Introduction to the 8th Global Issues Conference Special Edition

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The 8th Global Issues Conference, organized jointly by East Carolina University and the State University of Applied Sciences in Krosno on behalf of Global Partners in Education (GPE), took place online from April 8th to April 11th. This annual event brought together students, faculty, and staff from GPE member institutions worldwide to share insights and perspectives on a wide range of global issues.

As in previous years, the conference featured multiple thematic sessions, each comprising presentations followed by moderated discussions. These interactive discussions fostered the exchange of diverse perspectives, enriching the exploration of the issues presented.

The 2024 conference covered a broad range of topics under several thematic areas, including:

- Business, Technology & the Future of Work,
- Community Development,
- Education, Language and Society,
- Environment & Society,
- Economics & Society,
- Health, Medicine & Wellbeing,
- Human Rights & Justice.

Following the conference, the Organizing Committee selected outstanding presentations for publication in the Global Partners in Education Journal. This year the following eight articles are presented to a wider audience.

1. *"Exploring Gendered Dynamics in Performing Domestic Care Activities"*
2. *"Positive Masculinity & Disaster Preparedness in Pakistani Urban Communities"*

Both studies critically examine gender roles within society, addressing how traditional perceptions influence societal structures and functions. The articles challenge conventional gender norms and advocate for redefined roles that promote equity and inclusivity. They underline the transformative potential of addressing gender dynamics in diverse societal domains.

3. *"Linguistic Mistakes or a Distinct Variety? How L2 Speakers Influence English in International Contexts"*

4. *"The Application of Wordwall.net in English Language Instruction for Young Learners: The Learning Motivation of Taiwanese Elementary School Third Graders"*
5. *"Authentic Learning and Assessment in Lebanon and UAE Private Schools: Implementation, Impacts, and Challenges"*

These studies highlight the use of innovative approaches to enhance language learning. All of them emphasize the importance of tailoring educational practices to learners' specific needs and contribute valuable insights to the fields of language acquisition and instruction.

6. *"Bullying Dilemmas: Cyberbullying and Mental Health Strain for University Students in Mount Lebanon"*
7. *"Investigating Compulsive Staring Behavior in Men: A Gender-sensitive Examination of Sociocultural and Psychological Influences"*

Both studies investigate behavioural phenomena that have psychological, social, and cultural implications. They consider the sociocultural dimensions of selected features as well as highlight the psychological repercussions of the behaviours in focus. Both studies stress the importance of targeted interventions.

8. *"Shadows of the Past: Tracing Intergenerational Trauma in Seychelles"*

This article highlights the effects of trauma and reveals how much influence it has not only on the people who experienced it but it continues to affect their descendants as well. The study advocates for holistic recovery measures, including mental health care, legal aid, and community programs, to break the cycle of trauma and foster resilience.

The 8th Global Issues Conference once again provided an invaluable platform for researchers to present their work to an international audience. The breadth of topics ensured that every attendee could engage with areas of interest and participate in meaningful discussions.

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Exploring Gendered Dynamics in Performing Domestic Care Activities

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Abstract

Women's domestic care work has been overlooked and is considered unproductive. It is rarely counted in the domestic, communal, and national economies. This research explores the total time men and women spend on domestic care activities the economic value they perceive and the market value of these domestic activities. The research design of the study is quantitative and uses only the domestic care dimension of the tool developed by Tabassum et al. (2023). The total sample of 530 participants, i.e., 170 males and 360 females, was selected from the inner areas of Rawalpindi, Pakistan, using simple probability random sampling. The results revealed significant gender differences in time spent on domestic care activities, with females spending 86,158 hours per month while men spent only 16032 hours per month, meaning women spent more than five times more. The findings further revealed the perceived economic value by the participants to be 9.76 million rupees in a month, while the market-based economic value was 20.44 million rupees in a month, which is four times higher than the perceived economic value, showing the undervaluation of these domestic activities by participants. The study emphasizes the need for a more equitable recognition of roles and contributions within the domestic sphere and the necessity of redistributing gender roles and reevaluating social assumptions regarding the financial and emotional costs involved with these vital obligations.

Keywords: Care, Domestic, Gender, Unpaid, Value, Work

Background of the study

Care is a range of activities that promote the well-being of homes and communities. Caregiving encompasses direct caregiving for individuals, housework, and unpaid community work, including volunteer work and care for friends and neighbors (Maestre & Thorpe, 2016). Klein (2021) succinctly underscores that care is not merely a luxury, but a necessity, a force that supports and nurtures individuals in their endeavors (Maestre & Thorpe, 2015). A gendered narrative emerges within the context of caregiving, revealing a stark division. A division that is engraved by societal norms that designate care predominantly to women (Klein, 2021). Gendered norms define duties and obligations and create conditions that maintain the duality, in which, women and girls provide unpaid care for society's well-being (Rost, 2021). Various research studies emphasized a significant gender discrepancy in the distribution of time devoted to these domestic care activities, wherein women bear the majority of the burden. In their study, Rubiano-Matulevich, & Viollaz, (2019) stated that on average, women dedicate a considerably greater number of hours per week to domestic care responsibilities than men. Dorji et al., (2020) also mentioned that women devote twice as much time to unpaid care as men,

regardless of their income or family status However, this labor is not a straightforward equation; it is a multifaceted interplay of societal dynamics. Dorji et al. (2020) underscore the paradox of unpaid care labor, which is concealed behind market transactions, is disregarded despite its social value, and yet provides a public benefit that transcends economic concerns.

Women have been neglected and undervalued in the household, community, and/or national economy due to their contributions to family domestic labor being treated with little respect. This contribution is considered unproductive and has no financial worth. Economic surveys fail to recognize and acknowledge women's economic contributions, ignoring a large sector of the economy. This unseen sector is otherwise critical for the smooth functioning of a family and has a significant impact on the broader economy (Ferrant et al. 2014).

This invaluable contribution is concealed by hurdles such as unequal distribution, which results in time poverty, the invisibility of their efforts, and the weight that jeopardizes their well-being. Maestre and Thorpe (2015) provided a detailed account of how pleasure and satisfaction can rapidly transition into exhaustion and restriction, thereby further entrenching women in societal hierarchies. A contradiction is concealed beneath the surface: the capitalist system's dependence on unpaid caregiving, a foundation that frequently goes unnoticed.

The unpaid care work done by women is not limited by geographical boundaries; it resonates throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Crisologo (2022) shared the statistics that women account for 60% of the 187 million hours spent daily on unpaid activities. This gender disparity has a ripple effect on households. It is a testament to the dedication of women, as an average of 4 hours and 32 minutes is spent on unpaid care each day, and a testament to their resilience in the face of overwhelming responsibilities (UN Women, 2022). The intricacies of this discourse become increasingly complex as it progresses. Unpaid care labor is both a foundation and a constraint for the development of human capital, societal participation, and the well-being of women. Dong and An (2014) unravel this complex equilibrium, which impedes women's equal participation in the labor market due to the burden of care work.

The economic consequences of unpaid care labor are evident beyond the confines of domesticity. Stuart (2014) posits that this labor could represent a significant portion of the GDP if it were assigned a monetary value, a hidden treasure that is yet to be recognized. It is a realization that encourages policymakers and experts to imagine a world in which caregiving is not confined by gender. A vision in which male involvement is encouraged, and in which the potential of women is not restricted by care labor, but rather enhanced by their societal engagement. As Folbre (2006) emphasizes, a comprehensive comprehension is achieved: the cost of care includes debts and sacrifices, as well as profound bonds, intrinsic satisfaction, and invaluable services for dependents.

The dimension of unpaid labor, which has been neglected, is given prominence in this economic and societal context (Picchio, 2017). It is an essential element, a propelling

force that supports both economies and households. It reflects the multifaceted roles that women play, as Singh and Pattanaik (2020) reveal the complex interplay of restrictions, choices, and vocations that propel women into this field. The complex interplay of caregiving and its gendered subtleties becomes apparent when society expectations clash with personal ambitions, which are elaborately shaped by factors like age, marital status, family size, as well as caste, and religious background (Samantroy & Giri, 2015). Care is a thread that unites lives, communities, and ecosystems within the intricate tapestry of existence. Unpaid care labor predominantly performed by women, is an unquestionably vital yet underappreciated force, from its gendered division to its societal implications. By acknowledging and valuing the contributions of women to the care industry, it may be possible to prevent social and gender inequality in the development of sustainable communities.

Research Questions

The following are the research questions of the study:

- How much time do men and women spend on domestic care activities?
- How do men and women perceive the economic value of domestic care activity?
- What is the market-based economic value of domestic care activities?

Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research design to explore and find out the types of tasks men and women perform in the household and also the time spent on each activity in the old city of Rawalpindi. The target population comprised the residents of Rawalpindi of one union council No.38 and the locality of 'Rehmat Abad'. Using a non-probability purposive sampling technique, 530 participants took part in this study. Out of the 530 sampled participants 300 were from Union Council No.38 and 200 from 'Rehmat Abad'. Additionally, data were collected from specific subgroups, like 100 pregnant women, a sample of 100 female participants from different paid working categories like public sector primary school teachers, Lady Health Workers (LHWs), and domestic workers, and the remaining 300 from the males and females from the selected communities.

The data for the current study was collected through the survey method by using a questionnaire developed by Tabassum et al., (2023) in their recent study on 'Measuring Women's Contribution in Care Economy: Constructing Survey Based Indexed Questionnaire'. The Questionnaire consists of five dimensions namely child care, elderly care, domestic care, and the care of persons with special needs, and one additional component i.e., reproductive care. Only one dimension i.e., domestic care dimension was included. The collected data was entered using the software SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the study. Before data collection, participants were fully informed about the purpose of the study and informed consent was obtained ensuring their voluntary participation. Participants' identities were kept confidential, and their responses were anonymized to protect their

privacy. Data were stored safely and only authorized researchers have access to this data. The researchers were mindful of their own biases and preconceptions, ensuring that these did not influence the data collection process or analysis.

Calculation of economic value

Following the study of Suh (2021), the economic value of domestic care activities is measured as:

$$V = \sum_{i=1}^{N} [D_i f_i (H_i * 60 + M_i)/60] * W_j$$

Where V is the total economic value of all respondents for performing composite domestic and care activity,

$$D_i = No. of\ days\ performed\ a\ certain\ activites\ in\ a\ month\ by\ a\ respondent$$

$$f_i = frequency\ of\ doing\ a\ certain\ activity$$

$$H_i = Hours\ spent\ on\ a\ certain\ activity\ in\ a\ day$$

$$M_i = Minutes\ spent\ on\ a\ certain\ activity\ in\ a\ day$$

$$W_j = wage\ per\ hour$$

The wage rate for calculating the economic value for domestic care activities is considered the minimum wage i.e., 32 thousand (w.e.f. July 2023, as announced by the Government of Punjab).

A worker is required 40 hours to work in a week, using the minimum wage, we've converted per hour wage using the formula below:

$$W_j = \frac{32000\ minimum\ wage\ in\ a\ month}{(40*4)\ hours\ in\ Month} = 153.85\ Rupees\ per\ hour$$

Results and discussion

This part of the study describes the major findings. Following are the details,

Table 1:

Descriptive Statistics of quantitative aspects of demographics

Variables	Obs.	Mean	Stand. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
Age (years)	530	33.5	10	17	65
Monthly household income (in rupees)	530	45,214	28583	2000	200000
Education of respondents	530	8.7	4.9	0	18
Total time spent in 24 hours	530	7.2	4.3	0	20

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics of quantitative aspects of participants. The mean age of participants is 33.5 years, with a minimum and maximum of 17 and 65 years respectively. The monthly income of a household varies from Rs. 2000 to Rs. 200000. The education of participants has an average of 9 years of schooling, with a maximum of 18 years of education. The average time spent on domestic care work is 7.2 hours a day, with a minimum of zero hours and a maximum of 20 hours a day.

Table 2:

Descriptive Statistics of qualitative aspects of demographics

Variables	Obs.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	530	Male	170	32
		Female	360	68
Marital Status	530	Never married	48	09
		Married	437	83
		Divorced	43	08
		Widowed	2	0.4
Employment Status	530	Employed	186	35
		Not working	270	51

		Self-employed	74	14
Family System	530	Nuclear	230	44
		Joint	300	56
Type of household earners	530	Dual earner	267	50.5
		Single male earner	223	42
		Single female earner	40	7.5
Feeling while doing these activities	530	Fresh	46	8.7
		Better	80	15
		Fine	150	28.3
		Fatigued	203	38.4
		Drained	51	9.6

Table 2 depicts gender, marital status, family system, types of household earners, and overall feelings of participants for performing domestic care activities. The gender-wise representation of participants shows 32% males and 68% females. The majority of participants were married (i.e., 83%), followed by never married and divorced (9% and 8% respectively) and the least is widowed which is less only 0.4%. The employment status of participants includes 35% employed, 51% unemployed, and 14% self-employed. The types of household earners include dual earners 50.5%, single male earners, 42% and single female earners 7.5%. 38.4% of participants feel fatigued while doing domestic care work, followed by fine with 28.3% and 15% of participants feeling better. Out of the total, 9.6% responded to being drained and only 8.7% felt fresh in doing domestic care activities.

Time spent on domestic care activities

The following section covers the gender differences in the time spent on domestic care activities:

Figure 1:

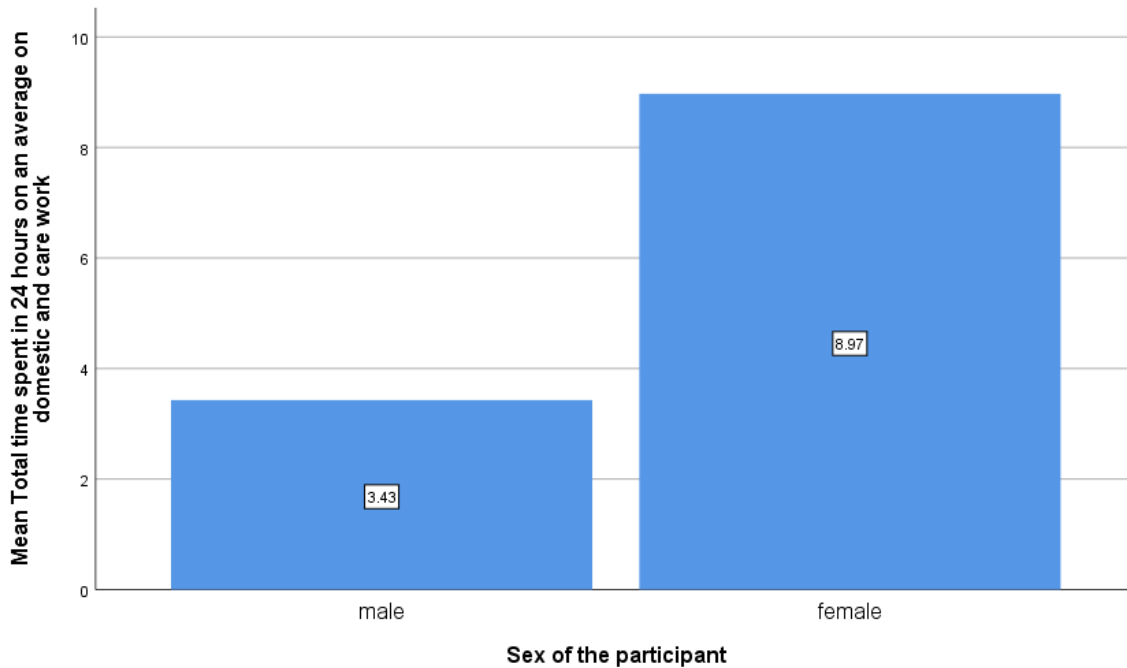*Mean gender differences in time spent per day on domestic care activities*

Figure 1 shows the mean time spent per day by males and females in different domestic care activities. It reveals that females spend around 9 hours a day on average on domestic care activities. Whereas males spend 3.4 hours on average on domestic care activities out of 24 hours. It is pertinent to mention that females spend almost three times more time spending on domestic care activities than males.

Figure 2:

Gender difference in time spent per month on cleaning activities in domestic care
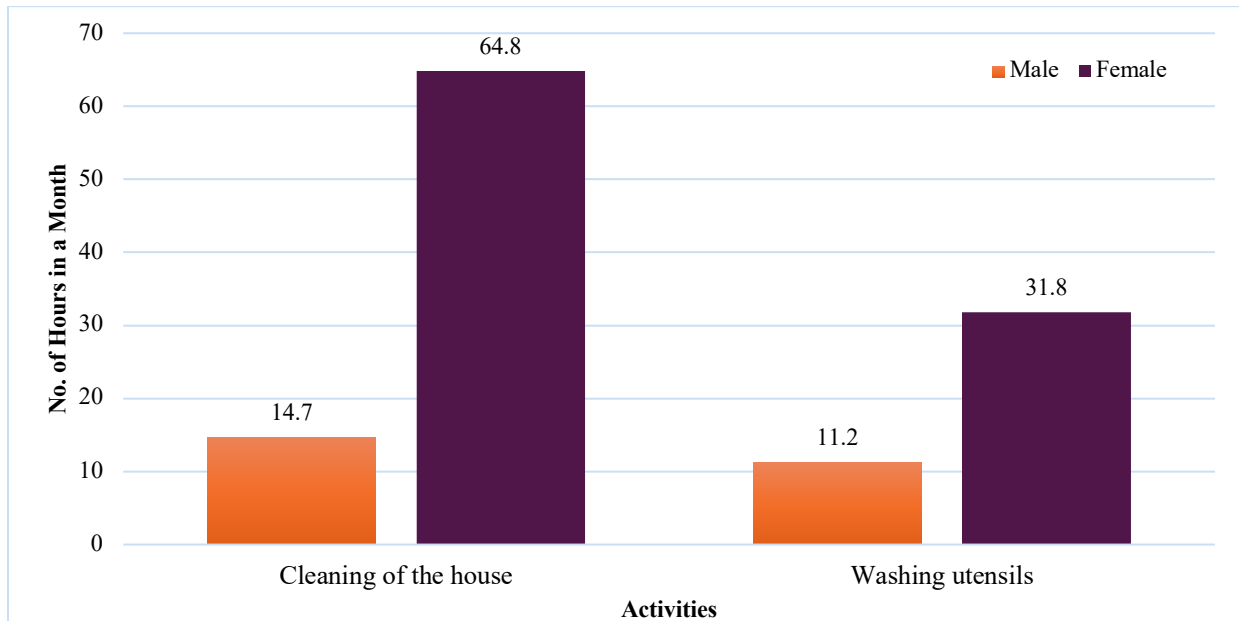
Figure 2 shows the gender differences in spending time based on several hours in a month on cleaning of house and washing utensils. Females spend more time cleaning of house and washing utensils 64.8 and 31.8 hours in a month whereas males spend time only 14.7 and 11.2 hours in a month. Various research studies emphasized a significant gender discrepancy in the distribution of time devoted to these domestic care activities, wherein women bear the majority of the burden (Rubiano-Matulevich, & Viollaz, 2019).

Figure 3:

Gender difference in time spent on preparing and serving different meals to family and guests
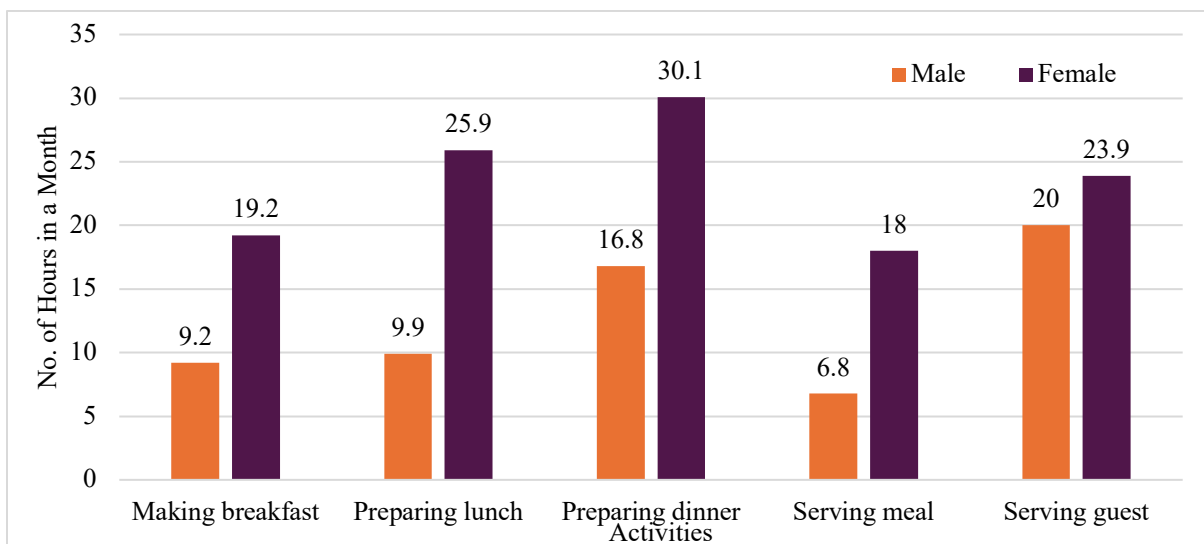
Figure 3 reveals time spending based on number of hours in a month on preparing food and serving meals to the family and guests. Females spend more time for preparing dinner, followed by lunch, and then making breakfast as 30.1, 25.9 and 19.2 hours on average in a month. Whereas males spend 16.8, 9.9, and 9.2 hours per month on average for preparing dinner, lunch, and breakfast. The time for serving meal is 18 and 6.8 hours in a month for females and males respectively. While serving guest, females spend 23.9 hours and males spend 20 hours per month. The results are similar to the study conducted in 2008 by Fontana and Natali that discovered, women in Tanzania dedicated three times more time than males to caregiving and household chores.

Figure 4:

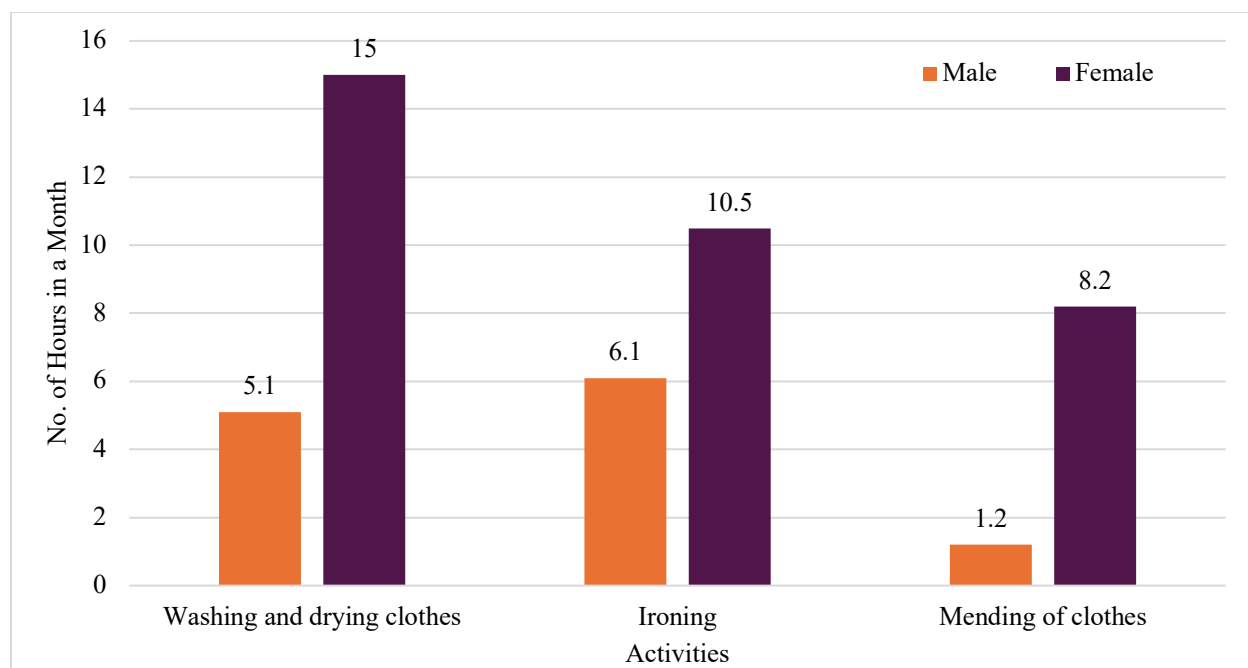*Gender difference in time spent on washing, and ironing clothes in domestic care activities*

Figure 4 shows the time spent based on the number of hours in a month on washing, ironing, and mending of clothes by males and females. Females spend more time in each activity that is 15, 10.5 and 8.2 hours in one month as compared to males who spend 5.1, 6.1, and 1.2 hours per month. The results are supported by the ILO report (2018) that mentioned that regardless of demographic or cultural contexts, women devote significantly more hours per week to unpaid care work than males.

Figure 5:

Gender difference in time spent per month on shopping for domestic care activities
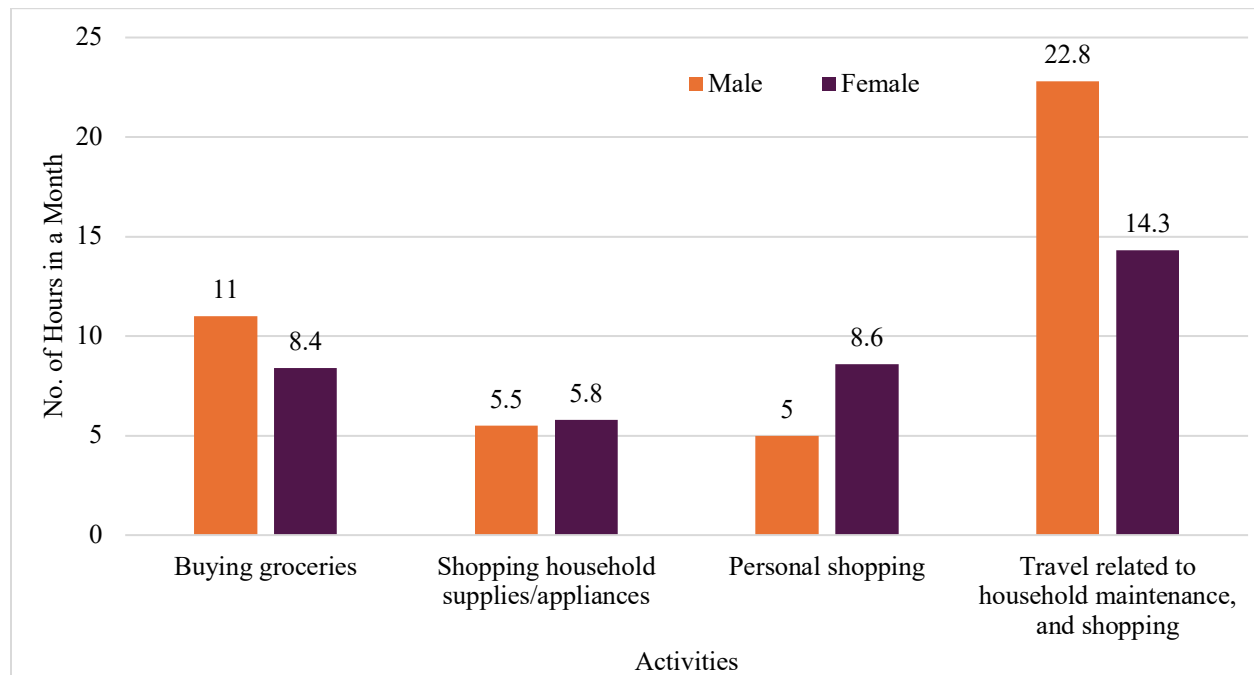
Figure 5 highlights time spend based on number of hours in a month for shopping. It reveals that males spent substantially larger amount of time in a month as compared to females. These activities comprise of doing groceries, shopping household supplies/appliances, personal shopping and travel related to household maintenance and shopping. Males spend 11, 5.5, 5 and 22.8 hours in one month while females spend 8.4, 5.8, 8.6 and 14.3 hours per month for the sequence of above-mentioned activities. It is very much evident from Pakistani culture where mobility of women is restricted, therefore males spent more time on shopping than females. While the time spent for shopping of household personal shopping by females outweighs than males.

Figure 6:

Gender difference in time spent on collection of household supplies for domestic care activities
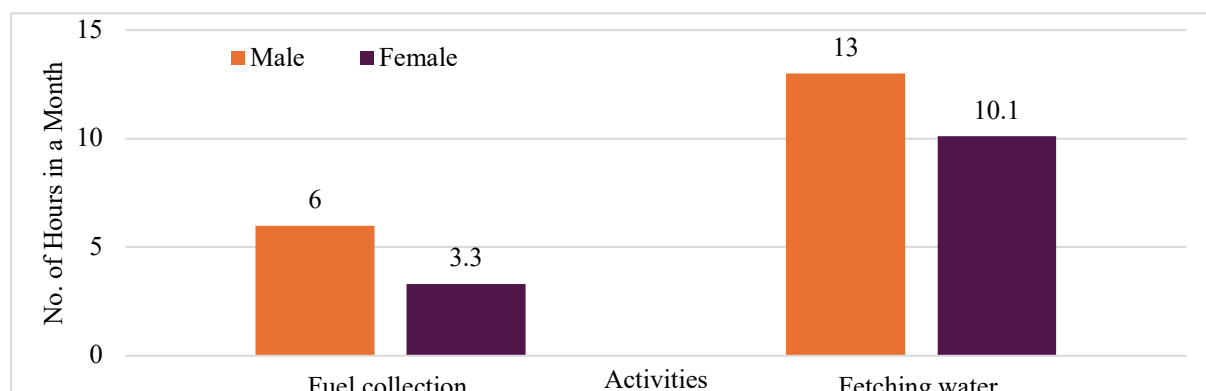
Figure 6 shows time spend based on number of hours in a month on collection of household supplies for domestic care. These activities (consisting of fuel collection and fetching water) are related to outdoor activities. Males are spending 6 and 13 hours in a month while females are not much far from males, they are spending 3.3 and 10.1 hours per month for fuel collection and fetching water in urban context of Pakistan.

Figure 7:

Gender difference in time spent per month on livestock management and gardening
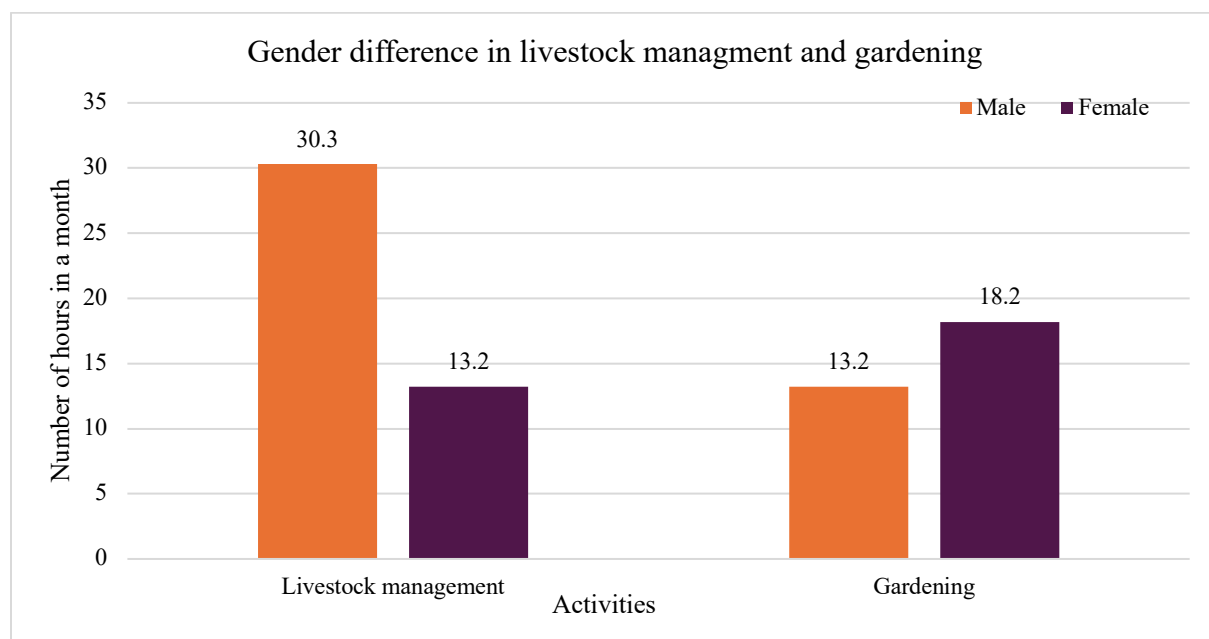
Figure 7 reveals time spend based on hours in a month on livestock management and gardening. The figure highlighted that females are more inclined towards gardening as they spend 17.2 hours per month on it while males are spending 12.2 hours on these activities. The time spent on taking care of livestock is dominantly by males than females that is 30.3 and 13.2 hours per month in an urban setting of Pakistan.

Figure 8:

Gender difference in total time spent on different dimensions of domestic care activities

Figure 8 illustrates the gender difference in time spent based on the number of hours per month on different activities of domestic care. Females spend the most time on preparing food and serving meals to the family and guests, followed by cleaning of house, washing and ironing of clothes, shopping, livestock management and gardening, and collection of household supplies. The q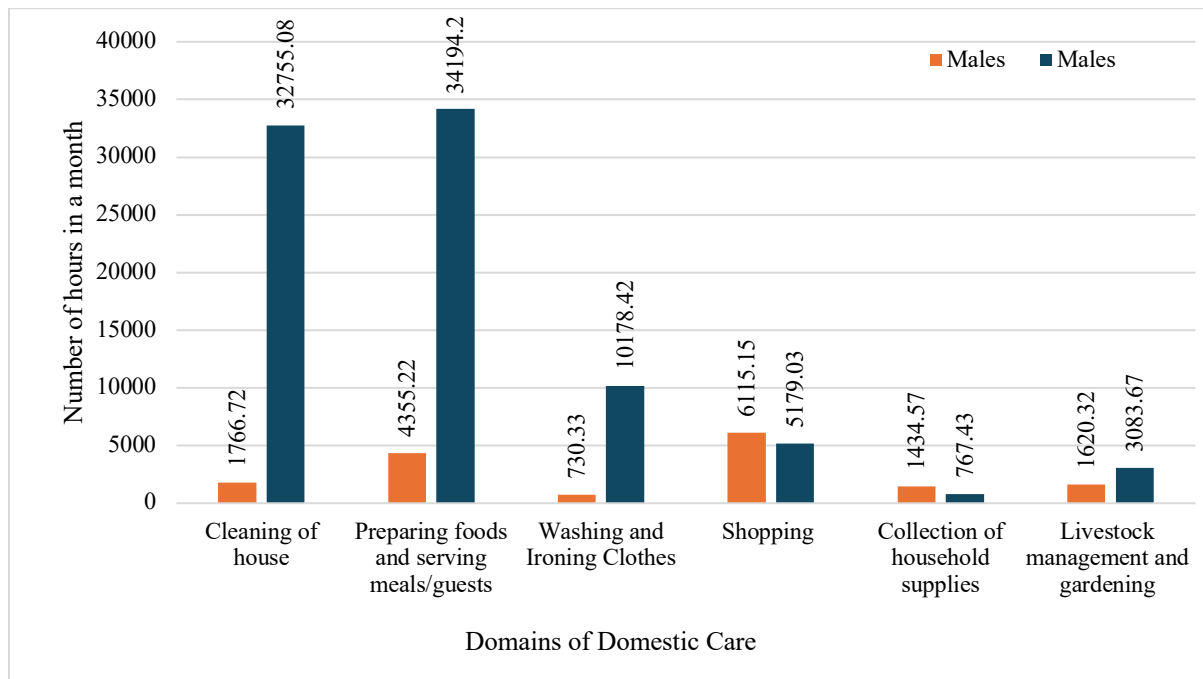uantum for this domestic care is: 34194.2, 32755.08, 10178.42, 5179.03, 3083.67, 767.43 hours for one month. Male spent the highest time on shopping (6115.15 hours), followed by preparing food and serving meals/guest (4355.22 hours), cleaning of house (1766.72 hours), livestock management (1620.32 hours), collection of household supplies (1434.57 hours) and washing/ironing of clothes (730.33 hours) per month. It is understandable that male spent higher time than females on the dimension of domestic care which are related to activities outside of house (i.e., shopping, collection of household supplies, livestock management). On the other hand, the activities related to indoor tasks including cleaning of house, preparing food, washing/ironing clothes and even gardening, females dominate in spending higher time than males. These results are supported by the study conducted Arora (2015) that analyzed data on time allocation in Mozambique and discovered that males dedicate around 1.5 hours per day to household duties, but women spend over five times as much time, namely 7.6 hours (Dhungel, 2022; Rios-Avila, et al., 2021).

Figure 9:

Gender difference in total time per month spent on domestic care activities
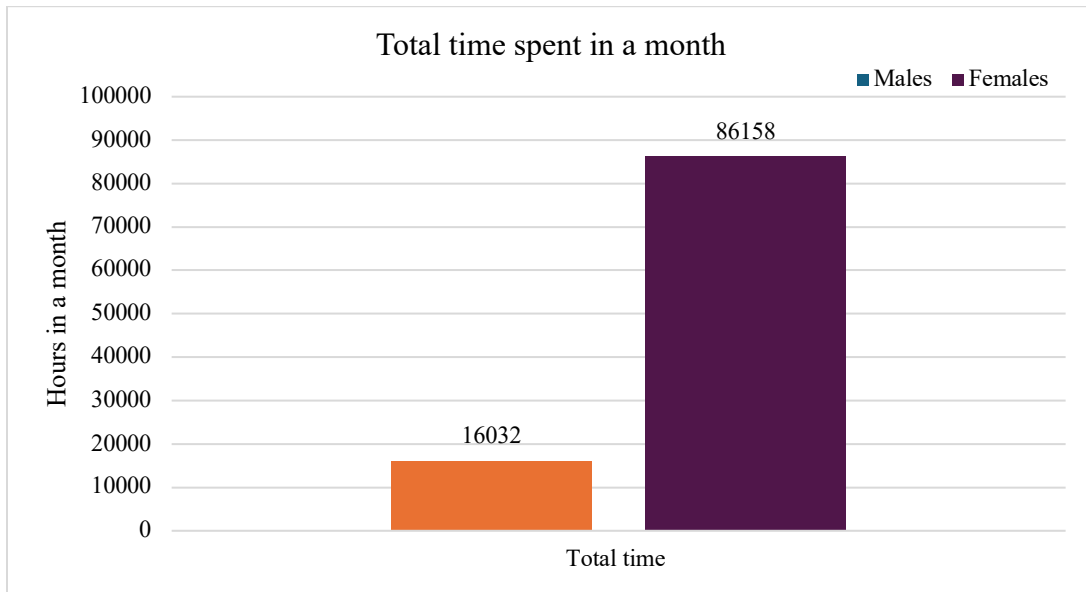
Figure 9 shows the total time spent by males and females in different 19 domestic care activities in a month. It reveals that females spend around 86158 hours in total in a month on domestic care activities. Whereas males spend 16032 hours in total on domestic care activities in a month. It is pertinent to mention that females spend almost more than 5 times higher time spending on domestic care activities than males.

Economic Value of Domestic Care

Figure 10:

Gender difference in economic value of different dimensions of domestic care activities
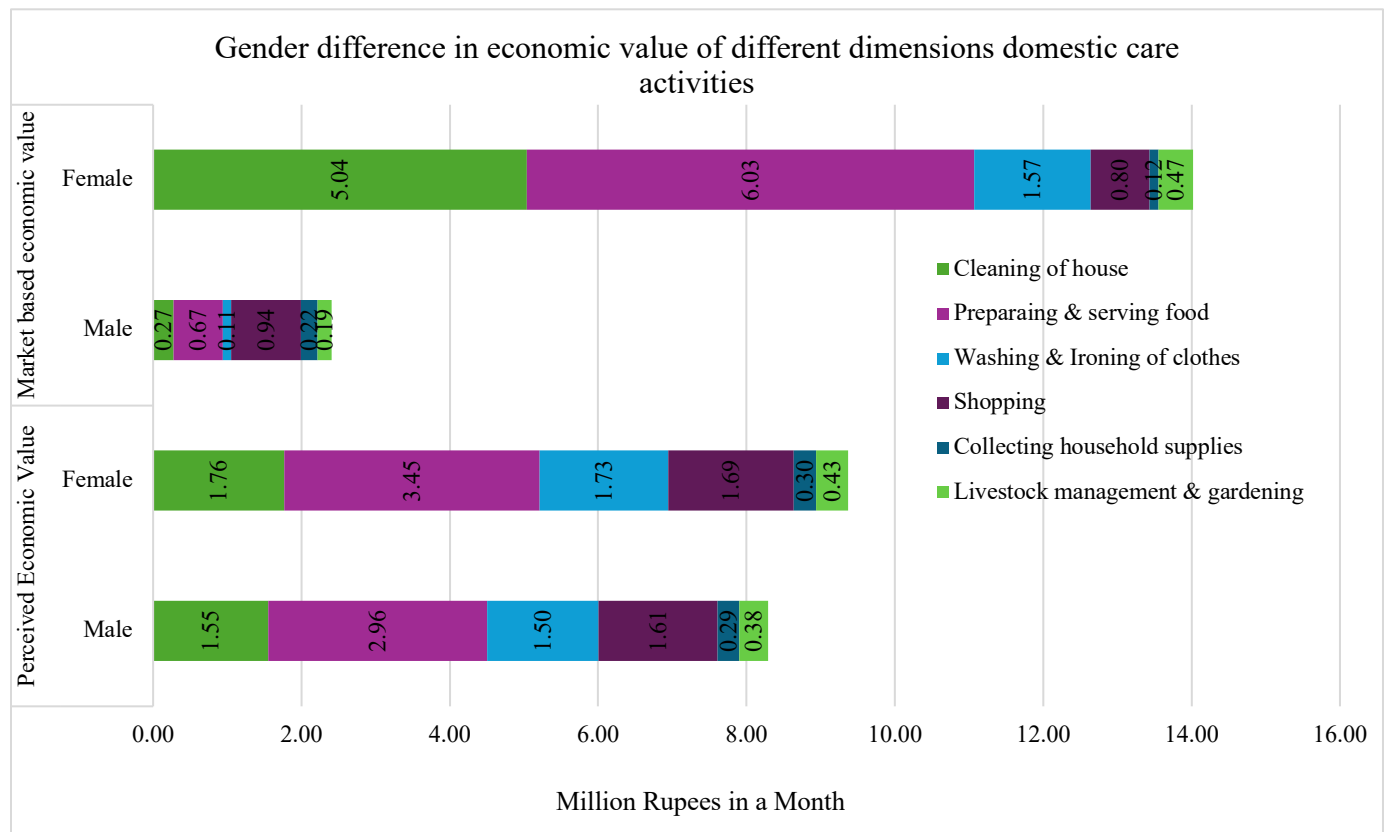
Figure 10 illustrates the economic value of various domestic care activities, as perceived and determined by the market. For women, the perceived economic value of cleaning the house is 1.76 million rupees per month, while for males, it is 1.55 million rupees. However, the actual market-based value of female economic value (5.04 million rupees) which is higher than the perceived value, indicating that females are undervaluing their contributions. The perceived economic value of the preparation and serving food is 3.45 million rupees for females and 2.96 million rupees for males per month. In contrast, the market-based economic value for women is significantly higher (6.03 million rupees), indicating that they are undervaluing their responsibilities. Conversely, the value for men is low (0.67 million rupees), indicating that they highly value their contributions to domestic tasks. The perceived value of washing and ironing clothes is higher for women than for men (1.73 million rupees versus 1.50 million rupees per month), while the market-based economic value is higher for women (1.57 million rupees versus 0.11 million rupees per month). This indicates that males place a high value on their role in the washing and ironing of clothes. The perceived economic value for household shopping is 1.61 million rupees for males and 1.69 million rupees for females while the market based economic value for household shopping is 0.94 and 0.80 million rupees for males and females respectively. This indicates that both males and females' priorities their contribution. In the similar manner, collection of household supplies, the perceived economic value for

females is 0.30 and 0.29 million rupees for males. While the market based economic value calculated for the same activities for females is 0.12 and 0.22 million rupees for males. This shows that participants prioritize their involvement in these activities. The last activities of livestock management, perceived economic value for females is 0.43 million rupees and 0.38 million rupees for males per month. While the market-based economic value for these activities for females is 0.47 and 0.19 million rupees for males. A lot of researches indicate that caregiving activities are frequently under value in terms of financial recognition and compensation to females (Kolovich, et al., 2024; Maestre, & Thorpe, 2016; Grimshaw, & Rubery, 2007). This has been mentioned that the reasons behind this gender disparity is due to traditional associated activities which are neglected and male-dominated in major societies and industries of the world (Oxfam, 2020).

Figure 11

Gender difference in total economic value of domestic care activities

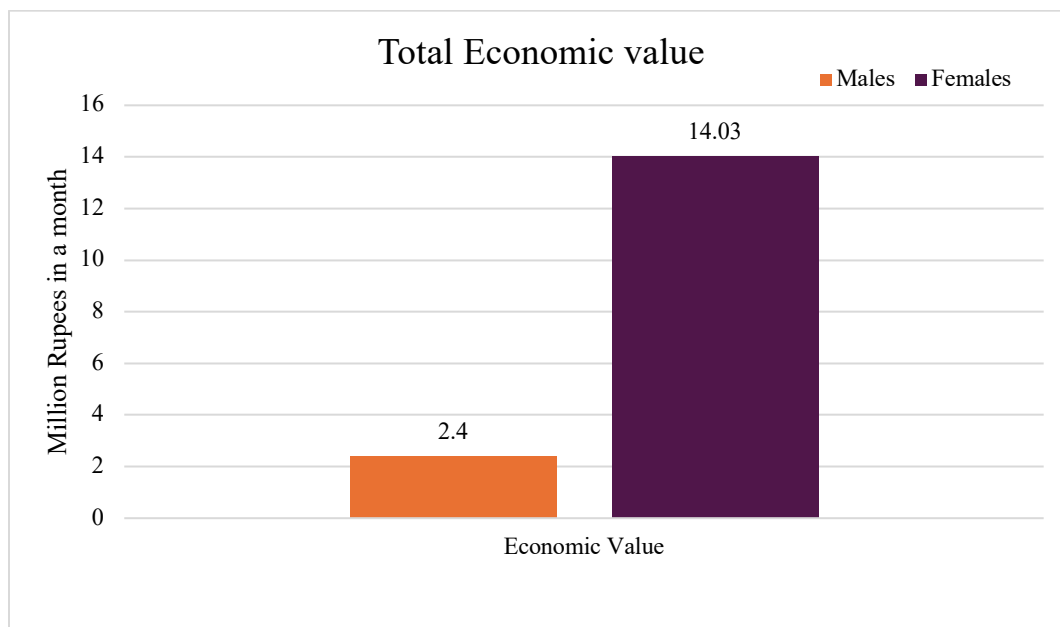Figure 11 shows the total economic value for 19 domestic care activities by males and females in a month. For females the total economic value of all these activities worth 14.03 million Pakistani rupees while for male, the economic wroth is 2.4 million Pakistani rupees in a month based on 19 domestic care activities which are calculated on the minimum wage rate of workers on a monthly basis.

Conclusion

Domestic care responsibilities between men and women are not equally shared in Pakistani society but there is a huge disparity between them to perform these activities. There are 19 domestic care activities that are measured in the urban context of Pakistan. The average daily commitment of males to these activities is 3.4 hours per day, which is significantly lower than that of women, who perform approximately 9 hours per day on these activities. The total time spent by females is more than 86000 hours per month as compared to males, this time spent is 16000 hours per month. The economic value calculated against these activities for females is 14.03 million Pakistani rupees while the economic value for males is 2.4 million Pakistani rupees per month. This shows a significant gender difference based on the government per month minimum wage for workers. Despite this gender-based disparity, unpaid caregiving labor remains a critical component of society, providing maintenance to communities and individual lives. Addressing this gender disparity is important to promote sustainable development, enhance social well-being, and to promote gender equality. To achieve this objective, it is essential to encourage male involvement in caregiving responsibilities and ensure that caregiving responsibilities are organized in a manner that facilitates women's participation in society, rather than impedes it. It is imperative that we acknowledge and provide support for the valuable contributions of women in the care industry to create a more sustainable, inclusive, and equitable future for all.

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Positive Masculinity and Disaster Preparedness in Pakistani Urban Communities

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores the intersection of positive masculinity and disaster preparedness in Pakistani urban communities. Through focus group discussions with 24 men aged 19 and above from Rawalpindi and Peshawar, the research highlights the transformative potential of positive masculinities in enhancing community resilience. The findings reveal that men in Pakistan have both traditional and positive perception of masculinity. Men with positive masculine traits, such as emotionality, responsibility, and perceiving women as allies are advocating for change. They can facilitate women's active participation in disaster preparedness efforts. These men emerge as pivotal agents in creating a conducive environment for collaboration, communication, and collective action in disaster mitigation and response. The study underscores the need to redefine traditional gender roles and promote gender-sensitive approaches that recognize and harness the strengths of both men and women in disaster risk reduction efforts within Pakistani urban contexts. It fosters inclusive and resilient communities in the face of disasters.

Keywords: Positive masculinity, disaster preparedness, gender roles, urban communities

Introduction and Background

Disasters, whether natural or man-made, pose a significant threat to nations across the globe. Pakistan is vulnerable to various types of disasters, including floods, earthquakes, and droughts, which have caused widespread damage and loss. Effective disaster preparedness is crucial for mitigating the impact of these events, particularly in urban areas like Islamabad, Rawalpindi, and Peshawar, which are prone to earthquakes, fires, and flooding (National Disaster Management Authority [NDMA], 2022; Ansari et al., 2019; Qasim et al., 2016; Siddique & Akhtar, 2020). These urban areas are particularly more vulnerable as they are thickly populated, hub of economic activities and home to poor people (Rana & Routray, 2018).

Disasters are much gendered in nature and thus the preparedness for disasters should be gender inclusive. The literature on gender and disasters emphasizes the contrast in how men and women plan for, handle, and recover from disasters. Studies reveal that the way men and women perceive hazard and react to alerts about forthcoming catastrophes is different. Men are more inclined than women to want to stay and put out the fire, while

women are more likely to seek refuge (Pease, 2014). This variation is influenced by gender roles socially constructed within a society.

Pakistan's social structure is influenced by the patriarchy and binary gender roles clearly divide men and women into specific roles. Similarly, masculinity and femininity are seen as opposite poles of a continuum (Ahmed et al., 2021). The concept of masculinity is diverse and multidimensional, impacted by a range of elements such as personal experiences, familial context, and cultural standards (Levant, 2007; Jabeen, 2018; Sinn, 1997). Connell (1995) defines masculinity as social construct which comprises of all the norms, behaviors and expectations which are attached with being a man in any society. In Pakistani society, men are expected to be strong, able to protect their family particularly women and unemotional in their demeanor (Ullah & Chaudhry, 2021). Adhering to these traditional traits of masculinity encourages men to behave in a certain way and it has significance for disaster preparedness. For instance, studies show that men in Pakistan use negative coping strategies including aggression, addiction and other harmful behavior when they are in stressful situations. Cases of domestic violence rise during disasters and crisis. (Chaudhry & Amis, 2021; Soomar et al., 2023). Additionally, it may put pressure on men to be protectors during disasters and it may challenge their ability to learn new disaster preparedness skills which increase the community's resilience.

Researchers have highlighted the need to challenge these traditional ideas of masculinity and promote positive masculinity approach to address these challenges particularly in the context of disaster management. This can be achieved through mass awareness campaigns on gender sensitization, empowerment and promoting men with positive masculine identities (Aurat Foundation, 2018). Michael Flood highlights the dual role of men as a hegemonic group increasing inequality and a catalyst for empowerment by being allies. He emphasized that excluding men from women gender mainstreaming activities may lead them to become more toxic in their masculine roles and creates a pressure on women alone to promote gender equality. In contrast, he advocates to consider men as agents of change so that they feel responsibility to work gender equality He has identified three main areas in which he advocates male engagement. First is the need to collaborate with men in the roles of decision makers and providers. Secondly, involve men in development agendas using gender sensitive framework. Finally work on men and their vulnerabilities. In this regard, major focus has been in the context of GBV and health. However few researches have highlighted their role in disaster context as well. They have discussed that when men are engaged in activities for enhancing disaster preparedness, they become allies of women and act as catalyst to increase women participation. Thus, communities become more resilient with positive masculinity (Mustafa et al., 2015; Dunn, 2016).

The main objective of this study focused on exploring the role of positive masculinity in promoting disaster preparedness among communities of selected urban areas in Pakistan. The research question inquires how do men with positive masculine traits

perceive their role in disaster preparedness and to what extent do they collaborate or facilitate women's role?

Theoretical Framework

For the current research, Connell's theory of masculinities is selected as a theoretical framework as this theory has major implications for disaster management. Connell published his theory of multiple masculinities in 1995 which posits that masculinity is a socially constructed schema moulded by sociocultural norms of a society (Connell, 1995). He explains that masculinity is not a singular concept but constructed over a continuum of traits close or far from cultural ideals. On one hand he defines hegemonic masculinity which is dominant in patriarchal cultures, characterising men as assertive, authoritarian, heterosexual, and brave. Boys and men are deemed manly based on how well they conform to this normative idea. Connell's (2000) categorization of subjugated and marginalised masculinities is also helpful in comprehending the connection between gender and how it intersects with other stratum elements like sexual orientation, class, and race. Connell (2000) employs these ideas to show how hierarchy and exclusion characterise the multiplicity of masculinities. Therefore, critical masculinity studies which view masculinity as interpersonal, socially constructed, enacted, and institutionally embedded have a great deal to offer critical social work perspectives on men and women in disasters as well as to gender and disaster studies more broadly.

Figure 1
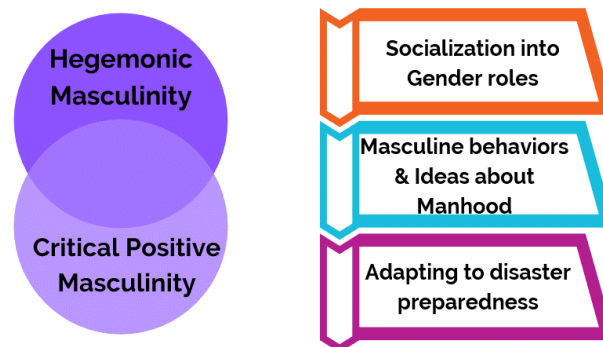
Figure 1 represents theory of Critical positive masculinity in the context of disasters.

Connell assumes that men are able to constructively resist or redefine traditional hegemonic norms and create more positive or inclusive masculinities that are more conducive to health and wellbeing. Thus, he advocates a new perspective in gender studies 'Critical positive Masculinity' exploring the complex potential for positive change in men. This theory can be very crucial in the context of disaster response and preparedness as it will aid in comprehending the role of masculine traits in shaping men's behaviors during disaster response and recovery. We have already discussed the need for gender sensitive disaster management strategies. Without taking into account men as well as women, these efforts cannot be fruitful.

Methodology

Research Design

With a qualitative research approach, the study was designed using focus group discussions (FGDs) as our selected method, a commonly used technique involving an in-depth discussion on a given topic. The group is generally between 6 to maximum 12 persons. The main advantage of this method is that it can yield rich information by giving opportunity to the participants to engage in meaningful discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2014).

Sample and Data Collection

The FGDs were conducted with a total of 24 men aged 19-50 years, recruited from the urban cities of Rawalpindi and Peshawar, Pakistan. The steps of FGD included planning, facilitation, documentation and content analysis and data collection was carried out in the following steps: Planning phase: The research objectives were clearly defined, and a semi-structured FGD question guide was developed to facilitate the discussions. 20 Potential participants were identified through purposive sampling and contacted to seek their consent belonging to Peshawer and Rawalpindi. 17 responded positively and 12 each were finalized from both cities based on availability.

Facilitation phase: Two FGDs were conducted, one in each city, from March 2024 to April 2024. Each lasting between 1 hour 45 minutes to 1 hour 50 minutes. A moderator guided the discussions, using probes to encourage participation from all attendees, while maintaining a neutral stance. Audio recordings were made with the consent of the participants. The moderator initiated each FGD with brief introduction and posed each question one by one. She used probes and involved all participants in the conversation without expressing any value to their answers to keep it neutral. At the end of each discussion, participants were thanked for their time. They were provided tea and snacks. No summary was provided at the end as this is a recommended method for conducted FGD (Rice & Ezzy, 1999; Anderson 1990).

Documentation Phase: The audio recordings were transcribed verbatim by a note-taker immediately after each FGD, as recommended by qualitative research experts (Anderson, 1990; Rice & Ezzy, 1999).

Content Analysis Phase: The transcripts were analyzed using a grounded theory-based thematic analysis approach. The researchers reviewed the data, identified recurring themes and patterns, and developed a coding framework. Verbatim quotes were used to support the interpretation of the findings. Verbatim was added with each theme to completely link the interpretation with the participants' own perceptions as recommended by Anderson (1990). Findings are discussed in the next section.

Results

Table 1

Demographic profile of men who participated in FGDs (N=24)

Characteristic	Category	frequency
Age	19 to 24 years	5
	25 to 30 years	5
	31 to 39 years	2
	40 to 49 years	5
	50 and above	7
Education	Informal Education/ Primary school	10
	Matric	5
	Intermediate	4
	Undergraduate	4
	Post graduate	1
City	Peshawar	12
	Rawalpindi	12
Native Language	Urdu	3
	Punjabi	10
	Pashto	9
	Kashmiri	2
Marital Status	Married	14
	Single	10
Employment status	Employed	13
	Unemployed	11

The demographic characteristics of our participants are presented above which indicate the diversity of the participants included in the discussion to get many viewpoints and representation of the population of both cities. Based on the data analysis, Two over arching themes were identified:

I.   Traditional Masculine Identity and Responsibility
II.   Men, Women and Disaster Preparedness

These themes which included subsequent subthemes are discussed below with illustrative quotes from the participants.

Theme 1: Traditional Versus Positive Masculine Identity

This emerged as a major theme in our discussion around disaster preparedness. All of the participants were highly aware of their traditional masculine identity and most of them

recognized the pressure of responsibilities which are associated with it. They expressed that being a man is their foremost identity which influences their behaviors in every aspect of their lives. Further sub-themes were identified pertaining to the masculine identity.

Man as Protector and Provider:

This sub theme was expressed by all of the men above 40 who participated in the discussion that they identify the role of men as protectors and providers of their families. They believed that to help, provide and protect their family is what a real man must do. They didnot see any other way to be real men and have to be strong at all times. According to one participant:

> Man is foundation of house. If the base is weak then house will fall into pieces (53, Peshawar, FGD 1).

These findings are consistent with the existing literature as Ullah and Chaudry (2021) have explained that traditional ideals of masculinity are hegemonic and men tend to perceive ideal manhood as being strong and identify with breadwinner role.

On the other hand, younger participants had a different opinion. They recognized that traditional role is not their ideal manhood, they can say no to being protector but in cultural norms, there is no option to say no to the provider role. Many of them believe women should contribute equally to this role. They also feel it causes stress and pressure to be strong and supportive for their family and is too much to ask. As one participant expressed:

> We men are expected and perceived to be strong and heroic, which creates unrealistic expectations and pressure to take unnecessary risks. Women are strong too. They don't need to be dependent on us, they can share our burden. (28, Rawalpindi, FGD 1)

This shows that alternative perceptions of masculine identity exist and not all men are falling for hegemonic masculine identity. This is what Connell (2000) has explained in his theory on masculinities are they are negotiated in different ways in a society.

Strength Versus Vulnerability

This theme was reported by older men above 30 years. They highlighted that masculinity includes traits of strength and courage. Men should be brave and face any challenge boldly. Since a man is expected to earn and protect their family, if he is not strong enough to perform roles or responsibilities he won't be respected. They also talked about taking risks for family and community. One participant said:

> *Man is like wall who can face any challenge. He becomes a shield for his children. (60, Rawalpindi, FGD2).*

Young age men below 30 years reported and shared different insights about masculinity. They have flexibility in attitude about roles if men of this community. According to them men can also express that they have emotions and feelings. It is okay for a man to be afraid sometimes and they don't have to face all the risks. They can also panic in crisis situations. They mentioned that mental and emotional wellbeing of men is neglected in disaster situations and even physical injuries are taken for granted as compared to women. As one participant said:

> *It is not in every case for men to be strong enough. I have a fear of blood and I can't help an injured person if they are bleeding. It doesn't mean I am not a man. A man can have fears too. (24, Peshawer, FGD 1).*

These findings are supported by literature that more mental health problems are prevalent in men post disaster as their emotional needs are neglected. They suffer more from anxiety, depression or stress as compared to women (Rao, 2006).

Theme 2: Men, Women and Disaster Preparedness

Men in the two FDGs were very well aware of disaster and its mitigation plans related to common disasters in respective cities. They expressed mixed opinions about including women as helping hand in disaster rescue and preparedness procedures. Most of them identified feminine role of women with household, domestic chores and caretaking of children or elderly in their families. In regard to their collaboration in disaster preparedness, mixed reviews were found. They are discussed in following sub themes emerged:

Women as allies

Under this subtheme, young men above 30 expressed that including women in disaster preparedness and post disaster activities is vital for swift outcomes and less vulnerabilities. Young men think that women can also help and support in crisis situations and as they are the one who know household matters much better than men. They can be more valuable partners in terms of decision making and finding helping way out in community settings. They mentioned that women bring unique perspectives that can greatly contribute to more comprehensive disaster preparedness and response and women should be better included in disaster trainings for measures and rescue so that we can reduce the casualties. According to one participant:

> *My sister is better than me at handling crisis. By valuing and integrating women's perspectives, we can foster a more inclusive and resilient community that works*

together to mitigate risks and support each other during crises (20, Rawalpindi, FGD 1).

Women as supporters

The men above 30 reported on this sub theme. They viewed women more as supporters and followers rather than leaders in disaster related activities. Their traditional gender roles and perception influenced their attitudes towards women. They do recognize that norms are changing in contemporary Pakistani society. As one participant expressed:

> *In our days women rarely went out. So, they cannot handle crisis. But yes, they can help men in dealing with crisis by providing support. Nowadays things are different. (55, Peshawar, FGD2).*

Collaboration and Support between genders

Majority of the men advocate trainings for women for disaster situation and show willingness to support them for this purpose. As women are more involved in household and care work, they know better how to handle children and elders in disasters and are also very much familiar with the house infrastructure for safety and rescue purpose. Men point out that men's position in society can be used as functional and eliminating power imbalance rather than obstacle for each of them; men and women. Men acknowledge women have certain capacities especially in child and elderly care to enhance disaster preparedness and response capabilities.

> *In our community, everyone needs to be prepared to handle emergencies, regardless of gender. I think all brothers and fathers should encourage their sisters and daughters to become well trained (40, Rawalpindi, FGD 1).*

This finds support in previous studies. Many men who are educated in Pakistan empower their female members of the family to get education, careers etc. (Malik & Courtney, 2011).

Advocating for Change

This subtheme highlights men advocating for policy changes that promote inclusivity and gender equality in disaster preparedness. They are of the view that these efforts can help the females of their community and families in future. This includes just and fair policies for disaster preparedness and post disaster allocation of resources. They recognize the importance of diverse perspectives and experiences, moreover they call for better planning and effective community resilience training for women and men. Both need better and professional trainings including First Aid, rescue training and disaster awareness. One participant of the study explained:

Changes need to be made in existing plan of action for disasters. Community leaders and organizations can better support women in disaster resilience by creating inclusive policies and programs that prioritize women's voices and needs (41, Peshawar, FGD 2).

Literature highlights that gender needs have been recognized in the context of disaster management. Many efforts for gender mainstreaming in the society are already underway by different stakeholders including government, NGOs and civil society. Studies have critically evaluated policies for their gender blindness and demanded reforms which include disaster management (Aurat Foundation, 2018; Ullah & Chaudhry, 2021).

Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the complex relationship between masculinity and disaster preparedness in Pakistani urban communities. The focus group discussions revealed two key themes. Older men expressed a strong attachment to traditional masculinity, viewing men as protectors and providers. However, younger participants advocated for a more flexible approach that allows men to express vulnerability and collaborate with women. Participants acknowledged the importance of involving women, with younger men seeing them as valuable allies. While older men tended to view women in traditional supportive roles, the majority expressed willingness to support women's inclusion in disaster preparedness. These findings highlight the need to redefine gender norms and promote positive masculinity emphasizing resilience, responsibility, compassion, and collaboration. By empowering men to embrace these qualities, and actively involving women, communities can foster a more inclusive and resilient approach to crisis management. Further research is needed to explore the nuances of this relationship in diverse cultural settings and to develop evidence-based strategies for promoting gender-inclusive disaster risk reduction and response.

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Linguistic Mistakes or a Distinct Variety? How L2 Speakers Influence English in International Contexts.

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Abstract

The study aims to examine the development of localised varieties of English within the Expanding Circle of World Englishes, as defined by Kachru (1992), based on an example of the Polish speech community. Employing a questionnaire consisting of translation and phonological items, the research explores how native Polish influences manifest themselves in L2 English language use. The translation task revealed common patterns of linguistic interference, such as calques and grammatical structures imported from the participants' native language, while the rhyming task highlighted phonological deficiency in distinguishing vowel length differences. Results indicate that Polish speakers tend to employ non-standard linguistic forms due to cognitive influences from their native language, suggesting that these recurring patterns, if properly identified, could potentially evolve into distinct features of a Polish variety of English. The findings underscore the need to adapt teaching methodologies to better address the specific challenges faced by learners. The study concludes that while the emergence of a Polish English variety remains speculative, acknowledging and addressing such linguistic interference could enhance both our understanding of language evolution and language instruction practices. Future research should incorporate more interactive tasks and larger samples to further investigate these phenomena and compare findings across different linguistic contexts.

Keywords: World Englishes, varieties of English, Expanding Circle, linguistic interference, L2 English, native language influence

Introduction

The global proliferation of the English language as observed over the course of the past century has created demand for a standardised framework categorising its usage depending on a variety of geographical and sociolinguistic factors. According to Crystal (2007), there are currently over 75 territories worldwide where English is spoken either as a first language (L1) or as an institutionalised or unofficial second language (L2) in key fields such as education, law and government, with new varieties constantly emerging and being discovered. Kachru's (1992) 'Three Circles of English' model provides a better understanding of this linguistic diversity, classifying English-speaking populations into one of the three geographically-based concentric circles, i.e. the Inner Circle, which refers to countries where English is spoken as a primary langue by the majority of population (e.g. the UK, Australia); the Outer Circle, encompassing largely, but not exclusively, members of the British Commonwealth where it serves as a *lingua franca* for communication between multiple speech communities (e.g. India, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea); and the Expanding Circle, including countries where English has no official status and is widely taught as a foreign language (e.g. Poland, Italy). Countries of the first two circles can be described as 'norm-providing' and 'norm-developing' respectively, meaning that they either establish linguistic standards that are recognised and adopted globally (the UK, United States) or develop distinct national varieties of English by adapting the language to local cultural influences (India,

Nigeria). The Expanding Circle on the other hand is, in principle, 'norm-dependent', as it relies entirely on the standards set by native speakers from the Inner Circle (Jenkins, 2009). As a consequence, countries of the Inner and Outer circles develop their own national varieties of English (i.e. British English, American English, Indian English, etc.), whilst learners in the Expanding Circle are taught according to frameworks for teaching English as a foreign language, which are based on an existing national standard – predominantly British or American.

The theoretical expectation is that speakers within the Expanding Circle will infallibly adhere to the externally-imposed linguistic norms without developing their own distinct varieties of the language (Matsuda, 2003). However, the reality of teaching English as a foreign language does not seem to corroborate this presumption, with several studies arguing that localised varieties of English can and do emerge within the Expanding Circle, despite its lack of official status or widespread native use (Seidlhofer, 2011). It could be argued, that irrespective of the organised efforts to teach English in a uniform way across different countries, certain linguistic features and patterns can be observed among members of a single speech community in their effort to speak standard English. These include calques and grammatical structures imported from their native languages, as well as common mispronunciations of sounds that are absent in their own vernacular. The current paper seeks to investigate the emergence of localised varieties of English outside of the Inner and Outer Circles as well as the discrepancy between global language standards and local linguistic practices based on an example of native speakers of Polish. It will deliberately construe the most frequent grammatical, syntactic and phonetic errors committed by an average member of the Polish speech community not as linguistic mistakes *per se*, but as observable features of a potential 'Polish variety' of English. It will also argue, that repeated non-standard speech patterns among L2 speakers occur as a result of linguistic choices that are suggested by one's native language at a subliminal level, and as such should be examined through the lens of the categories whereby a speaker of a particular language formulates and verbalises their thoughts.

Methodology

For the purpose of the research, a group of 34 first-year English philology students from a Polish university (ages 18-20), accessible at the time of the study and taught in accordance with the British standard of the language, were requested to complete an online questionnaire comprising a selection of 12 contextually unrelated Polish sentences to be translated into English without contemplating grammatical and vocabulary choices. The participants were instructed to translate the sentences as naturally as possible, without delaying the answer in search for the optimal linguistic solutions. To elicit instinctive rather than deliberate responses, a 5-minute time constraint was applied, discouraging pauses between questionnaire items or backtracking in order to correct the original input. The choice of Polish sentences was designed to include components that are partially translatable, with their optimal English renditions using similar expressions that differ by a single element. These components include, among others: collocations that employ a different verb (e.g., EN: 'to make sense' – PL: 'mieć sens' [to have sense]); fixed prepositional phrases that employ a different preposition (e.g., EN: 'at first sight' – PL: 'od pierwszego wejrzenia' [from first sight]); and nouns that are plural in English but singular in Polish (e.g., EN: 'the police are' – PL: [the police is]). Additionally, several items included elements requiring revised syntax or unintuitive vocabulary choices to be correctly translated.

The latter includes presence of lexical pairs that exhibit similar orthographic and phonological forms but diverge in meaning (i.e. false friends), e.g. PL: 'aktualny' [up-to-date] and EN: 'actual'; and a phenomenon called lexical asymmetry, which refers to a situation where two different words in one language are rendered by the same word in another, e.g. EN: 'lend' and 'borrow' = PL: 'pożyczyć'. The purpose of this task was to observe patterns in the way the participants translate certain problematic linguistic items into English, as well as to record the frequency of common grammatical and lexical errors within a sample whose common denominator is the native use of the Polish language.

The questionnaire also featured a rhyming task consisting of 20 pairs of English words of varying degrees of similarity arranged in a random order, with the participants being required to mark those which according to their judgement rhymed perfectly (i.e. had identical vowel and consonant sounds in their final stressed syllables). The set of word pairs contained 5 perfect rhymes (e.g. snail – whale, dutiful – beautiful) and 5 slant rhymes, i.e. pairs which rhymed except for the vowel length (e.g. bit – beat, slip – sleep), with the remaining 10 pairs having entirely different vowel sounds (e.g. scratch – sketch, lemon – demon). To facilitate answers true to one's individual understanding of what constitutes a rhyme, the quantity of perfect rhymes included in the task had not been specified prior to its completion. The procedure was designed to elicit responses that demonstrate the degree to which each participant perceived short and long English vowels as separate sounds. A potential repeated misconstruction of vowel length differences, which is considerably more likely to occur in speakers of a language where such a distinction is absent, could indicate regularities in the way speakers of Polish mispronounce certain sounds and entire words based on their spelling.

Results

For the translation task, each of the 34 responses was processed on an individual basis and analysed in terms of unique solutions to the linguistic problems contained in each question. For each item the focus was placed on specific translation challenges, disregarding any non-standard responses in areas in which they had not been anticipated by the questionnaire's design. The results are represented as the percentage of occurrences of the optimal solution and the most frequent non-standard solution to each sentence's focus problem. The research indicates varying degrees of grammatical and lexical compliance of the responses with standard English, with the non-standard response being predominant in 4 out of 12 items. Below is a summary of selected questionnaire items that are particularly relevant to the subsequent discussion. Structures and expressions that were the focus of each sentence were underlined. For the complete set of results, please refer to Appendix 1.

Question 2 – Collocations Employing a Different Verb

PL: Uważam, że Twój pomysł nie ma sensu.

EN: I think your idea makes no sense.

Literally: [I think that your idea does not have sense.]

The majority of participants (19 responses, 56%) correctly used the collocation *'to make sense'* in their translations. However, there was a notable tendency (14 responses, 41%) to translate the phrase as *'to have sense',* a clear calque of the Polish expression *'mieć sens'.* The remaining one participant employed an alternative

approach, replacing the collocation with a copular construction with an adjective, translating it as *'to be senseless'*.

Question 2: *Uważam, że Twój pomysł nie ma sensu*.
EN: I think your idea makes no sense.

senseless
3%

have sense
41%

make sense
56%

■ make sense   ■ have sense   ■ senseless
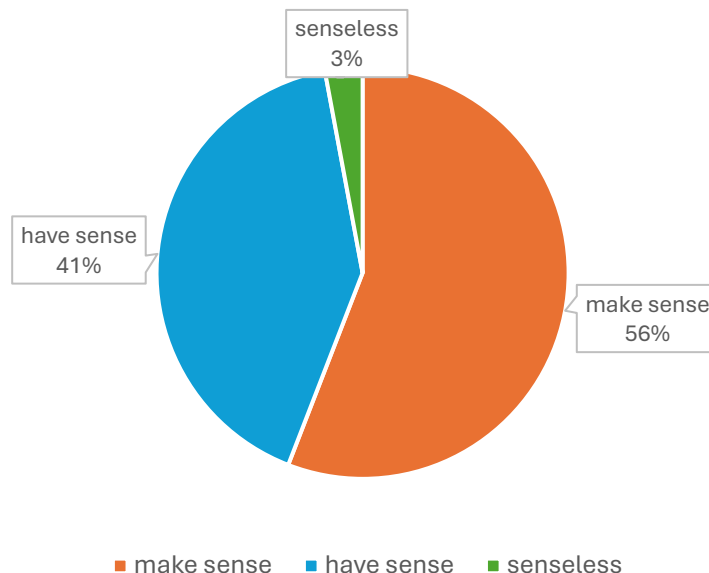
Question 3 – Prepositional Phrases Employing a Different Preposition

PL: To była miłość od pierwszego wejrzenia.

EN: It was love at first sight.

Literally: [It was love from first sight.]

Question 3: *To była miłość od pierwszego wejrzenia*.
It was love at first sight.

other
15%

at first sight
26%

from first sight
59%

■ at first sight   ■ from first sight   ■ other
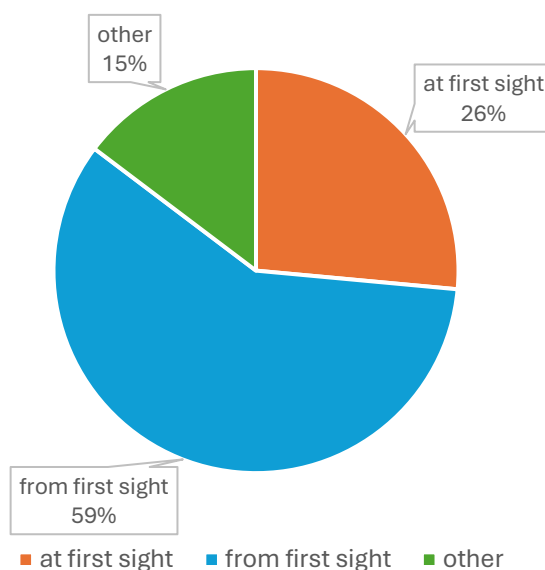
Item 3 saw the majority of the participants (20 responses, 59%) providing a literal translation of the Polish phrase 'od pierwszego wejrzenia' ('from first sight') as opposed

to the standard expression 'at first sight'. The latter response was the preferred one among only 9 of the respondents, amounting to 26% of the sample. Alternative solutions (5 answers, 15%) included the use of other prepositions and the replacement of the prepositional phrase with the predicative use of a noun phrase ('first-sight love').

Question 6 – Singular-Plural Asymmetry

PL: Od wczoraj policja poszukuje przestępcy.

EN: The police have been looking for the criminal since yesterday.

Literally: [Since yesterday the police is looking for the criminal.]

Question 6: *Od wczoraj policja poszukuje przestępcy.*
The police have been looking for the criminal since yesterday.
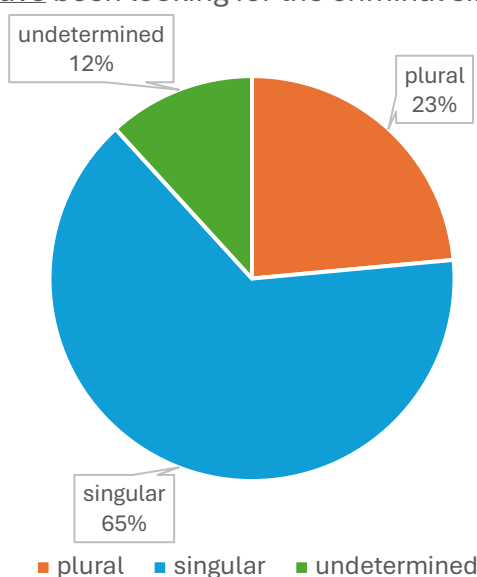
The noun 'police', which in English requires plural verb conjugation when used collectively, is exclusively singular in the Polish language. This has been reflected by the results obtained in item 6, which sees as many as 22 respondents (65%) using the singular form of the phrasal verb 'to look for', with only 8 of them (23%) employing the plural. The remaining 4 participants (12%) provided answers that did not ascribe any grammatical number to the word 'police'.

Question 9 – Lexical Interference

PL: Jak wygląda Twój pokój?

EN: What does your room look like?

Literally: [How looks your room?]

The original sentence in question 9 can be rendered in two ways in standard English, either as 'What does your room look like?' or 'How does your room look?'. The Polish equivalent begins with the interrogative adverb 'jak' ('how'), to which the language offers no alternative solution. The results indicate that an overwhelming majority of the participants began their translated sentences with the word 'how' (26 responses, 77%) with only 8 respondents opting otherwise (23%). However, it is worth noting that only

5 of those 26 responses (15%) used the correct syntax ('How does your room look?'), with as many as 21 participants (62%) providing the non-standard 'How does your room look like?'. If one assumes that the primary choice in this sentence was in fact between the syntax employing the final 'look' and the one ending with 'look like', the 'How does your room look like?' response could be explained as a result of lexical

Question 9: *Jak wygląda Twój pokój?*
What does your room look like? / How does your room look?
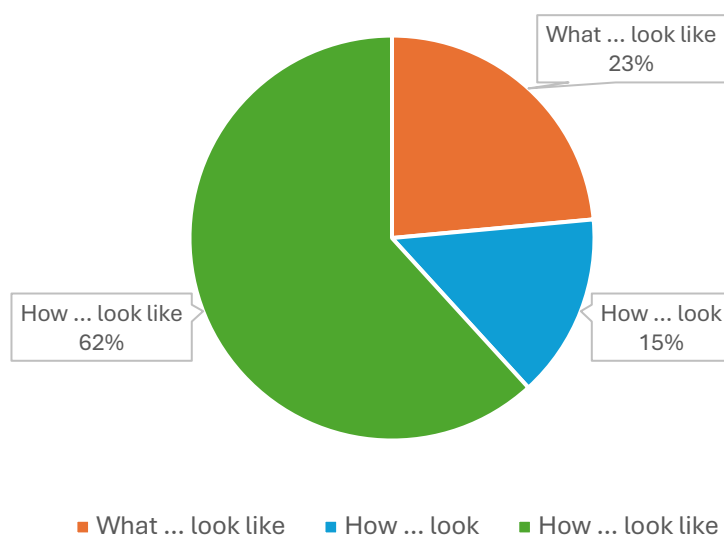
interference, i.e. subconscious replacement of 'what' with 'how' in the sentence 'What does your room look like?', dictated by the original Polish structure.

Question 11 – Lexical asymmetry

PL: Wczoraj pożyczył mi pieniądze.

EN: He lent me money yesterday.

Literally: [Yesterday he lent/borrowed me money.]

Question 11: *Wczoraj pożyczył mi pieniądze.*
He <u>lent</u> me money yesterday.

The Polish verb 'pożyczyć' is an illustration of lexical asymmetry, with its meaning encompassing that of both English verbs 'to lend' and 'to borrow'. It was therefore reasonable to 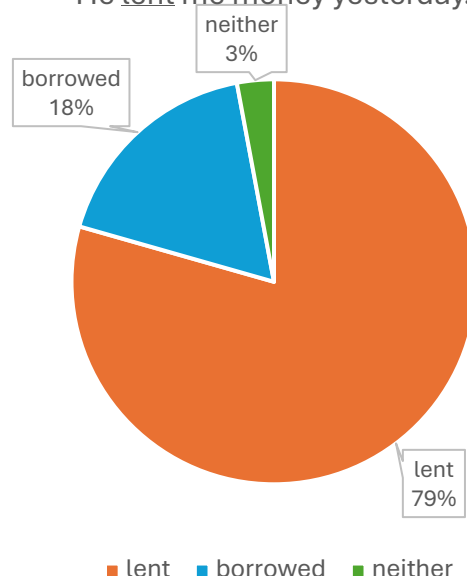expect the linguistic interference to result in a roughly equal distribution of participants opting for either verb in their translations. The obtained results however do not align with this assumption, as 27 of the respondents (79%) correctly translated the original verb as 'to lend', with only 6 of them choosing 'to borrow' (18%). Whereas the latter choice can well be attributed to the effect of interference, other factors, including insufficient language proficiency, cannot be ruled out.

Rhyming task – Phonological Interference

The results of the rhyming task indicate a significant tendency to disregard the differences between short and long vowels in English, with all but one pair of slant rhymes having been marked as perfect rhymes by over a half of the respondents (from 41% for bit - beat to 82% for glitch - beach). A significant majority of the participants correctly recognised all 5 pairs of perfect rhymes, with results varying between 70% (beautiful - dutiful; snail - whale) and 97% (rabbit - habit; dog - frog). 9 out of 10 pairs of words which do not rhyme due to divergent vowel sounds were correctly construed as non-rhymes by a vast majority of the respondents, with results ranging from 26% (trick - track) to 0% (bright - bread). The only remarkable exception within this group was the pair lemon - demon, which was marked as a perfect rhyme by as many as 24 participants (71%). The latter is a case of phonological interference, as the Polish equivalent of the noun 'demon' is pronounced with a short /e/, which does rhyme with the English 'lemon'. It could be argued, however, that this effect may have been amplified by the two vowel sounds being graphically represented by the same

character 'e', which given the scarcity of time available to complete the task, may have acted as a distracting visual cue.
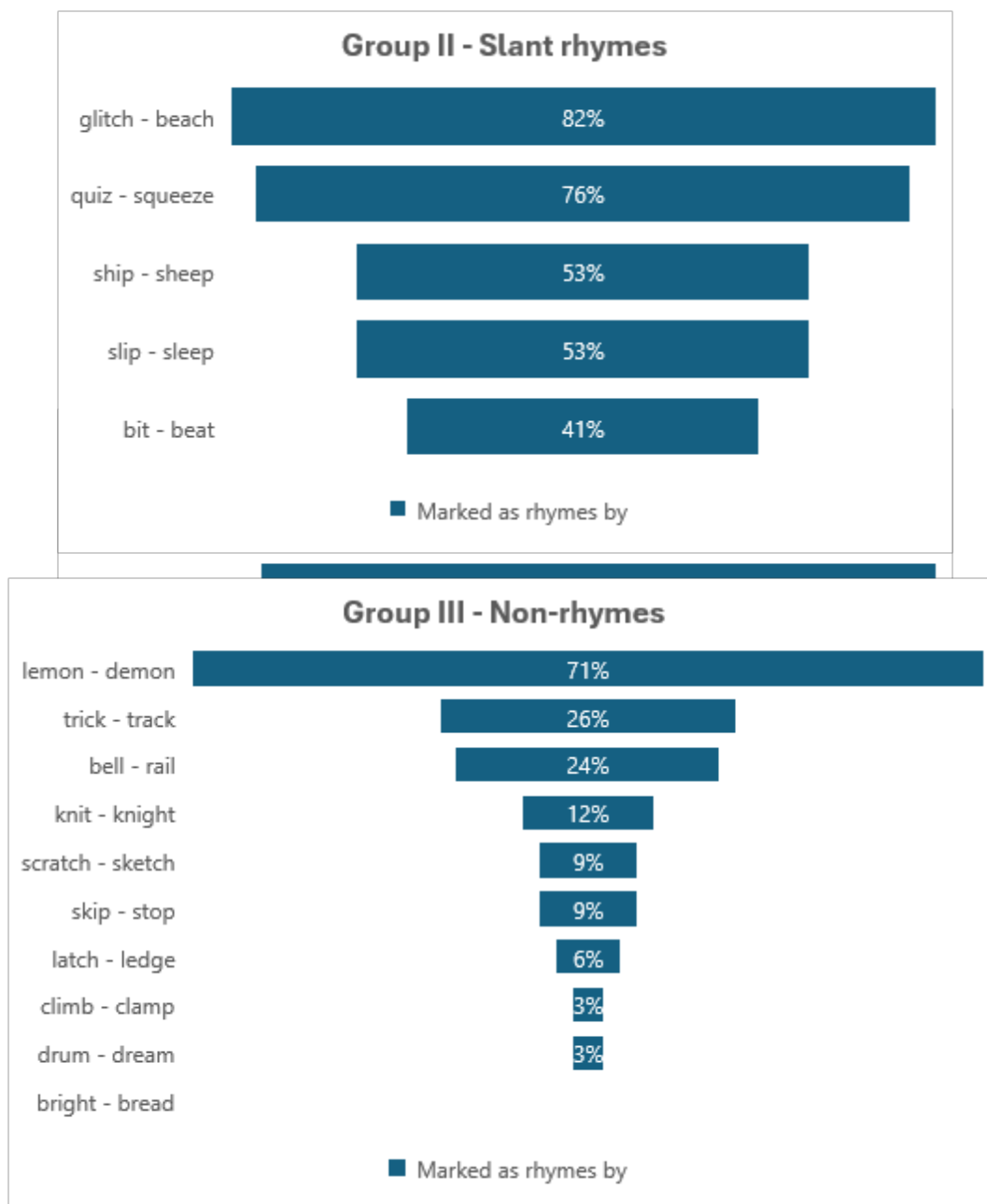
Discussion

The research conducted for the purpose of this paper sought to provide an insight into how members of the same speech community tend to commit similar, and in many cases identical linguistic errors when speaking English, even when instructed in one of its standard varieties at an academic level. This presumptive tendency was particularly visible in the results of the rhyming task, which revealed a reasonably uniform perception of Polish speakers with regard to the distinction between long and short vowels in English, a feature that has been absent in the Polish language for several

centuries. The participants' consistent disregard of this phonological aspect suggests that native use of Polish not only impairs the speaker's ability to discern between sounds which in many cases determine meanings of words, but also causes them to mispronounce certain sounds in a predictable way. This finding points to one of the potential causes of reduced mutual intelligibility between L1 and L2 speakers of English, particularly those with little prior exposure to the native use of the language.

In as much as the translation task proposed in the questionnaire may not entirely replicate the settings in which participants are able to produce purposeful utterances of speech typical of a casual conversation, it does provide an understanding of the thought process behind the linguistic choices they make as they verbalise their thoughts. Not only does a large proportion of them apply non-standard solutions to the translation problems they encounter, but they also exhibit a strong tendency to solve them in a similar fashion. This is reflected in an overall low number of unique ways of translating the same linguistic items recorded for the entire sample. In the majority of cases, the participants were split between those who translated certain phrases and expressions according to the standard and a considerable fraction of those who opted for one single common non-standard alternative. Notably, they did so despite operating on a strict time limit and without conferring their answers among themselves.

While this phenomenon may be interpreted as a result of a varying degree of command of the language within the sample, undermining the validity of carrying out similar research in this specific context, an insufficient knowledge of English among the participants helps to shed some light on the mechanism of the emergence of common linguistic mistakes and their subsequent fossilisation in everyday speech. Proficiency gaps in an L2 English speaker require them to seek alternative ways to convey their intended meaning. If a missing portion of information cannot be swiftly paraphrased or substituted by a synonymous standard English phrase, the speaker may, more or less consciously, resort to means of expression known from their own native language. This semi-intuitive approach is also additionally reinforced in case of languages belonging to the same language family, which tend to share a substantial amount of translatable and partially translatable expressions between one another, of which speakers are, more often than not, fully aware.

Given the limited time allowed for the completion of the research questionnaire and other measures applied to elicit instinctive responses to consecutive questions, the participants could only rely, apart from their English skills and their ability to quickly rephrase their utterances using limited lexical means, on automated responses suggested by native language patterns. Since virtually no L2 speaker of English is immune to this effect, especially when producing speech under conditions where the pressure factor is present, complete eradication of thus created 'common errors' appears impossible on multiple levels. Assuming that the frequency of errors resulting from the interference of Polish is inversely proportional to one's proficiency in a foreign language, it appears reasonable to expect that an L2 speaker, irrespective of their degree of mastery in English, is considerably more subject to exposure to other L2 speakers using a set of non-standard expressions typical to members of the Polish speech community, than to the native use of the language. This in turn provides a partial explanation as to how non-standard expressions enter and become entrenched in the mainstream language. It also explains how communities which historically underwent a shift from the Expanding into the Inner Circle, as per Kachru's model,

developed their own idiomatic expressions and linguistic structures unique to their variety of English.

The magnitude of the effect observed in the sample allows for a speculation about the potential for a distinct 'Polish variety' of English to develop, with the most common structures and calques from Polish serving as its core element. Whereas the current study did by no means attempt to compile a definitive list of features characterising this speculative variety, it endeavoured to demonstrate several speech patterns caused by linguistic interference which circulate among Polish speakers of English, and which could in certain, albeit unlikely circumstances become codified and institutionalised as the official national standard. Identifying the source of many linguistic errors committed by L2 speakers as a function of uncontrollable cognitive factors amplified by a number of individuals of average English proficiency contributing to the proliferation of non-standard structures and expressions, may call for a redefinition of what constitutes an error, or even for introducing a separate category to classify terms which originated in the Expanding Circle and which are in circulation within a particular local variety. This approach, though unorthodox and arguably lenient towards errors from the perspective of classical linguistics, could help identify areas for improvement for English teaching methodology by tailoring it to the unique needs of learners speaking a specific native language.

Conclusion

The research presented in this paper provides an insight into the phenomenon of linguistic interference and its fundamental role in shaping non-standard forms of English among L2 speakers. Through examining the specific grammatical, syntactic and phonetic patterns that emerge when Polish speakers translate and pronounce English, the study outlines how certain recurring linguistic errors ought to be construed as more than merely isolated mistakes, and that they reflect deeper cognitive processes influenced by one's native language. These observations challenge the conventional expectation that speakers from the Expanding Circle, as defined by Kachru's model, will strictly adhere to linguistic norms without developing their own variations of the language. In fact, the evidence suggests that even within this group there is potential for the development of distinct localised varieties of English. The implications of these findings are significant for both linguistic theory and language teaching practices. On the one hand, they suggest the need to reconsider what constitutes an error in the context of L2 English, particularly when such errors are widespread and consistent within a speech community. On the other hand, they point to the necessity of adapting English teaching methodologies to better address the specific challenges and needs of learners from different linguistic backgrounds. This may involve acknowledging and incorporating elements of the learners' native languages into the curriculum, rather than striving for an unattainable ideal of perfect conformity to native speaker norms.

While the emergence of a full-fledged Polish variety of English remains speculative, the study provides circumstantial evidence that linguistic interference can lead to the development of unique patterns and structures within L2 English. Acknowledging and addressing them not only enhances our understanding of language evolution but also releases the potential to improve language instruction in a way that is more responsive to the realities of global English usage. The current study, albeit informative within the context of linguistic interference, is not without its limitations, as the questionnaire

design based on rigid translations may not fully capture the complexities of actual spoken language use. To more effectively reflect natural speech patterns, future research could incorporate more realistic and interactive tasks, such as dynamic conversation simulations or multi-dimensional studies tracing language development over time. It should also focus on identifying a more robust and definitive set of characteristic features of L2 English among speakers of Polish, to be attained through larger and more diversified samples as well as adopting a contrastive approach to ascertaining the most challenging differences between the two languages from the learner's perspective. Comparing new findings with similar studies conducted in the context of other speech communities could provide a better understanding of how localised varieties of English develop and differ across various linguistic backgrounds.

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Appendices

Appendix 1.

I Translation task

1. Czy mógłby mi Pan zrobić zdjęcie?   Could you <u>take a photo</u> of me?

take a photo	29	85,29%
make a photo	3	8,82%
do a photo	2	5,88%

2. Uważam, że Twój pomysł nie ma sensu.   I think your idea <u>makes no sense</u>.

make sense	19	55,88%
have sense	14	41,18%
senseless	1	2,94%

3. To była miłość od pierwszego wejrzenia.   It was love <u>at first sight</u>.

at first sight	9	26,47%
from first sight	20	58,82%
other	5	14,71%

4. W tej chwili piszę zadanie domowe.   I am <u>doing homework</u> right now.

do homework	23	67,65%
write homework	11	32,35%

5. Muszę porozmawiać z menadżerem.   I need to <u>speak to</u> the manager.

to	20	58,82%
with	13	38,24%
other	1	2,94%

The <u>police have</u> been looking for the criminal since yesterday.

6. Od wczoraj policja poszukuje przestępcy.

plural	8	23,53%
singular	22	64,71%
undetermined	4	11,76%

7. Bardzo lubię pływać.   I like swimming <u>a lot</u>.

really like / enjoy	22	64,71%
… very much	7	20,59%
very much like	1	2,94%
very like	1	2,94%
avoided altogether	3	8,82%

8. Jutrzejsze zajęcia zostały odwołane.   <u>Tomorrow's</u> classes have been cancelled.

tomorrow's	24	70,59%
tomorrow	10	29,41%

9. Jak wygląda Twój pokój?   <u>What</u> does your room <u>look like</u>?

What … look like	8	23,53%
How … look	5	14,71%
How … look like	21	61,76%

10. Ten harmonogram nie jest aktualny.   This schedule <u>is not up-to-date</u>.

actual	3	8,82%
is not	23	67,65%

11. Wczoraj pożyczył mi pieniądze.   He <u>lent</u> me money yesterday.

lent	27	79,41%
borrowed	6	17,65%
neither	1	2,94%

12. Wiadomości w telewizji były nudne.   The news <u>on</u> TV <u>was</u> boring.

singular	11	32,35%
plural	23	67,65%
on	7	20,59%
in	17	50,00%
tv news	7	20,59%
news	3	8,82%

II Rhyming task

Perfect rhymes:

dog – frog	33	97,06%
rabbit – habit	33	97,06%
leather – feather	31	91,18%
beautiful - dutiful	24	70,59%
snail - whale	24	70,59%

Slant rhymes:

glitch - beach	28	82,35%
quiz - squeeze	26	76,47%
ship - sheep	18	52,94%
slip - sleep	18	52,94%
bit - beat	14	41,18%

Non-rhymes:

lemon - demon	24	70,59%
trick - track	9	26,47%
bell - rail	8	23,53%
knit - knight	4	11,76%
scratch - sketch	3	8,82%
skip - stop	3	8,82%
latch - ledge	2	5,88%
climb - clamp	1	2,94%
drum - dream	1	2,94%
bright - bread	0	0,00%

Author Notes

Mateusz Urbaniak is an undergraduate student of English Philology and Translation Studies at the State University of Applied Sciences in Krosno, Poland. His primary areas of interest include translation of classical literary works and the problem of translatability of idiomatic expressions and proverbs. His academic endeavours revolve around English, German, Polish and Portuguese languages, in which he demonstrates varying levels of proficiency. He also aspires to explore the work of a translator from multiple perspectives and to establish himself in a field that is being increasingly menaced by advancements in AI technology.

The Application of Wordwall.net in English Language Instruction for Young Learners: The Learning Motivation of Taiwanese Elementary School Third Graders

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Abstract

Technology plays a crucial part in the educational field since it aids both educators and learners. Wordwall.net is a digital game-based education site that has a wide selection of activities. Many studies have been conducted concerning Wordwall.net as a tool to enhance learning outcomes. However, research has not identified which motivational factors are attained simultaneously by using Wordwall.net. The current study unveils young learners' motivational factors during grammar and vocabulary instruction. The ARCS model of Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction was applied as the basis for investigating learners' motivational aspects. After collecting two sets of questionnaires from 24 participants, the Spearman Rank correlation was used to find correlations. The outcomes revealed that Wordwall.net led to many significant correlations between the ARCS's four motivational domains for both vocabulary and grammar teaching. As a result, apart from the findings of many studies that have indicated the beneficial aspects of Wordwall.net in enhancing students' language proficiency, this study fills in the research gap regarding motivational aspects that Wordwall.net brings to third-grade students. This will enable educators who are seeking to apply web-based tools in class for vocabulary and grammar instruction to recognize the ARCS motivational aspects that Wordwall.net can enhance.

Introduction

Background and Motivation

With the advancement of educational technology, different technological programs are nowadays widely applied in classrooms (Dash, 2022). Currently, in Taiwan, there are ample opportunities to attend online classes, which proves that technology has become an essential instrument that boosts both learning and teaching (Vosiqova, 2024). Recently, technology has also been viewed as a pivotal tool used by educators to teach a wide range of content (Dash, 2022). With access to the internet, educators can provide plentiful content to learners. Furthermore, technology meets the varied needs of learners across the world and can lead to "interactive and immersive language learning" (Vosiqova, 2024, p. 413). Hence, it is apparent that the introduction of technology to the teaching setting can help learners to achieve the desired outcomes as it does not limit them or the instructors to traditional teaching and learning (Dash, 2022).

Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) is a powerful new educational support that alters the way that language can be taught and acquired (Ima & Jihad, 2024). CALL enhances students' motivation, particularly particularly its intrinsic motivations (Ima & Jihad, 2024). When students use computers in class, they are more stimulated than when teachers use traditional approaches in their instructional sessions. Additionally, the use of interactive language learning platforms promotes an enjoyable and effective learning environment with engaging games, quizzes, and activities (Vosiqova, 2024).

CALL tools often gamify the language learning process. Gamification is not only the top choice for educators when teaching virtual classes (Sylvia et al., 2024), but also for educators who are inclined to gamify their conventional classroom teaching since gamification has become the means to encourage students to learn. This gamification has been brought forth as one of the means to encourage students to learn (Sylvia et al., 2024). By taking advantage of digital tools, teachers can also create engaging learning settings for diverse learners (Ima & Jihad, 2024).

Motivation plays a crucial role in both learning and teaching processes, whether they are taking place in online or face-to-face classes (Sylvia et al., 2024). When students are not naturally motivated, games or attractive visual materials can help, which requires a lot of teacher's effort. Specifically, non-native English speakers can get discouraged when learning the English language, which leads to educators exploring different strategies to assist those who are in need (Sylvia et al., 2024). However, a range of strategies need to be explored and a range of factors need to be considered. One of them is students' attention (Sylvia et al.., 2024).

The ARCS motivational model includes four major aspects: Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction (Keller, 1987). It has been proposed as framework for sustaining students' motivation throughout a lesson (Keller, 1987). This model of learning motivation can apply to both conventional and online classes. The ARCS model was first created to address the lack of macro theories or models that could be used to develop the kind of instruction that increased motivational learning (Keller, 1987). The foundation of this model was based on Tolman and Lewin's expectancy-value theory, which stated that if the activity is aligned to personal needs, a positive expectancy for success will exist (Keller, 1987).

Attention is the first condition in the model, and it is defined as catching and maintaining the interest and curiosity of learners, which can be accomplished by including "visual aids, animation, and interactive simulations (Alenezi, 2023). Relevance is the second condition in the model. It refers to the learners' view of the content regarding their needs and the value or importance of the lesson (Alenezi, 2023). To achieve practical learning, a range of fun and challenging games must be employed (Paksi et al., 2023). Confidence is the third component of the model. It relates to learners' belief in their abilities to succeed in the task at hand (Alenezi, 2023). Satisfaction is the last component of the model. It refers

to learners' experiencing "a sense of achievement and fulfillment" after completing the activity (Alenezi, 2023, p. 169). These four conditions must be met for students to be motivated in the learning process.

When classrooms around the world moved online during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, many teachers in Taiwan applied Wordwall.net as the primary teaching tool for online learning. In 2020 and 2021, Wordwall.net had 1 million visitors and 100,000 paid subscribers (About Wordwall, n.d.). At the time, Wordwall.net had 18 unique games with different features that could be used for teaching vocabulary and grammar. However, since students have returned to in-person classrooms post-pandemic, few teachers are still using Wordwall.net. Even those with access to a projector or e-board in the classroom prefer to use the traditional teaching approach, such as using textbooks and whiteboard or blackboard to rather than Wordwall.net. Therefore, the usage of Wordwall.net is not as common as it was during the Covid-19 pandemic. The aim of the current study is to prove that Wordwall.net activities could still be applied during face-to-face instruction increasing young learners' motivation in English learning.

Research Questions

This study has two research questions. The first research question aims to find out whether the implementation of Wordwall.net during vocabulary instruction increases students' attention, confidence, relevance, and satisfaction to unveil which motivational domain has a significant correlation with another while Wordwall.net is being applied. The second research question aims to examine students' motivational domains during grammar teaching when educators employ Wordwall.net. By doing so, we can find out whether Wordwall.net is beneficial for teaching vocabulary or grammar.

The research questions are as follows:

RQ1: What is the correlation between each of the domains of the Taiwanese elementary school students' attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction during classroom instruction while utilizing Wordwall.net for learning vocabulary?

RQ2: What is the correlation between each of the domains of the Taiwanese elementary school students' attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction during classroom instruction while utilizing Wordwall.net for learning grammar?

Statistical Hypothesis for RQ1

H01: There are no statistically significant correlations between students' ARCS motivational factors while Wordwall.net was being employed for vocabulary learning.

H0: $r = 0$

H11: There are statistically significant correlations between students' ARCS motivational factors while Wordwall.net was being employed for vocabulary learning.

H1: $r \neq 0$

Statistical Hypothesis for RQ2

H02: There are no statistically significant correlations between students' ARCS motivational factors while Wordwall.net was being employed for grammar learning.

H02: $r = 0$

H12: There are statistically significant correlations between students' ARCS motivational factors while Wordwall.net was being employed for grammar learning.

H12: $r \neq 0$

Literature Review

Vocabulary and grammar are crucial for learning a new language, such as English (Andriani et al., 2021; Paksi al., 2023). Grammar plays an important role in communicating; It is indispensable for developing the four skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing (Lim et al., 2021). Knowledge of English grammar underlies comprehension and communication for comprehension and communication (Andriani et al., 2021; Ilahi et al., 2022). Furthermore, to acquire a foreign language, students are required to gain vocabulary knowledge to succeed in developing the aforementioned four English skills (Masruddin, 2019). Without proper vocabulary, an individual does not know what words to use in a sentence, despite knowing the proper grammatical structure (Paksi al., 2023). One of the issues that educators grapple with is that students lack adequate vocabulary with which to understand the text and construct a sentence (Andriani et al., 2021). Conventionally, educators tend to ask students to memorize the words and give them a test afterward; however, such rote memorization inevitably results in losing motivation by the students (Paksi et al., 2023). Therefore, technology integration in the classroom can tremendously boost foreign language learning (Avila & Mayorga, 2020).

Digital media plays an important part in the education process because it can positively affect students' motivation and desire to learn (Wuryanti & Kartowagiran, 2016). More specifically, game-based learning allows educators to implement an active learning environment in class, leading to students being engaged (Mazelin et al., 2022). The utilization of games during the learning process leads to higher attention and better learning outcomes (Mazelin et al., 2022). Learners claim that the integration of technology in the classroom leads to an increase of interaction, motivation, and engagement (Baytak et al., 2011).

Apart from short language games Wordwall.net contains resources appropriate for both online and face-to-face teaching (Mazelin et al., 2022). They can revolutionize both online and conventional purposes, with features that revolutionize vocabulary instruction, providing students with engaging and interactive approaches to learning (Wandari et al., 2024). The use of Wordwall.net enhances students' attention, and level of engagement during playing the games (Hasram et al., 2021). Wordwall.net captures students' attention and increases participation in the learning process (Wandari et al., 2024). Technology can help foster students' participation in class, increasing students' learning success (Ahmadi, 2018). Students' active participation helps in development of vocabulary (Wandari et al., 2024). Moreover, as students take more of an active role in the process, their retention of the content also increases (Costley, 2014). The acquisition of vocabulary through games has been found to increase learners' vocabulary knowledge without students realizing it (Paksi, et al., 2023).

Methodology

Research Context and Participants

The participants of the current study were third-grade cram school students in New Taipei City, Taiwan. The instructor utilized Wordwall.net when teaching students English vocabulary and grammar in class. Students repeated a unit that consisted of a set of grammar and vocabulary approximately five times before learning the next unit.

Data Collection and Analysis

This study applied a quantitative analysis. Before distributing the questionnaires, permission from the parents was collected. Twenty-four students were formally by their parents to participate in this study. The researchers distributed two questionnaires that were designed on the basis of Keller's model (2010). Some items were altered to fit the research purposes. The items on the questionnaires were close-ended Likert scale questions with rankings from 1 to 5. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data from the questionnaires. The Spearman Rank Correlation was used to examine the results. The level of correlation between the variables determined by Dancey and Reidy's (2007) study is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1
Level of Correlation of Spearman Rank Correlation

Spearman ρ	Correlation
≥ 0.70	Very strong relationship
0.40–0.69	Strong relationship
0.30–0.39	Moderate relationship
0.20–0.29	Weak relationship
0.01–0.19	No or negligible relationship

Note. From Dancey and Reidy's study (2007).

Reliability of the Questionnaires

Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the internal reliability of the two questionnaires. The reliability interpretation is displayed in Table 3. The outcomes showed that the questionnaires regarding the application of Wordwall.net for learning vocabulary and grammar fell in the "good" range (α = .75 and α = .80) (see Table 2 and Table 3). It can be concluded that after modification of this study's items to fit the research purposes, the reliability of the questionnaires demonstrated an acceptable consistency throughout.

Table 2
Reliability Statistics

Items	Cronbach's Alpha	N. of Items
The Use of Wordwall.net for Vocabulary	.75	33
The Use of Wordwall.net for Grammar	.80	33

Note. N = 99.

Table 3
Internal Consistency of the Questionnaire

Cronbach's α	Internal Consistency
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent (high-stakes testing)
$0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$	Good (low-stakes testing)
$0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$	Acceptable
$0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.5$	Unacceptable

Results and Discussions

As shown in Table 4, there were significant correlations between the four domains of the ARCS model when Wordwall.net was implemented during vocabulary instruction. There was a statistically significant outcome between confidence and attention ($p < .01$), and a strong positive correlation was found between them (= 65) (Dancey & Reidy, 2007). This result indicated that as students' confidence increased, so did their attention. Furthermore, a significant association between relevance and confidence was found, and a medium positive relationship was discovered ($p < .01$, = .58) (Dancey & Reidy, 2007). This result showed that as students obtained confidence, their relevance aspect also increased. Lastly, relevance and satisfaction had a significant correlation and a medium positive relationship with one another ($p < .05$, = .48) (Dancey & Reidy, 2007). This result indicated that when the use of Wordwall.net captured students' satisfaction, they regarded Wordwall.net as a practical platform that aligned with their needs.

There were a few non-significant correlations between the ARCS domains during the application of Wordwall.net for vocabulary teaching. First, the association between

satisfaction and confidence was found to be not significant. This indicated that if Wordwall.net boosted learners' confidence, it did not necessarily lead to the learners experiencing gratification. Moreover, two negligible relationships were also discovered between attention and satisfaction ($p > .05$) and between attention and relevance ($p > .05$). This indicated that with the increase in students' attention, the students' satisfaction and perceived relevance of the subject did not necessarily follow.

Table 4

Spearman's rho - Correlations between the ARCS Motivational Domains using Wordwall.net for Vocabulary Teaching

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. AttentionVoc	.	.	.	.
2. ConfidenceVoc	.65**	.	.	.
3. SatisfactionVoc	.12	.29	.	.
4. RelevanceVoc	.27	.58**	.48*	.

Note. N = 33 * p <.05, ** p <.01.

In terms of the learning and teaching of grammar (Table 5), significant correlations between the ARCS motivational components were found. First, confidence and attention were found to be significantly associated with one another ($p < .05$); there was a strong relationship between these two variables (= .42) (Dancey & Reidy, 2007). These outcomes indicated that using Wordwall.net for grammar assisted with increasing not only students' confidence, but also their attention. Second, another strong correlation was discovered between satisfaction and confidence (= .67), and a significant association was found between these two variables ($p < .05$) (Dancey & Reidy, 2007). Therefore, as the students' confidence increased, satisfaction increased proportionately. Third, there was a very strong relationship between relevance and confidence (=.76,), and a significant correlation was found between relevance and confidence as the p-value was lower than .05 (Dancey & Reidy, 2007). Once again, as students' confidence was boosted, so was students perceived subject relevance. Last, a significant association was found between relevance and satisfaction ($p < .01$); the relationship between these two variables was very strong (= .72) (Dancey & Reidy, 2007). According to these results, Wordwall.net had beneficial effects on students' motivational aspects since the outcomes showed numerous significant associations.

Conversely, a few variables were found not to be significantly correlated, namely, attention and relevance, as well as attention and satisfaction. This indicated that while attention was captured, students' perceived relevance of subject might have decreased or shown no changes. This also suggested that even though students were satisfied while learning grammar via Wordwall.net, it did not necessarily lead to them being more attentive.

Table 5

Spearman's rho - Correlations between ARCS Motivational Domains using Wordwall.net for Grammar Teaching

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. AttentionGram	.	.	.	.
2. ConfidenceGram	.42*	.	.	.
3. SatisfactionGram	.37	.67*	.	.
4. RelevanceGram	.29	.76**	.72**	.

Note. N = 33 * p <.05, ** p <.01.

Conclusion

With web-based tools being prevalent in today's education, Wordwall.net is one of the web-based platforms that can be used for teaching vocabulary and grammar. Wordwall.net has many games that can be used for diverse educational purposes. A number of studies have indicated that Wordwall.net boosts students' motivation to learn; however, no studies have examined the correlation between the different motivational components that are attained. This study showed that teaching vocabulary and grammar to students using Wordwall.net's educational games is advantageous since there are several substantial correlations between students' ARCS motivational factors. Significant correlations were found between confidence and attention, confidence and relevance, and relevance and satisfaction pertaining to the use of Wordwall.net for vocabulary instruction. Therefore, to obtain all motivational factors, educators should focus on utilizing the content on Wordwall.net to meet students' needs, which can then lead to the elevation in other motivational domains. Furthermore, confidence and attention, confidence and satisfaction, confidence and relevance, and relevance and satisfaction were found to be significantly correlated in the use of Wordwall.net for teaching and learning grammar. Based on these outcomes, it is highly recommended that educators guide students in utilizing Wordwall.net educational games to induce a chain reaction that increases all four motivational domains.

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Authentic Learning and Assessment in Lebanon and UAE Private Schools: Implementation, Impacts, and Challenges

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Abstract

In today's world, it is vital to establish an educational system that equips students with critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, rather than encouraging them to be passive learners. To achieve this aim, authentic learning and assessment are crucial. This research seeks to explore the implementation of authentic learning and assessment, their impact, and the challenges faced by teachers in private schools in Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The study employs a mixed-methods approach to gather data from a survey that includes closed and open-ended questions for 91 teachers in ten private schools (50 teachers from Lebanon, five private schools from Mount Lebanon, and 41 from the UAE). The findings demonstrate that authentic learning and assessment are effective in developing teaching strategies and improving learning outcomes in both countries, despite the challenges that teachers face. The research also reveals a significant positive impact on student performance in Lebanon. As a result, the study provides valuable insights into future interventions to promote education in both the Arab and global contexts.

Keywords: authentic, assessment, impacts, challenges, Lebanon, UAE

It is crucial to incorporate authentic learning and assessment in the current school curricula to meet the 21st-century themes and skills (Revington, 2018). Authentic learning happens when students apply what they have learned in the classroom to the complexities and ambiguities of real-life circumstances. This learning engagement should reflect real-world, complex problems and their solutions, using various activities such as role-playing exercises, problem-based scenarios, case studies, and participation in virtual communities. (DeVito, 2016). It is considered an effective form of education, either as a contrast to or in conjunction with traditional methods. Several researchers have studied and improved traditional education, which is still prevalent in countries such as Lebanon and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) (Lombardi, 2007; Sahera, 2022; Chaaban, 2021; Halloun, 2018). Learning in a traditional setting involves a teacher-centered approach where the instructor conducts lessons according to the study program and curriculum structure within the confines of a classroom (Rashty, 2013). Also, this form of education is based on 19th-century philosophy, executed in outdated settings, and under unfavorable conditions, leading to flawed instruction and poor learning outcomes. Therefore, authentic learning and assessment can enhance the traditional teaching approach to education and improve students' learning (Halloun, 2018).

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to investigate how teachers in the UAE and Lebanon incorporate authentic learning and assessment methods in their teaching practices. The study also seeks to determine the impact of these strategies on students' academic performance, achievement, and behavior, as well as the challenges teachers face during planning, implementing, and assessing authentic learning.

Significance of the Study

The study provides teachers with knowledge, skills, and strategies to help them effectively implement authentic assessment techniques in their classrooms. This can improve teaching methods and elevate student learning outcomes. This study intends to contribute to the existing literature on authentic learning and assessment by providing empirical evidence on its impact on student's achievement and behavior. As there is currently insufficient research on authentic learning and assessment in the UAE and Lebanon, this study is significant in urging the Ministry of Education in these countries to conduct further research studies and develop tools to evaluate teaching methods in school curricula and assess their effectiveness.

Research Questions

1. How do teachers in Lebanon and the UAE implement authentic learning and assessment?
2. What is the effect of authentic assessment on students' academic performance, behavior, and achievements in schools in Lebanon and the UAE?
3. What are the challenges that teachers encounter during authentic learning planning, implementation, and assessment processes?

Literature Review

The Transition to Authentic Learning

In the context of traditional education, true knowledge can be canned between the 2 covers of a textbook, unpacked, and delivered through lecture and demonstration to students sitting quietly between the 4 walls of a classroom during 6 (or 7) packed periods a day under one-size-fits-all all curricula (Halloun, 2017). Traditional practices like teaching to the test, be it school, state, or other high-stakes exams, can lead only to rote, short-term learning and never to meaningful learning sustained in long-term memory, especially not to the development of 21st-century skills and dispositions (Mourshed, 2010). People who believe in traditional learning seem also to ignore or turn a blind eye to comparative research and studies that keep showing that Lebanon lags behind most countries around the globe when it comes to students' meaningful understanding of what our curricula are supposed to cover (Halloun, 2018).

Education must bring about well-rounded, creative, innovative value-driven citizens actively sensible to local and global causes and issues (OECD, 2016). Therefore, in today's classrooms, traditional methods commonly associated with objectivism, behaviorism, and transmission models of teaching, are being replaced with approaches that emphasize active learning and students' diverse needs (Roessingh, 2011). These non-traditional, active, or authentic learning methods of instruction have become a necessity at all levels of education to support students' acquisition of 21st-century skills (Niemi, 2002). On the other hand, if the United Arab Emirates aims to increase the student's academic performance so that they can achieve competitive levels internationally and link to the concept of the knowledge economy, then there would be cultural changes, improvements, and shifts along with the reforms in education (Tabari, 2014). In Tabari's working paper, many teachers in Ras Al Khaimah highlighted the traditional curriculum as a major contributor to the difficulties they experienced both in terms of quality and the primary method of instruction (through rote learning). Like other nations, the UAE needs to work continuously to introduce necessary reforms in education to increase the potential it has (Aleisseh, 2021).

Definition of Authentic Learning and Assessment

Authentic learning emphasizes learning by experience, problem-solving, and associating with everyday life. In authentic learning insight, students are active learners and teachers are guides and facilitators of the learning process (Koçyiğit, 2013). Authentic assessment is a more meaningful or significant form of evaluation (Wiggins, 1999). Two studies by Goodrich-Andrade (2000) and Hart (2004) suggest that assessment is authentic when it enables students to communicate their academic strengths, as well as their educational needs. Authentic assessment involves asking students to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate their essential knowledge and skills (Mueller, 2011). It is a method of evaluation that is also known as performance assessment which aims to implement creative and effective learning experiences to assess students' skills in a realistic situation (Fisher, 2019). Assessing if students can transfer learned skills and knowledge from the classroom to another context is the crux of an authentic process-centered approach (Kinay, 2018).

Authentic Learning and Assessment Tasks

Authentic learning practices and assessments involve a variety of methods that immerse students in real-world scenarios, requiring them to apply their critical thinking skills and problem-solving abilities. For example, simulation-based learning involves using environments that simulate real-life situations and role-playing to equip students with the communication, collaboration, and leadership skills required for their future professions (Chernikova, 2020). Inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, and project-based learning are other examples of authentic performance tasks where students work together in teams to explore complex questions and resolve challenging problems to gain new

knowledge and skills (Savery, 2016; Lombardi, 2007; Hmelo-Silver, 2004). Going on field trips, writing reports, and recording videos are some further examples of how students can participate in authentic learning experiences (Craft, 2015). With the advancement of technology, authentic assessments can be conducted through the use of student blogs, electronic role-play, posters/infographics, videos, e-booklets, e-portfolios, virtual simulations, and electronic resources like apps and wikis (Chermak, 2015). Students can also create 3D virtual reconstructions using 3D model editor applications, allowing them to learn by reconstructing places from the real world (Kopcha, 2003).

Impacts of Authentic Learning and Assessment on Students' Performance, Achievement, and Behavior

Authentic learning and assessment have a positive impact on students' thinking, social skills, and behavior. According to Lombardi (2007), authentic assessment can motivate and inspire students to explore various aspects of themselves and the world that they might otherwise overlook. Olusola-Fadumiye et al. (2022) argue that authentic learning effectively enhances students' learning outcomes, assimilation of knowledge, and social skills. Academically, it encourages students to construct their knowledge, engage in problem-solving, practice higher-order thinking, and reflect on real-world contexts. Socially, it increases interaction and collaboration, empowers students' social relations, and boosts their motivation. Authentic learning also improves students' behavior, increases their sense of responsibility, and maintains a positive attitude toward learning (Gürgil, 2018).

Challenges of Authentic Learning and Assessment

Although authentic assessment has numerous benefits, it is also associated with some challenges (DeCastro & Cho, 2005). One of the main hurdles is that some teachers may not be familiar with the definition, implementation, and methods of authentic learning and assessment. Authentic learning has become increasingly popular in the past decade; however, many teachers may not have received training on it (Kopcha, 2003). Recent changes in education have led to an increased focus on standardized test scores as a measure of growth and accountability for both students and teachers (Newmann, 1988). This shift has made it difficult for educators to implement authentic learning due to the traditional curriculum, causing added stress (Abdul Aziz et al., 2020). In addition, teachers may be less motivated to implement authentic learning due to a lack of support from school administration and parents, as well as the burden of teaching hours and documentation (Archbald, 1998).

Methodology

Research Study Design

This research study uses a mixed-methods approach and survey to explore the implementation of authentic learning and assessment. It aims to evaluate the impact of authentic assessment on students' academic achievement and behavior while also investigating the challenges faced by teachers in Lebanon and the UAE. Mixed methods research is defined as a research design in which the researcher collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws conclusions employing both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study (Tashakkori, 2018). In this research, the quantitative part measures teachers' implementation of authentic learning and assessment in the classroom and its impacts on students' learning and behavior in the UAE and Lebanon. On the other hand, the qualitative part of the study elaborates on the teachers' perspectives regarding the challenges they encounter during the process of authentic learning and assessment implementation. By utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods, this research study enhances its validity and reliability. Furthermore, it enables the exploration of research questions in a more profound and meaningful manner, leading to more insightful answers.

Data Collection Tool

Surveys serve as tools for quantitatively assessing subjective information, but by incorporating open-ended questions, they enable the collection of qualitative data as well (Hammer, 2017). For this research, a survey with both close-ended questions for quantitative data and open-ended questions for qualitative data will be created and administered to teachers in the UAE and Lebanon. The survey questions are classified into the following sections:

1. Socio-demographic section (consisting of five closed questions).
2. Authentic Learning and Assessment Implementation section (consisting of ten closed questions).
3. Authentic Learning and Assessment Impacts on Students' Performance, Achievement, and Behavior (consisting of ten closed questions).
4. Teachers' Perspective on Authentic Learning and Assessment Challenges (consisting of four open-ended questions).

Population and Sampling

Our study targets teachers in private schools in Lebanon and the UAE. We aim to explore how these teachers implement authentic learning and assessment, and how it impacts their students. To achieve this, we randomly select a sample of 91 teachers from both countries across five private schools, from Mount Lebanon and the Abu Dhabi Emirate in Lebanon and the UAE respectively. By using this method of sampling, we hope to minimize the margin of error and obtain enough data to reflect the practice in the population.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations are a set of rules that guide the design and procedures of a study, with a focus on truth, knowledge, and avoidance of mistakes. The potential ethical issues that may arise during the study are addressed, including informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, harm reduction, fairness, and equity. Participants are provided with a consent form that explains the purpose, procedures, risks, benefits, and their right to withdraw from the study. Deception or misleading information will not be used to recruit or carry out the study.

By examining the implementation of authentic learning and assessment practices in private schools in Lebanon and the UAE, this study aims to provide valuable insights for improving educational practices and fostering student success in the 21st century.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Section 1: Demographic information

Out of all the study participants, 50 were from Lebanon and 41 were from the UAE. The majority of the teachers were language, science, and math teachers. All teachers in both countries have a minimum of a bachelor's degree, but those in the UAE hold more advanced degrees. Lebanon has a lower percentage of teachers with more than 10 years of experience (46%) compared to the UAE (60%). Lebanon and the UAE show excellent results in professional development, with an average of 70% of teachers receiving annual training respectively. This reflects the commitment of teachers in both countries to keep up to date with genuine learning and assessment principles.

Table 1
The Demographic Information of Teachers in Lebanon and UAE

Key Ideas	Lebanon	UAE
Language Teachers	**62%**	**7.30%**
Science Teachers	**40%**	**53.70%**
Math Teachers	**26%**	**36.60%**
Education Level (BA/BS)	**78%**	**19.50%**
Education Level (BA/BS& TD)	**62%**	**26.80%**
Educational Level: Master/PhD	**25%**	**44%**
Teaching Experience (Less than 10 years)	**54%**	**36.60%**
Teaching Experience (Less than 5 years)	**32%**	**22%**
Training Workshop and Engagement (once or more per year)	**72%**	**68%**

Section 2: Authentic Learning and Assessment Implementation

Positive outcomes of authentic learning and assessment were recognized in Lebanon and the UAE, with over 70% practice in most areas. Teachers' professional development, education, and experience, as well as their dedication, contributed to these remarkable results. Notable practices were the use of real-world examples, designing learning activities based on real-world context, and project-based learning.

Table 2
Authentic Learning and Assessment Implementation - Practices

Key Ideas	Lebanon	UAE
Definition of Authentic Learning and Assessment	84%	73.20%
Use of Real-life Examples in Teaching	82%	87.70%
Design of Learning Activities Based on Real-life Context	72%	68.30%
Student Assessment Knowledge through Real-World Tasks or Simulations	90%	84.50%
Metacognition and Self-system	48%	36.60%
Project-Based Learning	94%	92.60%
Role Playing	92%	78%
Problem-Based Learning	62%	51.20%
Inquiry-Based learning	66%	51.20%
Use of Technology Tools	92%	90.20%
Incorporation of Students Reflection on Authentic Learning	78%	58.50%
Students Presentation to Authentic Audience	74%	75.30%
Classroom Connection to Current Events	74%	56.10%
Integration of Real-world Challenges into Assessment	40%	31.70%
Experts' Involvement in the Teaching Process	36%	19.50%
Assessment Feedback (Oral Comments)	48%	43.90%
Assessment Feedback (Written Comments)	36%	58.50%
Assessment Feedback (Rubrics)	44%	61%
Assessment Feedback (Scores)	28%	36.60%

Section 3: Impact of Authentic Assessment on Students' Academic Performance, Behavior, and Achievements

Lebanese teachers were more confident than their counterparts in the UAE about the impact of authentic learning and assessment on students. Lebanese teachers showed higher confidence in various categories, including motivation, student application, retention of knowledge, and satisfaction. This difference can be attributed to the

socioeconomic conditions and environment which these students come from. However, teachers in both countries agreed on the positive impact of authentic learning and assessment on students, overall improvement in academic achievement, improvement in positive behavior, and preparing students for the real world.

Table 3

Impact of Authentic Learning on Students Behavior, Performance, and Achievements

Key Ideas	Lebanon	UAE
Significant Effect of Authentic Assessment on Academic Performance	**58%**	**51.20%**
Significant Students Motivation Enhancement	**76%**	**48.80%**
Significant Students Knowledge/Application & Retention	**70%**	**39%**
Significant Enhancement of Problem Solving and Critical Thinking	**70%**	**43.90%**
Significant Students Collaboration and Communication Enhancement	**70%**	**53.70%**
Significant Self-Directing Learning Enhancement	**62%**	**53.70%**
Significant Self-Confidence Increase	**68%**	**36.60%**
Significant Students Satisfaction Increase in Education	**60%**	**36.60%**
Promotes Positive Behavior and Engagement in Class	**80%**	**65.90%**
Fosters Positive Attitude towards Learning	**84%**	**70.70%**
Prepares Students for the Real World	**72%**	**61%**
Increases Ownership and Responsibility	**74%**	**48.80%**
Improves Overall Academic Achievement	**60%**	**53.70%**
Improves Students' Overall School Performance	**70%**	**43.90%**

Section 4 - Internal Challenges and External Barriers

The following responses are divided into four categories. The first three categories address the personal challenges teachers encounter while planning, implementing, and evaluating authentic learning. These challenges are referred to as internal challenges. The fourth and final category deals with external barriers, such as policies implemented by schools or ministries.

Internal Challenges Teachers Encounter During Authentic Learning Planning

Teachers from Lebanon and the UAE faced similar challenges when planning authentic learning and assessment. Their confidence in the strategies they used to align the content

of their lessons with authentic learning and assessment is limited. Time constraints and limitations were also common challenges in addition to less frequently listed challenges such as resource limitations, professional development, and appropriate methods used for authentic learning. Differentiation was more of an issue in the UAE due to the need to accommodate all types of learners from different cultural and educational backgrounds. Lebanon faced technological issues, while the UAE had to deal with student attitude challenges.

Table 4

The challenges during planning authentic learning in Lebanon and UAE

Similar Challenges	Frequency in Lebanon	Frequency in UAE	Different Challenges	Frequency in Lebanon	Frequency in UAE
Content Alignment with Real World	26	13	**Technological Issues**	1	
Time Constraints & Limitations	11	9	**Student Attitude**		1
Differentiation	2	10			
Resource Limitations	1	3			
Professional Development	1	1			
Appropriate Methods Used in Authentic Learning Assessment	2	1			

Internal Challenges Teachers Encounter During Authentic Learning Implementation

Teachers from Lebanon and the UAE encountered challenges in implementing authentic learning and assessment. The biggest challenges were classroom management and student engagement, followed by time constraints. Issues such as preparation, content, student abilities, differentiation, assessment, and technological and financial issues were also noted. Lebanese teachers faced more financial constraints than their counterparts in the UAE.

Table 5
Challenges during the Implementation of Authentic Learning in Lebanon and UAE

Similarities in the Challenges during Implementation	Frequency in Lebanon	Frequency in UAE	Differences in the Challenges during Implementation	Frequency in Lebanon	Frequency in UAE
Student Engagement and Classroom Management	15	12	**Technology**		3

Time Constraints	15	10	Adaptation to Education Trends	1	
Preparation and Content	7	5	Financial Issues	7	
Students' Abilities	5	7			
Differentiation	3	6			
Assessment	2	6			

Internal Challenges Teachers Encounter During Authentic Learning Assessment Processes

Teachers in Lebanon and the UAE face similar challenges when it comes to assessing authentic learning. The limited experience in using proper assessment instruments is a common issue in both countries. Aligning assessments with curriculum standards and meeting students' needs are the other challenges. Lebanese teachers expressed more confidence in meeting students' needs. In the UAE, the challenge of formally assessing authentic learning is more common due to a strict summative assessment policy in most schools. The use of AI to cheat is also a concern in UAE classrooms.

Table 6
Challenges during the Assessment Process in Lebanon and UAE

Similarities in the Challenges during the Assessment Process	Frequency in Lebanon	Frequency in UAE	Differences in the Challenges during the Assessment Process	Frequency in Lebanon	Frequency in UAE
Limited Experience in Using Proper Assessment Instruments	10	10	Class Size	1	
Authentic Assessment Alignment with the Curriculum Standards	5	4	Policies	2	
Validity and Measurability of the Assessment	2	2	Resource Limitations	1	
Meeting Students Needs and Levels	2	5	Using AI and Cheating		2
Formal Authentic Assessment	1	6	Language Barrier	2	
Creating Rubrics	2	2			
Time Consuming	2	5			

External Barriers to Successful Implementation of Authentic Learning and Assessment

Teachers in Lebanon and the UAE face similar challenges in incorporating authentic learning and assessment into their curriculum. Lack of curriculum accommodation, limited

resources, professional development, and student abilities are among the barriers mentioned in both countries. Resistance to change is a particular concern in the UAE as many curricula are followed in different schools to meet the needs and interests of all students, while Lebanese teachers are more adaptable due to circumstances they encounter daily due to the socioeconomic conditions in Lebanon. Other issues include parental acceptance, stakeholder cooperation, funding, and limited access to real-world context in the UAE.

Table 7

External Barriers while Implementing Authentic Learning in Lebanon and UAE

Similarities of External Barriers	Frequency in Lebanon	Frequency in UAE	Differences of External Barriers	Frequency in Lebanon	Frequency in UAE
Curriculum Accommodation	15	4	Funding		1
Limited Time and Resources	5	9	Limited access to Real-world Context		2
Professional Development	5	5			
Taking Different Student Abilities into Account	5	6			
Resistance to Change	2	11			
Parents Acceptance	1	5			
Cooperation and Support amongst All Stakeholders	1	5			
Class size	1	2			

Findings Discussion

Despite facing internal and external challenges in the UAE and Lebanon, the study found significant similarities and differences among teachers. Factors such as limited ICT and lab resources, low-quality professional development, lack of time for lesson preparation, and difficulties in classroom management make the process of implementing authentic learning in classrooms complicated in both countries (Helder, 2021). However, the teachers in the UAE and Lebanon were able to shift from traditional teaching practices and implement authentic learning and assessment significantly using different strategies

such as integrating real-life examples and activities into teaching and learning, applying project-based learning, inquiry-based learning, and giving constructive feedback using oral comments and rubrics.

Teachers in both countries also showed similarities in the challenges and barriers that they faced, especially in areas such as time constraints, limited targeted professional development, differentiating instructions, and little curriculum accommodation for authentic learning and assessment. This highlights the need for an advanced continuous professional development program.

Other areas that need further improvement were found to be written feedback, expert involvement in the teaching process, time management, and the policies created by schools and ministries. Due to time constraints, teachers often give oral feedback instead of written feedback. Additionally, teachers are restricted by policies that govern the school environment, including inviting guest speakers to the schools, due to the bureaucratic system of obtaining security clearance. Therefore, it is essential to build room for flexibility and manage time effectively. Changing policies to allow for authentic teaching and assessment should also be done at the school and ministry levels.

The main significant difference between Lebanon and the UAE was evident in the impact of authentic learning and assessment on the students. More teachers in Lebanon recognize that authentic learning and assessment have a greater impact on students due to the need to generate critical thinkers and problem solvers to overcome the continuous economic, social, and environmental crises in Lebanon.

Recommendations and Conclusion

After analyzing the evidence provided in this research, several recommendations can be suggested. Firstly, it is recommended that the ministries of education worldwide, especially in Lebanon and the UAE, should incorporate authentic learning and assessment in their curriculum plan and design standards. This would allow the teachers to integrate authentic learning and assessment into their regular classroom practices. Secondly, teachers should be empowered by giving them the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process and allowing their voices to be heard. Thirdly, more professional development programs should be targeted towards authentic learning and assessment, the various tools implemented, and the methods of integrating them into everyday classroom practice. Fourthly, there should be an increase in resources and funding for the application of real-world tasks and activities through the reconstruction of structures that enable better authentic learning and assessment. Fifthly, the teacher's role in designing the curriculum and implementation should be enhanced to incorporate real-world issues and engage experts in the field in the teaching process. Sixthly, school stakeholders should be made aware of authentic learning and assessment, which would encourage policymakers to invest more funding into schools, reshape the curriculum, and

encourage parents to demand authentic learning and assessment for their children. These recommendations can be implemented across the globe, particularly in less stable countries where authentic learning and assessment can prepare students to become better problem solvers and critical thinkers. Finally, further longitudinal research should be conducted on authentic learning and assessment to measure its long-term impact on the students.

In conclusion, the research emphasizes the transformative potential of authentic learning and assessment in education, advocating for a shift from traditional methods to foster skills in authentic and realistic situations worldwide including Lebanon and UAE. Although educators face difficulties in designing authentic tasks, assessing student work holistically, and managing diverse classrooms, with targeted professional development, support from parents, schools, and stakeholders, and curriculum integration, authentic learning can be successfully implemented. Despite the obstacles, authentic learning offers great benefits like deeper understanding, motivation, positive behavior, better performance, and skill development in students' lives and workplaces. Involving teachers in curriculum design and planning is crucial to enhancing better learning experiences and efficient implementation of authentic learning and assessment, and future research should focus on effective integration strategies without relying solely on standardized testing for assessment.

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As an educator, I am deeply passionate about engaging in educational research and staying updated with the latest methods and practices, as it helps me understand their efficiency and effectiveness.

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Bullying Dilemmas: Cyberbullying and Mental Health Strain for University Students in Mount Lebanon

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Abstract

The study investigates the link between cyberbullying and mental health among university students, acknowledging the prevalence of online harassment and its possible influence on people's well-being. Using a cross-sectional research approach, the study examines the frequency of cyberbullying encounters among university students, as well as their understanding of many forms and consequences of cyberbullying. The findings show that respondents have a high degree of awareness about cyberbullying, with a consensus on its definition and acknowledgment of its negative consequences. Furthermore, the study finds a strong link between cyberbullying and negative mental health outcomes such as poor self-esteem, anxiety, despair, social isolation, and trust concerns. This highlights the critical need for preventative measures and support structures to combat cyberbullying and preserve people's psychological well-being. The study recommends comprehensive strategies for combating cyberbullying, such as education and awareness programs, stricter consequences for perpetrators, victim support, parental involvement, collaboration with social media platforms, and the promotion of empathy and responsible internet usage. It also underlines the significance of incorporating cyberbullying prevention education into university courses and working with mental health professionals to provide counseling and assistance to those impacted. Overall, the study emphasizes the crucial need of collaborative efforts from multiple stakeholders, including educators, parents, lawmakers, and mental health experts, in addressing the complex issue of cyberbullying and creating safer online environments for university students.

Keywords: cyberbullying, mental health, university students, online harassment, awareness, prevention, intervention, education, psychological well-being.

With almost a billion Internet users worldwide, the online world has become an integral part of daily life and plays an important role in society. Today's society is largely reliant on technology, and adolescents are increasingly living a digital existence via the Internet. The rapid development of information and communication technologies has had a significant impact on humans. This quick technological advancement has not only brought benefits, but it has also brought up a slew of issues, one of which is cyberbullying. The Internet has proven to be a double-edged sword, providing unparalleled convenience in our everyday lives. On the other hand, the Internet has created grounds for several harmful behaviors, such as cyberbullying, communicated electronically (Shaikh et al., 2020).

Young adults and university students have become sophisticated users of technology and often lead the way in adapting new technologies for everyday use. Sometimes their technological savvy can become a gateway, exposing them to a host of sordid activities including pornography, drugs, violence, and cyberbullying (Kowalski et al., 2008). Although online technologies provide numerous benefits like learning and teaching activities, they also have potentially harmful outcomes (Campbell, 2005). The current study focuses on the harmful consequences of cyberbullying that are serious and far-reaching on individuals (Finn & Banach, 2000). Although cyberbullying is a method of harassment by means of virtual reality, its effects are anything but virtual; they are real and have potentially serious negative consequences (Arıcak et al., 2008).

Overview and the Significance of the Study

The study examines the impact of cyberbullying on the mental health of university students residing in Mount Lebanon, revealing that it poses a significant risk. It suggests that targeted intervention and prevention strategies can be developed to reduce the negative effects of cyberbullying. Due to the widespread use of social media and digital communication, the effects of cyberbullying are not limited to a particular area but rather have an international impact. This highlights the necessity for concerted global efforts to tackle and fight this type of harassment. Understanding and addressing cyberbullying in Lebanon helps the worldwide debate about creating a more safe and friendly online community. Through research, data analysis has proven that many Lebanese adolescents and university students are suffering from cyberbullying and its negative impacts. Moreover, research shows that cyberbullying is clearly a global issue.

Research Objectives

The fundamental goal of this study is to delve into the complexities of the correlation between cyberbullying and mental health strain among university students. The study aims to investigate and uncover the correlation between cyberbullying experiences and mental health strain among Lebanese university students with a detailed examination of the psychological impact of cyberbullying on mental well-being. Also, it examines potential moderating factors that may influence the relationship between cyberbullying and mental health strain while exploring demographic variables, coping mechanisms, and social support networks. Furthermore, it develops practical intervention strategies to mitigate the adverse effects of cyberbullying on mental health among university students, and provides actionable recommendations for educational institutions and policymakers to address cyberbullying effectively.

In essence, the goal of this study is to bridge the gap in understanding the correlation between cyberbullying and mental health strain among university students. The objectives include examining the correlation, exploring moderating factors, and developing intervention strategies to support student well-being.

Research Questions

1. To what extent are university students aware of cyberbullying and possess sufficient knowledge about its various forms and effects, and what are their attitudes towards it?
2. How does the experience of cyberbullying contribute to the manifestation of mental health challenges, and what are the underlying mechanisms that link online victimization to adverse psychological outcomes?
3. What role do parents, schools, and other social institutions play in educating university students about cyberbullying and its effects?

Research Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis ($H_0 1$): The experience of cyberbullying among teenagers does not have a significant association with the manifestation of mental health challenges, and there are no underlying mechanisms that connect online victimization to adverse psychological outcomes.

Alternative Hypothesis ($H_1 1$): The experience of cyberbullying among teenagers significantly associated with the manifestation of mental health challenges, and there are underlying mechanisms that connect online victimization to adverse psychological outcomes.

Literature Review

Definition and Forms of Cyberbullying

As the number of people using computers and mobile phones has expanded, one type of bullying that has emerged more recently is cyberbullying which can be manifested in several forms (Smith et al., 2006). According to Strom and Strom (2005, p.21), cyberbullying is simply described as "an electronic form of peer harassment." Also, Faryadi (2011) defines Cyberbullying as an act of violence that occurs online in the virtual sphere.

The Mental Health Effects of Cyberbullying

Because of the wide-ranging implications and harmful repercussions that cyberbullying actions have on victims, cyberbullying should be considered a broad mental and public health concern. As the number of incidents recorded has been growing in the United States, Canada, Japan, Scandinavia, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Australia, Lebanon and New Zealand, further studies in this area are critical for establishing effective preventative and intervention strategies (National Children's Home, 2008). Studies imply that there is a strong relationship between cyberbullying and mental symptoms among university students, which requires a direct intervention (Myers & Cowie, 2017).

Thomas et al. (2016) state that bullying has several forms which include physical harm, rumor spreading, name-calling, or cyber bullying. Cyberbullying, according to Bauman (2015) has various types like social exclusion, harassment, outing, trickery, cyberstalking, trolling, and many others. Also, Faryadi (2011) points out that cyberbullying exposes a person's personal information, true name, and address to criminals with a goal of causing serious harm to the targeted individual or group. Also, being under a lot of emotional stress, victims of cyberbullying find it difficult to focus on academics, which negatively impacts their academic success (Schenk, 2011). Schenk and Fremouw (2012) state that it leads to low self-esteem, family problems, aggressive behavior and violence. Risky behavioral and psychosocial issues like drug and alcohol abuse, fights, dropping out of school, having suicidal thoughts, and carrying a weapon to school have all been linked to cyberbullying (Goshe, 2016).

Ongoing involvement in cyberbullying may be considered a long-term source of stress. Both instrumental and emotional social support can be valuable tools for young people experiencing bullying since they not only help prevent bullying from starting early on but also provide support when it occurs (Hellfeldt et al., 2020). Also, Kowalski and Limber (2013) mention that bullied children and those who are "bully victims" are more likely to have more psychosomatic issues than their mates that are not exposed to cyberbullying. However, Rivituso (2012) states that students who are cyberbullied will be suffering from more terrible psychological issues that push them to make such miserable actions toward their peers.

In Lebanon, Fekih-Romdhane et al. (2023) state that almost one in four Lebanese teenagers are thought to have engaged in bullying, making Lebanon appear to have one of the highest rates of bullying in the Arab world. Given the high frequency of local incidents, it is worrying that there are currently few researches evaluating the individual and social variables linked to cyberbullying perpetration in Lebanon (Awad et al., 2021).

Methodology

Research methodology is a critical aspect guiding the systematic strategy and protocols of studies. The methodological approach employed in this study is aligned with its objectives of investigating the correlation between cyberbullying and mental health strain among university students. Just as emphasized by Flick (2015), the research methodology is designed to ensure the quality and dependability of the study's findings, thereby enhancing the validity of the results. A rigorous research approach encompassing study design, data collection techniques, sampling tactics, data analysis, ethical considerations, data validation, and resource planning is pivotal in establishing the reliability of the study (Zohrabi, 2013).

The comprehensive exploration of research methodology discusses the design and measures of the survey questionnaire. Statistical methodologies and data analysis

strategies employed in the study process are also outlined. The overarching goal of this comprehensive approach is to uphold the validity and reliability of the study's conclusions, directly addressing the need to understand the correlation between cyberbullying and mental health strain among university students.

Survey Method: Design and Administering of a Survey

Quantitative Approach

This research article adopts an exploratory and explanatory approach, utilizing a quantitative research method to address the study's research questions. As emphasized by Nardi (2018), employing quantitative methods necessitates careful consideration of various factors such as reliability, appropriateness, and cost. A systematic survey was designed to collect quantitative data on cyberbullying experiences, mental health outcomes, and related factors among university students. The survey utilized closed-ended questions to measure students' experiences and perceptions. The survey encompassed sections capturing demographic information, cyberbullying experiences, mental health indicators, coping mechanisms, and social support networks. Clear instructions were provided at the beginning of the survey to ensure participant confidentiality and comprehension.

Random Sampling

The survey was conducted during a specific period, the second week of February 2024, considering the prevalence of cyberbullying incidents among university students. Random sampling was employed to ensure the inclusion of a diverse range of university students, minimizing bias and enhancing the representativeness of the sample. Outreach strategies included distributing the survey link via emails and various social media platforms to reach a broad spectrum of students. The sample size comprised 100 university students mainly from Aley Campus-Mount Lebanon.

Data Analysis Method with SPSS

All survey responses were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Descriptive statistics, including mean, median, mode, range, and standard deviation, were computed to summarize the data.

In summary, the research methodology employed in this study aims to systematically investigate the correlation between cyberbullying and mental health strain among university students, employing quantitative research methods to achieve robust and reliable findings.

Results

Participants were 100 undergraduate university students (70 Females and 30 Males) from different programs and faculties of Education at the Modern University for Business and Sciences -Aley Campus. Most of the Students' ages ranged from 19 to 21 years (M = 2.37, SD = 1.002).
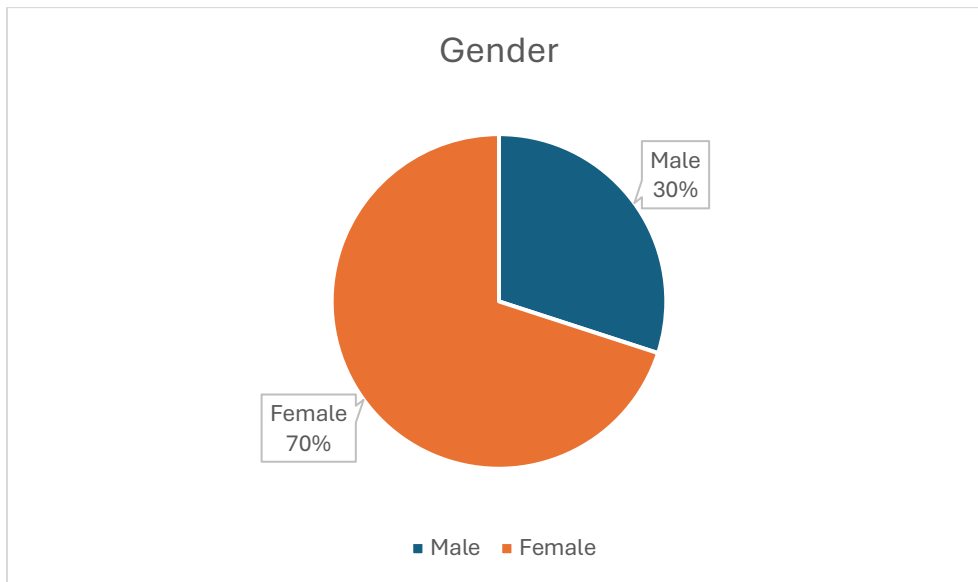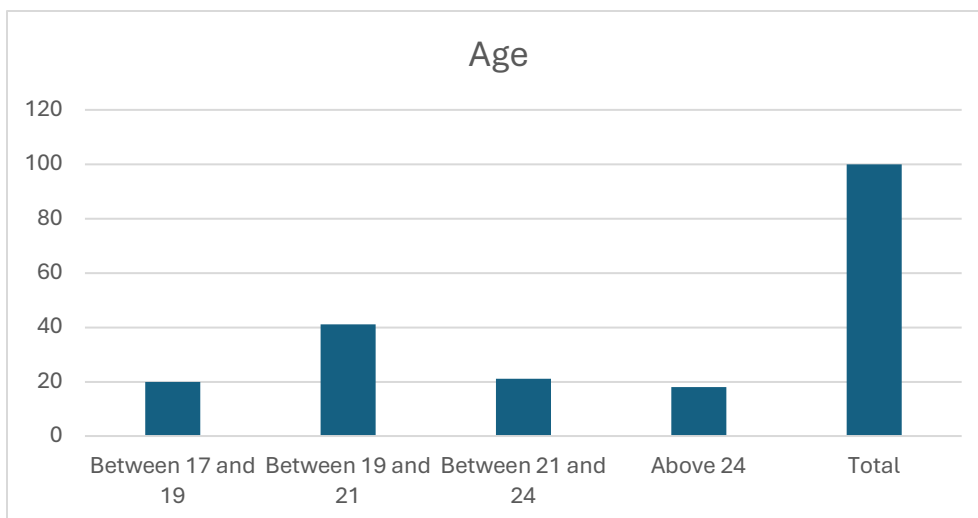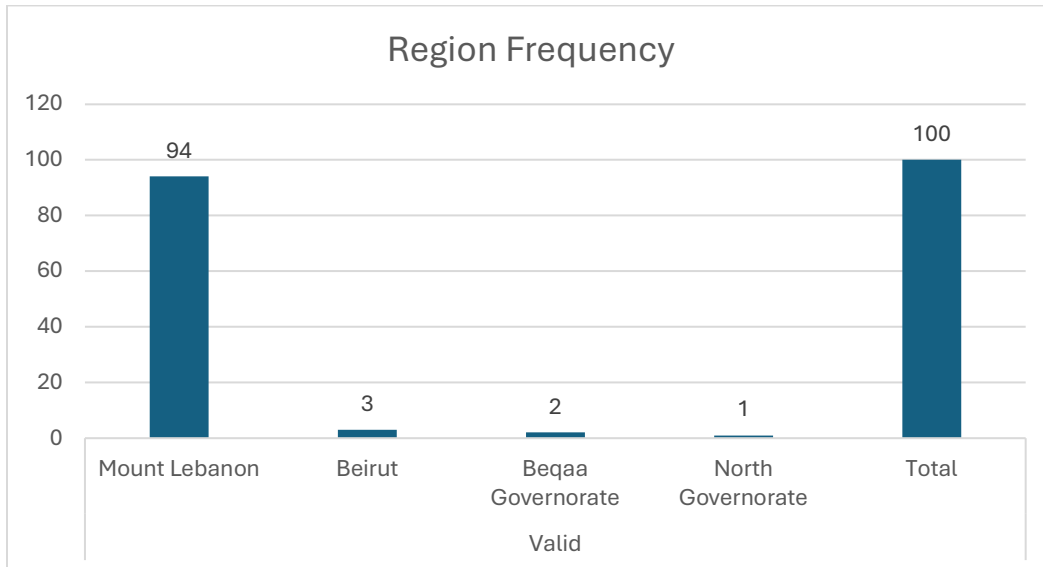
Figure 1

Figure 2

Overall, the sample exhibits a skew towards females and is predominantly composed of individuals between the ages of 19 and 24, with a significant portion falling between 19 and 21.

Figure 3

The majority of participants, 94 out of 100, are from Mount Lebanon. 3 participants come from Beirut, while 2 and 1 participant(s) come from the Beqaa Governorate and North Governorate, respectively. participants, while the Beqaa Governorate and North Governorate each have 2 and 1 participant(s) respectively. This indicates a significant concentration of participants from Mount Lebanon, with smaller representation from other regions.

Figure 4
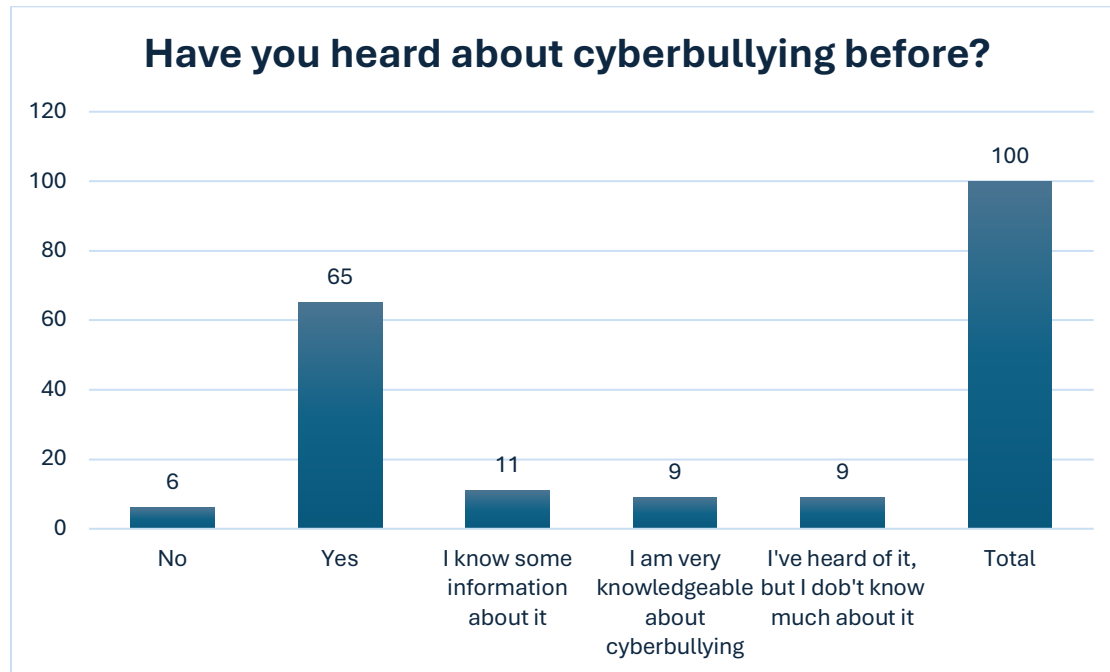
The results indicate that the majority of respondents (65%) have heard about cyberbullying, while 6% have not. Additionally, 11% claim to know some information about it, and 9% consider themselves very knowledgeable about cyberbullying. A further 9% have heard of it but do not know much about it. Overall, the findings suggest that cyberbullying awareness is relatively high among the surveyed group, with a significant portion indicating some level of familiarity or knowledge about the issue.

Figure 5
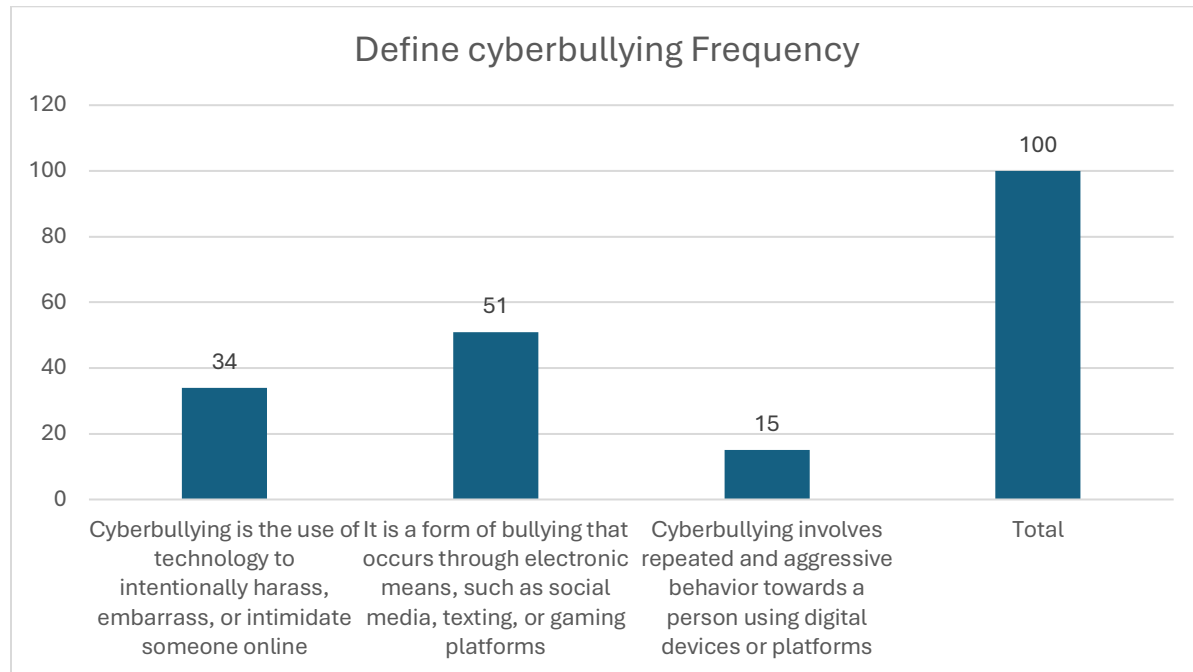
The results indicate that there is a consensus among the respondents regarding the definition of cyberbullying. The majority (51%) define cyberbullying as a form of harassment, embarrassment, or intimidation perpetrated through electronic means such as social media, texting, or gaming platforms. A significant portion (34%) also emphasizes the intentional aspect of cyberbullying, highlighting that it involves purposeful actions to harm others online. Additionally, a smaller percentage (15%) emphasize the repetitive and aggressive nature of cyberbullying, emphasizing that it occurs repeatedly over digital devices or platforms. Overall, these findings underscore the multifaceted nature of cyberbullying as a phenomenon involving intentional, repetitive, and aggressive behaviors carried out through technology to harm or intimidate others.

Figure 6

Do you believe cyber-bullying has negative effects on individuals? Frequency
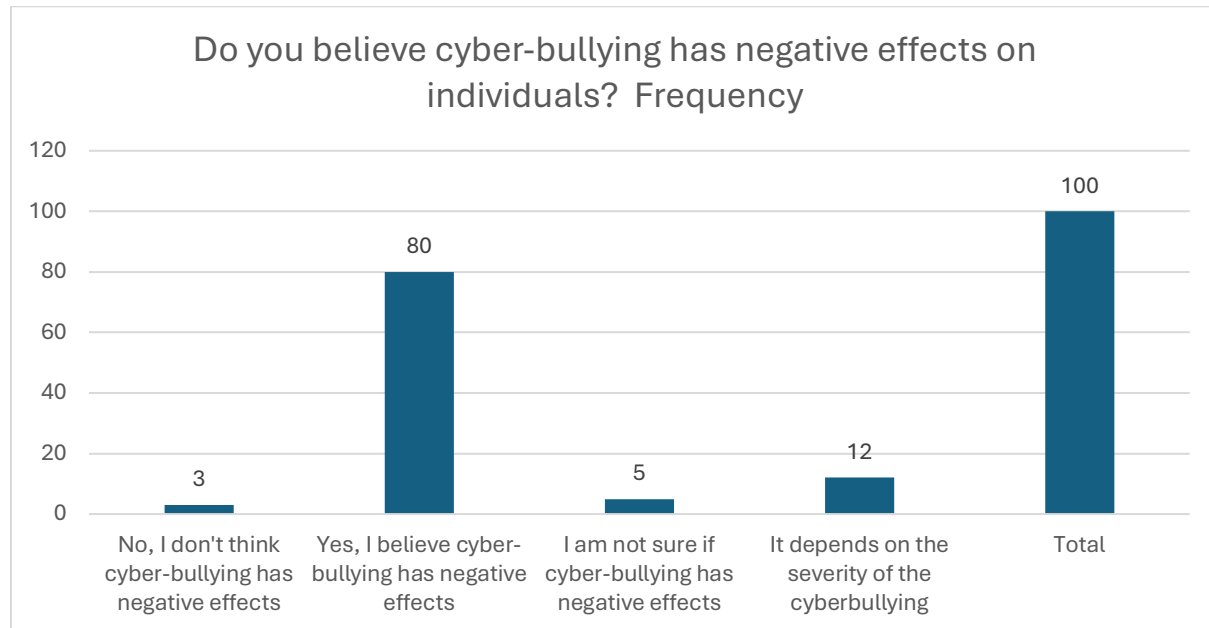
The survey results indicate a strong consensus regarding the negative effects of cyberbullying on individuals. A significant majority, 80%, firmly believe that cyberbullying does have detrimental impacts. Only a small minority, 3%, hold the opposite view, while 5% are uncertain. Additionally, 12% recognize that the severity of cyberbullying plays a role in its effects. Overall, the overwhelming sentiment is that cyberbullying is indeed harmful to individuals.

Figure 7

How concerned are you about the prevalence of cyber-bullying in today's society? Frequency
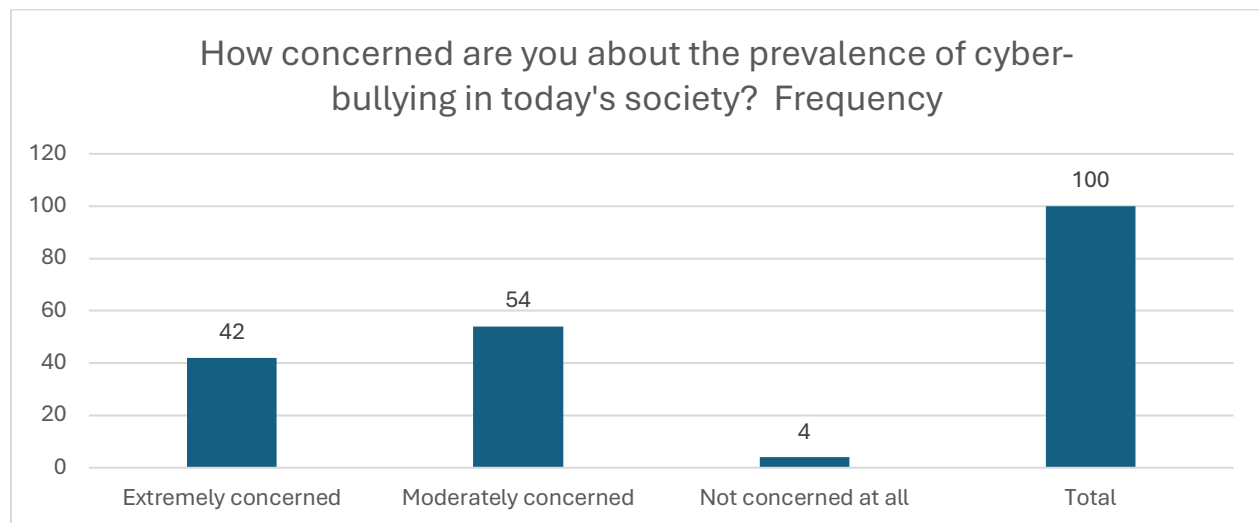
From these results, we can see that the majority of respondents are either extremely concerned (42%) or moderately concerned (54%) about the prevalence of cyberbullying in today's society. This indicates that a significant portion of the sample population perceives cyberbullying   as a serious issue.

Overall, the end result indicates that there is a notable level of concern regarding cyberbullying   in today's society among the surveyed individuals. This suggests that addressing cyberbullying   may be important for both policymakers and community leaders.

Figure 8

Do you think cyberbullying can be as harmful as physical bullying? Frequency
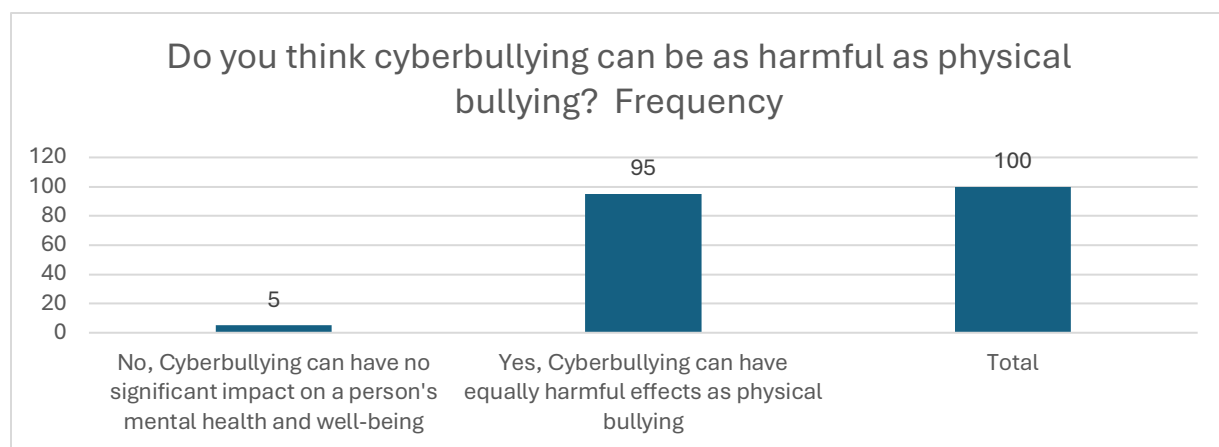
Based on the provided results, it's evident that a significant majority, 95 out of 100 respondents, believe that cyberbullying can have equally harmful effects as physical bullying. Only 5 respondents believe that cyberbullying cannot have a significant impact on a person's mental health and well-being.

This indicates a strong consensus among the respondents that cyberbullying can indeed be as harmful as physical bullying. The perception is that the psychological and emotional toll inflicted by cyberbullying can be comparable to that of physical bullying, despite the absence of physical contact.

This sentiment underscores the growing recognition of the severity of cyberbullying and its potential to cause profound harm to individuals' mental health and well-being. As a result, it emphasizes the importance of addressing and combating cyberbullying effectively, both at the individual and societal levels, to ensure the safety and well-being of individuals, particularly in the digital age where online interactions are increasingly prevalent.

Figure 9

**Which types of online behaviour do you consider cyberbullying? Frequency**
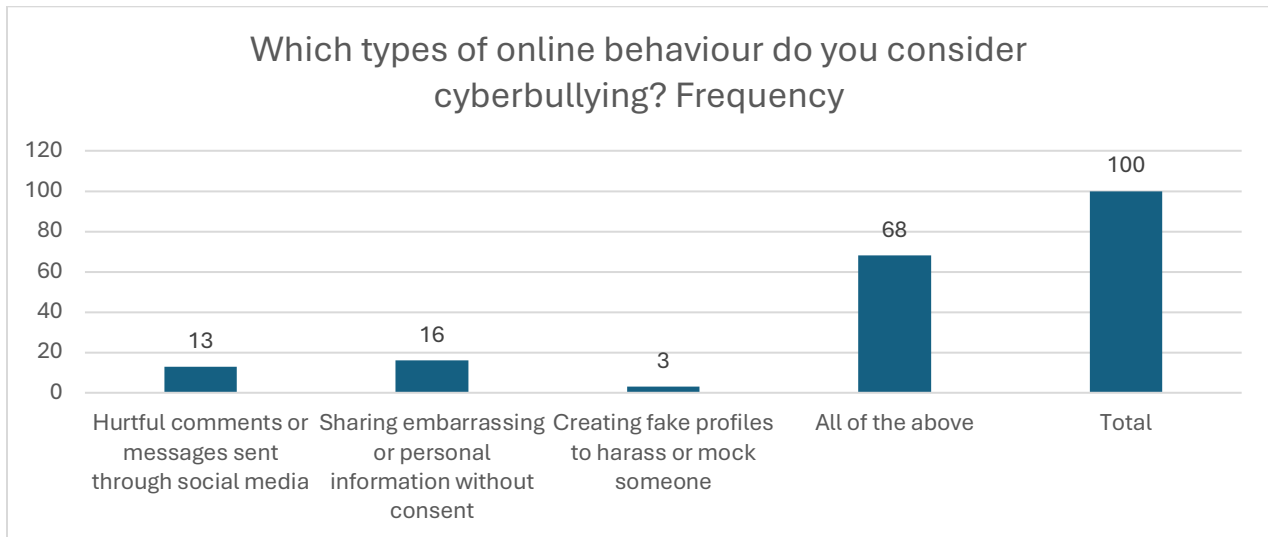
From these results, we can see that the majority of respondents (68%) consider all three behaviors mentioned (hurtful comments/messages, sharing personal information without consent, and creating fake profiles for harassment) to be forms of cyberbullying. Sharing embarrassing or personal information without consent had the second-highest frequency at 16%, while creating fake profiles had the lowest frequency at 3%. However, it is essential to note that all three behaviors are considered forms of cyberbullying, with a significant majority of respondents acknowledging this.

Figure 10

Have you or someone you know experienced cyberbullying? Frequency
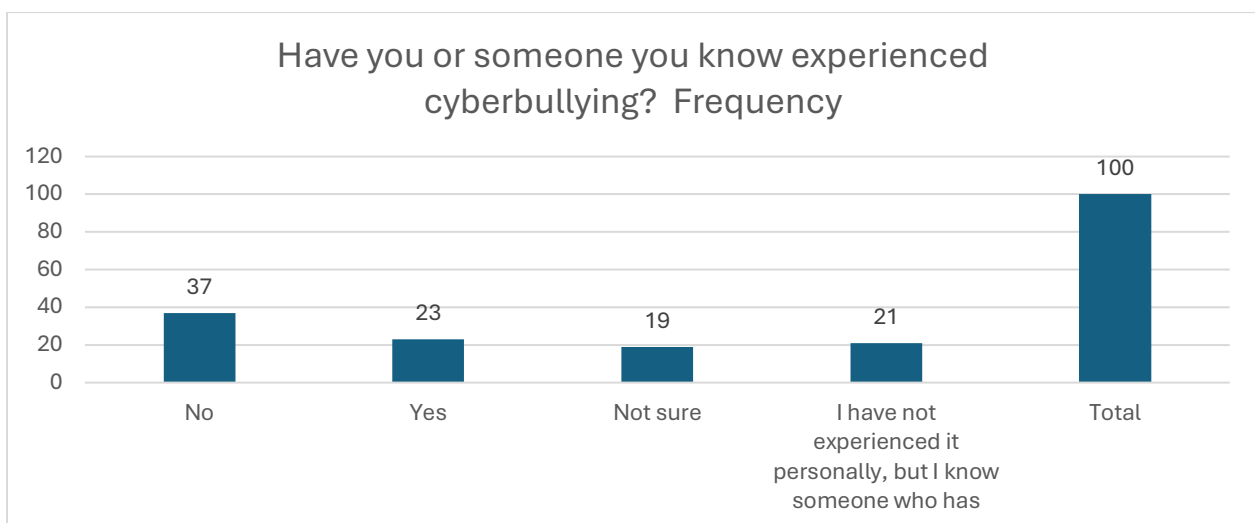
This data suggests that cyberbullying is not uncommon, affecting nearly a quarter of the respondents, and a significant portion are uncertain about its occurrence. Additionally, a notable proportion of respondents know someone who has experienced cyberbullying, indicating its prevalence in their social circles.

Figure 11
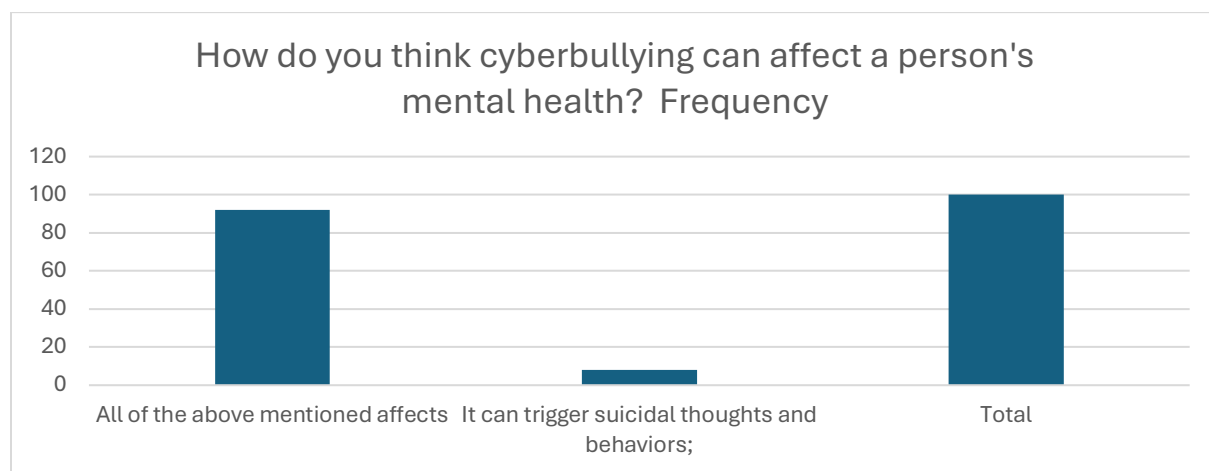
The results suggest that a vast majority (92 out of 100) of respondents believe that cyberbullying can lead to various negative impacts on a person's mental health, encompassing a range of effects. These effects likely include emotional distress, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and feelings of isolation, among others.

Additionally, a smaller portion of respondents (8 out of 100) specifically highlighted the potentially severe consequence of cyberbullying: triggering suicidal thoughts and behaviors. This underscores the gravity of the issue and the potentially life-threatening implications of online harassment.

In summary, the analysis of these results indicates a widespread recognition of the detrimental effects of cyberbullying on mental health, with particular emphasis on the significant risk of suicidal ideation and behavior. This underscores the urgency of addressing and combating cyberbullying to safeguard individuals' psychological well-being.

Figure 12

Do you think awareness and education about cyberbullying can help prevent Cyberbullying? Frequency
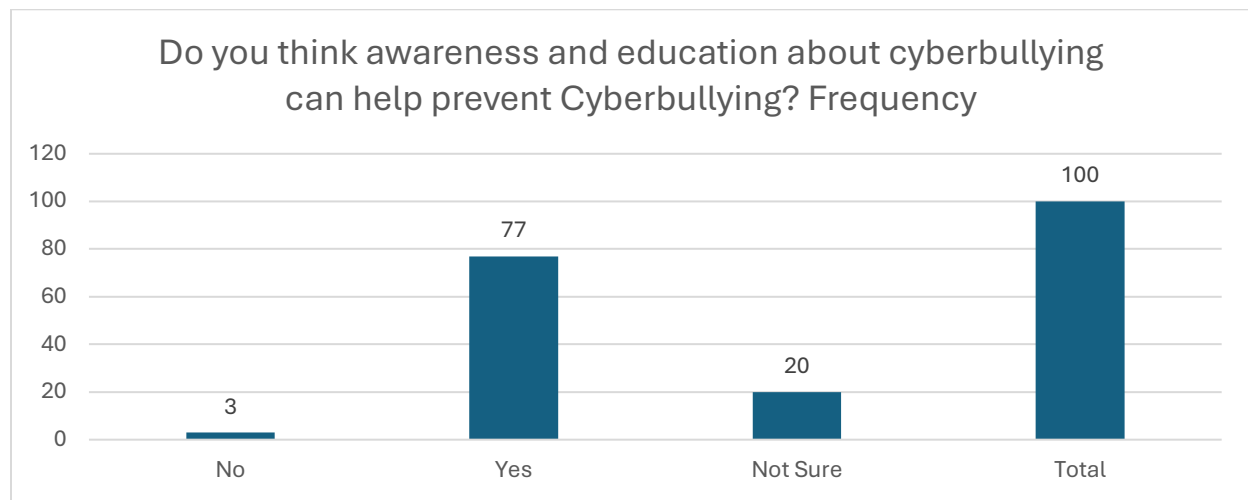
The overwhelming majority of respondents (77%) believe that awareness and education about cyberbullying can indeed help prevent it. This indicates a high level of confidence in the efficacy of educational efforts in combating cyberbullying.

Overall, the results indicate a general consensus among the respondents that awareness and education are valuable tools in the prevention of cyberbullying. However, further research or exploration could be warranted to understand the reasons behind the uncertainty among some respondents and the perspectives of those who do not believe in the efficacy of awareness and education.

Figure 13

Have you ever been a victim of cyberbullying? Frequency
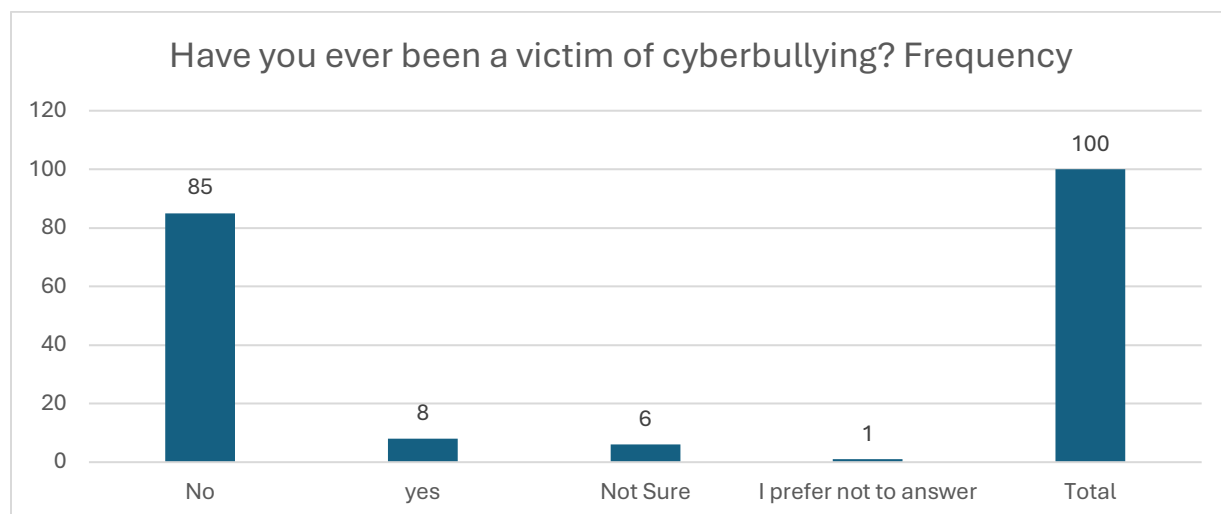
The provided data represents responses to a question regarding experiences with cyberbullying. Here is an analysis of the results:

The majority of respondents (85%) reported that they have not been victims of cyberbullying. This suggests that cyberbullying might not be a widespread issue among the surveyed population. However, it is worth noting that a small proportion (8%) of respondents did indicate that they had been victims of cyberbullying.

Overall, while the majority of respondents have not experienced cyberbullying, the data suggests that it remains a relevant issue for a minority of individuals. Additionally, there is a portion of uncertainty and a small group who choose not to disclose their experiences, indicating the complexity and sensitivity surrounding this topic.

Figure 14
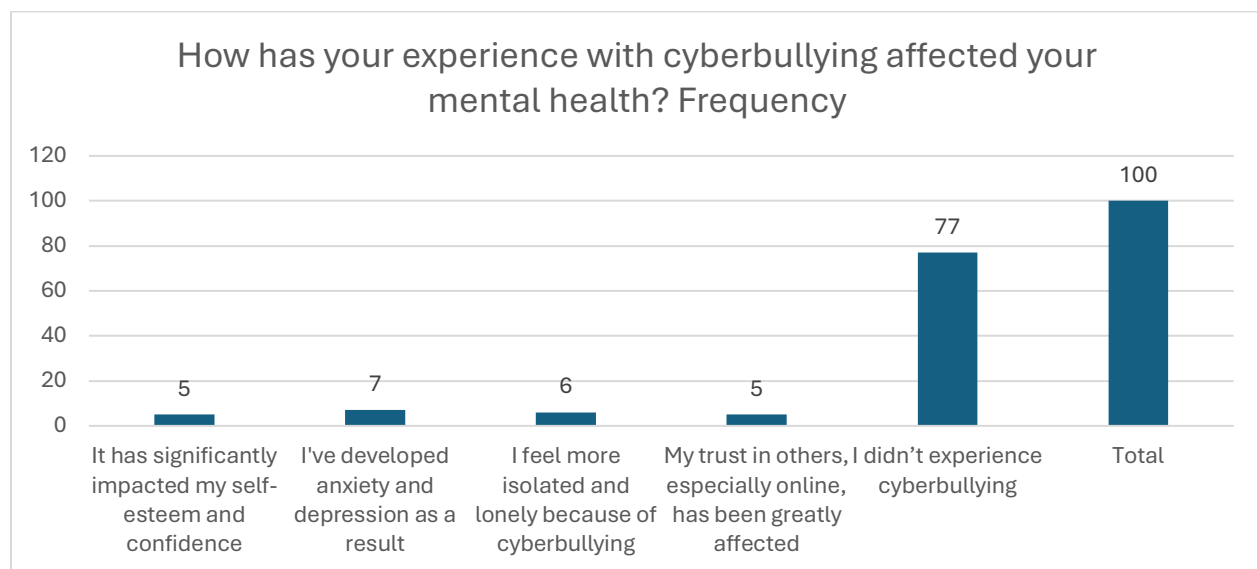
The results indicate a significant impact of cyberbullying on mental health among the respondents surveyed; 5 respondents reported that cyberbullying significantly impacted their self-esteem and confidence. This suggests that being subjected to cyberbullying has led to feelings of inadequacy and lowered self-worth among these individuals. Seven respondents indicated that they have developed anxiety and depression as a result of cyberbullying. This finding highlights the serious mental health consequences of cyberbullying, as anxiety and depression are significant psychological disorders that can greatly affect an individual's well-being. Six respondents reported feeling more isolated and lonely because of cyberbullying. This suggests that being targeted by cyberbullies has resulted in social withdrawal and feelings of alienation among these individuals. Five respondents stated that their trust in others, especially online, has been greatly affected by cyberbullying. This indicates that the experience of being cyberbullied has eroded their

trust in both online and offline social interactions. Interestingly, 77 respondents reported that they did not experience cyberbullying. While this is a significant portion of the sample, it is important to note that the impact of cyberbullying on mental health is still evident among those who did report experiencing it.

Overall, the results underscore the serious negative consequences of cyberbullying on mental health, including effects on self-esteem, anxiety, depression, social isolation, and trust. These findings emphasize the importance of addressing and preventing cyberbullying to safeguard the mental well-being of individuals, particularly in online environments where such behaviors are prevalent.

Figure 15
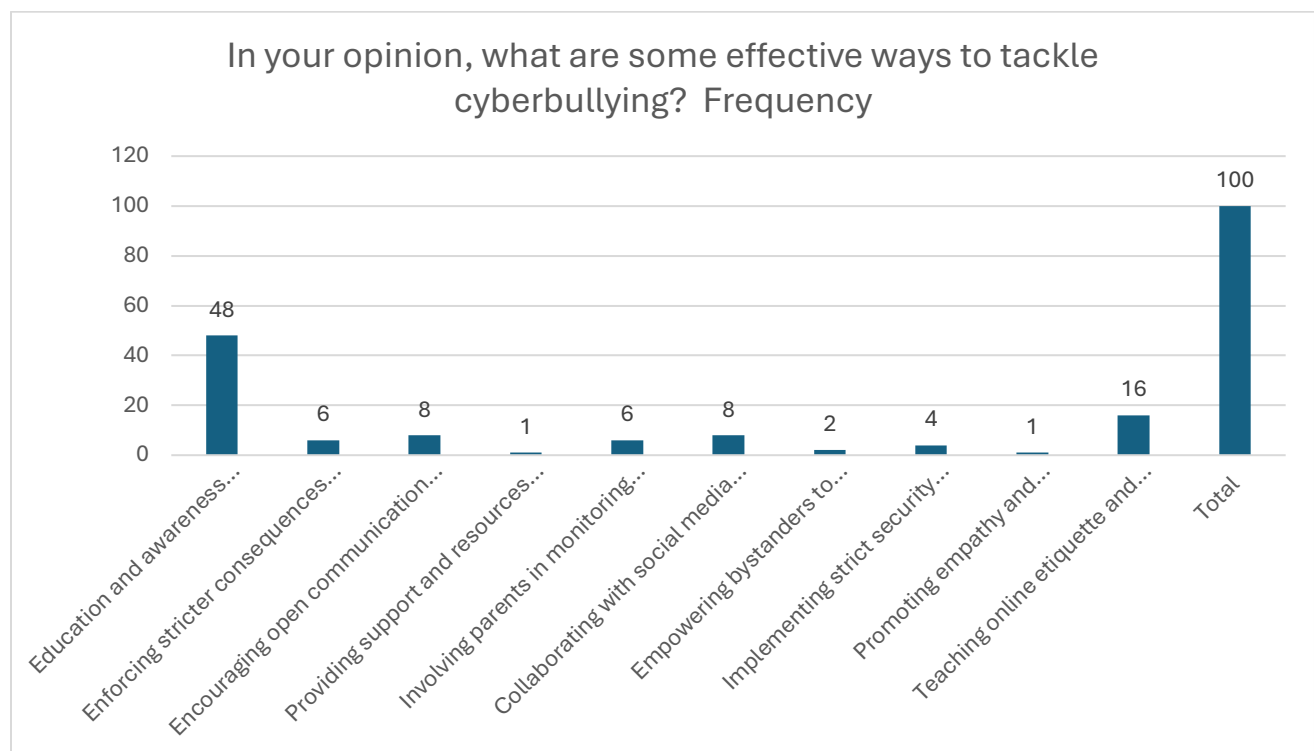
Forty-eight participants suggest that education and awareness programs in schools can tackle cyberbullying. This suggests that there is a recognition of the importance of educating students about cyberbullying and its consequences. Such programs likely aim to raise awareness, promote empathy, and equip students with skills to prevent and address cyberbullying incidents.

And a portion (16 participants) suggest that teaching online etiquette and responsible internet usage can bring down cyberbullying. This received a significant number of

responses, indicating a recognition of the importance of educating students about appropriate online behavior and the responsible use of the Internet.

In conclusion, tackling cyberbullying requires a comprehensive approach that involves education, enforcement, support, collaboration, and empowerment. No single strategy is sufficient on its own, but rather a combination of these approaches tailored to the specific needs of the community is necessary to effectively address cyberbullying.

Discussion

The presented results shed light on various aspects of cyberbullying, its prevalence, impact, and potential preventive measures. The sample predominantly comprises females and individuals aged 19 to 24, indicating a specific demographic focus in the study. This aligns with previous research indicating that young adults, particularly females, are more likely to experience cyberbullying due to their increased use of digital platforms for communication and social interaction (Shaikh et al., 2020).

The majority of respondents demonstrate a high level of awareness regarding cyberbullying, with a consensus on its definition as a form of harassment or intimidation perpetrated through electronic means. This aligns with previous studies highlighting the pervasive nature of cyberbullying and the need for a clear understanding of its definition among the public (Zhang et al., 2010).

Respondents overwhelmingly believe that cyberbullying has detrimental effects, with a significant level of concern about its prevalence in society. This underscores the seriousness of cyberbullying as a social issue and emphasizes the importance of addressing it effectively to mitigate its impact on individuals' well-being.

There is a strong consensus among respondents that cyberbullying can have equally harmful effects as physical bullying. This highlights a shift in societal perceptions, recognizing the severity of online harassment and its potential to cause significant psychological harm comparable to traditional forms of bullying. Various behaviors, including hurtful comments/messages and sharing personal information without consent, are widely recognized as forms of cyberbullying (Ndiege, et al., 2020). The data also indicates a significant prevalence of cyberbullying experiences among respondents, underscoring the need for preventive measures and support mechanisms.

Cyberbullying is shown to have profound negative effects on mental health, including lowered self-esteem, anxiety, depression, social isolation, and trust issues (Zhang et al., 2010). The findings emphasize the urgent need to address cyberbullying to protect individuals' psychological well-being and prevent potentially severe consequences, such as suicidal ideation.

Various preventive measures, including education and awareness programs, stricter consequences for perpetrators, encouraging open communication and reporting, providing support for victims, involving parents, collaborating with social media platforms, empowering bystanders, and promoting empathy and responsible internet usage (Ndiege et al., 2020).

Overall, from university students' perspectives, our study assumes that the experience of cyberbullying among teenagers is significantly associated with the manifestation of mental health challenges, and there are underlying mechanisms that connect online victimization to adverse psychological outcomes.

Study Limitations

While the study provides valuable insights into university students' perspectives regarding cyberbullying and mental health strain, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations. A larger sample size could provide more robust results and allow for a deeper analysis of subgroups within the population. The majority of participants come from Mount Lebanon, with smaller representation from other regions. This regional imbalance may affect the generalizability of the findings to other geographic areas with different socio-cultural contexts.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, the findings of this study demonstrate the enormous impact of cyberbullying on individuals' mental health and well-being, emphasizing the critical need for effective preventive and intervention techniques from the perspective of university students. Addressing cyberbullying involves a multidimensional strategy that includes education, enforcement, support, collaboration, and empowerment. By implementing comprehensive solutions customized to the individual requirements of communities, politicians, educators, and stakeholders may collaborate to build safer online environments and alleviate the negative consequences of cyberbullying.

To successfully combat cyberbullying among university students, comprehensive training programs for educators, parents, and students should be devised and executed simultaneously. These initiatives should focus on raising awareness of cyberbullying, educating people about its consequences, and offering effective response techniques. Furthermore, peer support networks inside educational institutions can provide students with a secure environment in which they can discuss their experiences, seek guidance, and get emotional support from their peers, reducing feelings of loneliness and increasing resilience.

Collaboration with mental health specialists is required to provide counseling and support services to persons affected by cyberbullying. This partnership may include individual counseling sessions, group therapy, and workshops on coping strategies and resilience

development. Furthermore, engaging local communities through community engagement projects such as campaigns and seminars can help to increase awareness of cyberbullying and foster a culture of respect and inclusion.

Moreover, integrating cyberbullying prevention education into university curricula is critical to ensuring that children hear consistent messages about appropriate online conduct and the repercussions of cyberbullying. This may be accomplished by integrating cyberbullying prevention instruction into a variety of courses, including health, social studies, and technology programs. Furthermore, ongoing study and assessment of cyberbullying prevention initiatives is critical for determining their success, identifying best practices, and addressing emerging trends and issues.

Parental participation and education have an important role in combatting cyberbullying. Providing tools and workshops to parents to educate them on cyberbullying, online safety, and effective monitoring tactics will help them assist their children as they navigate the digital world. Furthermore, lobbying for the creation and implementation of comprehensive policies at the municipal, state, and national levels is critical. These rules should contain clear reporting standards, disciplinary measures for abusers, and victim support systems, thus establishing a climate favorable to effectively tackling cyberbullying.

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Appendix

A. Questionnaire
Section 1: Demographic Information
1. What is your gender?
o Male
o Female
o Other

2. What is your age?

- o 13 years old
- o 14 years old
- o 15 years old
- o 16 years old
- o 17 years old

3. In which region do you currently reside in Lebanon?

- o Beirut
- o Mount Lebanon
- o North Governorate
- o South Governorate
- o Beqaa Governorate
- o Nabatieh Governorate
- o Akkar
- o Baalbek-Hermel

Section 2: Knowledge

1. Have you heard before of cyberbullying?

- o Yes
- o No
- o I've heard of it, but I don't know much about it
- o I know some information about it
- o I am very knowledgeable about cyberbullying.

2. How would you define cyberbullying?

- o Cyberbullying is the use of technology to intentionally harass, embarrass, or intimidate someone online
- o It is a form of bullying that occurs through electronic means, such as social media, texting, or gaming platforms
- o Cyberbullying involves repeated and aggressive behavior towards a person using digital devices or platforms

3. Do you believe cyberbullying has negative effects on individuals?

- o Yes, I believe cyberbullying has negative effects
- o No, I don't think cyberbullying has negative effects
- o I am not sure if cyberbullying has negative effects
- o It depends on the severity of the cyberbullying

4. How concerned are you about the prevalence of cyberbullying in today's society?

- o Extremely concerned
- o Moderately concerned

o   Not concerned at all

5. Do you think cyberbullying can be as harmful as physical bullying?

o   Yes, cyberbullying can have equally harmful effects as physical bullying
o   No, cyberbullying can have no significant impact on a person's mental health and well-being

6. Which types of online behavior do you consider cyberbullying?
o   Hurtful comments or messages sent through social media
o   Sharing embarrassing or personal information without consent
o   Creating fake profiles to harass or mock someone
o   All of the above

7. Have you or someone you know experienced cyberbullying?
o   Yes
o   No
o   Not sure
o   I have not experienced it personally, but I know someone who has

8. How do you think cyberbullying can affect a person's mental health?
o   It can lead to depression and anxiety
o   It can cause low self-esteem and self-worth
o   It can result in social isolation and loneliness
o   It can trigger suicidal thoughts and behaviors
o   It can lead to a lack of trust and fear of others
o   It can result in changes in behavior and mood
o   It can affect academic performance and school attendance
o   It can lead to self-harm and other harmful coping mechanisms
o   It can cause long-term psychological damage
o   It can have a significant impact on relationships and social interactions
o   All the above-mentioned affect

9. Do you think awareness and education about cyberbullying can help prevent Cyberbullying?
o   Yes
o   No
o   Not sure

Section 3: Cyberbullying Experience

1. Have you ever been a victim of cyberbullying?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- I prefer not to answer

2. How has your experience with cyberbullying affected your mental health?

- It has significantly impacted my self-esteem and confidence
- I've developed anxiety and depression as a result
- I feel more isolated and lonely because of cyberbullying
- My trust in others, especially online, has been greatly affected
- I didn't experience cyberbullying

3. In your opinion, what are some effective ways to tackle cyberbullying?

- Education and awareness programs in schools
- Enforcing stricter consequences for cyberbullying
- Encouraging open communication and reporting of incidents
- Providing support and resources for victims
- Involving parents in monitoring their child's online activities
- Collaborating with social media platforms to remove harmful content
- Empowering bystanders to intervene and stand up against cyberbullying
- Implementing strict security measures to prevent cyberbullying
- Promoting empathy and understanding in schools
- Teaching online etiquette and responsible internet usage

Author Notes

Nermine Abi Farraj graduated from MUBS with a BS in Public Health. She has a strong interest in research and has actively participated in various university research projects, earning valuable experience in studying crucial themes and contributing to important studies. Nermin is firmly committed to community development and education, working to promote positive change and address important societal issues. Nermin's current research on cyberbullying reinforces her enthusiasm for developing a safer and more inclusive digital environment.

Sawsan Hassan holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Management from the Modern University of Business and Science (MUBS) and is currently pursuing a Teaching Diploma in Math and Science at MUBS. She is passionate about management and organizing social events, bringing a dynamic perspective to her academic and professional endeavors.

Ghina Nassar is a Business Information Systems student with a strong passion for entrepreneurship, community engagement, and cultural exchange. She serves as the president of an entrepreneurship club at MUBS University, where she organizes workshops and events. With international experience through the Erasmus+ program in Poland and a virtual exchange program with a school in South Carolina, Ghina has developed a global perspective and strong communication skills. Her dedication to raising awareness on social and environmental issues reflects her commitment to addressing societal challenges, including cyberbullying and community well-being.

Investigating Compulsive Staring behavior in Men: A gender sensitive examination of Socio-cultural and Psychological Influences

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Abstract

Examining psychological, sociological, and cultural aspects, this study investigates the complicated phenomenon of compulsive staring. A person's inner self (Psyche), the people in immediate environment (Society), and certain customs or traditions (Culture) may have a significant influence in enhancing or diminishing this behavior. Students pursuing bachelors and master's degrees from highly populated universities in Rawalpindi and Islamabad participated in this qualitative study. Focus groups and interviews were done with the use of snowball sampling. To create themes from the data analysis, open and axial codes were extracted, and themes were generated. The results show that connections, social obstacles, and the social environment all have a big impact on compulsive staring. Cultural traditions can cause this behavior, such as when objectification becomes normative, although they have less effect than social and psychological elements. The psychological components of compulsive staring, such as suppressed feelings, urges, and coping mechanisms, are also major contributors. It is important to uncover further details or root causes of this behavior to have a deep understanding, which may help us to understand how to deal with the person exhibiting this behavior and if someone has tendencies to develop it, how to counsel him to get rid of it. All of these efforts are necessary to make this world a beautiful place to live in.

Keywords: Social environment, Snowball sampling, Focus Group discussions, Cultural traditions, Psychological components

Introduction

According to Kulkarni (2020), staring is regarded as a mental ritual linked to obsessions and compulsions. In the "Indian journal of Private Psychiatry" Kulkarni describes compulsive staring as a form of mental checking accompanied by incessant doubt.

It is also note that staring is a way to demonstrate aggression or dominance, which can cause unease and discomfort. Additionally, pleasant attitudes and verbal interactions, particularly smiling, can mitigate this tendency (Ellsworth et al., 1972).

Hegemonic views on gender performances led to the normalization and acceptance of the objectification of the objectification of women in media portrayals (Yiran, 2021). These views reinforce cultural norms of femininity "outlining specific beauty standards women are expected to follow" The objectification of women in media portrayals is a result of one

of the prevailing attitudes about gender performances in popular media, which maintains that women must adhere to a particular beauty standard to gain acclaim. Because of this, women's bodies and appearances are subjected to control under the dominant male gaze.

Samuel et al. (1983) described a case study involving a 52-year-old woman with frequent, compulsive staring rituals utilized self-monitoring and thought-stopping tactics taught through made-up instructions. As she refrained from her compulsive rituals during the treatment session, thought-stopping was creatively portrayed. Results showed that these techniques effectively addressed several target behaviors.. The study shows that patients with OCD-related cognitive rituals that are hard to replicate in a therapy session, imaginatively depicted thought-stopping can be a valuable therapeutic tool.

Gaze behavior—a social attention-centering behavior—influences romantic and sexual interactions. The term "male gaze" refers to men examining women with their eyes often focusing on their genitalia. Benjamin et al. (2016) studied the factors influencing men's gaze behavior, acceptance of the behavior, and satisfaction derived from it. The study focused on theories on gender perspectives (ambivalent sexism theory) and sexual preferences (sociosexuality) to justify men's gaze behavior. The study showed that male gaze was affected by five factors: frequency of glance, the unacceptability of stare, male pleasure of staring, perceived female contentment of being glanced at, and awareness of gaze behavior. The results demonstrated that men's views toward immediate sex, need for short-term sex, and hostile sexist ideas were the best predictors of men's frequency of staring at women as well as their assessments of the behavior's acceptance and enjoyment. The objectification hypothesis, which holds that women are commonly seen as the victims of male sexual attraction, sociosexuality, and multiple sexism hypotheses, explained the findings. The primary conclusion of the study was that men's attitudes toward casual sex and their sexist beliefs significantly influenced how they behaved and thought about themselves when looked at whom?

Social, cultural and psychological factors of compulsive staring

According to Thomson (2009), compulsive staring has been connected to social behaviors like information gathering and rudeness. Cultural factors, such as eye contact and personal space also influence this behavior (Colombatto et al., 2020). Furthermore, compulsive staring may disrupt typical cognitive processes, leading to perplexity, ambiguity, and derealization—a state in which a person perceives their surroundings are not real (Hout et al., 2008).

Background

Compulsive staring defined as an ongoing obsession with a person or objects and combines psychological, cultural and social elements. In order to recognize its influence

on social interactions and mental health, this research attempts to explore its intricate psychological foundations, cultural variations, and social implications. Compulsive staring has not received enough scholarly attention despite being present in a variety of contexts, especially when it comes to the obsessive aspect that that distinguishes it from other forms of staring. Studies that have already been done examine many facets of staring, but they do not concentrate on the compulsive staring.

Operational definition

Staring

Typically, "staring" is the act of looking intensively at someone or something. It might be a normal and infrequent activity, when someone is engrossed in something fascinating (Garland, 2009).

Compulsive staring

A prolonged, intense fixation, intense fixation on a particular subject or person that frequently lasts longer than socially acceptable periods of time is known as compulsive gazing, and it can cause discomfort or anxiety for the person being observed. Compulsive gazing is a phenomenon that has not received much scientific attention, but it has been related to problems related to psychological health, personal boundaries, and social norms.

Theoretical perspective

Psychodynamic theory

The idea of compulsive staring can be connected to psychodynamic theory, especially when we consider how psychodynamic concepts relate to the root causes and processes of this behavior. Psychodynamic theory views obsessive staring as an expression of unconscious needs, conflicts, or desires that remain unmet; the act of maintaining a prolonged look acts as a conduit or metaphor for these unspoken needs and emotions. This conduct could be an outward manifestation of suppressed emotions that are transferred onto the target of the stare, such as desire, envy, or fascination. According to psychodynamic theory, we can comprehend the psychological foundations and underlying causes of compulsive staring better by examining the unconscious dynamics and motivations (Zeanah, et al. 1989).

Objectives of the study

- To understand the role of social, psychological, and cultural factors in shaping the behaviors associated with compulsive staring

- To establish connections between psychological, cultural, and social providing a comprehensive and well-rounded explanation of compulsive staring.

Significance

Staring is one of the most fundamental and widespread human actions. We glance at objects that catch our attention, at each other, and around us. But when staring turns from an infrequent, fleeting glance into continuous, compulsive activity, it becomes more complex and nuanced, necessitating deeper exploration. A condition at the intersection of psychology, culture, and society known as compulsive gazing is typified by a strong and enduring fixation on a single object or person.

From a societal perspective, compulsive gazing can have serious consequences. People subjected to prolonged stares may experience unease, harassment, or even discrimination, which can have an impact on their mental health. As a society, we also need to think about things like consent, privacy, and the ethics of staring in public. Examining the wider societal effects of excessive gazing is essential to foster more polite and inclusive relationships in the society.

Research Question

How do social, psychological, or cultural elements influence an individual's complicated behavior of compulsive staring?

Methodology

Research Approach

The study areas for this semi-structured questionnaire survey were the most populated universities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. In order to gather comprehensive data and public opinion regarding compulsive staring behavior, a qualitative research approach was employed

Research Design

Three complex compulsive staring behavior categories were identified for this qualitative analysis in order to better understand the causes of compulsive staring. Open-ended, semi-structured interviews were conducted with students from various universities in the Twin Cities (Islamabad & Rawalpindi). To gather information, in-depth one-on-one interviews were done with every student. The researcher developed an interview guide based on the literature study before conducting these interviews. This guide was developed with explicit regard for the experiences and factors related to compulsive staring as reported by the pilot interview participants.

Sampling method

Snowball sampling was employed to recruit participants. This method was chosen because it is effective for accessing niche or hard-to-reach populations-to-reach communities. Initially, just a few individuals who met the study's criteria were found. After the interviews, they were asked to recommend other individuals who met the same criteria. This method was repeated until the required sample size (12 respondents) was reached ensuring a representative and diverse sample.

Instruments or Tool

To gather information, ten open-ended questions from a semi-structured interview guide were asked. This guide was designed to extract comprehensive responses pertaining to compulsive staring behavior.

Data analysis technique

Data was organized and analyzed after completing semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Initially, a variety of open codes were chosen from the entire set of data, and then those codes were dispersed across three distinct dimensions: social, cultural, and psychological. Repetitive codes were eliminated and similar codes were grouped together. Following that, an axial code was created from four to five open codes, which helped create a theme. Afterwards, distinct verbatim quotes were identified to support the themes. For the cultural and psychological components, the same method was used.

Ethical considerations

By following the ethical guidelines established by the FJWU Ethics Committee, this qualitative study guaranteed participant debriefing, informed consent, and confidentiality. Transparency and reflexivity among researchers on potential conflicts of interest were maintained during the course of the study. Ethical issues were included into the results report, and the limitations and ethical challenges encountered were thoroughly examined. The sincere appreciation of the contributions made by the participants underlined the researchers' commitment to upholding ethical standards in all research projects.

Analysis

Table 1
Social factors that affect compulsive staring behavior

Open codes	Axial codes	Themes	Verbatim
Common issue Social influence	Socio-economic and environmental influence		"Look how beautiful she is"

Surrounding environment Public areas Friends circle		Social dimensions and media influence	"We are just looking, there is nothing wrong in it"
Way of communication Unemployment Type of job Bad social networking			
Educated parents Joint family Social Media	Media and relationship impact		"Girls wear bold to being stared"
Late marriages Marital Conflicts Careless Unhealthy relationships			
Attraction for beauty Bold dress	Visually appeal		

Table 2

Cultural factors that affect compulsive staring behavior

Open codes	Axial codes	Themes	Verbatim
Norms Enjoying Dominance Having Power	Cultural impacts	Traditions and values	"Man can stare. There is nothing wrong in it"
Moral values Dress code Date promoting culture Western style dressing	Cultural values		"Girls should cover thems elves to not being stared"
Poetry Diplomatic words Bold language	Language		

Table 3

Psychological factors that affect compulsive staring behavior

Open codes	Axial codes	Themes	Verbatim
Realities of life Insecurities Unfulfilled desires Emotional distress Not social Inferiority complex	Psychological experience		"People can't control themselves to stare others"

		Regulating emotions	
Objectifying female Misinterpreting words Wish to harass Good way for sexual health	Personal Growth and sexual behavior		"It is normal to stare beautiful women"
Habitual or fun Free time activity Short-term pleasure Inner satisfaction	Activities for pleasure	Coping strategies	"People think they have the right to stare"

Discussion and conclusion

Whenever we aim to eradicate problems or issues negatively affecting our society it is essential to identify their root causes or contributing factors. Different social factors such as friends' circle, economic conditions, surrounding environment plays a very important role. Most of our respondents mentioned the importance of controlling the environment in which individuals live to prevent behaviors like compulsive staring from being triggered. Beauty or physical attraction is also considered as an excuse by those who engage in staring, but this excuse is ignored by most of the respondents as they think that women wearing abaya or hijab are also stared at or harassed, this means that physical appearance alone cannot explain the compulsive staring behavior."

Culture also plays an important role as in many cultures women are and staring at them is not considered inappropriate In most of the patriarchal systems, men are permitted to do whatever they want, which exacerbates the problem of unequal gender rights. One of the respondents mentioned that in some cultures it is normalized to stare:

> "He is a man; he can do whatever he wants"

Psychological factors like unconscious desires, suppressed emotions and the pursuit of short-term pleasure activities are the factors that lead to this behavior. The respondents also said that men who want to harass women do stare first to feel women uncomfortable and check what she will do in response.

In conclusion, it is important to do further research further research to uncover more relevant causes of compulsive staring. Understanding these factors can help develop effective strategies to address and control social issues that result from such behaviors.

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Shadows of the Past: Tracing Intergenerational Trauma in Seychelles

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Abstract

This article examines the intergenerational trauma resulting from the 1977 coup d'état in Seychelles, revealing how the psychological impacts experienced by victims continue to affect their descendants. The study highlights that trauma has manifested in the children of victims as anxiety, depression, and a pervasive sense of insecurity, underscoring the complex nature of healing in post-conflict societies. Through analysis of diverse emotional responses to the truth commission, ranging from relief to re-traumatization, the article illustrates the challenges of achieving collective healing. A significant collective call for reparations and justice has emerged, emphasizing the need for acknowledgment, accountability, and comprehensive redress to foster reconciliation. The study advocates for the implementation of holistic support systems, including psychological counselling, legal assistance, and community engagement initiatives tailored to the needs of affected populations. By exploring the transmission of trauma across generations, this research offers practical recommendations for breaking the cycle of suffering and promoting resilience within Seychelles. The findings have broader implications for other post-conflict societies, demonstrating the importance of integrating mental health care, justice mechanisms, and public acknowledgment of historical injustices into post-conflict recovery efforts. This work contributes to a deeper understanding of the enduring impacts of political violence and the critical need for comprehensive approaches to healing that address both individual and collective dimensions of trauma to foster a more just and resilient future.

Keywords: intergenerational trauma, Seychelles, post-conflict healing, truth commission, reparations and justice

Tracing Intergenerational Trauma in Seychelles

The 1977 coup d'état in Seychelles marked a pivotal moment in the nation's history, instigating a period of political upheaval and societal turmoil that continues to resonate across generations. This event, characterized by the violent overthrow of the government, resulted in widespread human rights violations, including arbitrary detentions, forced disappearances, and a climate of fear that pervaded daily life (Shillington, 2009). While the immediate victims of the coup have been acknowledged in historical accounts, the enduring impact on their descendants has received comparatively less attention. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the phenomenon of intergenerational trauma,

whereby the psychological scars of the past are transmitted from parents to children, influencing the mental health and social well-being of subsequent generations.

Intergenerational trauma refers to the transmission of emotional and psychological effects of trauma across generations, often resulting in similar or related patterns of distress among descendants who did not directly experience the original traumatic events (Danieli, 1998). This concept has been extensively studied in various post-conflict societies, such as those affected by the Holocaust, apartheid in South Africa, and the genocides in Rwanda and Cambodia, revealing a persistent legacy of suffering that transcends time and direct experience (Yehuda et al., 2016). In Seychelles, the legacy of the coup has been largely overlooked in public discourse and policy, yet the findings of this study underscore its profound and enduring impact on the children of those who lived through the turmoil.

The study conducted in Seychelles reveals that trauma experienced by the victims of the coup continues to affect their children, manifesting in various forms such as anxiety, depression, and a pervasive sense of insecurity. These psychological effects are not merely isolated instances but are indicative of a broader pattern of emotional distress that has been passed down through familial and societal lines (Chung & Bemak, 2002). The complexity of healing in post-conflict societies is further highlighted by the diverse emotional responses observed among individuals engaging with the truth commission, ranging from relief and closure to re-traumatization. This variability in response underscores the challenges in addressing historical injustices and the intricate process of collective healing (Hamber, 2009).

A significant collective call for reparations and justice has emerged among the affected populations, emphasizing the need for acknowledgment and redress to foster healing. The demands for reparations are not solely about financial compensation but are deeply rooted in the need for official recognition of the harm suffered and a commitment to address the wrongs of the past (Laplante, 2008). This study advocates for comprehensive support systems, including psychological counselling, legal assistance, and community engagement, tailored to the specific needs of affected populations. Such measures are crucial not only for alleviating individual suffering but also for promoting resilience and stability within Seychelles, contributing to the broader understanding of trauma transmission in post-conflict contexts.

By highlighting the ongoing impact of the coup on subsequent generations, this work aims to shed light on the long-term consequences of political violence and the critical importance of addressing intergenerational trauma in the pursuit of societal healing and justice.

Intergenerational Trauma in Post-Conflict Contexts

Intergenerational trauma, also known as transgenerational trauma, is a psychological phenomenon in which the effects of trauma experienced by one generation are passed down to subsequent generations. This transmission occurs through complex mechanisms that include behavioural patterns, psychological responses, and even genetic alterations, which together influence how descendants of trauma survivors experience and cope with their environments (Yehuda et al., 2018). Intergenerational trauma has been observed in various contexts, such as among descendants of Holocaust survivors, Indigenous populations affected by colonialism, and communities recovering from civil conflicts and genocides. In the case of Seychelles, the trauma inflicted by the coup d'état has similarly permeated the lives of the children and grandchildren of those directly affected, shaping their mental health and social realities.

The concept of intergenerational trauma challenges the traditional understanding of trauma as a singular event with isolated impacts. Instead, it highlights the enduring nature of traumatic experiences and their capacity to influence multiple generations. This is often facilitated by maladaptive coping mechanisms adopted by the original trauma survivors, such as avoidance, hypervigilance, or emotional numbing, which can become embedded in family dynamics and social interactions (Kellermann, 2001). In Seychelles, many survivors of the coup endured prolonged periods of fear, mistrust, and instability, conditions that have been internalised and mirrored by their descendants as chronic anxiety, depression, and a pervasive sense of insecurity.

Research on intergenerational trauma has identified several pathways through which trauma is transmitted across generations. These include direct communication of traumatic experiences, where survivors share their narratives with their children, often framed by unresolved grief or bitterness (Danieli, 1998). Conversely, silence and secrecy about the traumatic past can also be detrimental, as children may perceive this as a taboo topic, leading to a sense of mystery or danger associated with their heritage (Kaitz et al., 2009). Biological pathways have also been explored, with studies suggesting that trauma can induce epigenetic changes that affect stress responses in descendants, although the exact mechanisms and their implications remain areas of ongoing research (Yehuda & Lehrner, 2018).

In Seychelles, the consequences of the coup extend beyond the immediate victims to affect the social fabric of the community. The study findings suggest that descendants of those impacted by the coup experience significant emotional and psychological challenges, often without a clear understanding of their origins. This intergenerational impact is compounded by a lack of formal recognition or support for trauma survivors, leaving families to grapple with the legacy of the past on their own. Moreover, societal narratives that either glorify or dismiss the coup complicate the healing process, as individuals struggle to reconcile their personal histories with broader public discourses.

Addressing intergenerational trauma in Seychelles requires a holistic approach that considers both the historical context and the contemporary needs of affected populations. This includes creating spaces for dialogue and acknowledgment, providing access to mental health resources, and fostering resilience through community engagement. By understanding and addressing the intergenerational impacts of trauma, Seychelles and similar post-conflict societies can work towards breaking the cycle of suffering and building a more stable and resilient future.

Impact of the Coup on Victims and Descendants

The 1977 coup d'état in Seychelles not only altered the nation's political landscape but also left deep psychological scars on those who lived through it. The violent overthrow of the government and the subsequent years of repression resulted in widespread human rights violations, including arbitrary arrests, torture, forced exile, and the suppression of dissent (Shillington, 2009). While the immediate impacts on the direct victims have been documented, the long-term effects on their descendants reveal a more pervasive and enduring form of suffering, manifesting as intergenerational trauma. This section explores how the coup's legacy continues to affect the children of those who experienced the events firsthand, contributing to a cycle of anxiety, depression, and insecurity that persists in Seychelles today.

For many descendants of the coup's victims, the trauma experienced by their parents has significantly shaped their mental and emotional development. Studies on intergenerational trauma suggest that children of trauma survivors often exhibit heightened levels of anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues, even when they have not directly experienced the traumatic events themselves (Kaitz et al., 2009). In Seychelles, this pattern is evident among the descendants of those affected by the coup. Interviews and surveys conducted as part of the study reveal that many individuals report experiencing a pervasive sense of insecurity and fear, which they attribute to the stories and behaviours of their parents. This inherited anxiety is not merely a reflection of personal disposition but is deeply rooted in the collective memory of violence and instability that characterised the post-coup period.

One of the key ways in which trauma is transmitted across generations is through family dynamics and communication patterns. In many Seychellois families affected by the coup, the traumatic experiences of parents were either directly communicated to their children or manifested in their behaviour and attitudes. Some parents spoke openly about their suffering, recounting stories of imprisonment, torture, or loss of loved ones. While this openness provided a context for understanding the past, it also served as a constant reminder of the dangers associated with political dissent and the fragility of personal safety (Danieli, 1998). Conversely, in other families, the trauma was shrouded in silence, with parents avoiding discussions of the past to protect their children from pain or to shield themselves from re-traumatization. This silence often created a sense of mystery and

fear, leaving children to imagine the worst and internalise a sense of unease about their identity and place in society.

The psychological impact of the coup on descendants is further compounded by the socio-political environment in Seychelles, where narratives of the coup remain contested and politicised. For many descendants, the lack of a clear and unified public acknowledgment of the suffering caused by the coup exacerbates their sense of injustice and alienation. The truth commission established to address past human rights abuses has provided some victims and their families with a platform for acknowledgment and redress. However, the emotional responses to these processes have been varied. While some individuals found participating in the truth commission to be a cathartic experience, others felt re-traumatised by recounting their stories or felt that the commission's efforts were insufficient in addressing their needs (Hamber, 2009). This divergence in experiences highlights the complexity of healing in post-conflict societies, where individual and collective needs may not always align.

Moreover, the impact of the coup extends beyond mental health to influence broader social and economic outcomes for descendants. Many children of coup victims grew up in environments marked by economic hardship, social marginalisation, and limited access to educational and employment opportunities. The coup disrupted the lives of many families, leading to forced displacement, the loss of property, and diminished social capital. These conditions have had lasting effects on the socio-economic mobility of descendants, who often find themselves grappling with the dual burdens of inherited trauma and structural disadvantage (Laplante, 2008). The cumulative impact of these factors can lead to a sense of hopelessness and disconnection from broader societal goals, further entrenching the cycle of trauma and inequality.

Addressing the ongoing impact of the coup on victims and their descendants requires a multifaceted approach that goes beyond individual psychological interventions. While mental health support, such as counselling and therapy, is crucial, there is also a need for systemic changes that address the socio-economic and political dimensions of intergenerational trauma. This includes efforts to promote social justice, such as reparations, legal assistance, and community engagement initiatives that foster resilience and a sense of urgency among affected populations. Importantly, creating spaces for open dialogue and acknowledgment of the past can help to bridge the divide between personal and collective memory, allowing for a more comprehensive healing process (Chung & Bemak, 2002).

Diverse Emotional Responses to the Truth Commission

The establishment of the truth commission in Seychelles was a critical step towards addressing the historical injustices stemming from the coup. Tasked with uncovering the truth about human rights abuses, facilitating reconciliation, and recommending

reparations, the commission aimed to provide a platform for victims and their families to share their stories and seek acknowledgment. However, the emotional responses to the truth commission among affected individuals have been diverse, reflecting the complex nature of trauma and healing in post-conflict societies. These varied reactions underscore the challenges of pursuing collective healing while accommodating the personal and often deeply individualised needs of those impacted by past violence.

For some victims and their descendants, participating in the truth commission provided a sense of relief and validation. The opportunity to publicly recount their experiences and have them formally recognised by a state institution offered a form of psychological closure that had previously been unavailable. This acknowledgment of their suffering was seen as a vital step towards healing, not just for the individuals involved but also for the broader community. The act of telling one's story and having it heard without dismissal or minimisation helped some participants process their trauma and feel a renewed sense of agency over their narratives (Hamber, 2009). For these individuals, the truth commission represented a chance to reclaim a part of their personal history that had been overshadowed by silence and denial.

However, not all experiences with the truth commission were positive. For some, recounting their traumatic pasts in a formal setting led to re-traumatisation, as they were compelled to relive painful memories and confront unresolved emotions. The process of testifying before the commission, which often involved revisiting deeply personal and distressing events, triggered feelings of anger, sadness, and vulnerability. In some cases, the perceived lack of a tangible outcome, such as concrete reparations or justice for perpetrators, left participants feeling disillusioned and frustrated (Laplante, 2008). This sense of being let down by the process exacerbated their suffering, as it seemed to reinforce the notion that their pain would never be adequately addressed or remedied.

Furthermore, there were those who felt ambivalent about the truth commission, recognising its symbolic importance but questioning its practical effectiveness. For some participants, the commission's work was seen as a necessary but insufficient step towards justice and healing. They appreciated the effort to document and acknowledge past abuses but felt that the commission fell short in providing meaningful reparations or accountability measures. This ambivalence reflects a broader scepticism towards truth commissions in general, where the symbolic acts of truth-telling and reconciliation are often weighed against the concrete needs for justice, reparations, and systemic change (Brounéus, 2008). The feeling of ambivalence suggests that, while truth commissions can play an important role in addressing historical trauma, they are not a panacea and must be complemented by broader initiatives that address the socio-economic and legal dimensions of post-conflict recovery.

The diverse emotional responses to the truth commission in Seychelles highlight the multifaceted nature of trauma and the complexities involved in collective healing. The

truth commission's work, while valuable in providing a space for narrative and acknowledgment, also illuminated the deeply personal and varied ways in which individuals engage with their traumatic histories. Some found solace and closure, while others experienced renewed pain or remained sceptical of the process's efficacy. These differing responses underscore the importance of tailoring post-conflict interventions to meet the varied needs of affected populations, recognising that healing is not a one-size-fits-all process but a journey that requires sensitivity, flexibility, and a willingness to address both individual and collective grievances.

To foster a more comprehensive approach to healing, it is essential to supplement the work of truth commission with additional support systems, such as mental health services, community engagement initiatives, and legal recourse for victims. Acknowledging the diverse emotional landscapes of those affected by past violence can help build a more inclusive and effective path towards reconciliation and recovery. By understanding and addressing the broad spectrum of emotional responses, Seychelles can better navigate the delicate process of coming to terms with its past and moving towards a more just and harmonious future.

Collective Call for Reparations and Justice

The legacy of the coup in Seychelles has not only left deep psychological scars but also ignited a powerful collective call for reparations and justice among the affected communities. For many victims and their descendants, the trauma of past abuses-ranging from arbitrary arrests and torture to forced exile and the loss of livelihoods-remains a painful and unresolved chapter of their lives. The call for reparations and justice is driven by a need for acknowledgment, redress, and a sense of closure that has eluded many despite the establishment of the truth commission. This section explores the nature of these demands, the challenges they face, and the broader implications for healing and reconciliation in post-conflict Seychelles.

Reparations, in the context of post-conflict justice, are measures intended to compensate victims for the harm they have suffered and to restore, as far as possible, their dignity and rights. In Seychelles, the call for reparations is not limited to financial compensation but also encompasses symbolic acts such as official apologies, public memorialisation, and the restoration of confiscated properties. Victims and their families have expressed a strong desire for the state to acknowledge the wrongs of the past formally, with many viewing such acknowledgment as a critical component of the healing process (de Greiff, 2006). The demand for reparations reflects a collective yearning for validation and recognition of the pain endured, as well as a practical need to address the material and psychological consequences of historical injustices.

Justice, as called for by the victims, involves holding perpetrators accountable for their actions and ensuring that the truth about past abuses is publicly acknowledged. In many

cases, perpetrators of the coup's associated human rights violations have never been brought to justice, either due to a lack of political will or legal constraints that prevent retrospective accountability. This lack of accountability has been a significant source of frustration and anger for victims and their descendants, who perceive it as a continuation of the injustice they have long endured (Laplante, 2008). For these individuals, justice is not merely about punishment but about affirming the rule of law and the principle that all individuals, regardless of their status, are subject to accountability.

The pursuit of reparations and justice in Seychelles faces several challenges, including political resistance, limited resources, and societal divisions regarding the legacy of the coup. Political resistance often stems from concerns that revisiting the past could destabilise the current political landscape or reopen old wounds. Moreover, the financial and logistical constraints of providing reparations to a large number of victims can be daunting, especially for a small island nation with limited economic resources (Borer, 2009). Furthermore, societal divisions about the coup, where some segments of the population may view the events of 1977 through a more sympathetic or ambivalent lens, complicate the process of building consensus on what justice and reparations should entail.

Despite these challenges, the collective call for reparations and justice remains an important aspect of the healing process in Seychelles. Reparations serve not only to address the individual needs of victims but also to contribute to the broader goals of societal reconciliation and the rebuilding of trust between citizens and the state. By acknowledging past wrongs and taking concrete steps to redress them, the government can signal its commitment to human rights and the rule of law, thereby fostering a more inclusive and cohesive national identity. Moreover, justice for past abuses can help to break the cycle of impunity, ensuring that future generations do not suffer from similar injustices.

To effectively address the collective call for reparations and justice, a comprehensive approach is needed - one that goes beyond symbolic gestures and provides tangible support to those affected. This includes legal reforms to facilitate accountability, financial compensation where appropriate, and the establishment of community-based initiatives that promote dialogue, education, and reconciliation. By addressing both the material and emotional needs of victims, Seychelles can take significant steps towards healing the wounds of the past and building a more resilient and just society.

Recommendations for Support Systems

Addressing the legacy of the coup in Seychelles requires a comprehensive approach that not only acknowledges the past but also provides practical support to victims and their descendants. Given the multifaceted nature of intergenerational trauma, a robust support system is essential to foster healing, resilience, and long-term stability. This section

outlines key recommendations for support systems that should be implemented to address the unique needs of those affected by the coup, with a focus on psychological counselling, legal assistance, community engagement, and educational initiatives.

Psychological Counselling and Mental Health Support

One of the primary recommendations is the establishment of accessible psychological counselling services tailored specifically to the needs of trauma survivors and their descendants. Mental health support should include individual and group therapy sessions facilitated by trained professionals who are well-versed in trauma-informed care. These services should be culturally sensitive and incorporate local understandings of mental health to ensure they resonate with the affected communities. Additionally, providing trauma education and resilience training can empower individuals and families to better understand and manage the long-term effects of intergenerational trauma (Silove, 2013). Integrating these services into existing community health structures would enhance accessibility and reduce the stigma often associated with seeking mental health care.

Legal Assistance and Advocacy

Legal assistance is crucial for victims seeking justice and reparations for past abuses. Many survivors and their families may face significant legal and bureaucratic hurdles in pursuing their claims, including navigating complex legal systems and understanding their rights. Providing free or subsidised legal aid can help these individuals advocate for their rights, seek reparations, and hold perpetrators accountable where possible. Legal clinics or partnerships with human rights organisations could offer a practical avenue for delivering this support, ensuring that victims have the resources and knowledge needed to engage effectively with the legal process (de Greiff, 2006). Advocacy efforts should also focus on pushing for legal reforms that facilitate the recognition of historical injustices and provide clear pathways for reparations and redress.

Community Engagement and Dialogue Initiatives

Community engagement plays a vital role in the healing process by fostering dialogue, understanding, and reconciliation among affected populations. Creating safe spaces for open dialogue - such as community forums, workshops, and storytelling events - can help individuals share their experiences, validate their feelings, and connect with others who have similar histories. These initiatives can also serve as platforms for educating the broader public about the impacts of the coup, helping to bridge societal divisions and build a more inclusive narrative around the nation's history (Hamber, 2009). Additionally, community-led support groups and peer-to-peer counselling can complement formal mental health services, providing ongoing social support and strengthening communal bonds.

Educational Programmes and Historical Acknowledgment

Educational programmes that incorporate the history of the coup and its impacts into the national curriculum can play a crucial role in preventing the erasure of this traumatic past and fostering a more informed and empathetic society. By teaching future generations about the coup, its consequences, and the resilience of those affected, Seychelles can promote a culture of acknowledgment and respect for human rights. These programmes should be developed in consultation with affected communities to ensure they accurately reflect their experiences and perspectives (Borer, 2009). Public memorialisation, such as commemorative events or monuments, can further enhance the acknowledgment of victims and provide a collective space for reflection and remembrance.

Tailored Socio-Economic Support

Finally, targeted socio-economic support is essential to address the broader impacts of intergenerational trauma, which often include economic hardship and social marginalisation. Programmes aimed at improving access to education, vocational training, and employment opportunities for descendants of coup victims can help break the cycle exclusion that many affected families experience. Microfinance initiatives, scholarships, and community development projects can empower individuals to rebuild their lives and contribute positively to their communities (Chung & Bemak, 2002). By addressing the socio-economic dimensions of trauma, these support systems can help foster long-term resilience and stability.

Implications for Post-Conflict Societies

The findings from the study on the coup in Seychelles have broader implications for post-conflict societies around the world. The persistence of intergenerational trauma among the descendants of those affected by the coup highlights the long-term impacts of political violence and underscores the importance of addressing historical injustices to promote healing and stability. For post-conflict societies, this study serves as a reminder that the consequences of conflict are not confined to the immediate aftermath but can ripple across generations, influencing the mental health, social cohesion, and economic prospects of entire communities.

One of the key implications is the need for comprehensive and multi-dimensional approaches to post-conflict recovery that go beyond conventional truth and reconciliation processes. While truth commissions and similar initiatives play a fundamental role in acknowledging past abuses and fostering dialogue, they are often insufficient on their own to address the deep-seated psychological and socio-economic needs of affected populations. As seen in Seychelles, the diverse emotional responses to the truth commission reveal that healing is a highly individualised process, requiring tailored support systems that include psychological counselling, legal assistance, and socio-economic interventions (Hamber, 2009). Post-conflict societies must therefore prioritise

holistic approaches that integrate mental health care, justice mechanisms, and community engagement to effectively address the legacies of trauma.

Another significant implication is the importance of acknowledging and validating the experiences of all victims, including those whose suffering may not have been directly visible during the conflict. In many post-conflict settings, there is a risk of marginalising or overlooking the descendants of trauma survivors, who may bear the burden of their ancestors' experiences without explicit recognition. Ensuring that reparations, educational programmes, and public memorialisation efforts include these second and third generations is vital for breaking the cycle of trauma and fostering a sense of inclusion and justice (de Greiff, 2006).

Furthermore, the study underscores the role of education and public discourse in shaping collective memory and societal healing. Post-conflict societies must actively work to integrate honest and inclusive accounts of their histories into educational curricula and public narratives. This approach helps future generations understand the complexities of their past, learn from it, and work towards a more equitable and empathetic society. Public acknowledgment of historical injustices, through both formal and informal means, is essential in building a foundation for reconciliation and unity (Borer, 2009).

Conclusion

The study of intergenerational trauma in Seychelles following the 1977 coup d'état reveals the enduring impacts of political violence on both direct victims and their descendants. The trauma experienced by those who lived through the coup has permeated subsequent generations, manifesting in various forms such as anxiety, depression, and a pervasive sense of insecurity. These psychological effects underscore the complexity of healing in post-conflict societies and highlight the importance of addressing not only the immediate consequences of conflict but also the long-term and often hidden legacies of trauma.

A key finding of the study is the diverse emotional responses to the truth commission, which reflect the deeply personal nature of trauma and the varied needs of those affected. While some individuals found relief and closure in recounting their experiences, others felt re-traumatised or dissatisfied with the outcomes, pointing to the limitations of one-size-fits-all approaches to reconciliation and justice. This highlights the necessity for tailored support systems that address the specific mental health, legal, and socio-economic needs of victims and their descendants. Comprehensive interventions, including psychological counselling, legal assistance, community engagement, and educational initiatives, are essential in fostering resilience and promoting long-term healing.

The collective call for reparations and justice in Seychelles illustrates a broader demand for acknowledgment, accountability, and redress. For many, reparations are not solely

about financial compensation but also about the need for official recognition of their suffering and a commitment to rectify past wrongs. Addressing these calls is crucial for building trust between the state and its citizens and for creating a foundation for sustainable peace and reconciliation. The study emphasises that justice in post-conflict societies must go beyond punitive measures and include restorative approaches that validate the experiences of victims and foster societal healing.

The implications of this study extend beyond Seychelles, offering valuable insights for other post-conflict societies grappling with the legacies of historical trauma. The persistence of intergenerational trauma underscores the importance of holistic and inclusive approaches to post-conflict recovery. By integrating mental health support, legal reforms, community dialogue, and public acknowledgment of past abuses, societies can work towards breaking the cycle of trauma and building a more just and resilient future.

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