

# ESTEEM

## Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities

Volume 8, No. 1, April 2024



# ESTEEM

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# ESTEEM

## JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

### Journal Description

Introduced in 2017, ESTEEM Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities is an official journal of Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Cawangan Pulau Pinang with a registered e-ISSN 2600-7274. It is an open-access journal that publishes articles in English and Bahasa Malaysia. Initially, it was published once a year, from January 2017 to December 2020, but changed its publication frequency to twice a year starting in January 2021 to accommodate the increasing number of manuscript submissions. The journal adheres to traditional standards of double-blind peer review with an average acceptance rate of 30%. Currently, the journal does not charge any article processing fees for manuscripts submitted personally or collaboratively by authors.

### Aim and Scope

The ESTEEM Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities aims to serve as a platform for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers to exchange new knowledge and ideas in social sciences and humanities areas. The journal provides an avenue for scholars and practitioners to document unpublished, original manuscripts related to emerging issues, developments, and trends that examine how people interact, integrate, behave and influence the world around them. Specifically, the journal aims to provide new knowledge on the relationships between individuals and societies and the operation and progression of organizations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The key topics covered in the journal relate to emerging issues, trends, and challenges that shape individuals' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors across societies, businesses, industries, and governments worldwide. As the journal covers two separate but interrelated areas of social sciences and humanities, authors are welcome to submit manuscripts that systematically investigate questions around humanities development, namely language, linguistics, culture, arts, religion, health, and wellbeing. For social sciences, the journal invites manuscripts related to human psychology and sociology in education, law, political science, business, and hospitality, among others.

### Frequency of Publication

- January 2021 to present: ONE (1) volume TWO (2) issues per year, published in April and September.
- January 2017 to December 2020: ONE (1) volume ONE (1) issue per year, published in November.
- The publication frequency of the journal does not include special issues.

## Duration of Publication Process

The publication process takes approximately 90 – 120 days, based on current practice. All manuscripts are processed accordingly:

- Review Process (within 30 days after the closing date)
- Notification of Acceptance (within 10 days after the review process)
- Revision (within 30 days after the manuscript acceptance)
- Copy Editing (within 10 days after final revision)
- Publication (within 10 days after the copy-editing process)

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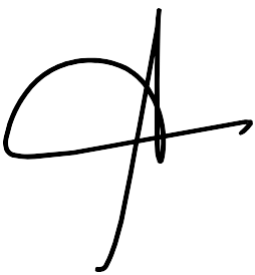
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## EDITORIAL NOTE

On behalf of the ESTEEM Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (EJSSH) Editorial Team, I am delighted to present Volume 7, Issue No. 1, September 2023. Out of 50 submissions received, only 17 manuscripts were accepted for publication after the stringent review process, representing a 34% acceptance rate. After multiple series of the double-blind peer review process, only 8 high- quality manuscripts met the standard empirical paper requirement and were successfully published.

For the next issue, we are looking forward for more insightful and thought-provoking articles from distinguished authors across various disciplines in social sciences and humanities. We welcome international-based papers across countries, regions, and continents that align with these important global objectives focusing on Sustainable Development Goals. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the authors, reviewers, and our editorial team members for their invaluable contributions in bringing this edition to fruition. We hope you find this journal issue both informative and inspiring, and we look forward to your continued support and engagement.



**Editor-in-Chief**

Noor Ashikin Basarudin, Ph.D.  
ESTEEM Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities  
Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Pulau Pinang



# ESL Foundation Learners' Difficulties and Strategies Applied in Writing Argumentative Essay Online

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## ABSTRACT

### ARTICLE HISTORY

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*Writing is perceived as one the most difficult skills to learn and acquire since learners need to produce a piece of writing where information is systematically in order and easily understood by the readers. Hence, during the process of acquiring the skill in writing, language learners face various difficulties that can cause them to become demotivated and frustrated during writing lessons. Therefore, this study is conducted to determine some of the difficulties faced by ESL foundation learners when they are assigned online writing argumentative essays and strategies applied to overcome the difficulties. This study employed a qualitative method and a semi-structured interview was conducted with 6 second semester ESL foundation learners to identify the difficulties faced by them in online writing argumentative essays. This study also aims to know strategies applied by these learners in order to overcome the difficulties faced by them in online writing argumentative essays. The findings revealed that the majority of the respondents experienced difficulty in generating ideas to write in their online argumentative essay and the majority of them believed that brainstorming activity helps them to overcome the difficulty. Thus, it is important for ESL foundation learners to be exposed to the writing process before they are assigned to essay writing in order to overcome their main difficulty in writing which is to generate ideas for their essay.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In learning a language, mastering the four main skills namely reading, writing, speaking, and listening is considered as an advantage for learners. However, based on past research, out of the four skills, learners at higher institutions deemed that writing is the most crucial skill that they need to acquire and excel at as it will help them to perform well in their academic. Hence, tertiary learners are highly encouraged by educators to improve and enhance their skill writing (Al Khazraji, 2019) because with a good command of writing, learners will be able to express their ideas, opinions, thoughts, feelings as well as arguments in the written form successfully. However, the process of determining and presenting ideas logically and sensibly in writing is not a walk in the park especially among learners with low proficiency levels in English (Srinawati & Alwi, 2020). Writing is perceived as one of the most difficult skills to learn and acquire among EFL learners (Najmi, 2015) since they need to produce a piece of writing where information is systematically in order and easily understood by the readers.

Even in the 21st-century language learning, mastering and acquiring the writing skill has still become an onerous effort among language learners (Bulqiyah et. al., 2021). Writing itself is perceived as a system that is not easily acquired and language learners are encouraged to learn writing through constant conscious effort. Moses and Mohamed (2020) stated that learning writing has become difficult among ESL learners in higher education due to some of the obstacles faced by learners such as lack of vocabulary, poor grammar and spelling, and, inadequate ideas to write. Thus, these difficulties can lead ESL learners to become demotivated, and uninterested, and affect their readiness in writing lessons. Habibi et al., (2017) shared a similar view that difficulties faced by EFL learners in writing caused learners to become very frustrated which then affected their performance in their assignments and examinations.

Despite all of the difficulties faced by ESL learners in acquiring essay writing skills, language learners particularly in tertiary education have been working hard to enhance their writing skill since they are required to be able to write and produce a well-written essay (Bulqiyah et al., 2021). Within the university context, ESL tertiary learners have to deal with different types of essays including discursive, problem-solutions, argumentative, and many more. Dang et. al., (2020) stated that in higher institution learning, the argumentative essay is a common type of essay for learners to write and they should be able to write it well to persuade readers to agree with their stance on certain topics and argumentative essay act as one of the tools to portray their maturity in thinking. Dang et al., (2020) also emphasized that being able to write a good argumentative essay increased learners' chances to succeed in both academics and at the workplace later.

However, the argumentative essay is one of the hardest types of essays to write (Ferretti et al., 2007; Neff-van Aertselaer & Dafouz-Milne, 2008) and many ESL learners experience difficulties when they are assigned to this type of essay. Most ESL learners struggle to write a good argumentative essay particularly when they need to produce arguments with clear supporting evidence and refutations that can convince readers to agree with their point of view (Dang et. al., 2020). Apart from that, Latifi et. al., (2020) mentioned that linguistic competence such as vocabulary, grammar, coherence, as well as background knowledge are also factors that can affect ESL tertiary learners' ability to write a good argumentative essay.

Considering the importance of writing to ESL tertiary learners, to deal with ESL learners' difficulties in essay writing, it takes efforts from both educators and learners so that a positive and effective teaching and learning atmosphere can exist in writing classrooms (Zhafirah &

Hamzah, 2022). A study conducted by Singh (2017) revealed that some of the strategies used by ESL learners to overcome their difficulties in writing essays are; utilizing correct writing techniques or applying certain writing techniques when they need to write essays, employing writing tools such as grammar and spelling checker to assist their writing, and enhancing their writing skill through writing practices. As for ESL educators, one of the strategies applied is through question strategy (Zhafirah & Hamzah, 2022). By applying this strategy, educators will encourage learners to think and strengthen their understanding of the topic through questions that can further help learners generate ideas to write. Apart from that, previous studies also revealed that peer discussion, group discussion, and brainstorming are some of the techniques applied by ESL educators to help learners overcome their difficulties in writing.

It is no doubt that studies on difficulties faced by ESL learners in writing essays as well as strategies employed by both ESL educators and learners to overcome the difficulties have been mushrooming in many different educational settings. However, studies on difficulties in writing essays encountered by ESL foundation learners in Malaysia, particularly in online writing argumentative essays, and strategies used to overcome the difficulties are still limited. Therefore, this recent study aims to understand the difficulties faced by ESL foundation learners when they are assigned online to write argumentative essays and determine some of the strategies that learners employ in overcoming the difficulties. The findings of this study might also enable ESL educators to plan and apply appropriate teaching strategies that can be used in order to assist ESL foundation learners in online writing argumentative essays.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Brown (2001) claimed that writing is a thinking process that requires proper planning and an unlimited number of revisions before an individual can acquire the skill to write. Writing requires mental work of creating, expressing, and organising ideas into statements and paragraphs that will be clear for a reader to comprehend. In higher institutions, having good skills in writing is crucial for learners to succeed in their learning since essay writing particularly argumentative essays is one of the common assignments in tertiary education (Dang et. al., 2020; Umar & Rathakrishnan, 2012).

There are a lot of definitions of argumentative essays mentioned by different researchers. Dang et. al., (2020) define an argumentative essay as a kind of essay that revolves around a strong and clear thesis statement where a writer needs to convince readers to accept or agree with his/her point of view over a controversial topic or issue. When writing an argumentative essay, it is crucial for a writer to have a clear stand, anticipate readers' opposing ideas, be able to refute ideas, and most importantly provide sufficient supporting evidence to convince the readers to have a similar stance with him/her (Chase, 2011). Based on the definitions mentioned, hence, it can be concluded that writing an argumentative essay is challenging especially among language learners since it is cognitively demanding.

Since writing an argumentative essay is perceived as a difficult skill for native as well as non-native speakers to acquire (Rass, 2015) in ESL writing classrooms, educators have constantly been finding and working on methods to teach writing effectively. With the fast-changing of technological tools, it is highly encouraged for educators to learn and integrate technology in teaching and learning to enrich both the contents as well as educational activities (Dung, 2020), particularly in writing classrooms. By integrating technology and allowing learners to write online, it helps to improve learners' writing output (Shin et. al., 2021). In a study conducted by Rasulmetova and Kamiljanova (2022), online writing improves learners'

writing achievement when they begin to use higher language and complex sentences in their essay writing as compared to hand-written essays.

Although the use of technology to some extent helps ESL learners to improve and enhance their skill in writing, can technology also help to minimise certain difficulties faced by ESL learners in writing? Do learners consider technology as one of the strategies to overcome their difficulties in writing especially argumentative essays? The next section discusses difficulties in writing an argumentative essay among ESL learners along with strategies used to overcome those difficulties.

### ***2.1 Difficulties in Writing an Argumentative Essay***

Based on past studies, ESL learners at the tertiary level experienced numerous difficulties in writing argumentative essays. One of them is related to cognitive problems which is to generate ideas to write an argumentative essay (Bulqiyah et al., 2020; Ceylan, 2019) although writing is a skill that requires an individual to communicate one's ideas in a written form. Bulqiyah et al., (2020) also revealed that the difficulty faced by ESL learners in generating ideas to write an argumentative essay is partly due to teaching strategies applied by ESL educators in writing classrooms which might not be effective for some learners. In another study conducted by Latifi et. al., (2020), some language learners find it challenging for them to generate clear ideas for their main claim, and evidence to support and counter-arguments against the main claim. Thus, due to learners' difficulty in generating ideas when writing an argumentative essay, hence, it is tough for language learners to produce such sound argumentation and solid reasoning in their argumentative essay (Latifi et. al., 2020; Kellogg & Whiteford, 2009).

Concurring with the findings from Latifi et. al., (2020)'s study, Dang et al., (2020) stated that a lack of ideas to write an argumentative essay will result in learners making unsubstantiated claims that may or may not be relevant to the essay's topic. Dang et al., (2020) further added that lack of ideas is associated with learners' limited knowledge that resulted in learners' inability to express their thoughts or opinions about new topics or issues. Hence, language learners must identify certain strategies that are helpful especially those strategies that can help them to generate ideas to write an argumentative essay.

Another difficulty faced by ESL learners in writing an argumentative essay is their readiness to write the essay. It is important for learners to be well-prepared to be able to complete their writing within the stipulated time (Moses & Mohamad, 2019; Winarto, 2016). Since writing an argumentative essay is a tough task for majority of the ESL learners, ESL educators need to prepare learners either physically or mentally before presenting them with the writing task. Foster (2015) stated that motivating and attracting learners' attention will benefit them as learners are ready to write and finish their writing.

### ***2.2 Strategies to Overcome Difficulties in Writing***

Learners' strategies in writing are one of the contributing factors that can affect their writing process and production significantly. This is supported by Bulqiyah et. al., (2021); Winarto, (2015) that writing strategies applied by EFL learners have a greater influence on their performance in essay writing.

Ambarwati and Listyani (2021) mentioned that creating an outline is a step that learners can take before they begin to write. An outline is perceived as a blueprint as it shows the division

and subdivision of an essay, the order of ideas, and also the relationship between the main idea as well as supporting details (Kartawijaya, 2018). An outline will ‘force’ learners to list the ideas that are associated with the essay topic and hence will lead to a better composition as an outline will ensure that learners will stick to the ideas (Oshima & Hogue, 2009). Furthermore, writing an outline helps in generating ideas as learners will need to brainstorm and organise their ideas and thoughts to write their essays later (Ambarwati & Listyani, 2020; Al Amsari, 2013; Chai, 2006). A similar finding was revealed by Maarof and Murat (2013) that writing an outline is beneficial for learners as it has the potential to help learners overcome their difficulties in essay writing particularly in generating ideas to write in their essays. Nasution et. al., (2020) that the brainstorming process while writing an outline helps to prepare learners to write better as they are required to read, discuss and write on the essay topic assigned to them. Brainstorming is part of mental exercise as learners will make use of background schemata as well as discover new ideas to write their essays (Minawati, 2018).

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

For this study, research ethics were applied and approved before the researchers began to conduct the semi-structured interviews. Participants were selected based on non-random sampling since the researchers had determined the criteria before the study was conducted. 6 ESL foundation learners from one of the centres of foundation studies, enrolled in the law course were selected to provide their views on the difficulties in online writing an argumentative essay and strategies applied to deal with those difficulties. According to Dworkin (2012), when it comes to qualitative research, most articles, book chapters, and books recommend from 5 to 50 participants as adequate for interviews. Therefore, 6 respondents were selected to be interviewed in this study in order to have an in-depth understanding of the difficulties they faced in writing and strategies used to overcome the difficulties. Not only that, these 6 respondents were selected based on the criteria below;

- 1) they were second-semester learners and enrolled in the English course offered by the centre,
- 2) they have experience in online distance learning (ODL), and finally
- 3) they have learned about how to write an argumentative essay during their first semester.

Prior to the interview session, these learners were assigned to write an argumentative essay titled ‘Talent is more important than hard work. Do you agree with this statement?’. They need to complete the essay online for forty-five minutes and submit the essay through Google Classroom. Once they were done with their online writing, these learners were interviewed individually in order to give them more time to freely express their opinions.

A semi-structured interview was used as the main instrument in the study. Two open-ended interview questions were asked to gauge learners’ experience in online writing argumentative essays. The questions are;

1. What are the difficulties faced by ESL foundation learners when performing online writing argumentative essays?
2. What are strategies applied by ESL foundation learners to overcome the difficulties faced when performing online writing argumentative essays?

Following the inductive process, data gathered from the interviews were analysed manually in order to answer both of the research questions. While analysing the data, all transcripts were reviewed repetitively to identify the potential meanings of the raw data. Later, relevant themes were developed from the responses received from all of the participants.

## 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The findings from the interview are presented based on the themes developed from responses gathered from all of the 6 participants. All of the participants were asked about difficulties that they experienced with online writing argumentative essay and also strategies they applied to overcome the difficulties and next section discusses the findings from the interviews.

### *4.1 Difficulties Faced by ESL Foundation Learners in Online Writing Argumentative Essay*

Based on the responds from all of the participants, there are three biggest difficulties ESL foundation learners have to endure which are; surroundings, time allocation, and lack of ideas.

#### *4.1.1 Surrounding and Time Allocated*

3 of the respondents, **Respondent B**, **Respondent C**, and **Respondent E**, mentioned that their surroundings and time allocated to complete the essay are two of their biggest challenges when completing the online argumentative essay.

*“I have lots of ideas to write but it is such a challenge when I have small siblings and they keep on disturbing me when I am writing... and yes, forty-five minutes is too short for me. I was struggling to complete the essay” – Respondent E*

**Respondent E** also shared a similar situation and even acknowledged that online learning is tough and demanding as compared to physical learning.

*“My biggest challenge is my surroundings...I have lots of ideas, but I get distracted with my surroundings. I realized that online learning makes me easily lose focus compared to face-to-face. I know for sure if I am in a proper classroom, I can finish writing the essay compared to when I am writing the essay online” – Respondent B*

As for **Respondent C**, the only difficulty experienced with online writing argumentative essays is insufficient time to complete the task.

*“I do not have enough time to complete the essay. I wish I had more time to write” – Respondent C*

#### *4.1.2 Generating of Ideas*

For **Respondent A**, **Respondent D**, and **Respondent F**, generating ideas to relate and to support their arguments is the ultimate challenge they need to complete their online writing argumentative essay.

*“I am having such a hard time to choose and come out with ideas to support my arguments. It is just hard because I feel both are important” – Respondent A*

**Respondent D** and **Respondent F** stated that lack of ideas to write indirectly affect the quality of their argumentative essay.

*“I don't know what to write and I ended changing my choice... And I write halfway, I change my stand again because I don't think I can support my arguments very well” – Respondent F*

*“I don't think I write a good argumentative essay because I have no ideas. I don't think I have good mark for task fulfilment. Everything seems unrelatable to me” – Respondent D*

It can be concluded that among the main difficulties faced by ESL foundation learners was the environment of completing the essay online and also to generate relevant arguments for the argumentative essay. Atikasari and Akhmad Multazim (2019) agreed that generating ideas is indeed one of the major difficulties faced by second language learners and among the causes is time allocation to write and to practice writing. The next part will discuss the strategies used by the learners to overcome such difficulties.

#### ***4.2 Strategies Applied to Overcome the Difficulties in Online Writing Argumentative Essay***

From the interviews conducted, the researchers also managed to learn about strategies employed by the ESL foundation learners that specifically help them generate ideas to write in their online argumentative essays. Some of the strategies applied by the respondents are as below.

##### ***4.2.1 Brainstorming Technique***

**Respondent F** stated that lack of ideas is the biggest challenge faced when writing an argumentative essay and therefore, he makes use of brainstorming activity using WH-Questions before beginning with the online argumentative essay.

*“When I brainstorm my ideas, I use WH-questions. This is a helpful strategy for me so far before I write any types of essays since I was in high school” – Respondent F*

If **Respondent F** believed that making use of WH-questions during brainstorming sessions is effective in getting and generating ideas when performing an online writing argumentative essay, **Respondent E** mentioned that searching for quotes related to the essay’s topic during brainstorming activity helps when there is a need to write an online writing argumentative essay.

*“I always search for quotes online during the brainstorming session and use whichever that is related to the topic. I think this is another reason why forty-five minutes is not enough for me to write the essay assigned to me” – Respondent E*

Although the strategy used by **Respondent E** is not related to the difficulty faced in online writing argumentative essays, it was acknowledged that the strategy applied might be one of the contributing factors that caused the struggle to finish the task within the stipulated time.

##### ***4.2.2 The Use of Real-Life Experience and Schemata Background Knowledge***

As for **Respondent A**, the use of real-life experience and schemata background knowledge are helpful ways before the beginning to write and in overcoming difficulty in finding ideas to use in the online writing argumentative essay.

*“I will relate the situation with my experience or knowledge that I have on the issue. If I never encounter such situation, then I will google and read about the situation or issue so that I have the knowledge and ideas to write” – Respondent A*

##### ***4.2.3 SAKURA Writing Technique***

**Respondent B** mentioned that ideas are not the main difficulty in online writing an argumentative essay, but he shared one of the strategies he used when he had to write the argumentative essay which is, the SAKURA writing technique.

*“I use SAKURA writing technique since high school and it is proven that I get good marks for my essay. But this technique is actually for essays that I need to write in Bahasa Melayu, but I use it for English essay nevertheless as it helps me a lot” – Respondent B*

This technique requires a writer to understand three elements of an essay before a person begins to write any type of essay. These elements are the essay's instruction, the essay's requirement, and lastly the writing of the essay.

As for both **Respondent C** and **Respondent D**, writing the essay immediately helped them generate ideas and complete the task on time.

*"I just write the essay without thinking of whether the ideas are interrelated, or my grammar is correct. I will check my essay once I am done writing only if I have the time to do so"* – **Respondent C**

*"Just write the essay. The ideas will come as I keep on writing"* – **Respondent D**

## 5. DISCUSSIONS

The findings revealed that the main difficulty faced by the majority of the ESL foundation learners in online writing argumentative essays is to generate ideas to write which is agreed by **Respondent A**, **Respondent D**, and **Respondent F**. This finding is similar to previous studies conducted by Latifi et. al. (2020) as well as by Dang et. al., (2020) which indicated that most of the language learners are struggling to generate ideas when they need to write an argumentative essay. Knudson (1992) associated difficulty in generating ideas to write an argumentative essay with a lack of background knowledge of the topic that learners need to write. Limited background knowledge on the topic will further cause language learners to produce arguments that may not be logical and irrelevant to the proposition, warrant, or opposition when writing an argumentative essay. As for Moses and Mohamed (2019), ESL learners' difficulty in generating ideas to write an argumentative essay might be due to a lack of reading and exposure to various reading sources and hence they are struggling to produce great ideas in their writing as well as their vocabulary are limited that makes it hard to produce a well-written argumentative essay. Based on the situation experienced by these ESL foundation learners, the difficulty in generating ideas could be due to limited background knowledge of the topic and thus it affects them to produce good arguments when writing their argumentative essay.

The other difficulty faced by these ESL foundation learners in online writing argumentative essay is the nature of the online distance learning (ODL) itself. Since the participants are involved in ODL, the argumentative essay assigned to them has to be completed online in the comfort of their home. Djalilova (2020) mentioned that during ODL, some learners are most likely to encounter unforeseen circumstances that might affect the productivity of the task assigned to them. As responded by two of the respondents during the interview, they were affected and distracted by their surroundings and thus time allocated for them to complete the online argumentative essay is considered insufficient. These respondents had to undergo some situational problems, especially with small siblings (as elaborated by **Respondent E**) and thus it made them feel less motivated and productive when writing the argumentative essay online. Allen and Seaman (2010) stated that in order for learners to survive and succeed in ODL, strong motivation and strict self-discipline are crucial. Hence, situational problems in online learning are one of the contributing factors that can lead to writing difficulty in this current era and further influence their motivation in writing.

When it comes to strategies employed to overcome difficulties faced by these ESL foundation learners in online writing argumentative essays, strategies employed by most of the participants of this study are mainly related to how they generate ideas to write the essay assigned to them. The majority of them stated that they use a brainstorming strategy before



they begin to write in order to generate ideas to write. This finding has somehow confirmed a statement made by Nasution et. al. (2020) that brainstorming activity do help language learners to generate ideas that in return help them to write better. Numerous past studies conducted on the advantages of brainstorming activity revealed that this strategy has a positive effect on ESL learners' writing. Based on the explanation by **Respondent B**, SAKURA's writing technique is considered one of the ways to help learners get ready to write their essay since learners need to understand the essay's instruction, the topic itself, and finally the main elements in writing an essay. When learners understand these three requirements, it will help learners to write better essays. This is supported by Abdul Karim et. al. (2016) where a proper technique that learners employ and frequent exposure to the pre-writing stage have significant improvement in ESL learners' writing output and thus making them more active and ready for writing lessons.

The finding of this recent study also discovered that these ESL foundation learners were unconsciously involved in the pre-writing stage where they applied various ways to generate ideas such as the use of WH-Questions, searching for relevant quotes that are related to the topic, and recalling background schemata to write the online writing argumentative essay assigned to them. This finding is supported by Nasution et. al. (2020) that the brainstorming process during the writing of the pre-writing stage helps to prepare learners to write better. This is because learners are required to read, discuss, and brainstorm their ideas before they begin to write. It is also believed that with the advancement of technology and when learners are assigned to write the essay online, it acts as a tool that can motivate ESL foundation learners to write since information can be found at the tips of their fingers. This is also agreed by **Respondent E** since it is believed that during the brainstorming session, she would search for related quotes are searched online before she started writing. Hence, both the pre-writing stage and the use of technology can be considered as a great combo to overcome difficulties in writing.

## 6. CONCLUSION

It can be underlined that one of the obstacles faced by ESL foundation learners in online writing argumentative essays is to generate ideas to write in their essays and it is agreed by most of the ESL foundation learners that brainstorming is one of the strategies that can help them to overcome the difficulty to generate ideas to write essays. This study also confirmed the importance of ESL educators in teaching the process of writing especially during the pre-writing stage where learners get to brainstorm their ideas before beginning to write. It can be stated that learners do know the importance of the pre-writing stage although they are not aware and are being exposed to the process approach of writing. According to Hashempour et. al (2015), as cited in Owen (2019), when learners are aware of the pre-writing stage, it will increase their motivation and confidence to write since they have ideas of what to write in their essays. This not only helps to overcome the difficulty in writing but most importantly helps ESL learners to become more confident and motivated to write. Other than that, it is crucial for learners to practice self-discipline during ODL since it can affect learners' performance in writing. Faliza Mahamed Ali et al. (2022) suggested that in order to enhance students' ability to control distractions and plan for self-directed online learning, lecturers may need to improve their learning materials before students can direct themselves toward taking complete control of their learning. It is also suggested that further research use more respondents and also include qualitative data in order to confirm the findings of this recent study. Future studies may also consider exploring other strategies employed by ESL foundation learners to overcome difficulties in writing faced by them considering the fact that the current era has more strategies that can be applied such as using the ChatGPT and other tools.

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## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

NHL wrote the introduction section, collected and refined the data performed the data analysis, and further wrote the findings and discussion sections. NSAK wrote the literature reviews, collected data and wrote the findings sections. MR contributed to preparing the methodology, the conclusion, and the reference sections. All authors are responsible for reading and approving the final manuscripts.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

“None declared”

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# Factors Influencing the Acceptance of Pre-Recorded Lecture Videos Through a Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) Approach in ESL Blended Learning

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## ABSTRACT

### ARTICLE HISTORY

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*With the use of technology in ESL instruction, pre-recorded lecture videos have emerged as a dynamic tool, requiring an understanding of the factors influencing their acceptance. This study examined factors influencing ESL students' acceptance of pre-recorded lecture videos using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in blended learning classrooms. The objectives of the study were to examine the variables' influence and to investigate the relationships among Intention to Use, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Enjoyment, Learner-Content Interaction, and Perceived Usefulness in the pre-recorded lecture video acceptance. Convenience sampling resulted in 221 responses from Universiti Teknologi Mara Terengganu students. Data was analysed using SPSS software that involved descriptive and regression analyses. Reliability analysis indicated strong internal consistency of the questionnaire items. Analyses of correlation and coefficient of determination revealed strong, positive correlations between variables. The regression analysis emphasised the importance of engaging content by emphasising the crucial role of Learner-Content Interaction in influencing Intention to Use. Perceived Enjoyment and Perceived Ease of Use appeared as important variables, emphasising the importance of user-friendly and enjoyable pre-recorded lecture videos. The study concluded by offering a model incorporating the relationships, providing insights into the literature on ESL learners' acceptance of pre-recorded lecture videos. Recommendations were emphasised for designing ESL instructional content particularly the pre-recorded lecture videos that are interactive, user-friendly, and enjoyable. Future research should employ various sampling methods and investigate longitudinal perspectives for a better understanding of perspectives.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The incorporation of technology has become a fundamental element in forming contemporary instructional practices in the dynamic field of education. Haleem et al. (2022) pointed out that the use of digital technology has already become necessary due to the globalisation of education. Moreover, according to Dziuban (2018), in a pioneering national survey funded by the Sloan Consortium (currently the Online Learning Consortium), 65.2% of participating institutions of higher education (IHEs) provided blended or hybrid courses that require digital learning tools. Globalisation has promoted greater use of digital technology in education, also by the increasing demand for flexible and accessible learning. As the educational environment evolves, there is a need to cater to students' various schedules, preferences, and learning accessibility, emphasising the significance of technology in meeting diverse learning needs. The shift towards blended learning highlights the innovative potential of digital tools in integrating conventional face-to-face interactions with online resources to provide students with flexible and meaningful learning experiences.

Conventional ESL classrooms have traditionally depended on face-to-face interactions, teacher-led instruction, and physical resources such as textbooks. By incorporating technology into the teaching and learning process, blended learning changes this traditional environment. This can include virtual communication tools, instructional apps, multimedia materials, and online platforms. As pointed out by Ramalingam et al. (2021), its main objectives are enhancing the educational process, encouraging participation, and considering the ESL students' diverse learning preferences and styles. The students have varying degrees of English competence and come from a variety of linguistic origins. Blended learning acknowledges that each student has specific difficulties and capabilities that require flexibility and adaptation to solve (Razawi et al., 2023).

In the context of ESL blended learning, the use of pre-recorded lecture videos stands out as a revolutionary development. Razawi et al. (2023) emphasised that the use of pre-recorded lecture videos gives students a level of flexibility and autonomy. It allows students to revisit and interact with course materials at their convenience by overcoming the time and physical constraints of traditional classrooms. This creative teaching tool fits in with the nature of the digital world while also acknowledging each person's learning preferences. Lapitan Jr. et al. (2021) highlighted that in a technologically advanced educational environment, pre-recorded lecture videos provide a dynamic and efficient way to distribute knowledge, improve the entire learning experience, and meet the various demands of students. This innovative educational strategy deviates from traditional teaching techniques by giving the students a sophisticated and adaptable way to interact with the material at their own speed. The adoption of pre-recorded lecture videos becomes an attractive means of bridging the gap between conventional and digital learning as the increasing number of educational institutions throughout the globe shift to adopting blended learning models.

### *1.1 Problem Statement*

Despite the growth of technology integration in ESL blended learning environments, the specific factors influencing the acceptance of pre-recorded lecture videos remain inadequately understood. Numerous research presented conflicting findings concerning factors influencing acceptance. Some studies highlighted technical issues, for example, Lange & Costley (2020). The study highlighted technical issues like video quality, pace, speed of materials,

instructional segmentation, incremental speed controls, audio intelligibility, and visual quality. Another study conducted by Lim (2022) emphasised the importance of instructional design. The faculty members were to prioritise not just creating learning content, but also to concentrate on the pedagogical design of lectures to improve the achievement of learning outcomes. Other than that, a study that was conducted by Islam (2020) highlighting learner preferences. The findings of this study revealed that pre-recorded video lectures were favoured over live Zoom lectures because of their flexibility, convenience, and educational efficacy. This inconsistency indicates a lack of consensus on the key factors that influence acceptance, thus suggesting the need for further research, especially on the relationship between the factors influencing; the Intention to Use, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Enjoyment, Learner-Content Interaction, and Perceived Usefulness with the acceptance of pre-recorded lecture videos. Therefore, this study generally aimed to examine the diverse aspects of students' acceptance in an ESL blended learning context, particularly on pre-recorded lecture videos using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The objectives of this study were as stated below:

- 1) To examine the variables influencing students' acceptance of pre-recorded lecture videos.
- 2) To investigate the relationship between the factors influencing; the Intention to Use, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Enjoyment, Learner-Content Interaction, and Perceived Usefulness with the acceptance of pre-recorded lecture videos.

This study is significant as it gives suggestions on how to make ESL learning materials better particularly in the blended learning classrooms. It discusses creating videos that are enjoyable, simple to use, and make learning English more engaging. These suggestions may assist lecturers in creating the process of learning English more enjoyable and successful.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***2.1 Pre-Recorded Lecture Videos in Classroom Settings***

A growing corpus of research investigated the use of pre-recorded lecture videos in ESL classrooms that provided numerous major findings and themes. Pre-recorded lecture videos' flexibility and accessibility allowed learners to engage with information at their own speed, and facilitated understanding through features such as replay, stop, and review options, as discovered in a study conducted by Lapitan Jr. et al. (2021). Other than that, Smith and Francis (2022) conducted a study on the influence of multimedia features on student engagement. It showed that well-designed pre-recorded lecture videos with visual aids and subtitles can increase learner attention. In addition, Razawi et al. (2023) conducted a study on lecture videos in ESL blended learning classrooms. The result demonstrated that pre-recorded videos can be equally or more successful in the ESL blended learning context. When investigated in connection to learner control, pacing, attention, and retention suggested potential improvements for concentration and knowledge retention. This finding was discovered in a study that was carried out by Zhu et al. (2022). Furthermore, Quinn and Kennedy-Clark (2015) investigated pedagogical approaches for pre-recorded lecture videos such as interactive quizzes and conversations. It was revealed that the interactive approaches were able to improve the overall learning results. However, Bui (2022) emphasised that challenges like learner isolation, restricted interaction with instructors, and technological glitches were evident in the use of lecture videos. This highlighted the importance of various perspectives on the use of pre-recorded lecture videos particularly in ESL classroom instruction.



## ***2.2 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) In Educational Research Settings***

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has been a foundation in the study of user acceptance of technology, providing a strong framework to discover individuals' attitudes and behaviours in adopting new technological innovations. Originating from the field of information systems, TAM was initially introduced by Davis in the late 1980s and has since developed into a widely adopted theoretical construct for examining technology adoption across various domains (Lai, 2017). Within educational research settings, TAM serves as a valuable lens through which one can explore the factors that influence users' acceptance of educational technology, thus shaping their engagement and interaction with innovative educational tools and systems (Granić & Marangunić, 2019). Numerous studies in the education field have applied TAM to analyse user behaviour and attitudes toward technology adoption. Previous studies have examined factors such as perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and external variables influencing individuals' decisions to accept or resist new technologies.

## ***2.3 Variables of The Study***

### ***2.3.1 Perceived Usefulness (PU)***

Perceived usefulness refers to how much a person believes that using a specific system would improve their job performance (Davis et al., 1989). In a longitudinal investigation, Davis et al. (1989) involved assessments after different time intervals, indicating a longitudinal investigation of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and self-reported usage over time. The regression analyses showed that in Study 1, both perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use indicated significant positive effects on self-reported usage of Electronic Mail and XEDIT. The pooled results across Study 1 showed a consistent positive influence of perceived usefulness on usage, while the effect of perceived ease of use was comparatively lower. Study 2 reflected similar trends, with both perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use significantly contributing to self-reported usage of Chart-Master and Pendraw, and the pooled results reinforced the substantial impact of perceived usefulness.

### ***2.3.2 Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)***

Perceived ease of use is the extent to which an application is perceived to be easier to use than another, and that it is more likely to be accepted by users (Davis et al., 1989). Examining students' acceptance of video-based and video-assisted learning in journalism and communication courses, the correlation coefficient discovered by Galatsopoulou et al. (2022) indicated that significant interrelations among key constructs were evident. Perceived usefulness (PU) showed strong positive correlations with variables such as perceived enjoyment (PE), perceived creativity (PCR), relative advantage (RA), satisfaction (S), intention (IOU), perceived ease of use (PEOU), and attitude towards use (ATU). These findings highlighted the interconnected nature of factors influencing students' perceptions and intentions regarding video-based and video-assisted learning. Satisfaction emerged as a key factor. This perspective highlights the importance of considering a complex framework that includes enjoyment, creativity, and satisfaction in designing and evaluating instructions for using video-based and video-assisted learning within journalism and communication courses.

### ***2.3.3 Intention to Use (IU)***

Intention to Use (IU) is the probability of utilising a new technology, influenced by individuals' perceptions of its perceived usefulness in enhancing performance and the

perceived ease of use, indicating the effortlessness of utilising the technology (Davis et al., 1989). In exploring factors influencing students' acceptance and usage of the lecture capture system (LCS) ReWIND at a Malaysian university, Nair et al. (2015) conducted a study that used the extended version of TAM, called the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2) model. The analysis employed partial least squares-based structural equation modelling. The key findings in the study highlighted those various factors, including performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, price value, hedonic motivation, and habit significantly influenced students' acceptance and usage of ReWIND.

### ***2.3.4 Learner – Content Interaction (LCI)***

Learner-content interaction (LCI) is the process where learners engage in elaboration and reflection upon course content, with its correlation with improved achievement outcomes (Li & Jhang, 2020). Correlations among independent variables and student satisfaction, as discovered by Kuo et al. (2014), revealed significant associations in the context of the learning environment. Positive correlations were observed between learner–learner interaction and student satisfaction, learner–instructor interaction and satisfaction, learner–content interaction and satisfaction, internet self-efficacy and satisfaction, as well as self-regulated learning and satisfaction. These findings suggested that a more positive engagement among learners, interactions with instructors and course content, higher levels of internet self-efficacy, and greater self-regulated learning are linked with increased student satisfaction.

### ***2.3.5 Perceived Enjoyment (PE)***

According to Atombo et al. (2017), besides the performance improvements resulting from technology use, Perceived Enjoyment (PE) is defined as the extent to which engaging with a specific technology is considered enjoyable. In the context of e-learning acceptance, Latip et al. (2020) found that self-efficacy positively affected e-learning acceptance, indicating that higher levels of self-efficacy contribute to a more positive attitude toward e-learning. Social influence, perceived enjoyment, and performance expectancy were also identified as significant influencers of e-learning acceptance. Additionally, Dishaw & Strong (1999) compared three models - the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), Task-Technology Fit (TTF), and an Integrated model. The Integrated model demonstrated superiority in explaining variance and total effects in which it had the highest contributions from perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, task-technology fit, tool experience, intention to use, and attitude.

In summary, the previous studies presented a comprehensive investigation of factors influencing technology acceptance and usage in diverse educational contexts. These studies provided a detailed understanding of the factors shaping technology adoption in educational settings. The findings from the past studies also provided a contextual framework for addressing the identified gap in the problem statement, specifically the inadequate understanding of factors influencing the acceptance of pre-recorded lecture videos in ESL blended learning environments, guiding the study towards a more comprehensive investigation of student acceptance in this context.

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

### ***3.1 Research Design***

This study employed a correlational research design and explored the application of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to hypothesise the effects of external variables;

Learner-Content Interaction, and Perceived Enjoyment on the intention to use pre-recorded lecture videos in learning ESL. The research hypotheses focused on establishing relationships and impacts of these factors within the context of the study. The hypotheses of this research were:

*H1: Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) positively influences the Perceived Enjoyment (PE)*

*H2: Perceived Usefulness (PU) positively influences the Perceived Enjoyment (PE)*

*H3: Learner-Content Interaction (LCI) positively influences the Perceived Usefulness (PU)*

*H4: Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) positively influences the Perceived Usefulness (PU)*

*H5: Perceived Enjoyment (PE) positively influences the Intention to Use (IU)*

*H6: Learner-Content Interaction (LCI) positively influences the Intention to Use (IU)*

*H7: Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) positively influences the Intention to Use (IU)*

*H8: Perceived Usefulness (PU) positively influences the Intention to Use (IU)*

### **3.2 Data Collection Procedure and Analysis**

Data was collected using convenience sampling, a cost-effective method (Hair et al., 2017). To determine the required sample size, the g\*power software was utilised, which suggested a minimum of 74 participants. The survey was distributed via email and WhatsApp group chats, resulting in 221 completed responses, exceeding the number recommended. The questionnaires were distributed through an online survey among Universiti Teknologi Mara Terengganu students at three campuses located in Dungun, Bukit Besi, and Kuala Terengganu. The study was structured with a questionnaire derived from the framework of the study, incorporating five primary variables. The items in the questionnaires were derived from prior research, as indicated in Table 1. The data collected from the questionnaires was then analysed using SPSS, involving descriptive and regression analyses.

Table 1: Survey Items

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Source</b>
Perceived Enjoyment (PE)	6	(Latip et al., 2020; Galatsopoulou, 2022;)
Learner-Content Interaction (LCI)	4	(Kuo et al., 2014; Galatsopoulou, 2022)
Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	6	(Davis et al., 1989; Galatsopoulou, 2022)
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	3	(Davis et al., 1989)
Intention to Use (IU)	3	(Lim et al., 2022)

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 Reliability Analysis

Cronbach Alpha is a metric used to assess the reliability or internal consistency of a set of test items or a scale. It is calculated based on the average correlation among items within the test. If the items are highly correlated, it indicates they are measuring the same underlying concept, leading to a higher Cronbach Alpha score. Sekaran and Bougie (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013) classify a Cronbach Alpha score of 0.6 as poor, 0.7 as good, 0.8 as very good, and 0.9 as excellent. As shown in Table 2, the Cronbach Alpha values for Perceived Enjoyment (0.966), Learner-Content Interaction (0.907), Perceived Usefulness (0.909), and Intention to Use (0.936) all demonstrated excellent internal consistency, while Perceived Ease of Use (0.894) exhibited good internal consistency. The range of very good and excellent Cronbach Alpha implied that the items within constructs were reliably measuring the intended concepts. This is crucial in research and assessments, as it ensures the validity of the conclusions drawn based on these measurements.

Table 2: Reliability Analysis

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Perceived Enjoyment (PE)	6	0.966
Learner-Content Interaction (LCI)	4	0.907
Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	6	0.894
Perceived Usefulness (PU)	3	0.909
Intention to Use (IU)	3	0.936

### 4.2 Correlation and Coefficient of Determination Analysis

Correlation coefficient measures the strength of a relationship between two variables. Values  $\leq 0.35$  are generally considered as weak correlations, 0.36 to 0.67 represents moderate correlations and 0.68 to 1.0 shows strong correlations (Taylor, 1990). The result in Table 3 shows that the relationship between all relationships exhibited strong positive relationships. All the relationships were significant (p-value  $< 0.05$ ).

Table 3: Correlation and Coefficient of Determination Analysis.

Hypothesis	Correlation	Strength	R <sup>2</sup>
Perceived Ease of Use → Perceived Enjoyment	0.789	Strong Positive	0.622
Perceived Usefulness → Perceived Enjoyment	0.813	Strong Positive	0.661
Learner-Content Interaction → Perceived Usefulness	0.818	Strong Positive	0.669
Perceived Ease of Use → Perceived Usefulness	0.803	Strong Positive	0.645
Perceived Enjoyment → Intention to Use	0.842	Strong Positive	0.708
Learner-Content Interaction → Intention to Use	0.852	Strong Positive	0.726
Perceived Ease of Use → Intention to Use	0.794	Strong Positive	0.631
Perceived Usefulness → Intention to Use	0.779	Strong Positive	0.607

R<sup>2</sup>, or the coefficient of determination, quantifies the extent to which the variation in a dependent variable is accounted for by independent variables. According to Table 3, the variations in Perceived Enjoyment were predominantly influenced by Perceived Ease of Use, explaining 62.2% of its variation, and Perceived Usefulness, accounting for 66.1% of the variance. In the case of Perceived Usefulness, Learner-Content Interaction was responsible for 70.8% of its variation, while Perceived Ease of Use accounted for 64.5%. Regarding Intention

to Use, a significant portion of its variation was attributable to several factors: Perceived Enjoyment (67.8%), Learner-Content Interaction (72.6%), Perceived Ease of Use (63.1%), and Perceived Usefulness (60.7%).

### 4.3 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis serves as a statistical method to evaluate the association between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables. Its primary purpose is to explore the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. Given that all the relationships depicted in Table 3 were statistically significant, with p-values less than 0.05, it provided a solid basis to proceed with the regression analysis.

As shown in Table 4, the impact of Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness on Perceived Enjoyment were both significant (p-value <0.05). The Beta coefficient means that when Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness increased by 1 unit, the Perceived Enjoyment will increase by 0.848 and 0.825, respectively.

Table 4: Regression Analysis of Independent Variable vs Intention to Use

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Perceived Enjoyment	(Constant)	.546	.182		3.004	.003
	Perceived Ease of Use	.848	.045	.789	18.993	.000
	(Constant)	.703	.160		4.405	.000
	Perceived Usefulness	.825	.040	.813	20.662	.000

As shown in Table 5, the impact of Learner-Content Interaction and Perceived Ease of Use on Perceived Usefulness were both significant (p-value <0.05). The Beta coefficient means that when Learner-Content Interaction and Perceived Ease of Use increased by 1 unit, the Learner-Content Interaction and Perceived Ease of Use will increase by 0.886 and 0.803, respectively.

Table 5: Regression Analysis of Independent Variable vs Perceived Usefulness

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Perceived Usefulness	(Constant)	.400	.170		2.351	.020
	Learner-Content Interaction	.886	.042	.818	21.024	.000
	(Constant)	.704	.190		3.714	.000
	Perceived Ease of Use	.803	.047	.759	17.244	.000

As shown in Table 6, the impact of Learner-Content Interaction, Perceived Enjoyment, Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness were all significant (p-value <0.05). The Beta coefficient means that when Learner-Content Interaction, Perceived Enjoyment, Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness increased by 1 unit, the Intention to Use increased by 0.978, 0.878, 0.891 and 0.825, respectively.

Table 6: Regression Analysis of Independent Variable vs Intention to Use

Model	Independent Variable	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
Intention to Use	(Constant)	.036	.164		.219	.827
	Learner-Content Interaction	.978	.041	.852	24.089	.000
	(Constant)	.461	.153		3.014	.003
	Perceived Enjoyment	.878	.038	0.842	23.067	.000
	(Constant)	.355	.187		1.896	.059
	Perceived Ease of Use	.891	.046	.794	19.355	.000
	(Constant)	.685	.179		3.820	.000
Perceived Usefulness	Perceived Usefulness	.825	.045	.779	18.393	.000

To sum up, the regression analysis presents valuable insights into the correlations between the variables. Particularly, there were strong relationships discovered between Perceived Ease of Use and Perceived Usefulness with Perceived Enjoyment, demonstrating that improvements in these categories positively impact users' satisfaction. Similarly, the study found that Learner-Content Interaction and Perceived Ease of Use had significant effects on Perceived Usefulness, highlighting their important role in developing users' perceptions of the system. Furthermore, the study found that Learner-Content Interaction, Perceived Enjoyment, Perceived Ease of Use, and Perceived Usefulness significantly influenced the Intention to Use, emphasising the impact on users' behavioural intentions. These findings highlighted the significance of these factors in determining user perceptions, attitudes, and intentions in ESL pre-recorded lecture videos. In summarising the regression analysis, the model depicted in Figure 1 was established in the course of this study.

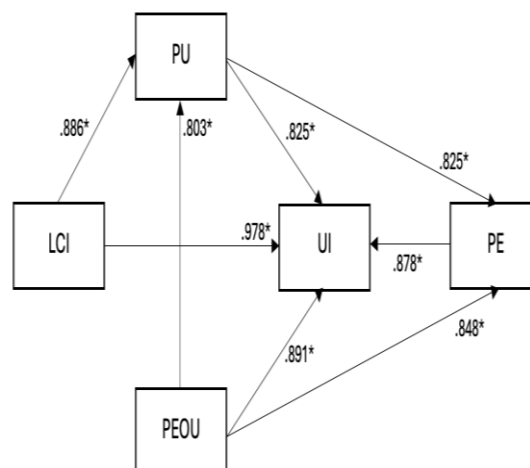


Figure 1: Model summary (\*: coefficient significant at  $p < 0.05$ ).

## 5. DISCUSSION

In the context of students studying English using pre-recorded lecture videos, the regression analysis provided valuable insights into the factors influencing their Intention to Use, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Enjoyment, Learner-Content Interaction, and Perceived Usefulness.

Intention to Use among these students was significantly influenced by Learner-Content Interaction. The finding aligns with Kuo (2014) who discovered significant correlations between learner-content interaction and student satisfaction in the context of the learning environment. This suggests that when students find the interaction with the pre-recorded lecture videos more engaging, especially in learning a language like English, they are more inclined to continue using these resources. Interactive content in pre-recorded lecture videos, especially for language learning, often includes elements that engage students actively. This notion is consistent with Galatsopoulou et al. (2022) where the study observed that interactivity can increase motivation and interest in the subject matter. For example, interactive exercises or quizzes embedded in pre-recorded lecture videos can make learning more engaging compared to passive watching. This heightened engagement can lead to a deeper understanding and retention of the material, thereby influencing students' intention to continue using these resources. Moreover, interactive pre-recorded lecture videos often allow for a more personalised learning experience. This finding supports the study by Davis et al. (1989), who highlighted that students could pace their learning, revisit challenging sections, and engage with the content in a way that suits their individual learning style. This personalization is particularly important in language learning, where proficiency levels can vary widely.

Perceived Enjoyment and Perceived Ease of Use were found to have an impact on students' intention to use the pre-recorded lecture videos. It aligns with Latip et al. (2020) where it was identified that perceived enjoyment positively affects e-learning acceptance. This implies that the more enjoyable and easier the pre-recorded lecture videos are to use, the more likely students are to engage with them regularly. Enjoyment is a critical factor in the learning process. When students find the pre-recorded lecture videos enjoyable, it can lead to increased intrinsic motivation. This intrinsic motivation is important for sustained engagement with the learning material. Enjoyable learning experiences are more likely to be repeated, therefore if students enjoy the pre-recorded lecture videos, they are more likely to continue using them. Perceived ease of use is a key determinant in technology adoption and continued usage. This is reinforced by Dishaw and Strong (1999) who demonstrated that perceived ease of use had the highest contributions to technology acceptance. If pre-recorded lecture videos are easy to access, navigate, and understand, students are more likely to use them regularly. Ease of use reduces the frustration and time spent figuring out how to use the technology, allowing students to focus more on the actual learning content. When the technological barrier is low, students are more inclined to engage with the material and integrate it into their regular learning habits.

Perceived Usefulness of the pre-recorded lecture videos in learning English was greatly affected by Learner-Content Interaction. This finding is substantiated by the work of Davis et al. (1989) who found that interactive features significantly contributed to users' self-reported usage of technology over time. When the lectures are designed to be interactive, providing opportunities for students to engage with the content, their usefulness in learning English is enhanced. The ease of accessing and navigating these lectures also contributes to their perceived usefulness. Interactive elements in pre-recorded lecture videos, such as quizzes, exercises, or even interactive discussions, can significantly enhance the learning experience.

These interactive components make the learning process more engaging and can aid in better understanding and retention of the language. For instance, interactive exercises allow students to practise the language actively, which is essential for language acquisition.

It was also discovered in this study that Perceived Enjoyment is driven by how easy the lectures are to use and their usefulness. This finding corroborates with the work of Latip et al. (2020), who found that self-efficacy, perceived enjoyment, and performance expectancy were significant influencers of e-learning acceptance. If the pre-recorded lecture videos are straightforward and beneficial in learning English, students find more joy in using them. This is crucial in language learning, where enjoyment can significantly enhance the absorption and retention of new information. When pre-recorded lecture videos are straightforward and easy to use, it reduces the cognitive load on students. They do not have to struggle with the technical aspects of accessing or navigating the lectures. This reduction in frustration and cognitive effort allows students to focus more on the actual learning process. A smooth, hassle-free experience can inherently be more enjoyable as it minimises obstacles and distractions. Moreover, enjoyment in learning creates a positive emotional connection with the material. When students enjoy the process of learning a language through pre-recorded lecture videos, they are more likely to develop a positive attitude towards the language itself. This positive emotional state can enhance the absorption and retention of new information. Enjoyable learning experiences can help in forming stronger memory associations, making it easier to recall and use the language in the future.

Overall, these findings emphasised the importance of creating pre-recorded lecture videos for English learning that are not only interactive and user-friendly but also perceived as useful and enjoyable. Such a combination is key to encouraging ongoing student engagement and fostering a positive and effective learning experience.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the findings of this study shed light on the crucial factors influencing students' Intention to Use and experience when studying English through pre-recorded lecture videos. Learner-Content Interaction emerged as a significant predictor of Intention to Use, emphasising the importance of engaging and interactive elements in these educational resources. Furthermore, the impact of Perceived Enjoyment and Perceived Ease of Use on students' intention to use pre-recorded lecture videos underscores the significance of designing user-friendly and enjoyable learning experiences. The study also emphasised the pivotal role of Learner-Content Interaction in shaping the Perceived Usefulness of pre-recorded lecture videos. In summary, this study highlights the multifaceted nature of factors influencing students' engagement with pre-recorded lecture videos in the context of learning English. By understanding and incorporating elements of interactive content, perceived enjoyment, ease of use, and perceived usefulness, educators and instructional designers can enhance the overall learning experience and promote sustained use of these valuable resources in language learning contexts.

## **7. LIMITATIONS**

In this study, focusing on English learning through pre-recorded lecture videos, certain limitations must be acknowledged when considering the conclusions drawn about Intention to Use, Perceived Ease of Use, Perceived Enjoyment, Learner-Content Interaction, and Perceived Usefulness. Firstly, the results were influenced by the specific characteristics of the sample. If the participants represent a limited demographic or educational background, the findings might not be universally applicable to all English learners using pre-recorded lecture



videos. This restricts the ability to generalise the conclusions beyond the study's context. The sampling method used in this study, convenience sampling, presents a key limitation. While this method is efficient, it does not always give a broad and balanced view of all English learners using pre-recorded lecture videos. It often results in a sample that might heavily represent certain groups, like students from a particular school or area, or those with specific technology access, and not others. This means the findings could be more reflective of these specific groups and not necessarily applicable to all students learning English through pre-recorded lecture videos. Furthermore, the study's design might not account for external factors such as the quality of the video content, teaching methods, or technological issues that could significantly affect student engagement and perceptions. These limitations suggest that while the study offers valuable insights, its findings should be interpreted with an understanding of these constraints.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Future research in the field of English learning using pre-recorded lecture videos should address several key areas to build upon the current study's limitations. One significant recommendation is to employ more diverse and representative sampling methods. Instead of relying on convenience sampling, future studies could benefit from using random sampling techniques. This approach would ensure a broader cross-section of students is included, encompassing various educational backgrounds, geographic locations, and levels of technological access, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, conducting longitudinal studies could offer deeper insights into how students' perceptions and Intention to Use evolve over time. This would provide a more dynamic understanding of the factors influencing engagement with pre-recorded lecture videos, capturing changes in attitudes and behaviours that might occur as students become more familiar with the content or as their proficiency in English develops. By addressing these areas, future research can offer more solid and comprehensive insights into the effective use of pre-recorded lecture videos for English learning.

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## **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION**

NAR was responsible for conducting the introduction and literature review sections. NAR and NM gathered and processed the data. NHMN performed data analysis utilising SPSS and prepared the sections pertaining to data methodology, discussion, and implications. NAR and NM meticulously reviewed and proofread the manuscript for errors and inconsistencies. The final manuscript received approval from all authors.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None declared.

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## APPENDIX

### i. Survey Instrument

SOURCE	SURVEY ITEMS
	<b>PERCEIVED USEFULNESS (PU)</b>
Davis et al., (1989)	Using videos makes my learning easier Videos support critical aspects of the learning material. Using videos enhances my effectiveness in learning.
	<b>PERCEIVED EASE OF USE (PEOU)</b>
Davis et al., (1989) and Galatsopoulou (2022)	Interacting with the videos doesn't require a lot of mental effort. Overall, I find the videos easy to use. I find the videos flexible to interact with Videos are easy to use during the educational process Learning how to use videos in lessons is easy (playback/save/study with texts) Using videos does not require much mental effort.
	<b>INTENTION TO USE (IU)</b>
Lim et al., (2022)	I intend to use Video Lecture in the next semesters I would recommend my friends to use Video Lecture in the next semesters I would say positive things about using Video Lecture
	<b>LEARNER CONTENT INTERACTION (LCI)</b>
Kuo et al., (2014)	Online course materials helped me to understand better the class content. Online course materials stimulated my interest for this course. Online course materials helped relate my personal experience

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to new concepts or new knowledge.  
It was easy for me to access the online course materials.

**PERCEIVED ENJOYMENT (PE)**

Latip et al., (2020) and Galatsopoulou (2022)	I experience fun using the e-Learning method It is exciting to use the e-Learning method The use of the e-Learning method is enjoyable. I find it enjoyable to watch videos in class I have fun watching videos in class Using videos in lessons is a pleasant experience
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# High-Impact Educational Practices in Higher Education Institutions: A Thematic Review

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## ABSTRACT

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*High Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs) have been identified as effective in providing positive educational results for students from diverse backgrounds across several institutions. Despite its effectiveness in teaching and learning, prior research revealed that there is still a lack of review papers discussing the trend in the application of High Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs), specifically in Higher Education Institutions. Therefore, this thematic review (TR) paper aims to discuss the most common High Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs) applied in teaching at the university by synthesizing the literature from 2019 to 2023 using ATLAS.ti 23. A keyword search, followed by a filter using inclusion criteria from SCOPUS, WoS, and Science Direct databases, identified 39 peer-reviewed journal articles. However, after the inclusion and exclusion processes, only 24 articles were considered to be used as the final articles to be reviewed. A thematic review of 24 articles identified 27 initial codes grouped into the five most practiced HIEPs in Higher Education Institutions worldwide. The five main themes are collaborative, service, experiential, research-based, and engaged learning. The results of this study will benefit future studies on the application of HIEPs in teaching at the university level. They can be the main guideline for developing a sustainable practice framework for applying HIEPs.*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

High Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs) are considered instructional strategies that significantly affect students' learning and foster their development (Ke et al., 2022). High impact educational practices (HIEPs) are defined as educational strategies that actively engage students in learning and link their learning to their personal and work lives. HIEPs benefit all students, including those from diverse and underrepresented groups (Kuh, G. D., 2008). Numerous institutions have shown that High Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs) efficiently deliver high-quality educational outcomes to students from various backgrounds. According to Riehle and Weiner (2013), high-impact educational strategies often span the college experience, include students in the learning process, and use active, contextual pedagogies. According to research, HIEPs promote higher academic engagement, comprehension, and resolve to help students excel in the classroom (Armstrong et al., 2019). Through various teaching methodologies, students are gradually allowed to participate in activities outside the classroom, promoting learning and individual growth. HIEPs are crucial in higher education institutions because they boost student engagement, encourage deeper learning and transferrable skills, raise retention and graduation rates, link theory and practice, promote inclusion, and improve career preparedness. These methods help students have a rich and fulfilling educational experience. Student engagement is a key factor in enhancing learning outcomes. When students are engaged, they are actively involved in the learning process, both mentally and emotionally.

High-impact educational practices (HIEPs) are used in universities and colleges worldwide. Many educational institutions have included these methods in their curriculum to improve the learning opportunities for their students since they understand the tremendous benefits of doing so. Eight key elements underpin the success of HIEPs practices: performance expectations set at appropriately high levels; significant investment of time and effort by students over an extended period; interactions with faculty members and peers about substantive matters; experiences with diversity; frequent, timely, and constructive feedback; periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning; opportunities to discover the relevance of learning through real-world applications; and public demonstration of competence (Berlie et al., 2020). According to Kuh (2008), HIEPs require much time and effort from students in their academic work, increase teacher-student contact, engage with students from diverse backgrounds, apply their knowledge in real-world situations, and more. Despite its effectiveness in teaching and learning, prior research revealed that there still needs to be more review papers discussing the trend in the application of High Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs), specifically in Higher Education Institutions. Therefore, the underpinning of this paper is to discuss the most common High Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs) applied in teaching at the university in publications from the year 2019-2023 through the following research question:

RQ: What are the most common High Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs) applied in Higher Education Institutions from 2019 to 2023?

## **2. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study adopted a non-systematic review method, which is a thematic review. The term thematic review using ATLAS.ti 23 as the tool introduced by Zairul (2020) is implemented because the method of this study applies a thematic analysis procedure in a literature review. Clarke & Braun (2013) define thematic analysis as identifying patterns and constructing themes based on a thorough reading of the subject. The following step is to identify the

pattern and construct a category to understand the trend of High Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs) applications at the university level in publications worldwide. The tenets of the research are to analyse and interpret the findings to recommend future research in HIEPs. The selection of literature was performed according to several selection criteria including: 1) publication from 2019- 2023, and 2) Have at least one keyword(s) High Impact Educational Practices and university.

Table 1: Search strings from Scopus, WoS and Science Direct

SCOPUS	TITLE-ABS-KEY ( “high impact educational practice” AND “university” ) AND PUBYEAR > 2019 AND PUBYEAR < 2023 AND ( LIMIT-TO ( DOCTYPE , “ar” ) )	23 results
WoS	“high impact educational practice” AND “university” (All Fields) and Open Access and 2023 or 2022 or 2021 or 2020 or 2019 (Publication Years)	8 results
Science Direct	“high impact educational practice” AND “university”	11 results

The literature search was performed in the Scopus, WoS, and Science Direct databases. The initial search yielded with 23 articles from SCOPUS, eight from WoS, and 11 from Science Direct. However, 18 articles were removed due to their premature results and anecdotes or because they did not discuss HIEPs applications at the university. Some of the articles were also found incomplete, or the full articles are not accessible, have a broken link that overlaps, or have incomplete metadata. Therefore, the final paper is to be reviewed down to 24 articles (table 1). The articles were uploaded in ATLAS.ti 23 as primary documents, and then each paper was grouped into 1) author; 2) issue number; 3) periodical, 4) publisher, 5) volume, and 6) year of publication. In doing so, the articles can be analysed according to the year they were published and the discussion pattern according to the year. The total articles are finalised and included in the final documents in the ATLAS.ti 23 is 24 documents.

Table 2: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion	Exclusion
1. Articles written in English	1. Articles written in other languages
2. Article year of publications range from 2019 to 2023	2. Published before 2019
3. Open access articles only	3. Paid access articles
4. Full article journals only	4. Conference proceeding



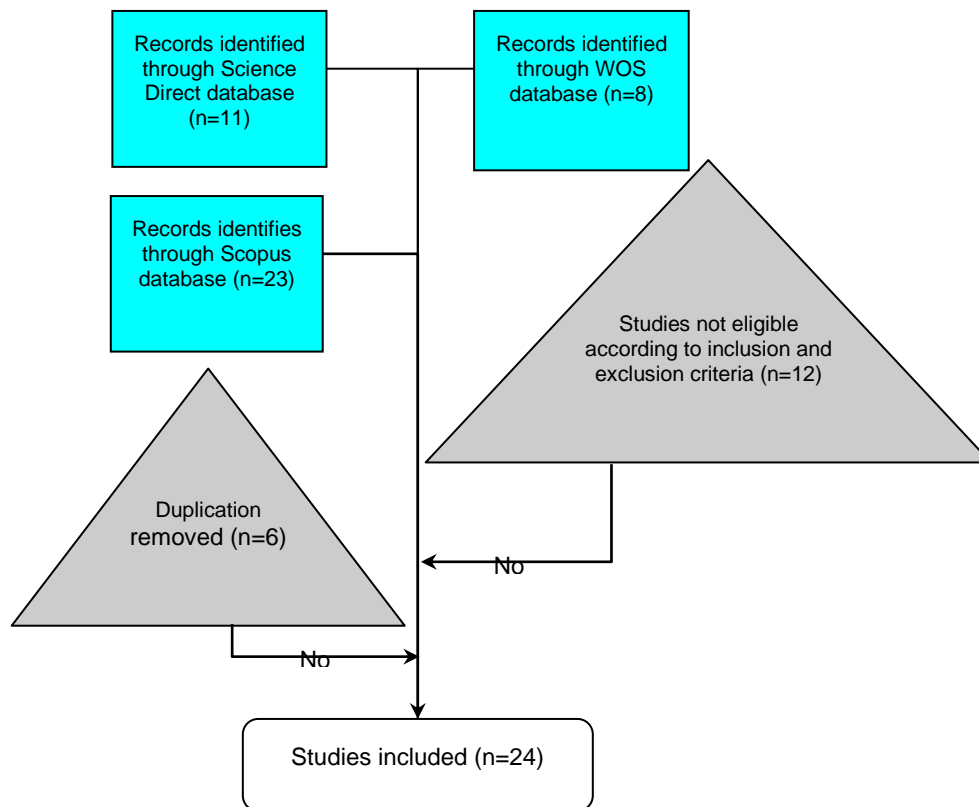


Figure 1: Inclusion and Exclusion Process in the Thematic Review

The classification of documents group in ATLAS.ti 23 has made sorting much more manageable and systematic (figure 2). 33 initial codes were generated during the first round of coding. Later, similar codes were merged, and the final codes became 27. Then, the codes were grouped into several themes to answer the research question: What are the most common High Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs) applied in Higher Education Institutions from 2019 to 2023? Contributed to a final of five main categories to answer the research question. Iteratively, the following six-step procedure for thematic review was carried out (Mohd Yusof et al., 2023):

1. Becoming familiar with the data
2. Generating basic codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Writing the report

According to Ahmad S, Wasim et al. (2019), quantitative analysis involves numerical data, while qualitative analysis involves words, pictures, and objects. Thus, the findings of this review will be divided into two parts: Quantitative findings and Qualitative findings. Quantitative results entail analysing numerical data to identify and emphasise publication trends, which involves statistical evaluations of factors like publication frequency or other quantifiable aspects linked to the dissemination of the publications. Qualitative findings delve deeper into exploring themes. Using an inductive approach, themes naturally arise from a comprehensive examination of selected articles. This in-depth analysis explores the content of the publications, uncovering patterns, nuances, and underlying concepts that quantitative methods may overlook.

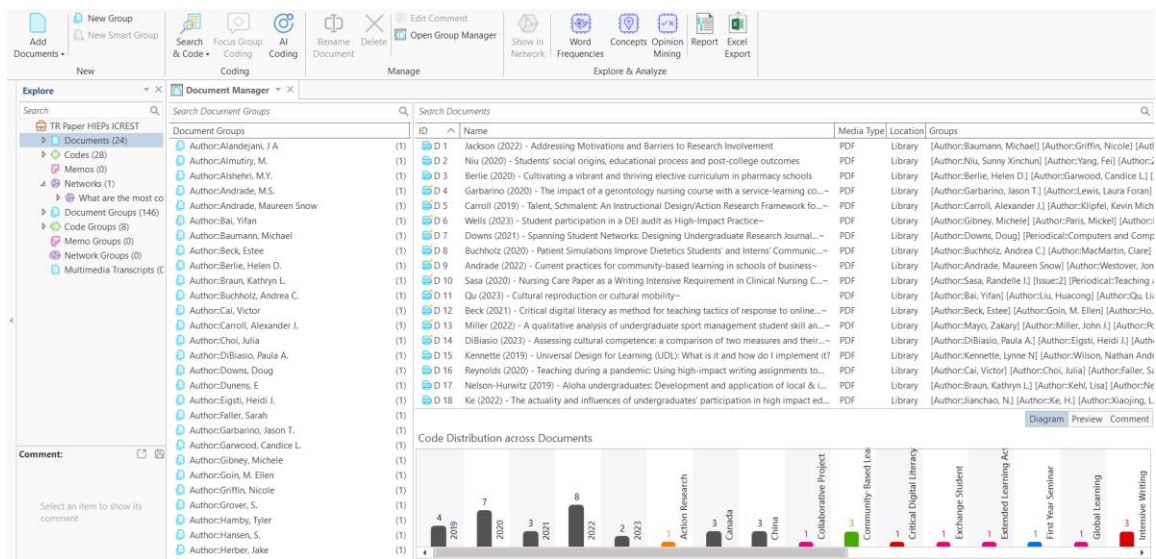


Figure 2: The Document Group Established from Mendeley Metadata

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The global implementation of HIEPs in higher education institutions was outlined in this thematic analysis over the past five years. According to the publications selected, numerous HIEPs strategies have been used in university teaching and learning. The selected articles highlight the benefits of HIEPs in teaching and learning and current HIEP practices. Important practical ramifications of this study are also present. The results of this literature review shed light on potential HIEPs teaching strategies as well as the best methods for teachers to adopt when implementing HIEPs in teaching and learning. This study will also help university students to have a positive shift in their attitudes toward the benefits of HIEPs in preparing themselves for future-proof university graduates.

This review and its conclusions have added to the body of knowledge by providing insights into various facets of the HIEPs use at higher education institutions. Thus, this section provides a summary of the key findings of the thematic review. The qualitative results for the thematic evaluation will be supported by the quantitative findings at the beginning of this section.

#### 3.1 Quantitative Findings

The pattern of regional dispersion indicates that High Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs) have been applied in Higher Education Institutions for quite some time in the American Country: United States and Canada. It is undoubtful that HIEPs were established by George Kuh in 2008 (Kuh & O'Donnell, 2013) and his colleagues at the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). Recently, China and Saudi Arabia have begun to adopt it (figure 3). However, research on HIEPs in higher education institutions is still not widely acknowledged in Asia, particularly Malaysia, where there have been no publications on the use of HIEPs in higher education institutions available in the databases used in this research.

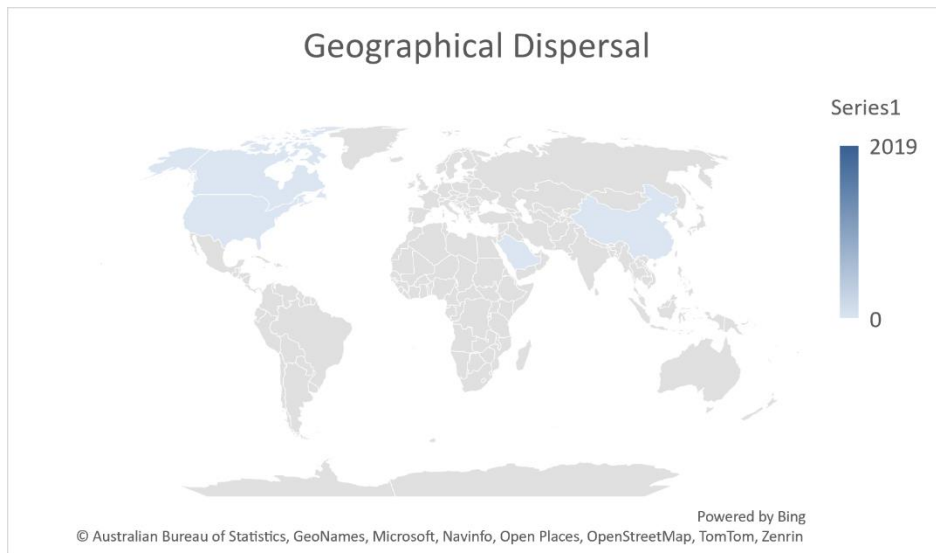


Figure 3: Articles Based on Country Published

The findings of this research show an increasing research trend for the year 2022. According to records, only three articles were published in 2023, which could be because some articles still needed to be written. Results demonstrate that research examines the use of HIEPs at higher education institutions, which are most common in the USA, followed by Canada and China. According to the publication trend by year, 2022 had the most publications, with eight for the year. Only four articles were published in 2019, compared to seven in 2020. In 2021, only two articles were published. It might be connected to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, which impacted the entire educational system. Nevertheless, the finding shows that Malaysia’s study on applying HIEPs in teaching is unavailable.

Table 3: Paper breakdown according to countries and the year of publication

Country/Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Totals
Canada	1	1	0	1	0	3
China	0	1	0	1	1	3
Saudi Arabia	0	0	0	1	0	1
United States	3	5	2	5	2	17
<b>Totals</b>	4	7	2	8	3	24

The 24 research papers were checked in an iterative process in which comparisons were made for similarities and differences to ensure consistency. A list of publication years and their allocation into the themes can be found in Figure 4. The 27 initial codes were then divided into five major themes, which are:

1. Collaborative Learning
2. Service Learning
3. Experiential Learning
4. Research-based Learning
5. Engaged Learning

This study’s findings show that studies on the application of HIEPs in Higher Education Institutions are discussing on various themes in Figure 4:

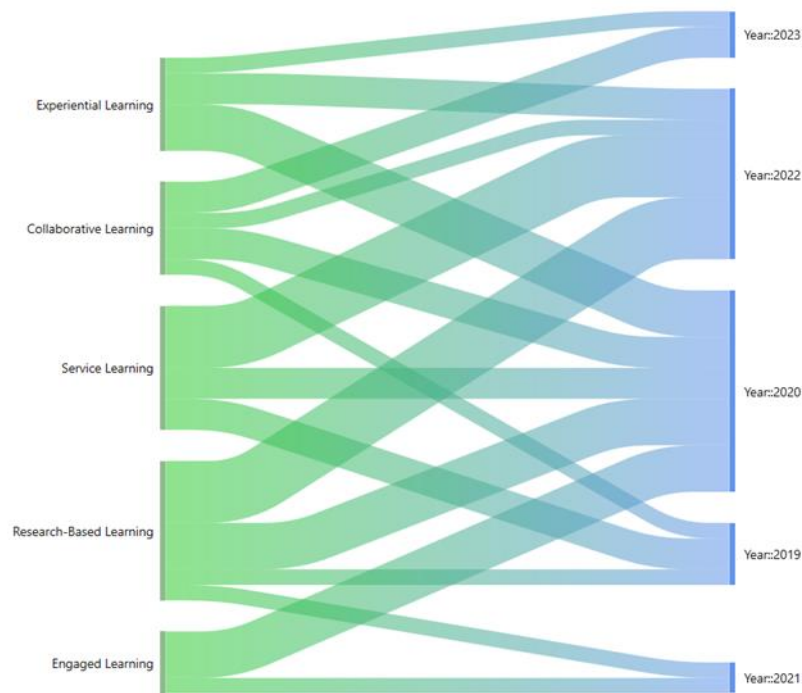


Figure 4: Year of Publications vs Themes

The publication year was used to evaluate the trend (figure 5). The analysis found that trends in service learning, collaborative learning, and research-based learning all began in 2019. There were no publications on engaged learning or experiential learning in 2019. In addition, research-based learning has grown significantly in popularity for HIEPs applications today, with nine publications since 2019.

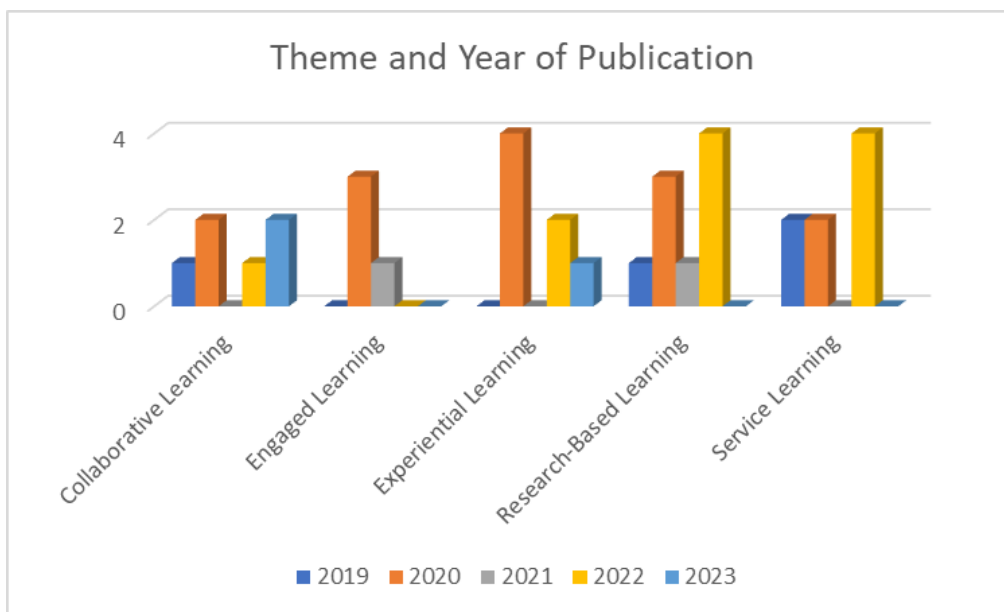


Figure 5: Themes and Year of Publications

### 3.2 Qualitative Findings

This TR paper reviewed publications and coded the patterns in the HIEPs application at higher education institutions. However, the future of HIEPs in education was not discussed.

The initial codes were recorded, combined, and categorized in multiple rounds. Since this study focused on elements thoroughly studied and investigated by researchers, codes that were rarely used and could not be categorised into any topic were eliminated. Results from quantitative investigations that were not statistically significant were also not included. Finally, five major themes emerged: (1) collaborative learning, (2) service learning, (3) experiential learning, (4) research-based learning, and (5) engaged learning. Each theme is investigated in further detail below and results outside of the themes or the evaluated articles will be referenced as needed for descriptive reasons.

The first round of coding produced 33 initial codes on various types of HIEPs applied in university teaching. The first step was to conduct a thorough analysis of all the selected articles and identify potential themes for each of the codes. Some similar codes were merged, and 27 final codes of HIEPs application were made. The following phase was to come up with, analyse, and define the overall concept. Finally, five major themes emerged, which will be discussed in detail in each section below.

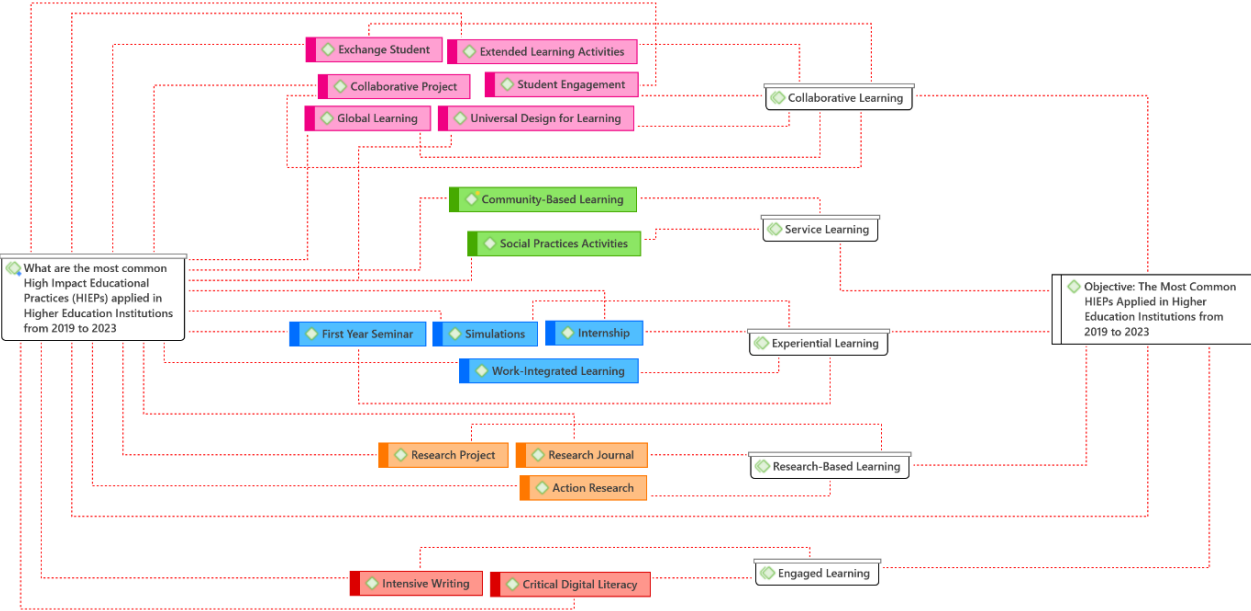


Figure 6: An Overview of Thematic Answer based on Research Questions

### 3.2.1 Collaborative learning

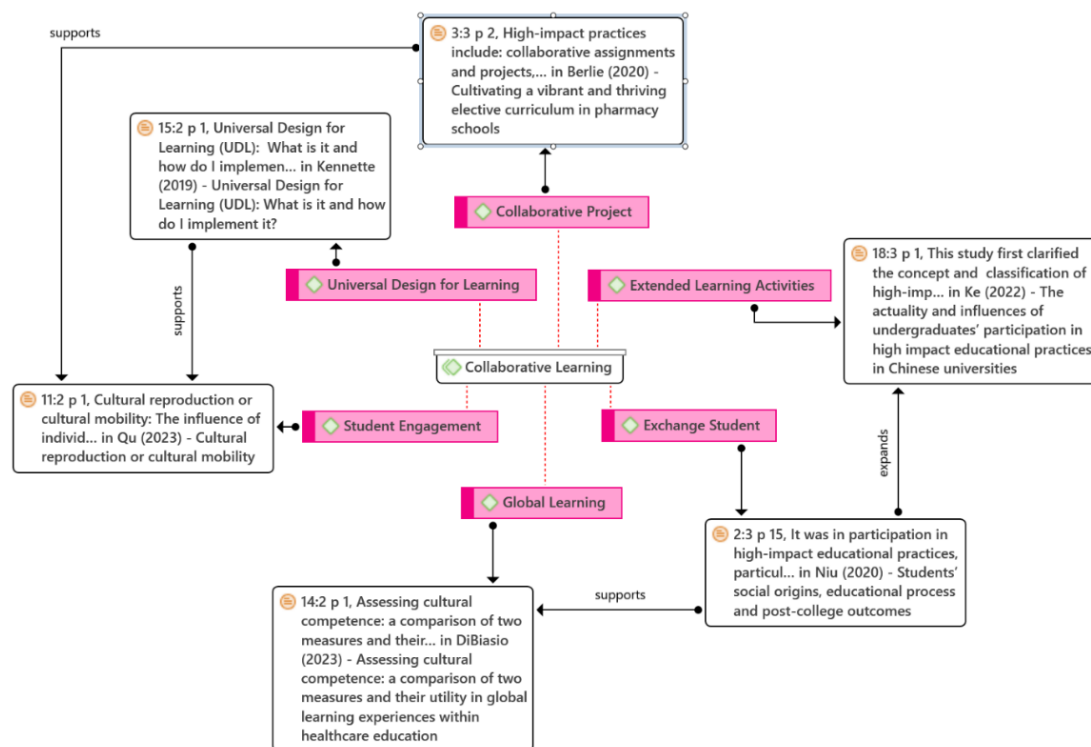


Figure 7: Theme 1-Collaborative Learning

The first theme that emerged from this study is collaborative learning. Collaborative learning is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product (Laal & Ghodsi, 2012). Unlike traditional learning methods where students mainly learn individually, collaborative learning encourages active participation, interaction, and peer cooperation. In collaborative learning environments, students engage in discussions, share ideas, and jointly solve problems, drawing on the group members' diverse skills, knowledge, and perspectives. Collaborative learning could be applied in various ways through the collaborative project (Berlie et al., 2020), students' mobility through a students exchange program (Niu et al., 2020) or cultural mobility program (Qu et al., 2023), extended learning activities (Ke et al., 2022), global learning (DiBiasio et. al, 2023), and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) (Kennette & Wilson, 2019).

Berlie et. al. (2020) identified elective courses as an approach to promote collaborative projects. In order to maximize the benefits to students, faculty members, and the institution, electives must be intentionally planned and managed. Adopting a more strategic and attentive approach to electives may require significant discussion and debate. Ideally, electives are tightly aligned with the core curriculum, extending student knowledge and skills in tangible ways. Additionally, a vibrant and thriving elective curriculum will enable students to develop deeper skillsets, differentiate themselves upon graduation, and contribute to moving the profession forward. On the other hand, Qu et. al (2023) mentioned that in the process of college students' development, student participation and engagement is a crucial means to foster cultural mobility and are also the reason for the inequalities in academic accomplishment groups in the same type of university. This idea supports Niu's et. al (2020)

perspective on students participating in student exchange programs, which have been remarkably effective in promoting a wide range of desired educational outcomes. Additionally, Ismail et.al, (2023) research found that collaborative design pedagogy is essential for improving students' quality in architectural design. It is also an effective learning method to increase motivation among students for student-centred learning and to develop critical, creative, and pragmatic thinking skills as individuals and as a team.

Furthermore, Kennette and Wilson (2019) promoted Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as one of the HIEPs approach to curriculum development which aimed at removing barriers in education, to make it accessible to the largest number of learners. UDL consists of three principles: multiple means of representation, multiple means of action and expression, and multiple means of engagement. When used to guide curriculum development, these principles provide access to learning to the widest possible audience by removing potential barriers and offering flexible paths to learning. Additionally, involvement in HIEPs and extended learning activities by undergraduates contribute to better learning (Ke et. al, 2022). Thus, HIEPs application is expected to benefit from collaborative learning. However, different deployment strategies must be clarified more thoroughly for a worldwide implementation.

### 3.2.2 Service learning

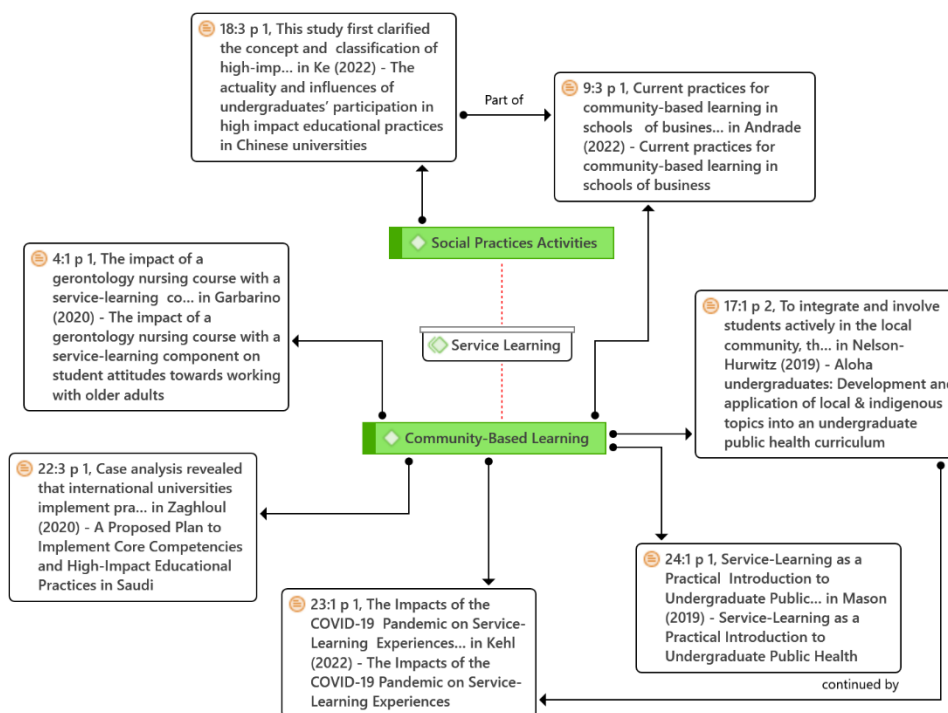


Figure 8: Theme 2-Service Learning

This research found that service learning becomes a Service-learning activity as one of the HIEPs strategies to engage students in service activities that simultaneously pursue two goals: (a) benefit to community stakeholders (e.g., agency, clients, neighborhood 3 residents) and (b) academic learning outcomes. The service experience provides a rich text from which academic lessons are learned through the interplay between theory and practice. The educational outcomes are derived from community service through reflection activities (Bringle, R. G., & Phillips, M. A., 2010). Several publications have discussed community-based learning (Kehl et. al, 2022; Zaghloul et al., 2020; Garbarino & Lewis, 2020; Nelson et

al., 2019; Mason & Dunens, 2019) and social practices in the context of service learning at the universities.

Ke et al. (2022) define social practice activities broadly. It refers to learning activities in off-campus situations that increase students' social experience or knowledge. This activity includes internship, social practice or investigation, community service, or volunteer activities. He added that the average educational practices of students who participated in social practice activities were higher than those of students who did not. On the other hand, most researchers discuss service learning specifically through implementing community-based learning activities. As community-based learning involves students' engagement with the community, it improves students' attitudes towards community members (Garbarino & Lewis, 2020). Though there has been wide adoption of community-based learning in teaching at the university, the information on how community-based learning has been effectively implemented, supported, and practiced at the school and university levels is still vague. More research on effective service learning or community-based learning frameworks is necessary.

### 3.2.3 Experiential learning

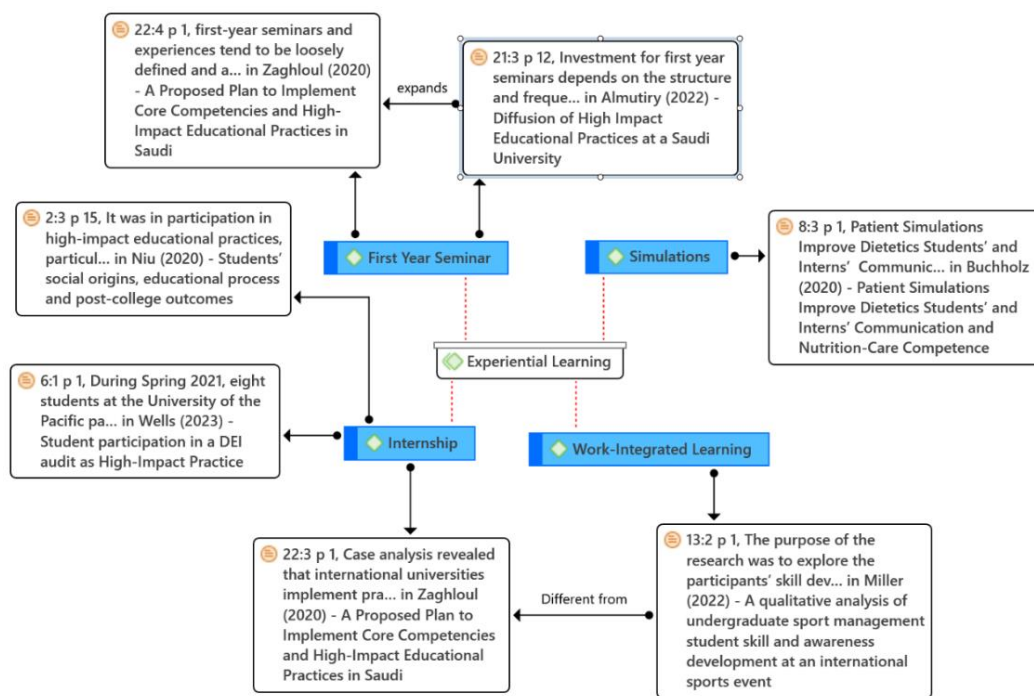


Figure 9: Theme 3-Experiential Learning

Students must learn by doing things. Though it is important to embed experiential learning into the teaching and learning process, what a student learns from a particular experience is frequently unique to how the student interprets that experience and is partially beyond the instructor's control (Gentry, J.W, 1990). Several discussions have been made on internships as one of the good practices for encouraging experiential learning among university students. Higher education researchers have also theoretically defined internship as one of high-impact educational practices (Kuh, 2008). Niu et al. (2020) research findings show that students with good social connections will completely champion their internship. Extensively, Wells et. al (2023) found that internships will effectively enhance students' personal growth for future career development. On the other hand, work-integrated learning is an additional strategy suggested by Miller et. al (2022) that will improve students' ability to translate theory into practice.



Zaghloul et al. (2020) argues that first-year seminars will enhance students’ academic performance. However, later discussion shows that students practicing first-year seminars are more likely to learn more about the university’s resources and will develop better time management (Almutiry et al., 2022). Though experiential learning can be low-tech and cost-effective, it also can be time-consuming (Buccholz, 2020). Nevertheless, some researchers highlighted the readiness of educators to shift the current teaching standard from an instruction paradigm to a learning paradigm through experiential learning. Therefore, educators must be more selective in how they utilize experiential learning to meet the needs of their students and improve their performance.

### 3.2.4 Research-based learning

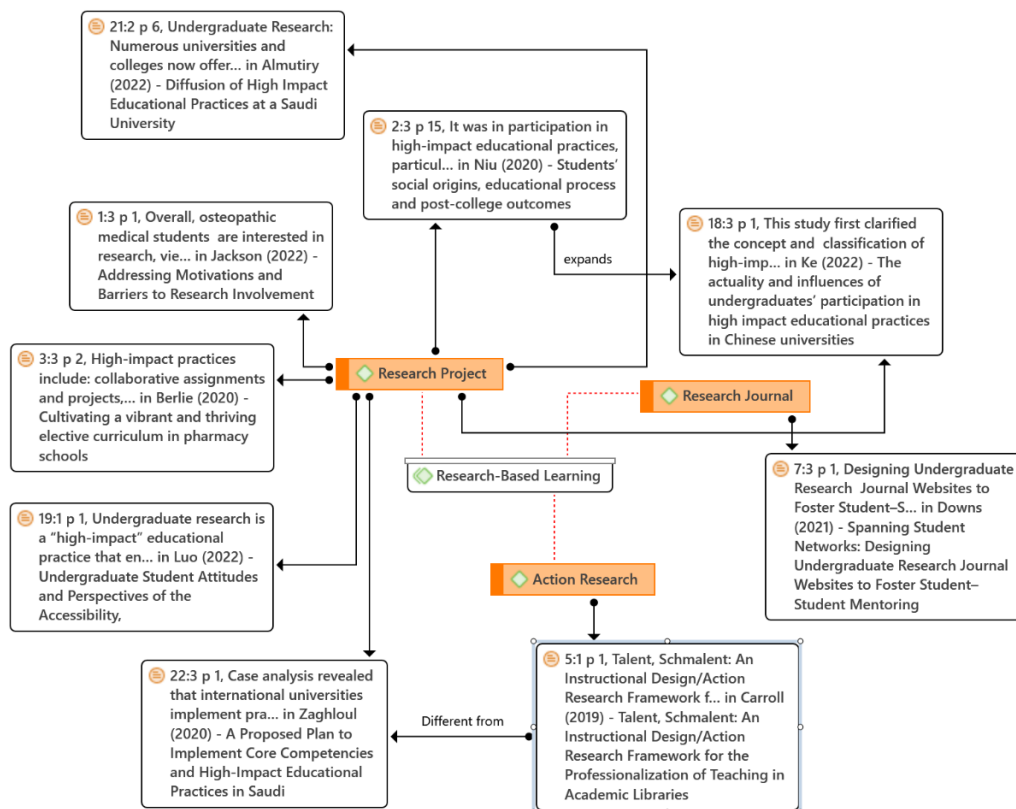


Figure 10: Theme 4-Research-Based Learning

Various means of applying research-based learning were discussed in the literature. Most researchers applying research projects as HIEPs at the university (Luo et al., 2022; Jackson et al., 2022; Almutiry et al., 2022; Ke et al., 2022; Niu et al., 2020; Berlie et al., 2020 & Zaghloul et al., 2020), while some other researchers discussing on research journals (Downs, 2021) and action research (Carroll, 2019). Integrating research-based learning into teacher education courses, for example, can be seen as part of an international effort to educate teachers for a fast-changing reality in schools, with continuous needs for development in the classroom (Brew, A., & Saunders, C., 2020).

Numerous universities and colleges now offer students from every discipline to participate in research. The opportunity is most common within scientific subjects (Almutiry et al., 2022). Some medical students are interested in conducting research, value the experience, and believe it will help them in their future professional endeavors (Jackson et al., 2022 & Luo et al., 2022). Supporting that, research projects embedded in students’ assignments can assist

students' professional career growth in the future (Berlie et al., 2020). Conversely, action research can be highly helpful in resolving educational challenges at the school. Action research is problem-based and results-focused, to assist educators in creating practical answers to real issues they experience in the classroom (Caroll, 2019). Research journals, which are typically more important to postgraduate students, were proposed by Downs (2021) as another option for research-based learning. In conclusion, research-based learning has become an important HIEPs strategy for both undergraduate and postgraduate students to enhance their professional skills.

### 3.2.5 Engaged learning

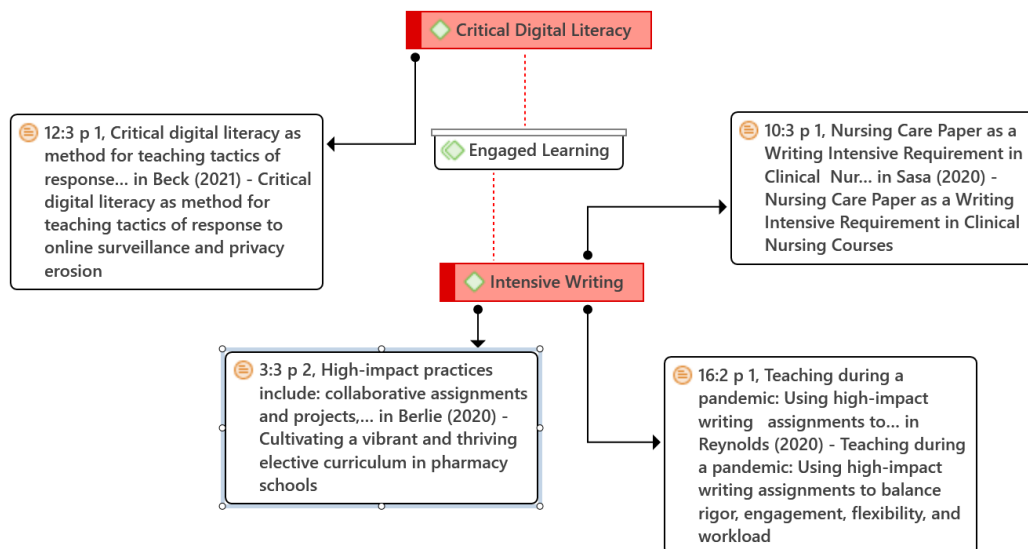


Figure 11: Theme 5-Engaged Learning

Post-pandemic COVID-19 has influenced the current educational shift from offline to online learning (Veyvoda & Van, 2020). This situation has contributed to the practice of engaged learning in university education. It significantly contributed to the current literature on the practice of engaged learning during the pandemic where the COVID-19 pandemic has created new challenges for instructors who seek HIEPs that can be facilitated online without creating excessive burdens with technology, grading, or enforcement of honor codes (Reynolds et al., 2020). They see intensive writing as the easiest for students to adopt during the pandemic. However, students' poor writing skills become a challenge that needs intervention to address the problem (Sasa, 2020).

Even though engaged learning should benefit students and educators, the issue of core values that are connected to ethical action, such as cybercrime, needs to be addressed. Beck et al. (2021) suggested critical digital literacy modules to be taught at the university to improve engaged learning. This module can be adopted to apply engaged learning in the era of IR4.0. Hence, exploring engaged learning should continue after the epidemic phase. In fact, it should empower the new era of education 5.0 in relation to IR4.0 that has been discussed worldwide.

## 4. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to systematize the existing body of scientific knowledge concerning the application of High Impact Educational Practices (HIEPs). This study aims to provide an

overview of the main applications of HIEPs at higher education institutions worldwide. The authors discovered that despite the effectiveness of HIEPs in literature, there is still a lack of a comprehensive overview of how HIEPs could be implemented in various ways. The authors conducted a thematic analysis to fill this gap and discovered five theme: collaborative, service, experiential, research-based, and engaged learning. For each of the themes, the types of HIEPs applications were assessed. The findings of this study demonstrate that certain themes have received more attention in the scientific literature. The findings of this study revealed several gaps in the literature on the application of HIEPs at the university and helped identify some suggested directions for future research.

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## **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION**

NSMS was the main contributor to the study who created the abstract, introduction, materials and method, quantitative and qualitative findings, conclusion, and references. FMS and MASA helped in the methodology, results, discussion, and references.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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# The Translation of Noun from Non-English to English: A Systematic Literature Review

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## ABSTRACT

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Linguistic structures and cultural variations pose significant challenges in the field of translation studies. Understanding the translation of nouns is essential for bridging linguistic gaps and enhancing cross-cultural communication. However, there have been limited systematic reviews on the issue. This study aims to systematically review and analyze the existing literature on the translation of nouns from non-English language to English as a target language. In accordance with the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, a systematic review was conducted utilizing two primary databases, Web of Science and Scopus. The process comprised three main stages: keyword identification, article screening, and final article determination. Primary searches from 2013 to 2023 revealed 1418 studies on the topic under investigation. After scrutinizing abstracts and eliminating duplicates, 16 studies were selected for further analysis. A thematic analysis was conducted to derive themes for the translation of nouns in these studies. The themes of the translation of nouns from non-English to English that emerged were: (1) the features of nouns; (2) linguistic scope; (3) the machine translation (MT) system; (4) hindrances in translation; (5) translation strategies. These five themes were further categorized into 20 sub-themes. The results provide linguists and translators with an in-depth overview of the published research on noun translation from other languages into English, the target language. This overview paves the way for the development of more efficient translation approaches. This systematic review enriches the field of noun translation from non-English to English, providing a robust foundation for future research. Given the limited number of existing studies on noun translation, there is a significant need for further investigation to explore this area more thoroughly. Future research initiatives should further scrutinize the challenges and strategies associated with noun translation, contributing to a more detailed understanding of this linguistic domain.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Translation conveys thoughts, knowledge, or intentions from a source language to a target language. This process involves substituting the linguistic structure of the source language with that of the target language (Almijrab, 2020; Bauko, 2022; Jiang et al., 2022). It requires consideration of several limitations, including context, the grammatical regulations of both languages and idioms (De Sutter & Lefer, 2020; Elhadary, 2023). As Edmonds-Wathen (2019) points out, no two languages have a straightforward, literal correspondence. Translating nouns from various languages (source) into English (target) is particularly complex, especially with specific noun categories (Akan et al., 2019; Kizi, 2023; Tonja et al., 2023). Tursunovich (2022) highlights a primary dilemma faced by translators in transliterating names within texts, noting that while personal and geographical names can theoretically be translated, it is often the most effective method to maintain their original form in the target text. According to Maulidiyah (2018), proper nouns, abstract nouns, cultural nouns, and compound nouns present unique challenges. It is necessary to appropriately reproduce names while preserving their cultural or historical connotations by employing proper nouns. (Nyangeri & Wangari, 2019). Abstract nouns require a clear understanding of the underlying concepts and their equivalents in the target language (Günther et al., 2022). Cultural nouns necessitate consideration of cultural connotations, and compound nouns require thorough analysis and interpretation of their specific meanings (Taule et al., 2022). Nevertheless, translating proper names often involves inconsistencies and exclusions. Nigora and Mamasharif (2020) identified that proper names pose distinct challenges, unlike those commonly found in dictionaries. Consequently, the translation of proper names struggles to convey the source text's unique local flavour and nationality in the target text (Font & Costa-Jussa, 2019; Savoldi et al., 2021).

The challenges highlighted the necessity for various translating methods that consider the unique features and limitations related to each category of noun. Strategies range from literal translation to retaining the original meaning, which emphasises readability in the target language (Boase-Beier, 2019; Kotze et al., 2021). Alymova (2022) stated that cultural translation strategies also aim to preserve cultural information encoded in source language nouns. Literal translation is not used when translating German to English since German nouns are grammatically gendered, such as masculine, feminine, or neuter (Harris, 2023; Misersky et al., 2019; Nübling & Lind, 2021). When it comes to Arabic translation, the translation of nouns can be even more intricate due to differences in grammar structures and cultural backgrounds between Arabic and English (Abdelaal, 2020; Akan et al., 2019; Betti & Bsharah, 2023). In French, compound nouns are commonly used, while in English translation, it is essential to separate them into individual words or employ different expressions to make appropriate adjustments in the linguistic structure (Arnaud, 2018; Bauer, 2019; Van Goethem & Amiot, 2019). To effectively convey meaning, accuracy is essential when translating Chinese words into English (Meng, 2020). It takes cultural sensitivity to avoid misinterpretations resulting from accurate translations (Lin, 2023). It is important to translate specific words carefully to conform to standards in this field (Tsai, 2023). Despite many published articles on strategies and challenges for translating nouns into English, few studies have systematically reviewed the English translation of nouns. Therefore, this study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the research on translating nouns across multiple languages into English as a target language.



## 2. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a systematic review as a scientific approach to obtain a comprehensive understanding of a specific research domain. It helped future studies identify gaps and trends in past and current research (Ab Manan Iskandar & Muhamad, 2022; Adams & Muthiah, 2020; Johari et al., 2019; Hiver et al., 2021). This study employed the publication standard proposed by Page et al. (2020), known as Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA), while conducting the systematic literature review. It adhered to the procedures specified by PRISMA, including detailed information on the inclusion and exclusion criteria used to select previous studies, the sources from which these studies were obtained, and the methodology used to collect and analyze data for the systematic literature review.

### 2.1 Systematic Searching Strategies

**Identification.** The identification phase, which was the first step in the process, involved identifying articles. Shaffril et al. (2021) stated that the research question in the studies guided the selection of appropriate keywords. Consequently, this investigation initiated the retrieval of articles by identifying synonyms or terms related to the keyword “noun translation”. Subsequently, after determining the keywords, various search strings incorporating Boolean operators (OR, AND), such as “nouns” AND “translation”, were utilized throughout this process in two databases, namely Scopus and Web of Science (Refer to Table 1). Gusenbauer and Haddaway (2020) proposed the selection of these databases due to their prominent citation indexing systems and rigorous article quality control. Furthermore, following the recommendation of Misersky et al. (2019), the primary search strategy involved considering the title, abstract, and critical terms when employing these search functions. Next, a manual search was conducted by systematically examining articles page by page, then identifying and tracking the articles through citations and references. In summary, a total of 1418 articles were obtained, with 1365 articles in the Scopus database and an additional 53 articles retrieved from the Web of Science (WOS) database as shown in Figure 1.

Table 1: The Research Strings

Database	Search String
Web of Science	TI=(("noun*") AND ("translation*"))
Scopus	TITLE-ABS-KEY (("noun*") AND ("translation*"))

**Screening.** The screening phase, which was the second step in the process, involved including or excluding articles based on predetermined criteria. This determination was made either with the assistance of the database or through manual screening, as outlined in Table 2. In line with the concept of “research field maturity” highlighted by Kraus et al. (2020), this review limited the screening process to articles published from 2013 to 2023. This timeline was deemed appropriate as it provided a substantial number of published studies for conducting a comprehensive review (Snyder, 2019). This study focused on reviewing empirical research papers, as they offer primary data. Notably, only proceedings papers and articles written in English were considered. The study concentrated on English translations. It specifically targeted open-access publications featuring translated nouns in

English. As shown in Figure 1, 1296 articles were excluded from the review as they did not meet the inclusion criteria, leaving 122 articles for evaluation in the subsequent stage.

Table 2: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Timeline	2013-2023	2012 and earlier
Publication Type	Article and conference paper (with empirical data)	Other than article and conference paper
Language	English	Non-English
Subject area	Nouns translation	Other than nouns translation
Translated noun	English	Non-English
Access	Open access or only content accessible to everyone	Non-open access or restricted access to content

**Eligibility.** The final stage was eligibility, during which the remaining papers were manually scrutinized to ensure they met the required criteria. In the abstract screening phase, 95 more articles were eliminated. After thoroughly examining the content of the selected articles, an additional 11 articles were excluded. In total, 106 articles were removed in this stage due to their insufficient focus on the translation of nouns from non-English languages to English as the target language. The quality appraisal stage involved assessing a final set of 16 articles, as illustrated in Figure 1.

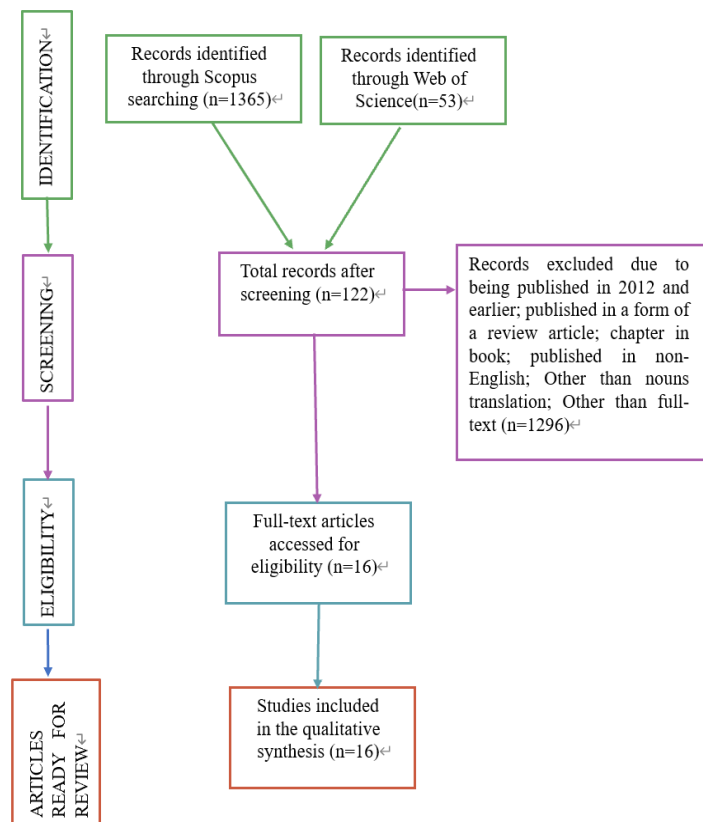


Figure 1: Flow Diagram of The Searching Process

## 2.2 Extraction and Analysis of Data

Thematic analysis was applied to assess the selected articles in this study. According to Goldsmith (2021), thematic analysis is an analytical technique that involves finding, analyzing, and presenting patterns, themes, and relationships within a particular dataset. This review followed the guidelines outlined by Lochmiller (2021) for conducting thematic analysis. First, the selected articles were read several times to become familiar with their content. Initial codes were created from this reading process, and any data relevant to the research questions were extracted. Next, themes related to the translation of nouns from non-English to English were inductively derived by discovering common interests, similarities, and connections within the extracted data.

## 3. FINDINGS

### 3.1 Background Information of the Selected Studies

**Source Languages.** Figure 2 illustrates the total number of articles according to their source languages. The findings revealed that six papers focus on Chinese as a source language, as shown in Figure 2 (Cao et al., 2018; Li et al., 2014; Pu et al., 2017; Shi, 2023; Tang, 2021; Zhou et al., 2012). Two papers focus on Arabic as a source language (Abdullah, 2018; Qassem, 2021). Meanwhile, one study focuses on German (Al Salem et al., 2023), Hindi (Harsh et al., 2015), Indonesian (Raharjo et al., 2020), Malay (Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, 2014), Polish (Lewandowski, 2015), Spanish (Espunya, 2020), Swedish (Ullman & Nivre, 2014), Russian (Mirzoyeva, 2023).

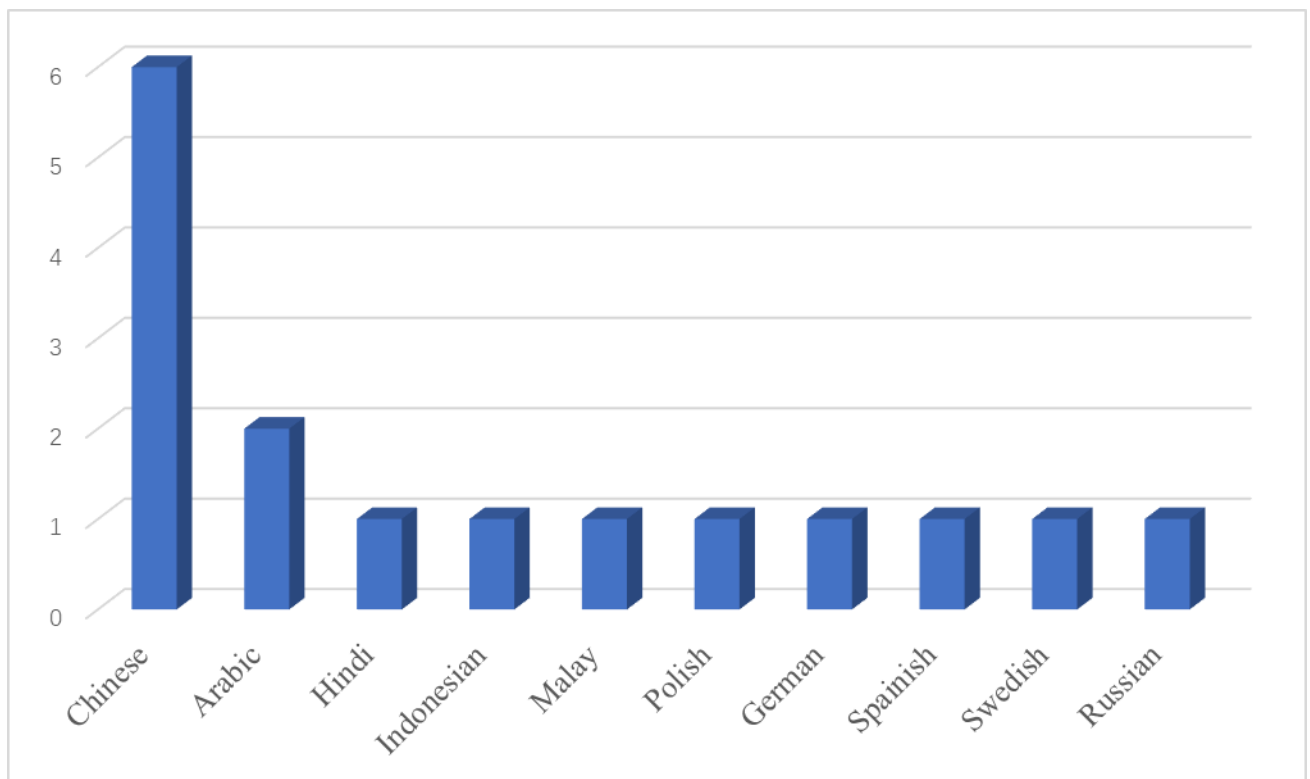


Figure 2: The Total Number of Articles According to Source Language

**Publication Years.** In terms of publication year, Figure 3 shows that one article was published in 2012 (Zhou et al., 2012), three articles were published in 2014 (Li et al., 2014;

Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, 2014; Ullman & Nivre, 2014), two articles in 2015 (Harsh et al., 2015; Lewandowski, 2015), one article in 2017 (Pu et al., 2017), two studies in 2018 (Abdullah, 2018; Cao et al., 2018), two studies in 2020 (Espunya, 2020; Raharjo et al., 2020), two studies in 2021 (Tang, 2021; Qassem, 2021), and three articles in 2023 (Al Salem et al., 2023; Mirzoyeva, 2023; Shi, 2023).

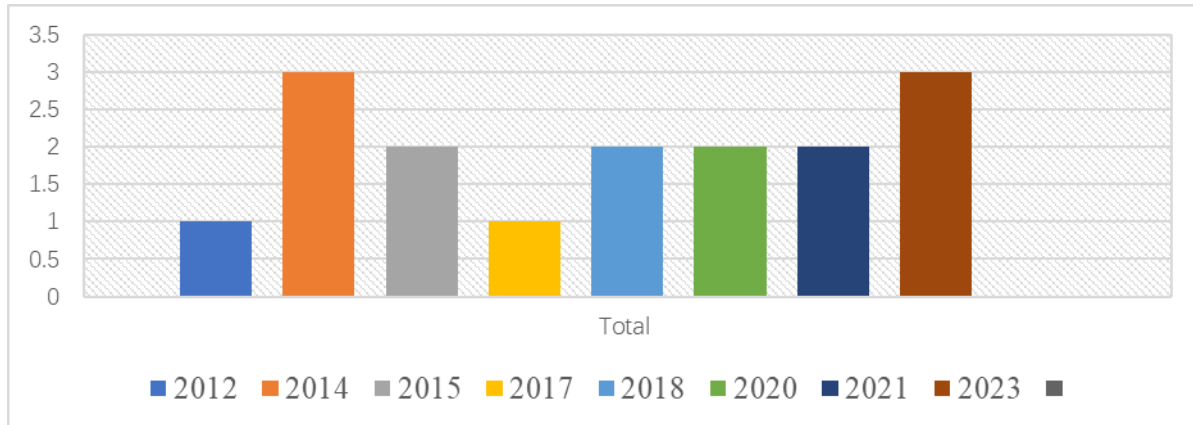


Figure 3: The Total Number of Articles by Year of Publication

**Classification of noun.** In reference to noun classification, four studies specifically examined proper nouns (Cao et al., 2018; Raharjo et al., 2020; Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, 2014; Tang, 2021). Another four studies focused on compound nouns (Li et al., 2014; Qassem, 2021; Ullman & Nivre, 2014; Zhou et al., 2012). Additionally, eight articles investigated various other types of nouns, including two articles on noun phrases (Lewandowski, 2015; Shi, 2023) and one article each on cultural nouns (Mirzoyeva, 2023), repeated nouns (Pu et al., 2017), property-denoting nouns (Espunya, 2020), similar plural nouns (Al Salem et al., 2023), Hindi nouns (Harsh et al., 2015), and Arabic nouns (Abdullah, 2018).

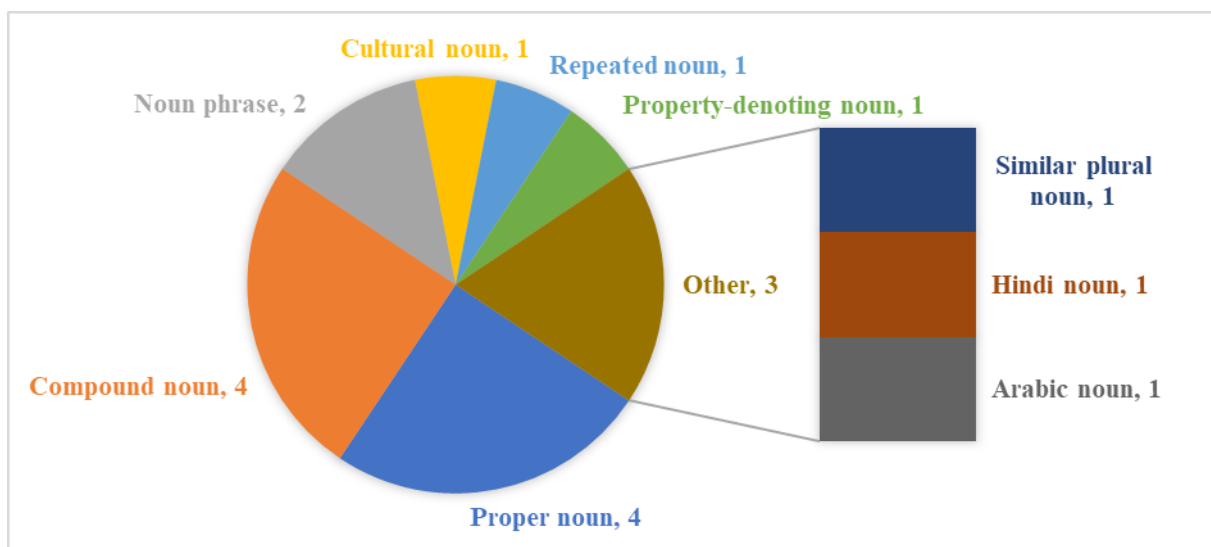


Figure 4: The Total Number of Articles by Classification of Noun

**Data Source.** The data sources in the 16 selected articles included a range of text types, including corpora, patent texts, essays, legal texts, novels, dialects, lyrics, Chinese Opera, research papers, websites, and albums. Four papers examined the corpora, such as the

Swedish Europarl corpus and the subset of Swedish Wikipedia (Ullman & Nivre, 2014), the phrase corpus (Shi, 2023), the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Russian National Corpus (RNC) (Mirzoyeva, 2023), and the UN Corpus (Pu et al., 2017). Two studies focused on patent texts (Li et al., 2014; Zhou et al., 2012), and three focused on essays (Al Salem et al., 2023; Qassem, 2021; Raharjo et al., 2020). Meanwhile, one study each explored legal texts (Tang, 2021), novels (Espunya, 2020), dialects (Harsh et al., 2015), lyrics (Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, 2014), Chinese Opera (Cao et al., 2018), and the management and economy domain (Abdullah, 2018), as well as research papers, websites, and albums (Lewandowski, 2015).

### 3.2 The Noun Translation of the Selected Studies

Table 3 presents the findings from the thematic analysis of 16 articles about noun translation into English from 2013 to 2023. Five themes and twenty sub-themes were identified as follows: (1) the features of nouns (accuracy, ambiguity, formality, and expertise); (2) linguistic scope (morphology, syntax, and semantics); (3) the machine translation (MT) system (identification of nouns, paraphrase, and shallow segmentation); (4) hindrances in translation (complexity, lack of professional knowledge, and mistranslation); and (5) translation strategies (literal translation, liberal translation, transliteration, addition, omission, substitution, and generalization, and changing the order and the word class).

Table 3: The Main Themes and the Sub-themes

Authors and Years	The Features of Nouns				Linguistic Scope			The MT System			Hindrances in Translation		Translation Strategies							
	A	AM	F	E	M	S	SE	IN	P	SS	C	LPK	MI	LT	LIT	T	A	O	SG	COW
Zhou et al., (2012)	√		√	√			√	√					√							
Li et al., (2014)	√		√	√	√		√	√												√
Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, (2014)		√		√			√							√	√	√	√	√	√	
Ullman & Nivre, (2014)			√	√	√				√											
Harsh et al., (2015)	√				√		√	√											√	
Lewandowski, (2015)		√	√											√	√				√	√
Pu et al., (2017)	√																			
Abdullah, (2018)				√		√	√			√			√							
Cao et al., (2018)	√					√	√				√	√		√	√	√	√			
Espunya, (2020)				√			√													
Raharjo et al., (2020)	√		√																	
Tang, (2021)	√		√		√	√	√					√			√	√	√	√	√	√
Qassem, (2021)	√		√				√		√				√	√				√		
Al Salem et al., (2023)	√				√															
Mirzoyeva, (2023)			√																	
Shi, (2023)	√					√	√	√			√	√	√	√						
The Features of Nouns	Linguistic Scope				The MT System			Hindrances in Translation		Translation Strategies										
A=Accuracy	M=Morphology				IN=Identification of Nouns			C=Complexity		LT=Literal Translation										
AM=Ambiguity	S=Syntax				P=Paraphrase			LPK=Lack of Professional Knowledge		LIT=Liberal Translation										

F=Formality

SE=Semantics

SS=Shallow  
Segmentation

MI=Mistranslation

T=Transliteration

E=Expertise

A=Addition

O=Omission

SG=Substitution and  
Generalization

COW=Changing the Order and  
the Word Class

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### 3.2.1 *The Features of Nouns*

Four sub-themes under the theme of the features of English translated nouns were identified in this study: accuracy (A), ambiguity (AM), formality (F), and expertise (E). In these sub-themes, accuracy refers to the degree of correctness and faithfulness with which a translated text conveys the meaning of the original text (Cao et al., 2018). For deeper comprehension in translation, one should acquire the unique characteristics of nouns, particularly proper nouns (Shi, 2023). Li et al. (2014), Tang (2021), and Zhou et al. (2012) emphasized that in the legal and patent literature, it is crucial to maintain a high level of authority and seriousness, indicating that ensuring accuracy in special terms is a fundamental principle in the translation. Ambiguity arises in traditional cultural language when cultural conceptions of particular domains do not accurately correspond to specific domains, resulting in misunderstandings, especially in novels, lyrics, and essays (Al Salem et al., 2023; Espunya, 2020; Qassem, 2021; Raharjo et al., 2020; Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, 2014). In novels, complex topics including society, morality, and human nature must be examined in the translation, prompting the reader to think about deeper meanings by introducing ambiguities of cultural concepts into the story (Espunya, 2020). Preserving ambiguity in lyrics during translation helps maintain the aesthetic qualities of the original and provokes similar aesthetic feelings in the target language (Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, 2014). Ambiguity plays an important role in essays by enriching the text, conveying the intention, and stimulating the reader's thinking (Al Salem et al., 2023; Harsh et al., 2015; Pu et al., 2017; Qassem, 2021). The formality inherent in legal English conveys the gravity and professionalism closely linked to legal matters. Legal professionals employ an official tone to communicate their expertise, reliability, and a sense of seriousness (Tang, 2021). Implementing formal language in the translation enhances the opera's universal attraction, ensuring it remains comprehensible and valued by a wide range of audiences (Cao et al., 2018). Overall, the significance of formal style in translation depends on the characteristics of the original text and the requirements of the target reader (Li et al., 2014; Lewandowski, 2015; Ullman & Nivre, 2014; Zhou et al., 2012). Expertise includes a deep understanding of the subject and culture, as well as the ability to accurately and appropriately convey the meaning of the original text in the target language (Abdullah, 2018; Li et al., 2014; Qassem, 2021; Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, 2014; Zhou et al., 2012). The key to expertise in translation lies in preserving the style of the source text and gaining a profound understanding of the subject of the translated text (Espunya, 2020; Lewandowski, 2015; Mirzoyeva, 2023; Raharjo et al., 2020, Ullman & Nivre, 2014).

### 3.2.2 *Linguistic Scope*

This section focused on the linguistic scope. The scope of linguistics would be divided into three sub-themes: morphology (M), syntax (S), and semantics (SE). Word and structure formation were the subject of morphology (Li et al., 2014; Tang, 2021). The morphological

structure of words was essential in both non-English and English languages. Word formation and meaning were influenced by how morphemes were joined and modified. A similar methodology was used with the Swedish data, as with the English compound nouns in Ullman and Nivre's (2014) study. Harsh et al. (2015) emphasized that the first stage in linguistic translation between Hindi and English was the transformation of inflected nouns into pure form, which was subsequently translated into the target language according to the target language's linguistic rules. Furthermore, Al Salem et al. (2023) suggested that translators should carefully examine each plural noun, considering its morphological pattern. Syntax and morphology were closely connected because word structure determined how they were joined in sentences (Abdullah, 2018; Cao et al., 2018; Tang, 2021). The arrangement of morphologically generated words influences the grammatical structure of sentences in both non-English and English (Shi, 2023). Syntax and morphology both had a role in semantics, and morphological structure influenced word meaning, and the way words were arranged in a sentence determined how those meanings combined to convey a larger message (Abdullah, 2018; Cao et al., 2018; Espunya, 2020; Li et al., 2014; Tang, 2021; Zhou et al., 2012). Hence, understanding figurative language and cultural references in addition to referential meaning was crucial (Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, 2014). Qassem (2021) argued that the translator would recognize the intertextual signs and understand the Qur'anic metaphor's denotation and connotation through linguistic analyses. Harsh et al. (2015) conducted a study on Hindi compound nouns, and the findings indicated that the bilingual dictionary included compound nouns based on their meanings in both languages. Specific compound nouns had a single-word meaning, while others had many meanings.

### *3.2.3 The MT System*

This section describes the Machine Translation (MT) system, focusing on the identification of nouns (IN), paraphrase (P), and shallow segmentation (SS). In the context of code-mixed or code-switched language, it is crucial to identify the languages being used and their corresponding components (Li et al., 2014; Zhou et al., 2012). Accurate syntactic and semantic translations of code-mixed sentences necessitate the implementation of translation rules and POS labeling techniques (Harsh et al., 2015). High-quality phrase production requires precise identification and comprehension of functional noun phrases, which are word clusters that alter the meaning of a noun by carrying out a grammatical function within a sentence (Shi, 2023). According to Shi (2013), current research on translating Chinese noun phrases into English focuses on recognizing Base Noun Phrases (BNP) and Maximum Noun Phrases (MNP). Ullman and Nivre (2014), however, investigated the impact of paraphrasing noun-noun compounds in statistical machine translation from Swedish to English. Their findings suggested a slight improvement in translating paraphrased compound nouns but a modest decrease in the overall BLEU score. The transfer-based approach to translating long Arabic noun phrases into English involves three phases: syntactic analysis, abstract representation of input language, and grammatical rules of both languages (Qassem, 2021). Abdullah (2018) reports that noun sentences with accurate titles of 100 theses were segmented into noun phrases separated by prepositions, conjunctions, or quantifiers, and the separated phrases were translated individually. The results of testing the system showed that this method was efficient with most of the particles used in noun sentences.

### ***3.2.4 Hindrances in Translation***

The hindrances in the translation theme produced a further three sub-themes: complexity (C), lack of professional knowledge (LPK), and mistranslation (MI). Translation complexity is influenced by two main factors: the variability of languages and the difficulty of determination. Shi (2023) identified that these obstacles stem from the considerable diversity of linguistic patterns across different languages and cultures. Functional noun phrases, which carry a wealth of contextual information, are influenced by cultural factors and exhibit structural variations across languages. Additionally, determining the meanings of titles of publications, institutions, and official positions is crucial in semantic translation. In addition, determining the pronunciation and meaning of these proper nouns is particularly challenging; translators encounter difficulties in faithfully conveying their literal meaning or English pronunciation (Cao et al., 2018; Shi, 2023). Lack of professional knowledge is a significant obstacle in the domain of translation. Insufficient expertise in specific translation aspects frequently leads to less precise and contextually appropriate (Shi, 2023). Cao et al. (2021) highlighted the inherent challenges in translating Chinese Opera, exacerbated by the lack of standardized methods for translating proper nouns. Similarly, Tang (2021) argued that translators who lacked a profound comprehension of legal language unintentionally made translation mistakes due to phonetic or literal interpretations. Mistranslation involves inaccuracies or imperfections in translating a source text into another language, leading to misinterpretation or misunderstanding of the original content (Shi, 2023; Zhou et al., 2012). The implications of mistranslation are particularly significant for nouns, encompassing a range of linguistic elements, including the precise translation of nouns (Abdullah, 2018; Qassem, 2021). Since nouns are critical components of language with distinct semantics, their inaccurate translation can result in substantial misconceptions or misinterpretations. Qassem (2021) found that lacking exegetical analysis in translating the Qur'anic verse leads to broad and imprecise translations, thereby losing the original meaning in the translation process. Additionally, Abdullah (2018) observed that errors in translating Arabic sentences into English typically arise from misinterpreting the meaning of the particles or from misjudging the context in which they are used.

### ***3.2.5 Translation Strategies***

This subsection focuses on the translation strategies for nouns from 2013 to 2023. The strategies are categorized into seven sub-themes: literal translation, liberal translation, transliteration, addition, omission, substitution, and generalization, as well as changing the order and the word class.

***Literal Translation (LT)***. Literal translation is a form of translation in which the translator is required to have broad knowledge of both the culture of the source language and the culture of the target language (Qassen, 2021; Shi, 2023). Shirinzadeh and Mahadi (2014) stated that literal translation is the method by which the translator utilises the proper noun from the source text into the target languages without implementing any modifications. The literal translation aims to maintain word-for-word correspondence between the target and source languages (Lewandowski, 2015; Shi, 2023). Cao et al. (2018) highlighted that although the English and Chinese languages are linguistically unrelated, literal translation can be effective, particularly in traditional Chinese patterns like opera translation. This method preserves the source language's exact words, phrases, and sentences thereby maintaining the original meaning (Cao et al., 2018). However, Lewandowski (2015) claimed that there are circumstances where the literal translation, while grammatically



correct, may not accurately reflect the natural usage in the target language. Furthermore, Qassem (2021) argued that using literal translation for the Qur'an can distort hidden meanings and mislead readers.

***Liberal Translation (LIT).*** Liberal translation allows the translator more freedom to interpret and modify the text in a way that correctly conveys the idea of the original message, even if it involves using different words from the original text. Cao et al. (2018) pointed out that a significant amount of vocabulary in Chinese opera refers to the country's distinguished ethnic characteristics or customs. This category of words is more accurately conveyed in English through liberal translation, such as “枪” / “spear,” “布城”/ “City Wall as Setting”. Furthermore, Tang (2021) suggested the importance of precise semantic translation in avoiding misinterpreting of the original proper nouns' intended meanings. Adopting a liberal approach enables translators to use creative meaning, especially when confronted with language barriers (Cao et al., 2018; Lewandowski, 2015; Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, 2014; Tang, 2021).

***Transliteration (T).*** Transliteration is often used for names, technical terms, or specific words that lack direct equivalents in another script (Cao et al., 2018). This technique helps bridge the gap between different writing systems, allowing for a more accurate representation of the original sounds. It is crucial to note that transliteration does not involve altering the meaning of words; instead, it merely conveys the sounds of the original words using a different writing system (Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, 2014). According to Tang (2021), transliteration plays a crucial role as a foundational translation technique, particularly with proper nouns like names of places or individuals. It serves as a notable method for translating English nouns, and within the context of legal English, transliteration is frequently utilized for translating specific new words and names of individuals or locations.

***Addition (A).*** The addition strategy is a translation technique that involves introducing additional information into the target language that was not present in the source language (Cao et al., 2018; Qassem, 2021; Tang, 2021). This technique ensures that the content is fully understood in all aspects of the target language by adding details, explanations, or clarifications. Shirinzadeh and Mahadi (2014) emphasized the importance of translators thoroughly understanding the author's intention to effectively receive and convey information. This understanding requires a deep knowledge of the cultural context associated with specific names. In his work, Qassem (2021) demonstrated this approach by incorporating rhyme and rhythm into the text, providing the Surahs with introductions, and supplementing the content with explanatory notes.

***Omission (O).*** Omission is a translation strategy where nouns, or parts of them, in the source language, are removed from the target language. Translators may eliminate the original noun or a segment of it from the translated text for various motives (Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, 2014). Harsh et al. (2015) found that when translating Hindi nouns with the post position “kA or kI or kE” into English, these post positions should be omitted. Lewandowski (2015) discovered, through corpus data analysis, that reducing complex noun phrases often involves deleting words from three categories: nouns, participles, and relative clauses. However, Tang (2021) discovered that translators omit specific proper nouns in legal English, which could result in a direct repetition of the original text. Nevertheless, it was sometimes necessary to add descriptive phrases before or after the

original text to guarantee that the translated version accurately conveys the target language's meaning and allows readers to understand it clearly and thoroughly.

***Substitution and Generalization (SG).*** In the generalization translation strategy, the translator would replace a specific term in the source language with a more general noun in the target language. This strategy involves replacing nouns with super-ordinate noun counterparts. Substitution, on the other hand, occurs when the conventional equivalent of the noun in the source text is used in the target text. For instance, twenty proper nouns in the source Persian text were replaced with their equivalent in the translated version (Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, 2014). Modification in translation entails substituting the original noun in the target text with a replacement that indirectly aligns with the noun conventions or logic of the source language. This process can lead to significant changes in the structure or implied meanings of the translated text.

***Changing the Order and the Word Class (COW).*** Altering the order and word class is essential in the translation process. This theme gives rise to two sub-themes: recasting and recategorization. The recasting strategy is often used when the structure of the target language requires a reorganization of sentence fragments in a manner different from the sequence in the source language (Tang, 2021). Lewandowski (2015) claims that due to syntactic differences, Polish clauses, have a unique structure and are not typically placed in a pre-head position in English. Recategorization on the other hand, is a translation process designed to attain meaning or sense equivalence by modifying a specific word or phrase's word class or part of speech (Li et al., 2014). In the context of Polish-English translation, Lewandowski (2015) identified five categories of recategorization: abstract non-finite verb, empty verb-clause subject, nominalization-verb, noun phrase-non-infinite verb, and noun-adjective. These strategies are indispensable for guaranteeing both accuracy and fluency in the translated text.

#### **4. DISCUSSION**

The statement outlines concerns related to the translation of nouns from non-English to English, referencing specific studies by Cao et al. (2018), Tang (2021), and Qassem (2021). The sixteen studies mentioned focus on various aspects, including challenges in translating nouns, their linguistic characteristics, machine translation (MT) systems for noun translation, distinctive features of nouns, and translation strategies. The translation of nouns is significant in professional fields, as researchers investigate specific language characteristics that impact accurate noun translation. The studies suggested that nouns must be translated clearly and accurately to provide exact communication and understanding of technical terminology. Proper noun translation is essential in professional settings such as law, science, and technology because it explains particular concepts, preserves correctness and avoids misunderstandings. This is necessary to maintain information integrity and clarity in research papers, reports, or other materials, contributing to effective connections in professional settings. Ralli & Rouvalis (2022) highlight that nouns frequently convey specific linguistic characteristics, such as gender, number, and case, which vary significantly between source and target languages. Blanco-Elorrieta and Caramazza (2021) suggest that studying how certain characteristics contribute to translation challenges could improve the understanding of language complexities. Several studies reveal concerns with translation strategies for conveying word meaning from non-English to English as a target language due to cultural differences (Al Salem et al., 2023; Lewandowski, 2015; Qassem, 2021; Shirinzadeh & Mahadi, 2014). Five of the seven sub-themes in noun translation—

literal translation, liberal translation, transliteration, addition, and omission—are commonly used. The other two sub-themes, substitution and generalization, and altering the word class and order, are less frequently employed in translations because they were limited to the translation of specific language nouns, such as Chinese (Tang, 2021; Li et al., 2014; Zhou et al., 2012), as well as Hindi (Harsh et al., 2015). Kolev (2016) notes the complexity of translation as a task that requires a comprehensive consideration of linguistic, cultural, and grammatical factors. Translators must skillfully balance these elements to ensure accurate communication while navigating the nuances of the target context. However, in the translation of nouns, the translation strategies used by the translators do not mention the two translation strategies of foreignization and domestication. Terminology translation often employs strategies that are closer to literal translation, transliteration, or other techniques that prioritize conveying a term's specific meaning (Cao et al., 2018; Lewandowski, 2015). Foreignization and domestication are regarded as principles applicable to translating texts in general, including considerations beyond individual terminology (Obeidat & Mahadi, 2019; Zuhairana et al., 2021). Sabzalipour and Pishkar (2015) discuss the importance of cultural awareness in accurately translating proper names, necessitating knowledge of both the source and target languages' cultures. Ningsih (2016) found that foreignization is a dominant approach in proper noun translations, indicating its ideological orientation.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The present study has conducted a comprehensive analysis of previous studies on the translation of nouns from non-English to English spanning 2013 to 2023. This literature review enhances understanding of the studies conducted on English-translated nouns, identifying knowledge gaps and opening up new avenues for future investigation. This study evaluated sixteen papers using a systematic literature review approach. These sixteen articles that were selected for thematic analysis yielded five major themes: (1) the features of nouns; (2) linguistic scope; (3) the MT system; (4) hindrances in translation; and (5) translation strategies. A total of twenty sub-themes emerged from these primary themes. The interconnectedness of these themes was evident as the significance of these responsibilities extended from one to another. Under many circumstances, nouns are crucial in translation because they signify key concepts, persons, and places. The translation must be accurate to convey the intended content and context. Translators pay close attention to morphological, syntactic, and semantic elements to ensure readability in the target language. As a whole, the connection of the text was much enhanced by accurate noun translations. While this thematic analysis of previously published studies on noun translation from non-English to English is comprehensive, research in this area, especially on the translation of cultural nouns on tourism websites remains scarce. This gap indicates a need for more research to fully understand the quality of cultural noun translation and its implications on intercultural communication strategies. The meticulous translation of cultural nouns serves to afford target readers a deep and immersive understanding of diverse cultural paradigms, thereby fostering the advancement of cross-cultural exchange and comprehension. Thus, future studies should explore translation strategies in other word classes, particularly foreignization, and domestication, even though current findings show a limited focus on noun translation strategies from Chinese to English. There is potential for further research and development of theoretical frameworks in the field of translation studies.

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## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

The initial draft of the paper was written by Shang Xiaoyan. The article was edited and reviewed by Teh Hong Siok and Nur Huslinda Che Mat. The final draft of the paper has been read and approved by all authors.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None declared.

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# A Transformative Approach for Ombudsman Requirements in Malaysia

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## ABSTRACT

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*In 2016, the Ombudsman for Financial Services (OFS) was established in Malaysia as the official scheme operator of the ombudsman. It operates as an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) platform for consumers and financial service providers, attempting to obtain satisfactory outcomes for all parties while adhering to transparency and accountability. However, no standard measurement or explicit criterion is indicated in the legislation for the certification or qualification of an ombudsman officer. This lack of standardisation raises concerns about the competency and skill of the individuals working as ombudsman officers, thereby weakening the OFS's efficacy in resolving financial issues. This paper seeks to fill this gap by investigating several other ADR officers' current procedures and qualifications in Malaysia. This paper aims to establish prospective benchmarks and best practices for ombudsman officers in Malaysia by researching the qualifications and procedures of ADR officials in the present institution. This will help to develop a more comprehensive structure for certifying and qualifying individuals for the role, thereby improving the OFS's credibility and efficacy in resolving financial disputes. This paper employs library-based research, a statutory approach, and a comparative method to examine existing frameworks and find best practices. The primary findings from evaluating other ADR institutions can assist in identifying potential gaps or areas for improvement in the current system, enabling the establishment of a more complete and powerful ombudsman system. The practical implications of this paper are essential for policymakers and stakeholders in enhancing the certification and qualification process for individuals in the ombudsman role. Overall, having a legislative necessity for an ombudsman officer is critical for fostering justice and resolving problems in financial disputes, enhancing trust and confidence among consumers.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism in Malaysia offers various methods of resolving disputes outside the traditional court system. It cannot be denied that those who feel dissatisfied can go to a court of justice to settle any kind of dispute. However, ADR provides an alternative avenue that is often quicker, more cost-effective, and less formal than litigation (Ahmad et al., 2022). By opting for ADR, individuals and businesses can maintain a level of control over the resolution process and potentially preserve relationships that may be strained through a court battle. This is also agreed by Raja Abdul Aziz & Abdul Hamid (2017), who highlighted the fact that the court is the main platform to resolve disputes, but not for financial disputes. With so many disadvantages of the judicial process, financial consumers avoid the formal legal system and prefer to seek an alternative resolution that better serves the business and financial worlds. Multiple ADR mechanisms exist to support the justice system, including arbitration, mediation, adjudication, conciliation, negotiation, and the ombudsman. All these mechanisms promote social harmony, which may legally and peacefully settle any dispute. This is because ADR depends on the cooperation given by both parties, their consent, and mutual agreement between them (Syed A Rahman & Mokhtar, 2017).

In Malaysia, the Asian International Arbitration Centre, the Malaysian Mediation Centre, and the *Sulh* Council in Syariah Court are among the established ADR institutions that have played a crucial role in easing the burden on the court system and promoting faster and more cost-effective resolution of disputes (Abdul Hak et al., 2020; Labanieh et al., 2019; Safei & Chua Abdullah, 2023). Another institution, the Ombudsman for Financial Services (OFS), was introduced as the first official scheme operator of the ombudsman explicitly deals with financial disputes (Mohd Zain et al., 2022). Since 2016, the OFS has ensured a fair and impartial resolution of financial disputes, providing individuals and businesses with a reliable avenue to seek redress.

In developing a more comprehensive structure for certifying and qualifying ombudsman officers, this paper explores the legal requirements for the appointment of an ombudsman to deal with financial disputes. It is a significant step towards promoting consumer protection and maintaining the integrity of the financial sector. This paper looks into other ADR institutions that provide specific criteria and qualifications for the dispute resolution officer in the relevant legislation. These criteria and qualifications ensure that the dispute resolution officer possesses the skills and expertise to handle financial disputes effectively.

### ***1.1 Problem Statement***

The development of the ombudsman scheme in Malaysia can be seen through primary legislation, such as the Financial Services Act 2013 and the Islamic Financial Services Act 2013 (Mohamad & Hassan, 2019). These two-parent laws are supported by their subsidiary legislation, the Financial Services (Financial Ombudsman Scheme) Regulation 2015. It contains many provisions relating to implementing the ombudsman in handling financial disputes (Bank Negara Malaysia, 2015).

Nevertheless, the current legislation does not provide specific provisions to standardise requirements for the appointment of an ombudsman. The qualification to be an ombudsman is absent since no explicit provision states the criteria that must be fulfilled before being chosen by the board of directors. As far as the study is concerned, there are no specific requirements for the certification or qualification of an ombudsman officer in Malaysia. In any related legislation, there are no proper guidelines to determine the fit and appropriate criteria for

being appointed as an ombudsman officer. The ombudsman needs to have several requirements so that the ombudsman services can increase confidence and trustworthiness among financial consumers. It is mentioned in Regulation 4(1)(a) that OFS shall have qualified, experienced, and expert officers in resolving disputes, but no details are provided even in the Term of Reference (TOR). Even the constitution of OFS does not provide the qualification but rather the disqualification requirement to be an ombudsman. The absence of specific guidelines for the ombudsman has created an unclear entry path for this critical position as the third party during the dispute hearing process.

The annual report published by OFS emphasises that the institution must deal with thousands of cases every year. For instance, in 2019, OFS handled 1,380 cases, of which 1,047 were registered, and 333 were brought forward from the previous year. While 944 cases were disposed of in 2019, 436 were carried forward to 2020 (OFS, 2019). Most of the time, the financial services provider failed to fulfil the 6th Principle of the Fair Treatment of Financial Consumers published by the Central Bank of Malaysia, resulting in the financial consumers bringing the matter before the OFS (Central Bank of Malaysia, 2019). In handling all the registered disputes, OFS needs a reliable officer to comprehensively understand the products and services provided by the financial industry. If not, they may decide cases beyond their capabilities, resulting in unfair and inconsistent outcomes.

The ombudsman officer and the case managers are essential human resources for the OFS institution; therefore, qualified people must be capable and credible in carrying out their duties. In addition, it is sad to note that the data recorded shows that up until 2022, the OFS currently consists of only two Ombudsman officers, fifteen case managers, and seven support staff to deal with thousands of cases. As financial products evolve rapidly, the number of cases may also increase; thus, the human capital of OFS must increase, with the necessary skillsets to deal with emerging issues among Malaysians.

This research explores the significance of having the standard and relevant legal requirements for appointing an ombudsman in the current regulation. By examining the existing legal framework, this research aims to shed light on the potential implications of a lack of standardised and relevant legal requirements for the appointment of an ombudsman. Understanding the significance of such requirements can enhance transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in ombudsman institutions in Malaysia, particularly OFS. The other ADR regulations in Malaysia can provide insights into the importance of having standardised and relevant legal requirements for the appointment of officers as the middle person.

Therefore, this study's research questions primarily concern how important it is to include a standard minimum requirement for an ombudsman in regulations, how officers are appointed in other ADR regulations, and what can be done to improve the current legal system for choosing an ombudsman ~~improved~~. By looking into these questions, the study intends to find out how other ADR laws choose officers and how important it is to include the standard minimum requirement of an ombudsman in the rules. In the end, the study seeks to come up with suggestions for the regulators to improve the existing legal framework related to selecting an ombudsman. The ombudsman should possess expertise in financial matters and be independent of undue influence, ensuring their decisions are unbiased and in line with the law. Additionally, clear guidelines should be established regarding the ombudsman's

jurisdiction, powers, and procedures to ensure a fair and efficient resolution process for all parties involved.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Throughout human history, there have been multiple ways to resolve disputes. In addition to the court proceeding as the traditional method, the common ADR mechanisms are mediation and arbitration, followed by other forms, including judicial settlement conferences and ombudsman, to name a few (Abdul Hamid & Nik Mohammad, 2016). In other words, nowadays, people develop a better alternative platform to resolve disputes and problems than the traditional court system.

Historically, the ADR concept can be said to be as ancient as the culture of the Malaysian people since it has been informally practised by multi-race, multi-cultural and multi-religious societies (Syed A. Rahman & Mokhtar, 2017) which has been a practice for a long time. Oseni and Ahmad also proved that the ADR concept had been introduced informally into the culture of the Malaysian races; hence, it is not alien to the people when applied formally. Malaysians accept the concept of ADR very well, as it can suit the needs of the people while still upholding justice in different circumstances (Oseni & Ahmad, 2016). The most common ADR methods in the Malaysian legal system are arbitration, mediation, conciliation and adjudication (Dhillon & Ling, 2015). After the enactment of the Arbitration Act in 2005, Malaysians started to admit the importance of resolving disputes through the arbitrator, which led to the introduction of the Mediation Act in 2012 for mediation services (Abraham, 2000).

In Malaysia, the adjudication process is managed by the Asian International Arbitration Centre (AIAC), which handles disputes within the jurisdiction of the Construction Industry Payment and Adjudication Act 2012 (CIPAA 2012). The adjudication process involves disputes in the construction industry due to its inherent nature, which is very complex, involves relatively long project durations, and is subject to many uncertainties. Having CIPAA 2012 helps facilitate regular and timely payment and provides remedies for the recovery of payment in construction industry dispute resolution (Mazani et al., 2019). On the other hand, mediation operates under the Malaysian Mediation Centre (MMC), which helps and provides guidance toward fair settlements for all the parties involved (Dhillon & Ling, 2015). Typically, people use mediation services in almost all forms of interpersonal conflict in present-day Malaysian society. The existence of mediation services helps society deal with their disputes in every matter, except constitutional disputes and criminal matters, as provided by the MMC. While Malaysia is practising Islamic principles in certain circumstances, the *Majlis Sulh* Unit (Sulh Council) is among the ADR mechanisms that have been officially established within the administration of the Syariah Court by the Syariah Judiciary Department (Abdul Hak et al., 2020). It has been enacted in section 99 of the Syariah Court Civil Procedure Federal Territory Act 1998, which provides that the parties to any proceedings may, at any stage of the proceedings, hold Sulh to settle their dispute following such rules as may be prescribed or, in the absence of such rules, under Islamic Law. Sulh Council is necessary to deal with disputes relating to Muslims, especially those with marital discord or family disputes (Abdul Hamid & Nik Mohammad, 2016).

The recent legal developments of ADR in Malaysia indicate that the ombudsman has been implemented in dealing with financial disputes. Generally, an ombudsman is a person who can handle and resolve problems fairly and expeditiously outside the courts or other legal procedures. Many countries have developed ombudsmen to resolve disputes, especially in financial matters (INFO Network, 2007). Undoubtedly, the financial ombudsman exists to

support improvements and reduce disputes in the financial business with the consumers, resolving when they failed to resolve themselves and, subsequently, reducing the burden on the court cases (David & Francis, 2012). Aside from having OFS as the first and sole institution that operates to deal with financial disputes, the ombudsman has also been successfully introduced in the higher educational institutions, as discussed by Atikah et al. (2023) and the Integrity and Ombudsman Unit Sarawak (UNIONS) under the Premier Department of Sarawak (Zulkarnain et al., 2024).

After all, since adjudication, mediation, *sulh*, and the ombudsman are currently considered the preferred methods of ADR in Malaysia, this research would like to explore the legal requirement of appointing officers to handle ADR cases. Specifically, this research focuses on whether the current ombudsman scheme in Malaysia adequately meets the legal requirements and if any improvements or modifications are necessary.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This research employs qualitative research, which triangulates the data obtained from the library-based research with doctrinal legal research. The primary sources of laws and regulatory instruments in Malaysia are the Financial Services Act 2013, Islamic Financial Services Act 2013, Financial Services (Financial Ombudsman Scheme) Regulations 2015, and the other ADR legislations such as the Construction Industry Payment and Adjudication Act 2012, Mediation Act 2012, and Syariah Court Civil Procedure (Federal Territories) Act 1998. The library research is conducted using information from the online databases of Current Law Journal, LexisNexis, Scopus, and Wiley Online Library. By using several keywords such as "Criteria", "Qualification", "ADR Institution", "Ombudsman", and "Legislation", a comprehensive literature review of the selected materials, including journal articles is analyzed to provide a thorough understanding of the topic. This method ensures that the research is based on up-to-date and credible sources, contributing to a well-rounded analysis of the subject matter. Then, a comparative study is conducted to draw significant lessons from other ADR mechanisms. By comparing different ADR mechanisms, the research aims to identify best practices and potential areas for improvement in the implementation of Ombudsman services.

### **4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULT**

#### ***4.1 Relevant Regulation of Ombudsman in Malaysia***

Since 2016, the establishment of the OFS has been an excellent resolution platform for financial consumers to lodge their related financial disputes with the current amount of 221 registered financial services providers (Mohd Zain et al., 2022). This is following to the introduction of the financial ombudsman scheme in the two existing parent laws, namely the Financial Services Act (FSA) 2013 and the Islamic Financial Services Act (IFSA) in 2013. The government introduces explicitly a scheme to deal with the financial disputes between financial consumers and their financial service providers. In addition, the enactment of the subsidiary legislations, namely the Financial Services (Financial Ombudsman Scheme) Regulations 2015 and the Islamic Financial Services (Financial Ombudsman Scheme) Regulations 2015, strengthened the implementation of the financial ombudsman scheme (Engku Ali & Oseni, 2017). Then, the Term of References (TOR) is also explicitly developed by the OFS so that it could set out the scope of the scheme, the terms of membership, the types of disputes, the award that the ombudsman may grant, and the procedures and timeframe for a dispute to be heard by the OFS.

In appointing the ombudsman, 2015 Regulation has stated in Regulation 4(1)(a) that the scheme operator, which is OFS in Malaysia, can operate the financial ombudsman scheme in a fair and timely manner, including having officers who are qualified, experienced, and experts in resolving disputes. In other words, the OFS in Malaysia needs to be equipped with a team of skilled professionals with the knowledge and expertise to handle and resolve financial disputes effectively. This ensures that individuals seeking assistance from the scheme can expect high competency and efficiency in addressing their concerns. OFS shall have qualified, experienced, and expert officers in resolving disputes. Nevertheless, there is no specific definition of 'qualified, experienced, and experts' in any part of the regulation to discuss the ombudsman appointment. On the other hand, Paragraph 4(1)(b) and Regulation 8 may provide provisions that state that the board of directors of the OFS shall consist of people who fulfil the fit and proper criteria set out in the Second Schedule. The Second Schedule lists the details related to the fit and proper qualification to be on the OFS board of directors.

Furthermore, the paper examines the constitution of the OFS, which preserved the written Memorandum of Association (MOA) and Article of Association (AOA) from the previous Companies Act of 1965. This is allowed per Section 34(c) and Section 619(3) of the Companies Act of 2016. Under Article 55(b), the clause highlighted the grounds for disqualification of the ombudsman that make him no longer suited, qualified, or capable of holding the office of an ombudsman and, therefore, may be terminated by the board. These provisions ensure that the constitution of the OFS remains consistent with the legal framework established by the Companies Act of 2016. In other words, there are clear criteria outlines for potential termination stated in the constitution.

Since the appointment of an officer also falls under the purview of the OFS constitution, it is essential to have provisions that highlight the fit and proper criteria of an ombudsman officer to maintain the accountability and integrity within the OFS. These provisions maintain the integrity of the OFS and ensure that the ombudsman officer is well-suited for the role and can effectively carry out their duties. By outlining clear criteria for termination and appointment, the constitution of the OFS establishes a transparent and accountable process for selecting and evaluating ombudsman officers.

#### ***4.2 The Appointment of Officers in Other ADR Mechanisms***

Considering the other ADR mechanism, section 4 of the CIPAA 2012 highlights the competency standard and criteria of the adjudicator. Among others, the person must have seven years of working experience and hold a Certificate in Adjudication from an institution recognised by the Minister. Furthermore, he is not an undischarged bankrupt and has not been convicted of any criminal offence. While the adjudication mechanism provides strict requirements, it may establish an institution that satisfies many of its clients and is the most widely used dispute-resolution method in the Malaysian construction industry (Mazani et al., 2019).

On the other hand, sections 7(2) and (7) of the Mediation Act 2012 state that the mediator should have the relevant qualifications, related knowledge or experience in mediation acquired through training or proper tertiary education and is required to fulfil the mediation institution requirements (Dhillon & Ling, 2015), other requirements are also stated on the MMC websites, whereby those who are neutral, impartial, independent, and accredited by MMC and who may be either an advocate or solicitor hold a valid practising certificate for the time being appointed by MMC as a mediator. These requirements indicate that a mediator is a highly fit person who can mediate to resolve the disputing matters.

The Sulh officer must be someone with a Degree in Syariah from any local or international university or a Diploma in Administration of Islamic Judiciary from IIUM or UKM or hold a Certificate for Conducting Mediation from Mediation Consultants recognised by JKSM (Abdul Hamid & Nik Mohammad, 2016; Wan Mohd Fadzli, 2018). Recently, 99 participants from USIM enrolled in the Sulh-Mediation Skills Certificate programme, which lasted five (5) days and qualified them as sole mediators (Mohamed Yunus, 2023). This means that to be a *Sulh* officer, a person must have a professional certificate, training, education, and knowledge, especially when dealing with human relationships. This is agreed by Ramli et al., (2022) since the roles and competency of the selected officers can influence the success of mediation in the *sulh* sessions.

The table below summarises the qualifications for appointing the relevant independent third party for each mechanism.

Table 1: The Selected ADR Mechanism in Malaysia to Be Referred to Ombudsman

ADR Mechanism	Adjudication	Mediation	Sulh Council
<b>The Operating Institution</b>	AIAC	MMC	Syariah Courts
<b>Legislation</b>	Construction Industry Payment and Adjudication Act 2012	Mediation Act 2012	Syariah Court Civil Procedure (Federal Territories) Act 1998
<b>Independent Third Party</b>	Adjudicator	Mediator	Sulh Officer
<b>Qualification</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seven years of working experience</li> <li>A holder of a Certificate in Adjudication from an institution recognised by the Minister</li> <li>Not an undischarged bankrupt</li> <li>Not been convicted of any criminal offence</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have the relevant qualifications, related knowledge, or experience in mediation</li> <li>Training or proper tertiary education</li> <li>Fulfil the mediation institution requirements</li> <li>A neutral, impartial, independent, and accredited by MMC</li> <li>An advocate and solicitor holding a valid practising certificate</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The minimum qualification in the education level of Degree in Syariah from any local or international university</li> <li>Alternatively, having a Diploma in Administration of Islamic Judiciary from IIUM or UKM</li> <li>Alternatively, having a Certificate for Conducting Mediation from Mediation Consultants recognised by JKSM, such as a Sulh-Mediation Skills Certificate by USIM-JKSM</li> </ol>

Sources: (Abdul Hamid & Nik Mohammad, 2016; Dhillon & Ling, 2015; Mazani et al., 2019; Mohamed Yunus, 2023; Wan Mohd Fadzli, 2018)

### 5. DISCUSSION AND STUDY IMPLICATIONS

From the above finding, the paper highlighted that the current ombudsman scheme in Malaysia did not adequately meet the legal requirements, and some improvements or modifications are necessary. This research found that the current legislation for the ombudsman, either in the 2015 Regulation or the OFS Constitution itself, does not provide an explicit provision to specify the requirements for the appointment of an ombudsman. This lack of clarity regarding the appointment of an ombudsman could lead to potential challenges and inconsistencies in the selection process. As the ombudsman is an essential figure in resolving disputes between financial consumers and their service providers, it is crucial to have a clear and comprehensive framework in place for their appointment. Without such

provisions, there may be ambiguity and potential challenges in ensuring a fair and transparent selection process based on merit. Additionally, a lack of clarity regarding the qualifications and responsibilities of an ombudsman could undermine their effectiveness in addressing consumer grievances and maintaining trust in the financial sector. Therefore, policymakers must address this issue and establish a comprehensive framework outlining the qualifications and procedures for appointing an ombudsman.

From the Islamic perspective, the Muhtasib (Ombudsman in the modern world) must have high qualifications and be wise, mature, pious, well-poised, sane, free, just, empathic, and a learned scholar (faqih) (Ahmad et al., 2022). These qualifications ensure that the ombudsman has the knowledge and expertise to handle complex financial disputes and make fair and informed decisions. Therefore, the financial ombudsman scheme in Malaysia also need to have these criteria in the relevant legislation to ensure the appointment of qualified individuals who can effectively address financial grievances and uphold justice in the system.

Compared to the abovementioned ADR institution, which explicitly states their qualifications for appointing anyone fit and proper for the position, OFS should similarly provide a high-quality standard as a requirement to be appointed as an ombudsman officer. This will help maintain the credibility and integrity of the financial ombudsman scheme in Malaysia, ensuring that only competent individuals are entrusted with resolving complex financial disputes. Based on the objectives of OFS to dispose of matters swiftly, efficiently, and effectively, the staff's qualifications, experience, and relevant personal qualities need to be emphasised. The OFS staff, particularly the ombudsman officer and the case manager, should have relevant qualifications and experience in the relevant field to ensure they thoroughly understand financial regulations and practices. Additionally, possessing strong analytical and problem-solving skills will enable them to effectively navigate complex financial disputes and provide fair resolutions for all the parties involved. By prioritising these qualifications and experiences, the OFS can uphold its commitment to delivering efficient and effective resolutions, ultimately enhancing trust in the financial ombudsman scheme in Malaysia. As a result, it is crucial to review and revise the existing legislation procedure to ensure that it clearly outlines the role and responsibilities of the ombudsman in the dispute resolution process.

## **6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

The OFS institution has made remarkable strides in providing a platform for financial consumers to file their complaints, as one of the relevant ADR mechanisms in Malaysia. Individuals can effectively address and resolve their concerns with an expert ombudsman or case manager. Introducing the financial ombudsman scheme in the legislation has also significantly improved the accessibility and efficiency of the complaint resolution process for financial consumers in Malaysia. While the other ADR mechanisms consider accommodating the relevant qualifications under their existing laws, the OFS should have a supportive legislative framework for appointing the expert ombudsman.

This research would recommend to the policymaker or the regulator the following model clauses for having a clear and specific qualification for appointing an ombudsman in the 2015 Regulations or amendment in the OFS Constitution. Among others, the ombudsman must have a minimum requirement of a legal certificate in law degree and be a holder of a professional certificate in financial services and products. Alternatively, he or she may have a bachelor's degree in psychology, administration, or business, which may help him or her to understand the problem related to their field. In other words, a person with legal, financial



planning, finance/business, or dispute resolution qualifications would be well-equipped to handle complex issues.

Moreover, possessing the qualities of wisdom, maturity, poise, and sanity is crucial for maintaining professionalism and objectivity in the role of an ombudsman. Additionally, having traits like independence, fairness, effectiveness, openness, transparency, and accountability align perfectly with the principles of an ombudsman. Additionally, the ombudsman should have at least five years of experience in the legal and financial sectors to ensure they possess the necessary expertise and knowledge. These qualities enable effective communication with diverse customers and facilitate the identification of underlying problems through attentive listening and thoughtful questioning.

In conclusion, this research has established the significance of the urgent need to have qualified ombudsman officers for a better and more effective resolution in Malaysia. Inserting specific criteria and qualifications for appointing an ombudsman officer in the legal framework helps enhance its effectiveness.

### ***6.1 Study Limitation***

The research's limitation is that it focused solely on the role and qualifications of an ombudsman in the financial sector. It did not explore an ombudsman's potential impact or effectiveness in other industries or sectors. Additionally, the research did not investigate other countries' jurisdictions system to see if the qualifications and skills required for ombudsmen in the financial sector are consistent globally.

### ***6.2 Suggestion for Future Research***

Some suggestions for future research include examining the role of an ombudsman in various industries and sectors to determine if the same qualifications and skills are necessary across the board. In addition, it would be valuable to explore how different regulatory frameworks and cultural contexts influence the necessary expertise and knowledge in different countries.

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## **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION**

The contributions of MIMZ in conceptualising and writing the original draft were instrumental in shaping the content of the manuscript. The validation, review, and editing of the final draft by NER and III further enhanced the quality and accuracy of the paper. The unanimous approval of all authors on the final manuscript reflects their collective agreement on its completeness and readiness for publication.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None declared.

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# Examining Key Stakeholder’s Neglect as an Obstacle to Effective Administrative Reform in the Nigerian Power Sector

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Reform Outcomes

*Scholars have long recognized a stable electricity supply as a critical infrastructure required to facilitate economic growth and development in all nations. But, despite concerted efforts made by the successive governments in Nigeria to rejig the power sector for optimal performance. No substantial progress has been achieved; the initiatives have over time produced unintended outcomes. Thus, this study examines issues ascribed to the unintended outcomes against the anticipated result. In this article, a survey research method, a cross-section study, and a purposive sampling technique were adopted. The study distributed a total of 463 closed-ended questionnaires where 401 were returned to establish the complex relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Data obtained was analysed using WarpPLS software, a variance-based Structural Equation Model. The study found that stakeholder support, which is required to drive a purposeful reform exercise, was conspicuously lacking. The research suggests a strong alignment, collaboration, and cooperation amongst the stakeholders as a necessity and a sine qua non to purposeful reform outcome.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the public sector management parlance, the issue of administrative reform is a widely discussed phenomenon in both developed and developing countries. Historically, administrative reform emerged many centuries ago but attracted global attention in the 1940s and became prominent between the 1960s-1970s (Caiden,1979). This simply implies that administrative reform is not an emerging issue, but an old, and recurring issue. Undoubtedly, administrative reform is a vital ingredient of development cross-nationally, irrespective of the pattern, direction, and speed of change, because improved administrative capacity is central to the implementation of new ideas, plans, and policies (Caiden, 1969). Put simply, administrative reform entails the reorganization of institutions and structures considered ineffective or requiring innovation for better service.

Interestingly, academic discussions on the impact of administrative reform on economic growth and national development, most especially in developing economies, became more intense in the last century. This aptly attests to renewed interest in the continuation of the agitation for improving electricity access to enhance individual livelihood and accomplish nations the nation-states. Sarkodie and Adams (2020: 1) assert that "*without electricity, the pathways out of poverty are narrow and long*".

From the foregoing, it became apparent that the role of a public institution as a critical player in accomplishing this fundamental objective of this state cannot be underestimated. Undoubtedly, an efficient public sector facilitates a sound, balanced, and virile societal development (Nasrollah, 2004). This is especially true in the provision of public goods and services, namely: stable electricity, portable water supplies, and other infrastructural facilities. Notably, the availability of these commodities aptly indicates the bedrock of the state's obligation to the populace under the good governance principle. Yet, Nigeria and many developing countries (LDCs), are still struggling and grappling with the challenge of adequate provision of this essential service. Seidu, (2010: 1) acknowledged these challenges and admitted that "*without reform in the sector, good governance and efficient administration can be looked upon as wishful thinking*". Undoubtedly, an essential component of Nigerian governance is administrative reform, which aims to improve the effectiveness, transparency, and responsiveness of the public sector to the demands of the populace. The failure of administrative reform programmes across the nation has been hindered by several issues, despite the general recognition of their necessity. One major barrier has been the disregard of important stakeholders. A wide range of parties are involved in administrative reform, including local communities, businesses, government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and individuals. The success of reform initiatives throughout African countries has been hampered by a persistent problem: ignoring the interests, viewpoints, and contributions of these important stakeholders. It is noteworthy that stakeholders are often neglected in Nigerian administrative reform initiatives. This in most cases result in may result in policies that do not align with the diverse needs and expectations of the population (Nkosi & Diallo, 2021). Stakeholder neglect can take many different forms, according to research, including little consultation and little involvement in decision-making.

### ***1.1 Problem Statement***

Despite the government's giant strides to reposition the sector for efficient delivery through successive reform initiatives. Conversely, the government has demonstrated more commitment to the sector over the years and huge financial investment in the sector (FGN, 2010). For example, between 1999-2015, a huge sum #2.7 trillion equivalent to USD 8.8

billion (at # 305 per USD), was allocated and disbursed but no commensurate result (Igali, 2015). Nonetheless, evidence from end-users suggests that no meaningful progress has been achieved. In a nutshell, the reform programme has since failed to produce anticipated outcomes. For example, the quarterly report for 2015 produced by NERC (2016) unveiled that a total of 47,127 electricity consumers lodged complaints against electricity companies over erratic power supply. Also, the NERC quarterly record showed that the number of complainants increased from 47,127 to 109,048 over interrupted likewise inadequate supply against power distribution companies in the third quarter of 2017 (NERC, 2018).

This undoubtedly pinpoints the fact that the majority of customers are dissatisfied with the service provided by the power companies. The evidence from these reports suggests that one out of every five electricity consumers is displeased with the quality of services provided by this utility company. To further buttress this argument, the former Vice President's assertion rightly alluded to deep concern over states of electricity supply in the post-reform as reported by Tony (2019) thus:

*“Power sector has failed to deliver the desired result after years of privatisation. The sector remains stalled in delivering power to many Nigerian homes and businesses. We must act as a matter of national importance and we are committed to doing so, to work and re-engineer the sector for much more effective performance.”*

Conversely, the President also shared greater frustrations on the negative impact of poor electricity delivery to the national economy as reported by Philip (2015) thus:

*“No single cause can be identified to explain the Nigerian's poor economic performance over the years than the power situation. It is a national shame that an economy of 180 million generates only 4,000MW, and distributes even less. Continuous tinkering with the structures of power supply and distribution and close to \$20b expanded since 1999 have only brought darkness, frustration, misery, and resignation among Nigerians. We will not allow this to go on. Careful studies are underway during this transition to identify the quickest, safest, and most cost-effective way to bring light and relief to Nigerians”.*

Moreover, this ugly situation forced a quarter of the population to rely on a generator, 32.3 percent resorted to a rechargeable lamp for lighting. In contrast, 21.7 percent rely on a kerosene lamp and battery touch lights (Okpi, 2018). Papaefstratiou (2019) offered useful insight into the problem when he asserted the absence of mutual trust amongst key stakeholders in the reform process. The stakeholders include political actors, bureaucrats, professionals, and interest groups (civil society organisation).

For instance, political actors, bureaucrats, professionals, and interest groups (civil society organisation) have significantly affected positive reform outcomes. Therefore, the fundamental thrust of this paper is: to ascertain whether political, bureaucratic, and professional support influences a successful reform. Additionally, to establish whether reform decision moderates the relationship between professional support and at the same time reconfirm Ouda's (2008) generic reform model.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Several studies have discussed reform in the public sector institutions aimed at achieving optimal performance. Many scholars have advocated for administrative reform to facilitate modernisation and change in society to effect social and economic transformation (Hussain, 1997, Farazmand, 1999; Brunsson, 2006). Admittedly, Caiden and Sundaram (2004) maintained that reform exercises a significant impact on building the capacity of public sector organisations. In this sense, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) agree that effective public institutions were strategic to reinvigorate and bolster the national economy. To corroborate this argument, Van Wart and Kapucu (2011) maintain that reform initiatives are often designed to facilitate institutional strengthening for improved performance.

From another perspective, many studies have justified support for privatisation as a deliberate effort to instill efficiency in service delivery (Adamantiades, Besant-Jones, & Hoskote, 1995; Bacon, 1999; Besant-Jones, 2006; Gratwick & Eberhard, 2008; Willians & Ghanadan, 2006). In light of this, Pollitt (2007; Shoshonis, 2011) identified privatisation as the most common pattern of electricity sector reform in both developed and developing countries. Additionally, notably amongst scholars whose research has shown vested attention to electricity reform in developing nations include (Jamsab *et al.*, 2004; Andersson, 2004; Pollitt, 2007 in Sioshansi, 2011).

However, Meyer *et al.* (2018) raised concern that privatisation in developing countries has proved itself to be a challenging exercise. This is because the exercise is most likely to generate an unexpected outcome and maintain that privatisation always accompanies controversies. In the same manner, Brirdsall and Nelli's (2003) study reveals divergent opinions on the effect of privatisation on poverty and the national economy. This might be the reason why many unveil strong skeptics and apprehension about the multiplier effect of the privatisation exercise against the fundamental objective of state principle.

Despite the divergent standpoint and ambiguities that have characterised the privatisation programme. There seems to be a consensus on what constitutes the rationale for or cardinal objective of privatisation, which entails enhancing competition and improving service quality (Pitelis & Clarke, 1993, Asmeron, 1994; Farazmand, 2000; Zhang *et al.*; 2002; Mota, 2004; Jamasb *et al.*; 2005). Notably, this ambitious objective cannot be accomplished in isolation, which is why many studies affirm close synergy and alignment among stakeholders in the electricity value chain. For instance, the Association of National Electricity Distribution (2019) maintains that the objective of power sector reform would not be realised without alignment, collaboration, and cooperation amongst stakeholders in the electricity delivery chain.

Admittedly, Muhammed's (2012) assertion corroborates the above argument that successful reform has failed to actualise far-reaching results. This is simply because facilitators of reform seem to work in isolation and secrecy, and this often deprives the process of expected participation and support from key stakeholders. Caiden (1979), while alluding to this argument, mentioned that most reforms fail not because strategies are incorrect, wrong, or implemented by unqualified reformers but merely due to inadequate support from key stakeholders. Consequently, when this happens, the reformers face stiff resistance and hostility from the public, who are often skeptical about change; of course, this negatively affects reform outcomes. Concisely, Meyer-Sahling, and Jan-Hinrik (2006) agree that the inability to establish synergy amongst key stakeholders in the reform process was largely



responsible for unintended reform outcomes. Much literature has underscored the significance of various stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector entities, and consumers, in driving administrative reform (Oladiran et al., 2017). Understanding and aligning the interests of these stakeholders are critical for successful reform initiatives.

In the same manner, Sangita (2002: 340) rightly observes that *"the success of reform depends upon the government's ability to present strategic reform based on the vision in consultation with the wider sections of the society as well as effective communication to the stakeholders and people about the need for reform and likely benefits from it"*. Similarly, Smith and Johnson (2020) state that a major barrier to administrative reform in the Nigerian Power Sector is the disregard for important stakeholders. According to Johnson et al. (2021), successful administrative change in the electricity industry depends on an understanding of the dynamics of stakeholder interactions. Stakeholder neglect undermines administrative reform efforts, as demonstrated by a recent study by Brown (2022) that highlights the necessity of comprehensive methods to address this issue. From the foregoing, it is evident that stakeholders' support is key to a desirable reform outcome, which cannot be underestimated.

**2.1 Underpinning Theory**

This article was anchored on Ouda's (2008) generic government sector model to explain the central point of this research has administrative reform in the power industry failed to produce the desired result? This framework explains the lateral relationship between political actors, bureaucrats, and professional supports in reform initiation and implementation. The adapted model was used based on the strength of the model, which underscores the fundamental requirement for successful reform. Put simply; this model was premised on the belief that for government sector reform to be successful, it must be supported by the key actors (political actors, bureaucrats, and professional groups), and when otherwise, the reform programmes are unlikely to be successful. To buttress Ouda's postulation, Zhang et al. (2008) suggest that the nature of the relationship that exists between stakeholders such as political class, bureaucrats, and other interest groups is a key determinant of reform success. The framework adopted in this research is presented in Figure 1.

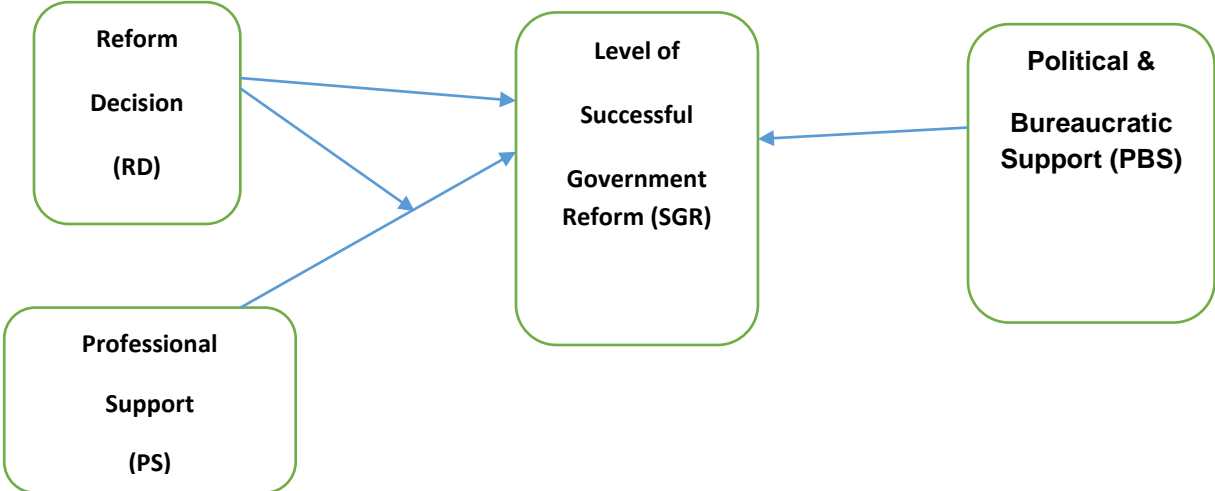


Figure 1: Adopted Theoretical Framework of the Study

The description of the adopted generic government sector reform:

$$\text{SGR} = f(\text{PBS} + \text{PS} + \text{RD})$$

Where:

SGR	=	Successful Government Reform
f	=	function
PBS	=	Political and Bureaucratic Support
PS	=	Professional Support
RD	=	Reform Decision

Notably, no attempt has been made to empirically study the reason why administrative reform failed. This article attempts to reconfirm this model using new data collected on each of the model variables. In the model, successful government reform (SGR) was used as the dependent variable, while Political, bureaucratic support (PBS), and professional support (PS) were used as the independent variable.

## ***2.2 Proposition Developed***

Although, many studies have been carried out on public sector reform (Farazmand, 2000; Beh, 2007; Seidu, 2010; Ukwandu & Ijere, 2020; Ishihara, 2021). However, there are few studies on the influence of stakeholders on administrative reform outcomes. Therefore, this study hypothesized that stakeholders support significantly influences the level of successful administrative reform. Specifically, the study postulates this:

***Proposition 1:*** *Successful government sector reform (SGR) is associated with strong political, and bureaucratic support (PBS.)*

***Proposition 2:*** *Strong professional support (PS) facilitates successful government reform (SGR)*

***Proposition 3:*** *Reform decision (RD) moderates the relationship between professional support and successful government reform.*

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

This section encompasses research methods including sampling techniques, the selected sample sources of data, methods/instruments of data collection, and method of data analysis.

### ***3.1 Research and Sampling Techniques***

This study adopted a cross-sectional research approach and purposive research technique. This research adopted a quantitative approach because quantitative data provides a vivid understanding of the issues under study. Quantifying the influence of political, bureaucratic, and professional support using a scale ensures a better understanding of what determines a successful administrative reform.

### 3.2 Sample

For the study to generate quantitative data from the population, a sample (respondents) was chosen from the following states: Lagos, Kwara, Niger, and Osun, having a total population of 1,589,000. Altogether, 463 respondents were chosen as the sample size (Based on Krejcie & Morgan 1970 sample size table).

Additionally, the breakdown of sample selection to the states shows that 156 respondents from Lagos State were included in the survey, 104 respondents from Niger State, 104 respondents from Osun State, and 99 respondents from Kwara, were included in the survey. In total, 463 respondents participated in the survey exercise. The selection was made based on an essential demographic attribute of the population: residency urban/rural, gender, educational attainment, and occupation. Table 1 shows the sample selection criteria for four states.

Table 1: Sample Selection Criteria for Four States

States	Number of LGs (sample)	Wards (sample)	Sampled Population
Lagos	20 (5)	110 (10)	156
Niger	25 (5)	105 (10)	104
Osun	30 (7)	120 (13)	104
Kwara	16 (4)	95 (9)	99
Total	91 (21)	430 (42)	<b>463</b>

Source: *Extracted from National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria, Demographic Distribution of population (2016).*

Note: Figures in parenthesis represent the sample size for each item

Conversely, civil servants from the Ministry of Energy, Works, and the Governor's office served as respondents. Likewise, programme officers in Civil society organisations, electricity employees, and well academia. The selected respondents were presumed to have adequate knowledge of the issues under investigation.

### 3.3 Procedure

A closed-ended questionnaire instrument was utilised to elicit cogent information from participants chosen from the study population. The questionnaire was carefully designed, vetted, and ensured to capture issues under study before being administered to 463 respondents (stakeholders), giving rise to 401 valid responses. The study first establishes contact with the relevant organisation through Permanent secretaries and heads to solicit intending respondents through emails. Moreover, designed questionnaires were delivered to participating organisations for onward transmission to respondents and were given a week to fill out to avoid pressure. Subsequently, the questionnaires were retrieved and collated accordingly. Data gathered through this survey method were inserted and coded appropriately into SPSS software.

The SPSS software was also used to screen the data and detect or remove outliers that might significantly affect the resulting output from the SPSS. The Cronbach's alpha for the latent variables was found to be satisfactory as the values exceeded the threshold  $> .70$ . Moreover,

evidence from the Kolmogorov-Shapiro-Wilks Normality Test conducted shows  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ , the  $P < 0.05$ , indicating a nonlinear data distribution. For the tool of analysis, a non-parametric, (WarpPLS 6.0 software)- variance-based structural equation model was adopted to analyse the data collected based on the result of the normality test. WarpPLS as a tool of analysis was considered well-suited because of its strength in prediction-oriented studies and theory development (Hair et al., 2017; Ali et al., 2018; Rasoolimanesh & Ali, 2018).

## 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Reliability Statistics

Table 2 shows the result obtained from a pilot test conducted to ascertain the veracity of the survey design and research instrument (questionnaire). The participants were public servants, lecturers, retired electricity employees, and public officers who had adequate knowledge about the privatisation programme. A total of 30 respondents were chosen from the target study population. The pilot test was conducted between 26th and 30th January 2022. The study administered 30 sets of questionnaires developed on a 5-point Likert scale.

Table 2 Reliability Statistics

Latent variable	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
PBS	8	0.812
PS	7	0.798
RD	7	0.748
SGR	6	0.824

Source: Author's Computation, 2023.

Evidence from the result indicates that the alpha value of all the latent variables exceeded the threshold, which is greater than  $\geq 0.7$ . Therefore, the internal consistency for the latent variable met an acceptable level, implying that the reliability value is satisfactory.

### 4.2 Assessment of Research Models

In this paper, two evaluation models were employed: namely, the measurement model and the structural model. This evaluation was analysed using the PLS-SEM approach supported by WarpPLS 6.0 Algorithm method. All constructs are explained and considered as reflective indicators. Based on Kock's (2012) sample size specification for the choice of resampling method, the bootstrapping resampling method in WarpPLS was adopted because the research sample size is 463, which is higher than 100.

### 4.3 Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The outer model often referred to as the "measurement model", is usually evaluated to determine the reliability and validity of the indicators of the latent variables in the proposed model. Latan and Ghozali (2017) argued that the measurement of validity and reliability of the "outer model" through reflective constructs must encompass the following: (i) Multicollinearity (ii) internal consistency: Cronbach's alpha (CA) and composite reliability

(CR); and (iii) assessment of validity: convergent and discriminant. The result in Table 4 was derived from data analysed to verify the incidences of multicollinearity (if any) in the model.

Table 3: Multicollinearity

Full Collinearity	VIFs
PBS	1.369
PS	1.545
RD	1.226
SGR	1.107
RD*PS	1.82

Source: Survey Data Analysed using WarpPLS 6.0 Software, 2023.

In WarpPLS analysis, Kock (2018) recommended an acceptable threshold of  $\geq 3.3$ , specially when model variables are measured through one or more indicators. All values derived from the model variable estimation were lower than the recommended threshold. The results for each construct are thus acceptable and aptly suggest the absence of a multicollinearity problem. Similarly, the article further assessed the internal consistency of the construct used in the model through two measurements: (i) Cronbach alpha and (ii) composite reliability coefficients. The values obtained from each of the measurement items are presented in Table 4 and Table 5 below.

Table 4: Cronbach Alpha

Cronbach alpha (CA)	
PBS	0.746
PS	0.817
RD	0.723
SGR	0.722
RD*PS	0.915

Source: Survey Data Analysed using WarpPLS 6.0 Software, 2023.

Table 5: Composite Reliability (CR)

Composite Reliability (CR)	
PBS	0.704
PS	0.865
RD	0.751
SGR	0.812
RD*PS	0.922

According to Tavakol and Dennick (2011) Cronbach alpha coefficients  $\alpha \geq 0.9$  = excellent;  $0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$  = good;  $0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$  is acceptable, while;  $0.7 > \alpha \geq 0.6$  questionable;  $0.6 > \alpha \geq 0.5$  poor and lastly  $0.5 > \alpha$  is considered unacceptable. From Table 4, the values of Cronbach alpha coefficients obtained from each construct as presented in the table above are as follows: PBS 0.746, PS 0.817, 0.824, RD 0.723, SGR 0.722, RD\*PS 0.915. Therefore, the CA for all the constructs is acceptable and found to be satisfactory. Undoubtedly, Cronbach alpha (CA) as an accurate measure of internal consistency has been vigorously challenged because of observable deficiencies and issues concerning computation and interpretation (Shevlin *et al.*, 2000; Raykov, 2001; Henson, 2001; Streiner, 2003; Hayashi & Kamata, 2005; Liu, & Zumbo, 2007). Moreover, this paper further conducted a composite reliability test to reinforce the CA; the coefficient obtained here is presented in Table 5.

The result in Table 5 indicates that the value of the coefficients for latent variables is: PBS 0.704; PS 0.865; CS0 0.515; RD 0.751; SR 0.812 while the result of the moderating variable also shows RD (RD\*PS 0.922). Evidence from the table indicates that the results obtained were higher than the recommended threshold value of (0.6). This aptly implies that the internal consistency for the structural model is acceptable and satisfactory for all latent variables employed in the model.

In PLS-SEM, assessment of validity is crucial and is twofold: **Convergent** and **Discriminant** Validity. The common method for determining convergent validity is to check the estimated average variance extracted (AVE) against composite reliability (CR) for each loading of measurement items.

Table 6 Convergent Validity

<i>Measurement Items</i>	<b>CR</b>	<b>AVE</b>
<i>PBS</i>	0.704	0.430
<i>PS</i>	0.865	0.478
<i>RD</i>	0.751	0.44
<i>SGR</i>	0.812	0.424
<i>RD*PS</i>	0.922	0.425

**Source:** Survey Data Analysed using WarpPLS 6.0 Software, 2023.

Normally, the value for satisfactory convergent validity outcomes should be  $\geq 0.5$ . However, Fornell and Larcker (1981), as reported in Safiih and Azreen (2016), argued that when the value of AVE is less than 5, but the composite reliability is more than 0.6, then the convergent validity for that variable(s) is deemed satisfactory and acceptable. Based on the affirmation, the value of composite reliability (CR), as shown in column 2 of the table, is acceptable and satisfactory because the CR values for all variables are more than 0.6. Similarly, the table below shows the result of the discriminant validity test.

Table 7 Discriminant Validity

	<i>PBS</i>	<i>PS</i>	<i>RD</i>	<i>SGR</i>	<i>RD*PS</i>
<i>PBS</i>	<b>0.575</b>				
<i>PS</i>	0.395	<b>0.692</b>			
<i>RD</i>	0.399	0.282	<b>0.58</b>		
<i>SGR</i>	0.171	0.289	0.12	<b>0.651</b>	
<i>RD*PS</i>	0.044	0.035	0.1	0.02	<b>0.474</b>

**Source:** Survey Data Analysed using WarpPLS 6.0 Software, 2022

As indicated in Table 7, the **bolded** value for each construct in the model is greater than the value in the diagonal and off-diagonal in the rows and columns (as recommended by Muhammad Ali, 2013). Thus, evidence in the result analysed above, the assessment of the discriminant validity of the model is acceptable and satisfactory.

#### 4.4 Evaluation of Structural Model

In PLS-SEM, a model fit and quality of indices are usually conducted to determine when a model is a better fit than the other using new data or testing hypotheses (Kock, 2017). The general result from model estimation is summarised in Table 8.

Table 8 Model Fit and Quality of Indices

Description	Threshold	Estimated Value	P-Value	Remark
APC	$\leq 0.05$	0.108	0.007	Significant
ARS	$\leq 0.05$	0.114	0.005	Significant
AARS	$\leq 0.05$	0.103	0.009	Significant
AVIV	$\leq 5$	1.442	-	Satisfactory
AFVIF	$\leq 5$	1.471	-	Satisfactory
GOLF	$\geq 0.1$	0.192	-	Small

Source: Data Analysed with WarpPLS 6.0 Software, 2023.

As shown in Table 8, the study model fit estimation indicates a good fit because the  $p$ -value of the main indicators of the robustness of the model: APC, ARS, and AARS, was found below the threshold. The values are aptly within the recommended range, which implies satisfaction (Kock, 2011). Specifically, the value for average path coefficient (APC), adjusted R-squared (ARS), and average adjusted R-squared (AARS) as presented above is  $< 0.05$ , precisely the value for each are as follows: APC = 0.007, ARS = 0.005, and AARS = 0.009. Conversely, the result of multicollinearity estimation: AVIF, and AFVIF indicate 1.442 and 1.471, respectively. These values are acceptable because they are below the recommended moderate threshold of 3.3 (Kock, 2018). It, therefore, suggests the absence of multicollinearity problems across indicators and exogenous variables.

Moreover, the result of (GoF) "the goodness of fit" estimated shows 0.192, though small according to Wetzel et al. (2009) ranking but satisfied acceptable benchmark (Kock & Lynn, 2012; Kock, 2015a). For instance, Wetzel et al. (2009) categorized the thresholds for GoF thus: small if equal to or greater than 0.1, medium if equal to or greater than 0.25, and large if equal to or greater than 0.36.

Table 9 Structural Model Outcome

Measurement Items	Hypotheses	Beta
Political and Bureaucratic Support (PBS)	$H_{1a}$ : PBS to SGR	0.05
Professional Support (PS)	$H$ : PS to SGR	0.22
<b>(Moderation: Indirect)</b>		
Reform Decision	$H_{4a}$ : RD*PS to SGR	0.05

Source: Data Analysed with WarpPLS 6.0 Software, 2023.

The result analysed in Table 9 above, shows a positive relationship between PBS to SGR ( $\beta=0.05$ ;  $p > .05$ ) but insignificant. Impliedly, the analysis failed to statistically confirm the relationship. However, some studies suggest otherwise (Ouda, 2008; Hesse, 2005; Beh, 2007; Schedler & Schmucki, 2009; Ahmed, 2009; Seidman, 2016). Therefore, this article rejects the hypothesis. In the same vein, path analysis of the relationship between PS to SGR ( $\beta=0.22$ ;  $p$

< .05) suggests positive and significance. This aptly implies that the analysis has confirmed the relationships. Furthermore, analysis of moderating (indirect) effects of reform decision (RD) on successful government reform (SGR) through other variables, i.e., RD\*PS to SGR ( $\beta=.005$ ;  $p > .05$ ), showing this relationship to be positive but insignificant

#### **4.5 Discussion of Findings**

The results analysed on the reliability and validity indicate high reliability and validity, it measures the strength, and the credibility of the research findings, instilling confidence in the accuracy of the results. Additionally, the overall model fit indices, including GoF, AVIF, and AFVIF, reinforce the reliability and robustness of the structural model. Moreso, structural equation estimation demonstrated a good fit, supported by satisfactory values of APC, ARS, and AARS. This affirms the robustness of the overall structural model. Analysis of the study propositions indicates that while the positive relationship between political and bureaucratic support (PBS) and successful government reform (SGR) was found to be insignificant, the positive and significant relationship between professional support (PS) and SGR validates the hypothesis. Moreover, estimating the moderating effects of reform decision (RD) on successful government reform (SGR) through professional support (PS) was positive but insignificant, suggesting potential areas for further investigation. The study contributes to the existing literature by employing PLS-SEM and providing nuanced insights into the relationships between key variables in public sector management. Specifically, the study's results provide valuable insights into the dynamics of public sector management, affirming the reliability and validity of the research methodology and offering avenues for future research exploration.

### **5. STUDY IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Reforms in Policy: To overcome stakeholder neglect in the Nigerian power sector, the findings point to the necessity of prompt governmental measures. Researchers could investigate the precise policy adjustments that are needed and evaluate how they might affect stakeholder participation. Also, the study emphasizes how crucial it is to provide important stakeholders with the tools they need to actively engage in administrative reforms. In another way, the potential avenues for further research include examining successful ways for strengthening the capacity of various stakeholder groups. The issues of techniques of communication are also crucial, therefore addressing stakeholder neglect requires effective communication. Consequent upon this, scholars could investigate communication tactics that can improve stakeholder collaboration and help administrative reform to be successful.

### **6. CONCLUSION AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

Previous studies have reiterated the crucial role of stakeholders in a successful government reform exercise. Scholars such as Sangita (2002); and Meyer-Sahling and Jan-Hinrik (2006) have posited that the persistent failure of the reform programme was largely due to the inability to create strong synergy and effective consultation strategies among stakeholders. Data analysed and interpreted have proved that stakeholder involvement in the reform process is a prerequisite for result-oriented reform initiatives. For instance, the relationship between PBS to SGR ( $\beta=.005$ ;  $p > .05$ ), political, and bureaucratic support to facilitate successful government reform, was positive though not significant. But the literature as discussed above affirmed a significant relationship.



Furthermore, as shown in the path analysis, the relationship between professional support (PS) and successful government reforms (SGR) estimated using WarpPLS 6.0 indicates PS to SGR ( $\beta=.022$ ;  $p < .05$ ). This result affirmed the relationship as it has been statistically confirmed and proven.

Moreover, the article used a reform decision (RD) as a moderator, which estimated the indirect relationship between RD\*PS to SGR ( $\beta=.005$ ;  $p > .05$ ) The result failed to confirm the indirect relationship between reform decision and SGR (RD\*PS to SGR).

Evidence from the result presented affirms that reform decisions indirectly influence reform success. It became clear from the shreds of evidence analysed, that stakeholders significantly influence reform outcomes in the public sector. Consequently, the study affirmed that the contributions of key stakeholders are crucial to facilitate the success of government reform initiatives in the public sector. This implies that the involvement of key stakeholders is not only a pre-requisite, but it is a sine qua non to purposeful reform activities.

No doubt, a study of this nature is mostly assessed based on its contributions to expand the theoretical base and enrich the body of literature. from theoretical, empirical, and practical perspectives, Firstly, the study has contributed to the intellectual search for the appropriate theory/framework for result-oriented reform activity in the public sector. Secondly, the study has moved the search for an appropriate framework beyond Ouda's mere conceptualisation of the generic reform framework (variables), this study expands and empirically tests conceptualised variables (adapted variables). Lastly, the practical implication of this study entails the development of an adequate understanding of dynamics, complexities, and pre-conditions for a successful reform activity.

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## **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION**

The research was carried out by all authors from the introduction to the conclusion. Specifically, the co-authors provided immense qualitative and quantitative support.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None

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# Analisis Faktor Perceraian dalam Kalangan Pasangan Belia di Seberang Perai Utara Menurut Undang-Undang Kekeluargaan Islam

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## ABSTRAK

### ARTICLE HISTORY

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Fenomena perceraian adalah suatu isu yang polemik dalam kalangan masyarakat Islam di Malaysia. Perceraian berlaku disebabkan kewujudan punca dan faktor tertentu yang membawa kepada ketegangan dalam hubungan rumah tangga. Justeru, perceraian menjadi pilihan bagi meleraikan ikatan perkahwinan yang telah terbina. Oleh itu, artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji konsep perceraian menurut perspektif Islam dan undang-undang kekeluargaan Islam. Kajian ini juga memfokuskan faktor perceraian dalam kalangan pasangan belia muslim meliputi kawasan Seberang Perai Utara. Kajian ini juga bertujuan untuk mencadangkan penambahbaikan oleh pihak yang berautoriti terhadap isu perceraian yang berlaku dalam kalangan belia muslim khususnya di Seberang Perai Utara dan masyarakat muslim umumnya. Di dalam kajian ini, pengkaji menggunakan reka bentuk kajian kualitatif. Sumber primer bagi kajian ini adalah temu bual separa-struktur dan sumber sekunder pula adalah kajian perpustakaan bagi menjawab objektif kajian. Bagi teknik temu bual tersebut, pengkaji telah memilih 5 orang informan yang terdiri daripada pihak Mahkamah Rendah Syariah Pulau Pinang, pihak Pejabat Agama Pulau Pinang dan informan pasangan belia muslim di Seberang Perai Utara yang pernah bercerai. Seterusnya, dapatan temu bual telah dianalisis dengan menggunakan analisis tematik. Tema-tema tersebut dikategorikan mengikut objektif kajian. Pengkaji menggunakan instrumen perisian Atlas.ti 23 agar data temu bual dapat menjawab objektif kajian ini. Hasil kajian menunjukkan antara punca perceraian yang menunjukkan keputusan yang majoriti adalah kerana sikap kegagalan suami dan isteri menjalankan tanggungjawab mereka. Tuntasnya, pengkaji berharap agar kajian ini dapat menyumbang kepada strategi dan usaha pihak yang berautoriti seperti mahkamah Syariah dan pejabat agama Islam negeri memainkan peranan penting dalam menangani dan membendung kadar perceraian yang berlaku sekaligus meminimakan jumlah kes yang berlaku.

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## 1. PENGENALAN

Perkahwinan merupakan suatu ikatan lahir dan batin antara lelaki dan perempuan dalam sesebuah rumahtangga. Ia merupakan amalan yang disyariatkan oleh Islam bahkan salah satu sunnah Rasulullah S.A.W yang telah dinyatakan di dalam al-Quran dan al-Sunnah (Pmwp, 2019). Hukum asal berkahwin adalah harus dan dituntut kepada umat Islam (Wan Ismail et al., 2022; Amalia et al., 2021). Namun, dalam perkahwinan pasangan suami isteri akan menghadapi isu konflik sehingga menyebabkan mereka memilih untuk bercerai.

## 2. SOROTAN LITERATUR

Sorotan literatur ialah senarai rujukan secara kritikal dan sistematik mengenai maklumat terpilih yang terdapat dalam kepustakaan berkaitan dengan objektif kajian. Berdasarkan objektif kajian, beberapa tema telah diketengahkan iaitu konsep dan kategori perceraian, faktor berlaku perceraian dan strategi mengatasi masalah perceraian.

### KONSEP DAN KATEGORI PENCERAIAN

Konsep perceraian menurut Islam lebih dikenali dengan penggunaan istilah talak. Talak digunakan bagi menggambarkan situasi pasangan suami isteri yang tiada ruang membaik pulih serta meneruskan hubungan perkahwinan tersebut. Suami yang membuat pilihan untuk melafazkan talak perlu mengaplikasikan tatacara dan prosedur yang selari dengan kehendak syariat Islam. Justeru, Islam telah membahagikan beberapa jenis perceraian yang diharuskan syarak sebagai contohnya talak, talak ta'liq, fasakh dan juga khulu' (tebus talak) (Al-Zuhaili, 1989).

Perceraian ialah perihal (kejadian) bercerai antara suami isteri. Perceraian juga membawa maksud menamatkan hubungan perkahwinan sama ada dengan pilihan suami atau keputusan kadi. Perceraian dari segi bahasa bermaksud berpisah (Kelantan, 2022). Dari segi istilah pula bermaksud keruntuhan hubungan perkahwinan dan terputusnya hubungan antara suami isteri dengan bersebab (Pinang, 2022). Menurut perspektif Islam pula, perceraian adalah sesuatu perbuatan yang dibenarkan oleh syarak (Wan Ismail et al., 2022; Amalia et al., 2021) namun perbuatan ini tidak disukai oleh Allah SWT. Berdasarkan firman Allah daripada ayat al-Quran iaitu

الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانِ فَإِمْسَاكَ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٍ بِإِحْسَانٍ

Maksudnya: *Talak (yang boleh dirujuk kembali itu hanya) dua kali. Sesudah itu bolehlah ia (rujuk dan) memegang terus (isterinya itu) dengan cara yang sepatutnya atau melepaskan (menceraikannya) dengan cara yang baik. (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:229)*

Setiap hubungan perkahwinan akan melalui fasa ketegangan dan perselisihan faham antara suami dan isteri (Mohamad, 2021). Pasangan yang tidak mampu menyelesaikan konflik dan mencari jalan perdamaian akan memilih untuk bercerai. Justeru, Islam telah menetapkan beberapa jenis perceraian yang mengikut hukum syarak. Malahan ia telah menjadi amalan masyarakat Islam di Malaysia antaranya ialah talak, khuluk, fasakh dan li'an (*Perceraian*, 2020).

### FAKTOR BERLAKU PENCERAIAN DI MALAYSIA

Perceraian di Malaysia bukan lagi perkara asing bahkan merupakan suatu fenomena yang kerap melanda institusi kekeluargaan di Malaysia. Terdapat beberapa kajian lepas yang telah



mengetengahkan faktor-faktor berlakunya perceraian antaranya ketidakberkesanan komunikasi yang memberi impak kepada perselisihan faham berkaitan peranan dan tanggungjawab sebagai seorang suami mahupun isteri. Komunikasi yang kurang baik antara pasangan boleh menyebabkan ketegangan dan kekurangan pemahaman sehingga menyebabkan perceraian (Nurhanisah et al., 2023).

Selain itu, faktor berlaku perceraian adalah disebabkan oleh pegangan agama yang kurang kukuh. Rentetan itu, ia memberi impak kepada kurangnya kesedaran berkaitan isu nafkah, keganasan rumahtangga serta penglibatan dalam penyalahgunaan dadah. Malahan berlaku pengkhianatan, perselingkuhan atau ketidaksetiaan pasangan sering kali menjadi sebab perceraian. Ditambah pula dengan ketidakseimbangan dalam kehidupan keluarga dan kerjaya. Kesukaran untuk mencapai keseimbangan antara kehidupan keluarga dan kerjaya juga boleh menyebabkan ketegangan dalam rumah tangga (Rogayah et. al., 2021).

Kajian oleh Solihah dan Mohd Husairi (2023) menunjukkan, antara punca berlaku perceraian adalah pihak suami dan isteri tidak mempunyai ketahanan mental dan fizikal dalam menghadapi rintangan berumahtangga. Misalnya, tidak mampu mempertahankan rumahtangga apabila diuji dengan kesusahan dan masalah kewangan, walhal jika antara pasangan saling mendukung dan berusaha bersama-sama menghadapi kesusahan pasti rumahtangga dapat dipertahankan. Ketidakseimbangan tanggungjawab: Jika salah satu pihak merasa tidak adil dalam pembahagian tanggungjawab dalam rumah tangga, ia boleh menjadi faktor perceraian. Masalah kewangan juga seperti kekurangan wang, mempunyai tunggakan hutang atau perbezaan pendapat dalam pengurusan kewangan juga boleh menyebabkan ketegangan dalam rumah tangga.

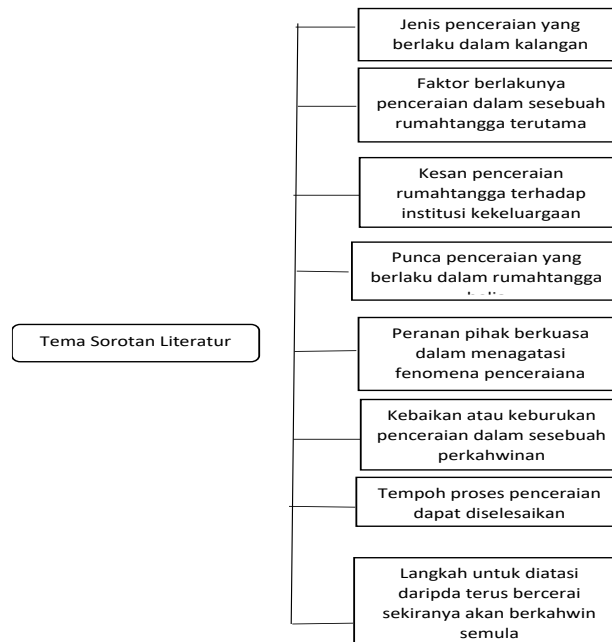
### **3. METODOLOGI KAJIAN**

Metodologi merupakan kaedah yang saintifik untuk menjelaskan strategi dan pendekatan yang digunakan dalam penyelidikan. Metodologi kajian merupakan kaedah bagaimana penyelidikan dijalankan dengan melibatkan tatacara, proses dan langkah yang digunakan untuk mencapai objektif penyelidikan. Menurut Kamus Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, metodologi adalah sistem yang merangkumi kaedah dan prinsip digunakan dalam sesuatu kegiatan, disiplin dan sebagainya. Oleh itu, bagi memastikan ketepatan pemilihan metodologi penyelidikan, penyelidik perlu melakukan empat proses utama iaitu memilih kaedah yang bersesuaian, refleksi kaedah yang telah dipilih, menilai kaedah yang telah dipilih serta mengukur dan menginterpretasi pengaruh data yang dikutip (Darusalam, & Husin, 2021).

Berdasarkan kajian ini, pengkaji menggunakan reka bentuk kajian berbentuk kualitatif. Pengkaji menggunakan dua sumber utama iaitu primer dan sekunder. Sumber primer adalah daripada dapatan temu bual separa berstruktur. Seramai dua orang informan yang telah dipilih daripada Mahkamah Rendah Syariah Seberang Perai Utara, Pulau Pinang iaitu pegawai sulh serta Hakim dan daripada Pejabat Pegawai Jabatan Agama Islam iaitu kaunselor pendaftaran cerai. Manakala terdapat dua orang informan yang telah dipilih secara khusus iaitu golongan informan yang sudah bercerai. Terdapat satu set soalan yang terdiri daripada lima soalan berdasarkan objektif kajian. Soalan-soalan yang disediakan mempunyai perbezaan antara informan di mahkamah dengan informan yang terlibat dengan cerai. Sumber sekunder pula ialah pengkaji mendapatkan maklumat dan data melalui kajian perpustakaan (Darusalam & Husin, 2021).

Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan di dalam kajian ini adalah teknik kajian perpustakaan, teknik temu bual separa struktur dan teknik dokumentasi. Penyelidik menggunakan metodologi kajian perpustakaan bagi mencari maklumat berkaitan kajian lepas berkaitan dengan perceraian dan membahagikan pencarian sorotan literatur kepada beberapa tema seperti dalam Rajah 1 di bawah.

Rajah 1: Tema Sorotan Literatur



Teknik pengumpulan data secara temu bual di dalam kajian kualitatif merupakan interaksi antara penyelidik dengan informan kajian meliputi topik yang mendalam dan tidak hanya terikat kepada senarai soalan yang telah tersedia. Namun begitu, temu bual kualitatif melibatkan temu bual bersemuka dan atas talian. Selain itu, temu bual ini digunakan bagi mendapatkan maklumat berkaitan fakta, emosi, kepercayaan dan aspek yang ingin diselidik oleh pengkaji. Teknik temu bual ini mestilah diadakan perjumpaan bersemuka di antara penyelidik dan informan kajian. Temu bual boleh dijalankan secara tidak berstruktur, berstruktur dan separa berstruktur. Temu bual separa berstruktur ini merupakan soalan yang dikemukakan kepada informan yang disusun dan berjadual. Walaubagaimanapun, informan diberikan kelonggaran ketika menjawab soalan tersebut. Soalan diubahsuai dari segi susunan serta kaedah menyoal yang lebih fleksibel. Temu bual yang berlangsung boleh dilaksanakan secara individu ataupun berkumpulan (Darusalam, & Husin, 2021).

Berdasarkan penelitian di atas, kajian ini memilih kaedah temu bual secara separa struktur. Temu bual yang dijalankan adalah secara bersemuka fizikal dan juga atas talian. Teknik temu bual ini dapat membantu penyelidik untuk mencapai objektif kajian. Di samping itu, soalan-soalan yang diajukan kepada informan adalah merangkumi komponen tentang perceraian yang membantu penyelidik untuk mendapat maklumat bagi melengkapkan objektif kajian. Informan temu bual bagi kajian ini terdiri daripada 5 orang informan iaitu seorang pegawai sulh daripada Mahkamah Rendah Syariah, seorang kaunselor daripada Jabatan Agama Islam Negeri dan dua orang awam yang pernah terlibat dengan kes perceraian.

Jadual 1: Senarai Informan Kajian

Informan	Jawatan
Informan 1	Pegawai sulh
Informan 2	Kaunselor perceraian
Informan 3	Orang awam terlibat dengan perceraian
Informan 4	Orang awam terlibat dengan perceraian

Berikut merupakan protokol temu bual yang menyenaraikan item soalan yang berkaitan dengan punca perceraian, isu perceraian, kesan perceraian dan strategi untuk mengatasi masalah tersebut. Jadual di bawah menunjukkan protokol soalan yang ditanyakan kepada informan-informan yang terlibat:

Jadual 2: Item Temubual Kepada Pihak Mahkamah/ Pejabat Agama

Protokol temu bual	
Bil	Item
1.	Apakah isu perceraian sering berlaku bagi pasangan yang telah berkahwin dalam kalangan belia?
2.	Apakah punca berlakunya perceraian dalam sesebuah rumah tangga terutama dalam kalangan belia?
3.	Apakah kesan daripada perceraian rumah tangga terhadap institusi keluarga?
4.	Masalah tidak memberi nafkah (wang) kepada isteri dan anak-anak, tiada kefahaman antara pasangan suami isteri, campur tangan orang ketiga dalam hal rumah tangga dan pasangan suami isteri yang tidak solat merupakan punca berlaku perceraian, namun adakah terdapat kes terpencil seperti kahwin paksa menjadi punca berlakunya perceraian?
5.	Masalah cerai ini semakin meningkat sehingga ke hari ini dengan pelbagai punca dan kesan. Oleh itu, sebagai pihak yang berkuasa, bagaimanakah pihak kerajaan/mahkamah Syariah dalam mengatasi fenomena Perceraian dalam kalangan belia muslim.

Jadual 3: Item Temu Bual Kepada Orang Awam

Protokol temu bual	
Bil	Item
1.	Apakah punca/masalah perceraian yang berlaku dalam rumah tangga tuan/puan?
2.	Apakah perceraian yang berlaku memberi kesan kepada diri dan keluarga tuan/puan?
3.	Apakah perceraian dalam sesebuah perkahwinan mampu menyelesaikan masalah atau sebaliknya?
4.	Berapa lamakah tempoh proses perceraian tuan/puan diselesaikan?
5.	Berdasarkan pengalaman perceraian yang telah berlaku, bagaimanakah cara puan/tuan untuk mengatasi supaya tidak berlaku perceraian sekiranya berkahwin semula?

#### 4. ANALISIS KAJIAN

Hasil kajian diolah berdasarkan hasil dapatan kajian kualitatif yang telah dijalankan oleh penyelidik dengan menggunakan kaedah temu bual separa struktur dan kaedah dokumentasi. Hasil kajian menunjukkan perceraian merupakan perkara penting yang berlaku. Data ini dapat disokong melalui hasil analisis data temu bual bersama informan iaitu kesemua jumlah kod adalah 9 kali. Berikut adalah jadual hasil pengekodan rujukan analisis temu bual bersama informan:

Jadual 4: Jenis Perceraian

Informan Kajian	Jumlah Informan	Jumlah Rujukan Kod
Pegawai Sulh	1	9
Kaunselor Perceraian	1	-
Orang Awam	2	-

Sumber: Analisis Code-Documen Table Atlas.ti 23.

Informan 1 menyatakan mengenai tentang isu perceraian. Perceraian ini memiliki beberapa jenis bentuk tuntutan perceraian iaitu fasakh, perceraian bersama, tebus talak, khuluk dan taklik. Perceraian bersama ini berada di bawah seksyen 47. Kes perceraian bagi daerah Seberang Perai Utara (SPU) ini merupakan kes yang terbanyak berbanding daerah-daerah lain di Pulau Pinang. Kes perceraian yang banyak berlaku di daerah SPU ini adalah melibatkan kes tuntutan cerai.

#### 4.1 Punca Perceraian

Jadual 5 menunjukkan jumlah analisis pengekodan bagi punca perceraian iaitu sebanyak 12 kali merangkumi jumlah rujukan kod bagi keempat-empat informan.

Jadual 5: Punca Perceraian

Informan Kajian	Jumlah informan	Jumlah Rujukan Kod
Pegawai Sulh	1	6
Kaunselor Perceraian	1	4
Orang Awam	2	2

Sumber: Analisis Code-Document Table Atlas.ti 23.

Informan 1 telah menyatakan terdapat beberapa punca berlakunya perceraian dalam kalangan belia muslim di SPU, antara puncanya adalah tahap persefahaman yang kurang antara pasangan suami isteri. Isu ini dapat dilihat dalam kalangan belia yang berkahwin namun masing-masing tidak dapat memberi kerjasama dalam memainkan peranan sebagai suami isteri. Bahkan turut menimbulkan isu perselisihan faham dan membawa kepada ketegangan antara suami dan isteri. Sebagai contoh, suami tidak memberi nafkah kepada isteri dan anak-anak. Hal ini menyebabkan isteri tidak lagi mampu untuk mempertahankan hubungan dan memohon perceraian di mahkamah.

Terdapat juga isu tiada ruang perbincangan ke arah pendamaian antara suami isteri juga memberi punca tiada persefahaman antara suami dan isteri tersebut. Pasangan suami isteri lebih mementingkan perasaan sendiri dan tiada sifat keterbukaan ke arah penyelesaian masalah dengan lebih berkesan. Sebagai contoh isteri pergi ke mahkamah untuk menuntut perceraian namun suami tidak mahu memberi kerjasama yang baik. Oleh itu, masalah perceraian ini akan berlanjutan sehingga memakan tempoh yang lama.

Selain itu, informan 2 menjelaskan punca berlaku perceraian adalah kerana tiada persefahaman antara satu sama lain. Melalui perkahwinan di usia yang awal, sesetengah orang tidak mampu untuk menghadapi ujian dan cabaran dalam rumah tangga. Antara isu tiada persefahaman adalah apabila seorang suami yang selalu berbelanja untuk kepuasan diri sebelum berkahwin. Justeru itu, selepas berkahwin wujud konflik dalam pengurusan kewangan apabila suami tidak mahu menyeimbangkan kewangan antara keperluan dirinya, isterinya dan anak-anak. Oleh itu, pasangan suami isteri ini akan memulakan ketidak kesefahaman kerana masing-masing tidak mampu untuk menghadapi masalah tersebut.

Seterusnya, masalah komunikasi banyak berlaku dalam rumahtangga dalam kalangan belia pada hari ini. Pasangan di kalangan belia ini tidak mengetahui cara terbaik dalam berkomunikasi untuk menyelesaikan masalah malah makin menimbulkan masalah seperti bergaduh. Masalah komunikasi ini mampu menghilangkan toleransi dalam hubungan sebuah perkahwinan.

Punca perceraian terakhir bagi penjelasan informan 2 adalah campur tangan pihak ketiga dalam rumah tangga. Berdasarkan maklumat yang dimiliki oleh informan 2 menyatakan pihak ketiga bukan merupakan kes curang tetapi kes campur tangan keluarga mertua dalam sebuah perkahwinan. Kes campur tangan tersebut membawa kepada punca yang tinggi kepada

berlakunya perceraian. Selanjutnya, punca perceraian yang dinyatakan oleh informan 2 adalah kahwin paksa dalam kalangan belia. Perkahwinan ini dikatakan ada kes perceraian yang berlaku berpunca daripada kahwin paksa. Kahwin paksa ini merupakan aturan daripada kedua-dua pihak keluarga yang menyatukan pasangan suami isteri itu. Namun begitu, pasangan di kalangan belia yang tidak memahami dan mengenali antara satu sama lain akan menyelesaikan perkahwinan tersebut dengan cara membubarkan perkahwinan mereka.

Seterusnya, berdasarkan daripada informan 3 menyatakan punca perceraian adalah tahap kefahaman pasangan suami isteri tersebut. Salah seorang daripada pasangan suami isteri tidak mahu memahami keadaan pasangannya seperti berkemungkinan memunyai masalah kewangan dan tidak mampu untuk berbelanja dengan baik. Manakala informan ke-4 juga menyatakan punca perceraian adalah daripada isu pengabaian nafkah dalam perkahwinan. Punca kedua adalah keganasan rumah tangga iaitu si suami kerap memukul isteri apabila mempunyai masalah dan marah kepada si isteri.

#### **4.2 Langkah Mengatasi Perceraian**

Jadual 7.4 dibawah memaparkan hasil jumlah rujukan kod langkah mengatasi perceraian keseluruhannya iaitu sebanyak 5 kali.

Jadual 6: Langkah Mengatasi Perceraian

Informan Kajian	Jumlah Informan	Jumlah Rujukan Kod
Pegawai Suluh	1	1
Kaunselor Perceraian	1	2
Orang Awam	2	2

Sumber: Analisis Code-Documen Table Atlas.ti 23.

Merujuk kepada informan 1 menjelaskan langkah untuk diatasi bagi fenomena perceraian ini adalah pasangan suami isteri tersebut mestilah mendapatkan khidmat kaunseling yang telah disediakan oleh pihak Jabatan Agama Islam. Hal ini kerana Jabatan Agama Islam lebih arif dalam menyelesaikan dan memberi keputusan dalam isu tersebut.

Manakala berdasarkan informan 2 memberitahu langkah untuk mengatasi fenomena perceraian ini adalah penyediaan pusat khidmat kaunseling yang telah ditubuhkan oleh Jabatan Agama Islam bagi setiap daerah dan negeri. Khidmat ini ditubuhkan bagi membantu pasangan suami isteri yang mempunyai masalah dalam rumahtangga untuk mendapatkan nasihat sebelum membuat keputusan untuk membubarkan perkahwinan tersebut. Kewujudan khidmat kaunseling ini juga dapat membantu sesetengah pasangan suami isteri berbaik semula dan tidak meneruskan niat untuk pembubaran perkahwinan. Manakala penjelasan langkah seterusnya adalah berperanan bagi pihak mahkamah Syariah yang telah menyediakan Jawatan Kuasa Pendamai (JKP). JKP ini juga akan memjalankan sesi kaunseling kepada pasangan suami isteri yang masih mempunyai peluang untuk berbaik dan mampu menyelamatkan rumah tangga. Berdasarkan dua langkah ini dapat membantu dan dapat mengurangkan fenomena daripada terus berlaku. Melalui ini pasangan yang mempunyai emosi yang tidak baik mampu untuk dikawal dan ditenangkan oleh pihak autoriti supaya pasangan suami isteri ini mampu untuk bertenang dan membuat keputusan tanpa melibatkan perasan yang mampu membawa kepada penyesalan (Adam et. al, 2021).

Menurut informan 3 langkah mengatasi fenomena perceraian ini adalah pasangan suami isteri mestilah memahami antara satu sama lain. Hubungan rumah tangga ini memerlukan kerjasama dan tolak anssur supaya tidak berlaku salah faham antara pasangan. Malah pasangan suami isteri juga perlulah berbincang sekiranya mempunyai masalah malah tidak menyimpan rahsia antara satu sama lain. Hal ini kerana mengelakkan daripada berlakunya salah faham dan buruk

sangka terhadap pasangan sehingga mencetuskan salah faham yang meruntuhkan rumah tangga.

Informan 4 juga menyatakan bahawa langkah untuk mengatasi fenomena ini adalah setiap pasangan suami isteri ini mestilah memahami tanggungjawab masing-masing dalam menjadi pasangan suami isteri dan sebagai ibu bapa. Hal ini supaya tidak berlaku pengabaian atau ketidakpuashatian daripada mana-mana pihak dalam sebuah perkahwinan. Malah informan 4 juga menyatakan bahawa pasangan suami isteri ini mestilah membuat persediaan mental, fizikal dan emosi dalam menguruskan hal rumah tangga. Mendirikan rumah tangga bukanlah perkara yang mudah bagi pasangan yang di usia pertengahan kerana masing-masing memiliki kelemahan diri dan cabaran kehidupan yang sangat mencabar pada hari ini.

## **5. PERBINCANGAN KAJIAN**

Berdasarkan kajian ini, hasil kajian daripada 5 orang informan tersebut akan dibandingkan dengan kajian literatur. Jenis perceraian yang berlaku dalam kalangan belia muslim di SPU adalah melalui fasakh, khuluk atau tebus talak, taklik, pengesahan lafaz cerai dan perceraian. Kenyataan dari hasil kajian ini telah disokong oleh kajian lepas iaitu penulis Mariam (2017) bahawa perceraian mempunyai jenis atau kaedah seperti fasakh. Melalui kajian lepas ini dapat dilihat jenis perceraian banyak dipraktik oleh kalangan belia di SPU dalam menyelesaikan kes perceraianya. Namun begitu, dalam kajian lepas ini hanya menekankan kepada perceraian jenis fasakh berbanding hasil kajian kini yang dapat melihat kepada 5 jenis perceraian yang telah dinyatakan.

Berdasarkan dapatan kajian yang telah dinyatakan oleh 4 orang informan ini telah menekankan punca perceraian yang telah berlaku dalam kalangan belia di SPU adalah tiada persefahaman antara satu sama lain kerana terlalu mementingkan diri sendiri sehingga tidak ada sikap tolok ansur dalam perkahwinan, tidak memberi nafkah dan tidak melaksanakan tanggungjawab bagi seorang suami dan bapa yang tidak mengambil berat dan mengabaikan tanpa berasa bersalah. Berdasarkan penulis artikel lepas (Hudin, 2017), (Rogayah Estar, 2021), (Amalia, 2021), dan (Sail, 2022) menyatakan pernyataan tersebut merupakan punca berlakunya perceraian. Namun begitu, informan 1 dan 2 menekankan bahawa pihak ketiga dalam sesebuah rumahtangga ini adalah daripada campur tangan dari keluarga mertua ianya bukanlah daripada isu kecurangan pihak suami atau isteri. Malah kahwin paksa juga ditekankan menjadi punca kepada perceraian dalam kalangan belia pada hari ini. Masalah ini terjadi akibat daripada penyatuan daripada kedua ibubapa pasangan suami isteri tersebut.

Berdasarkan 4 informan telah menyatakan bahawa kesan berlakunya perceraian dalam kalangan belia hari ini memberi kesan terhadap anak. Anak-anak akan menjadi mangsa pengabaian dan kurang mendapat kasih sayang yang secukupnya daripada kedua ibu bapa. Hal ini kerana anak kemungkinan tidak dapat berjumpa dengan anak dan si ibu akan terlalu sibuk bekerja demi mendapatkan secukupnya kerana harus berjuang dalam membesarkan anak dengan seorang diri. Maka anak akan menerima impak yang mamu mengganggu emosi dan menjauhkan hubungannya bersama ibu bapa. Manakala informan 1 menekankan bahawa seseorang yang bercerai akan mendapat ujian dan tanggungjawab yang berat kerana berperanan dua orang dalam satu masa. Sebagai contoh, si isteri mendapat hak penjagaan anak maka si isteri perlu memainkan dua peranan iaitu menjadi seorang ibu dan dalam masa yang sama si isteri perlu menjadi ayah untuk membesarkan anak seorang diri. Oleh itu, perkara ini akan memberi tekanan kepada si isteri dalam menguruskan hal rumahtangga seorang diri dan mampu menjejaskan emosi anak kerana si isteri tidak mampu menghadapi ujian selepas bercerai.

Pernyataan ini tidak diungkapkan dalam artikel lepas, justeru itu dapatan kajian telah menyatakan kesan baik dan buruk berlakunya perceraian tersebut.

Merangkumi dapatan kajian ini dapat dijelaskan langkah mengatasi fenomena perceraian dalam kalangan belia di SPU melalui informan 1 dan 2 adalah merujuk kepada pihak lebih pakar iaitu pejabat agama. Pasangan suami isteri yang mempunyai masalah digalakkan untuk menghadiri ke jabatan agama bagi menerima nasihat dari unit khidmat kaunseling yang telah disediakan oleh jabatan agama. Informan 1 dan 2 juga menyarankan kepada pasangan suami isteri untuk menggunakan khidmat Jabatan Kaunseling Syariah yang disediakan oleh pihak mahkamah Syariah. Fungsi JKS adalah memberi nasihat dan kaunseling bagi pasangan suami isteri sebelum melanjutkan kes perceraian ke mahkamah dengan lebih mendalam. Melalui cara ini ia mampu untuk mengurangkan masalah dan mengembalikan hubungan suami isteri ke arah lebih baik (Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia, 2017).

Manakala pada pernyataan informan 3 dan 4 menyatakan langkah untuk mengatasi perceraian adalah bekerjasama dan saling bertolak ansur dalam hubungan perkahwinan. Pasangan perlu memiliki sikap ini dalam sesebuah perkahwinan kerana ia mampu mengekalkan keharmonian rumah tangga. Hal ini kerana perbincangan secara baik akan terhindar daripada berlakunya pembubaran perkahwinan. Perbincangan secara baik mampu untuk mengetahui punca dan dapat menyelesaikannya dan memudahkan semua pihak. Merujuk artikel lepas juga tiada penekanan dalam langkah mengatasi fenomena perceraian ini.

### **5.1 Kesan Baik dan Buruk Perceraian**

Dapatan kajian bagi pengekodan bahagian kesan baik dan buruk perceraian mencatat jumlah keseluruhan sebanyak 13 kali. Jadual di bawah menunjukkan pengekodan daripada data temu bual yang telah dianalisis:

Jadual 7: Kesan Baik dan Buruk Perceraian

Informan Kajian	Jumlah Informan	Jumlah Rujukan Kod
Pegawai Suluh	1	2
Kaunselor Perceraian	1	5
Orang Awam	2	6

Sumber: Analisis Code-Document Table Atlas.ti 23.

Informan 1 menyatakan bahawa kesan buruk daripada perceraian adalah pihak suami isteri yang bercerai akan dipandang serong oleh masyarakat sekeliling. Sebagai contoh orang kampung atau jiran akan berbicara dan membawa mulut akan perceraian yang berlaku kepada pasangan suami isteri yang bercerai dalam usia belia.

Kesan buruk seterusnya adalah memegang tanggungjawab yang besar dan banyak. Sebagai contoh, sekiranya pasangan bercerai mempunyai anak akan memberi impak pada diri sendiri. Sebagai contoh, hak penjagaan anak dapat kepada si ibu maka si ibu akan bertanggungjawab sebagai ibu dan ibu juga memegang tanggungjawab sebagai seorang ayah kerana sudah tiada pasangan akibat daripada pembubaran perkahwinan.

Pengabaian terhadap pasangan juga merupakan salah satu punca berlakunya perceraian. Anak-menjadi mangsa keadaan bagi masalah perceraian dalam rumahtangga. Anak tersebut akan mengalami kekurangan kasih sayang, perhatian dan masa bersama ibu bapa.

Berdasarkan daripada maklumat daripada informan 2 mengenai kesan perceraian adalah kepada keturunan itu sendiri. Manakala kedua adalah kepada anak-anak bagi pasangan yang bercerai memiliki anak-anak akan mendapat impak buruk iaitu tidak mendapat kasih sayang dan

perhatian. Kesan seterusnya akan melibatkan kepada si isteri perlu membuat tuntutan selepas perceraian. Sebagai contoh, membuat tuntutan nafkah, penjagaan anak dan sebagainya.

Merujuk kepada informan ke-4, kesan perceraian banyak memberi impak kepada anak. Anak akan kehilangan kasih sayang dan perhatian daripada bapa. Hal ini kerana anak berpisah dan tidak tinggal serumah bersama bapa akibat daripada perceraian tersebut.

Seterusnya, kesan baik daripada perceraian bagi situasi kes masalah rumahtangga informan ke-3 ini adalah dapat menyelamatkan diri daripada bahaya dan keburukan. Hal ini kerana si suami tidak boleh untuk terus memukul isteri kerana si suami sudah tidak mempunyai hubungan perkahwinan serta tidak duduk serumah dan dijaukan oleh mahkamah akibat penderaan tersebut.

Manakala informan ke-4 menyatakan bahawa kesan perceraian ini memberi banyak kesan kepada anak. Anak yang menjadi mangsa tidak mendapat perhatian dan kasih sayang daripada seorang bapa. Berlakunya perceraian tersebut maka jauhla rasa sayang dan hubungan anak dan si bapa akibat daripada penjarakkan yang terhalang oleh masalah cerai dalam ibubapa (Adam et. al, 2021).

## **6. KESIMPULAN**

Kesimpulannya, punca perceraian yang sering berlaku adalah kerana tiada sifat bertanggungjawab dalam memegang peranan suami dan isteri dengan baik dalam sebuah rumah tangga. Hal ini boleh mengurangkan unsur kerohanian dalam sesebuah rumah tangga akibat daripada sikap mementingkan diri sendiri tanpa melaksanakan tanggungjawab dengan sebaiknya. Walhal tanggungjawab sebagai suami dan isteri merupakan peranan yang sangat penting sebagaimana dijelaskan dalam syariat Islam. Sekiranya tanggungjawab tersebut tidak dijalankan dengan baik dan boleh merosakkan hubungan maka akan dijatuhkan hukum berdosa. Malah, usia belia ini ramai pasangan yang tidak mengambil endah isu ini dan merasakan ia hanyalah perkara yang ringan dan lebih mementingkan kepuasan individu dalam kehidupan.

Malahan, terdapat juga kesan baik dan buruk apabila berlakunya fenomena perceraian dalam kalangan belia di SPU ini. Kesan ini akan memberi impak kepada anak dan ahli keluarga yang lain daripada perceraian tersebut. Oleh itu, sebagai belia yang sudah berkahwin perlu mempelajari dan mengetahui tentang ilmu perkahwinan dengan baik sebelum meneruskan atau mendirikan rumahtangga.

Sekiranya tidak diatasi dengan efisien, maka fenomena perceraian ini akan menjadi semakin bertambah dalam kalangan belia di SPU kerana tiada peruntukan khas daripada pihak berautoriti untuk mengatasi perceraian. Oleh itu, pihak jabatan agama dan mahkamah syariah perlu memainkan peranan penting dalam membimbing pasangan suami isteri yang mempunyai masalah dalam rumahtangga dengan memberi nasihat untuk menyelesaikan secara baik serta peranan bakal suami dan isteri iaitu memenuhi diri dengan ilmu rumahtangga seperti hak nafkah dan tanggungjawab supaya difahami dengan sebaiknya.

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## SUMBANGAN PARA PENULIS

LAL melaksanakan abstrak bagi kajian ini. AH melaksanakan bahagian pengenalan dan mengumpulkan kajian-kajian lepas. NFNS dan LAL pula meneliti penulisan kajian literatur. AH dan NFNS mengumpul dan memperhalusi data dan melakukan analisis data menggunakan Atlas ti 23. AH juga menulis bahagian metodologi data. AH, NFNS dan LAL menulis bahagian perbincangan dan implikasi. Semua pengarang membaca dan meluluskan manuskrip akhir.

## KONFLIK KEPENTINGAN

Tiada konflik kepentingan.

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## **BIOGRAFI PENULIS**

**Dr Nur Fatin Nabilah binti Shahrom** merupakan pensyarah kanan sepenuh masa di Jabatan Syariah, Fakulti Pengajian Islam, Kolej Universiti Islam Perlis. Kepakaran beliau adalah dalam bidang Sistem Pengurusan Islam di Mahkamah Syariah Malaysia, Sistem Pentadbiran Islam dan Siasah Syar'iyah. Beliau turut aktif menghasilkan penulisan akademik di dalam jurnal bertaraf Scopus, MyCite dan MyJurnal.

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# Ownership Structure and Contributions of Female Directors: Impact on Financial Performance in Malaysian Public Listed Companies

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## ABSTRACT

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*Despite increasing recognition of the valuable contributions of female directors, their representation on corporate boards still needs to be improved. This study investigates the relationship between female directors' contributions to stakeholder representation, decision-making, and corporate social responsibility (CSR), and the financial performance of companies. Additionally, the study examines how ownership structures, such as family, government, institutional, and foreign ownership, might moderate the relationship between female directors' contributions and financial performance. The study utilised primary and secondary data to achieve the aims of the study. Survey questionnaires about female directors' contributions were distributed to 250 companies selected using a purposive sampling technique. Data on financial performance, ownership structures, and control variables were collected from annual reports for the year 2019. The study's findings reveal that Malaysian public listed companies with female directors tend to exhibit lower financial performance. Surprisingly, no evidence supported the idea that female directors' contributions positively impact financial performance. However, government ownership moderates the relationship between female directors' contributions and company performance. These results provide practical and policy implications for female representation on corporate boards.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Gross Domestic Product, income and standard of living in Malaysia can all increase with the inclusion of more women in the workforce (The Worldbank, 2020). However, research by Khazanah Research Institute titled the ‘State of Households 2018’ discovered that around 2.6 million women, many of whom are educated and of prime working age, are not employed as a result of household responsibilities (Khazanah Research Institute, 2018). This figure is extremely concerning because it implies that the country is underutilising its female population and cannot use their skills and abilities to help develop and improve the country for future generations.

In 2015, Datuk Seri Najib Razak, the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, introduced the ‘Malaysia 30% Club’ policy, which intended to double the proportion of women on corporate boards to 30% by 2020. The Malaysian government has not made a mandatory quota for females to hold top senior management and director positions in the public and private sectors. However, the Bursa Malaysia regulations require large, listed companies to comply with the 30% club policy. Nevertheless, Malaysian women made up only around 17.2% of boards of publicly listed Malaysian corporations as of March 2021 (Aljunid, 2020). The Chairman of The Securities Commission of Malaysia reported that only 52 top 100 Malaysia listed companies have achieved the target of 30 percent women on their boards and less than 37 percent or 350 listed companies out of 959 total listed companies have one woman director on their boards. This statistic is far from what was targeted by the government under the 2022 Budget, where all listed companies were required to have at least one female director by January 2023.

In 2021, Deloitte released a report titled ‘Women in Boardrooms: a Worldwide View,’ which found that advancements in the representation of female directors in corporate boardrooms, especially within Asian nations, were observed. For example, in Malaysia, the proportion of board seats held by women increased by 3.4%, from 20.6% in 2018 to 24% in 2021. This percentage seems encouraging even though Malaysia has a strong culture and religion that believes women should stay at home (Low et al., 2015). Although the proportion of board chairs that are women increased in 2021 to 6.5% compared with 3.9% in 2018, the proportion of women CEOs and CFOs showed less than a 1% increase from 2018 to 2022 with 0.5% and 0.7%, respectively. These statistics indicate that there is still room exists for Malaysia to recognise the significant contributions of female directors.

An increasing number of female directors and top management can significantly enhance the accounting performance of companies (Au Yong and Tan, 2018; Bennouri et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2014; Low et al., 2015) and reduce risks (Perryman et al., 2016). However, previous studies have been conducted in developed countries, such as France, USA and China. Only a few studies have examined the relationship between female directors and company performance in Malaysia (Au Yong and Tan, 2018). By contrast, Francoeur (2006) found no relationship exists between gender diversity and a company’s financial performance. Thus, the mixed results of these studies have indicated that no conclusive evidence can convince companies, specifically the nomination committees and shareholders, to nominate female candidates to the board of a corporation. This phenomenon raises the question of what kind of contributions female directors might make to enhance a company's financial performance. By highlighting the contributions made by female directors, the nomination committee and board members may be persuaded to recommend a possible female candidate for the company’s board.

Numerous previous studies have provided evidence that female directors' participation in corporate decision making can enhance board effectiveness, resulting in better firm financial performance (Adams and Ferreira, 2009; Bart and McQueen, 2013; Low et al., 2015; Terjesen et al., 2016). Boards with gender diversity characteristics tend to be more proactive and have a more comprehensive corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy than boards with less gender diversity (Shaukat et al., 2016). Female directors on boards can also represent a wider range of stakeholders in decision making, namely, institutional investors (Pucheta-Martinez et al., 2019), shareholders and the broader group of stakeholders (De-Masi et al., 2021; Garcia-Torea et al., 2016). According to Beji et al. (2021), boards with higher female directors are positively associated with specific CSR areas, such as human rights and corporate governance, because female directors are more empathetic and sensitive to social issues compared with male directors. On the basis of the above discussion, by conducting in-depth research to investigate female directors' contributions to effective decision making, stakeholder representative and CSR initiatives may challenge the theoretical assumptions about the role of female directors on boards (Campopiano et al., 2022). Hence, a study could be conducted to understand the contributions of female directors in respect of effective decision-making, stakeholder's representative and CSR.

Studies from the past contend that the different ownership structures have an impact on the appointment of women to the board. Women connected to the founder or any family members of the director of a company with highly concentrated ownership, such as a family-owned companies, are likely to be appointed to the board of directors (Al-Duais et al. 2019; Haslindar and Fazilah, 2010). It has been stated that family-owned businesses prefer to select female directors for their boards to keep family quotas, practise nepotism, and protect friends. Some claim that female directors selected through this appointment method will only serve as tokens and not properly carry out their oversight responsibilities (Bianco et al., 2015; Samuel et al., 2016). Thus, in this study, ownership structures are included and expected to play a moderating role that either strengthens or weakens the relationship between female directors' contributions and the company's financial performance.

The current study differs from most research on this topic, either globally or locally. Prior studies seem to focus more on the characteristics of female directors [age, tenure of appointment, education level, the status of appointment (either independent or non-executive director) and its link to company performance, either financially or non-financially]. This study focuses on the contributions of female directors instead of their characteristics. The current study applies agency theory, stakeholder theory, stewardship theory and resource dependency theory to examine the contribution of women directors toward the financial performance of the company. No known study has applied all four theories in one study. In addition, the current study's data source is primary (questionnaire) and secondary (annual reports). Prior studies mostly used annual reports as the main source of data.

The significance of the study is that it could provide valuable insights into how ownership structure, including the presence of female directors, influences decision-making processes and corporate strategies. This understanding is crucial for investors, regulators, and policymakers seeking to enhance board diversity and improve corporate performance. Next, the findings of the study could have practical implications for companies, especially in Malaysia, where there is a growing emphasis on gender diversity in corporate governance. By identifying the positive contributions of female directors to financial performance, the study could encourage more companies to promote gender diversity on their boards.

On the basis of the above discussion, this study examines whether female directors' contributions in terms of decision making, CSR and stakeholder representation improves a company's financial performance. This study also attempts to investigate the moderating effects of different ownership structures (family, government, institutional and foreign ownership) on the association between the contributions of female directors and the financial performance of a company. The paper is organised as follows - the next section reviews prior studies related to corporate governance, which focuses on the contributions of female directors, summarises the relevant theories and highlights the theoretical framework of the study. Section 3 presents the research methods adopted for the study, followed by the findings and discussion of the key results in Section 4. Finally, in section 5, the conclusion of the study with implications, limitations and future research are provided.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***2.1 Director***

One of the most important positions in a corporation is the director, who is often in charge of setting direction and guiding the company toward maximising shareholder value. Before being appointed as a corporate director, a person is not required to meet any prerequisites. The Malaysian Companies Act 2016 simply stipulates the basic minimum qualifications for the appointment of a director, stating that the candidate must be a natural person, at least 18 years old and has a primary residence in Malaysia. However, the Act stipulates that a person who is disqualified by either legislation or company charter should be barred from serving as a director of a company. Furthermore, the Act provides no restrictions on the candidate's gender, ethnicity, age, religion or nationality when it comes to the selection criterion.

Given that the Act does not mention any specific gender, any competent woman may be nominated as a company director. The need to have a diverse corporate board is particularly emphasised in the Malaysian Code on Corporate Governance 2017 and 2021. The Malaysian government introduced a policy to encourage companies to appoint and promote women's participation at the corporate board level to foster a positive workplace culture and recognise the significant contributions of women to nation-building. Listed firms are urged to establish gender diversity policies and disclose how company strategies can increase and meet the targeted 30% female directors on their corporate boards, even though the 30% female directors' quota is not mandatory.

### ***2.2 Contributions of Female Directors***

Female directors have aided boards, in general, in performing their responsibilities successfully, which improves companies' financial performance. Stakeholder representation, decision making and CSR are the three key contributions of female directors that stand out from others based on the evaluation of pertinent literature. The following section discusses in more detail these important contributions.

#### ***2.2.1 Stakeholder Representation***

Directors who function as spokespersons for stakeholder groups, either internally or outside, are referred to as having stakeholder representation. The interests and concerns of stakeholders will be heard and protected if directors are sensitive to stakeholders' needs. According to Rossi et al. (2017) three or more women on the board will improve communication with the company's diverse stakeholder groups and financial performance.

Empirical research has shown that female directors are more likely to consider a more extensive range of stakeholders when making decisions, which supports their assertion (Bart and McQueen, 2013; Francoeur et al., 2006; Rosener, 2003).

From the viewpoint of internal stakeholders, female directors might serve as role models for female workers at an organisation. This position can assist female employees in overcoming the long-held misconception that the working community holds that women are inferior and belong at home. Female directors are also legitimate individuals to look out for the welfare of all women working for the company. Lukerath-Rovers (2013) asserted that the presence of women on boards lends credibility to various stakeholder groups, mainly existing and prospective employees, by representing career opportunities and equitable hiring practices.

Female directors can take advantage of a business opportunity that female consumers dominate from the standpoint of external stakeholders. Women are the primary market force because they control the purchasing power in the household or family (Rosener, 2003). Therefore, having women on the board may aid in the board's development of a thorough grasp of the perspective of female consumers, which will aid in maintaining the company's competitiveness and producing high-quality goods and services that satisfy customers' wants and needs. In addition, in comparison with their male colleagues, women are more likely to consider their external stakeholders' interests before making any decisions (Prabowo et al. 2017). Bart and McQueen (2013) demonstrated that a board with male and female directors protects stakeholders' interests better than one with only male members.

### ***2.2.2 Decision Making***

The participation and input of different viewpoints or judgments, as well as the independent thought of each director, will likely result in a board with gender-diverse members, subsequently leading for a better and more sound decisions. Therefore, having more women on boards may lower the danger of corporate corruption because the boards have a propensity to scrutinise management techniques. Bart and McQueen (2013) and Perryman et al. (2016) found evidence to support these claims. Their findings suggest that gender-diverse boards might prevent immoral choices that could damage the company's performance and reputation.

Today's female directors are more educated and have degrees from prominent universities (Solimene et al. 2017). These women's inclusion on the corporate board will influence the business to choose investment initiatives that will yield better returns for investors. According to Arfken et al. (2004), a diverse board typically conducts a more in-depth analysis of choices than one with members of similar demography. In other words, a diverse board will be more watchful during the decision-making process and result in more effective decisions than a board with only one gender.

### ***2.2.3 Corporate Social Responsibility***

According to Ibrahim and Hanefah (2016), female directors can recognise and express their emotions. In comparison with male directors, women are more compassionate, sympathetic and concerned regarding social and moral issues in the community (Tunyi et al., 2023). Employers seek these characteristics in their staff members to increase their business accountability to stakeholders. Today's consumers are more inclined to support socially conscious businesses by making purchases or using their services. Thus, a company that prioritises market success will pay particular attention to CSR initiatives. The company will actively engage in CSR initiatives due to the presence of female directors on the board, which

will improve product quality and ultimately increase sales (Korenkiewicz and Maennig, 2023). As a result, investors will be more inclined to put money into the business because they are more confident that successful businesses will also be profitable.

Kaspereit et al. (2016) found that female directors seek more CSR data before making investment decisions. Moreover, they noted that compared with males, females express greater worry for their stakeholders. Female directors are thought to improve the company's CSR because they tend to organise more donations, host more charity events and engage in other charitable activities. Due to their gender-specific qualities, female directors are also expected to be able to make a significant contribution to the business. Empathy, care, sensitivity and attention to detail will help the business succeed in the challenging business environment. Furthermore, enhancing CSR will draw in socially conscious investors, customers or both, thereby enhancing a company's success financially and non-financially (Kaspereit et al., 2016).

The following section explores how theories of corporate governance can deepen the knowledge of how women contribute to board effectiveness and improve business performance.

### ***2.3 Corporate Governance Theories and Female Directors' Contributions***

The three key contributions of female directors—effective decision making, stakeholder representation and CSR, can be linked together based on several corporate governance theories, including Agency, Stakeholder, Stewardship and Resource Dependence theories. The researchers followed the advice from Rubino et al. (2021) that a single theory prevents them from adequately observing the function of female directors in companies. Consequently, relying on a single theory limits the useful theoretical sources that encourage in-depth analysis of female directors' contributions. Furthermore, given the complexity, applying multi-theories is required to explain the relationship between female directors' contributions, ownership structure and firm performance.

Agency theory focuses on the connection between principals (shareholders) and agents (managers). Female directors can help the board make better decisions by bringing varied viewpoints to the table (Triana et al., 2014), which increases the efficacy of the board (Mathisen et al., 2013). Female directors can support stakeholder interests and assist businesses in making less risky decisions (Bruna et al., 2019; Muhammad et al., 2023). These contributions can improve financial performance by lowering agency conflicts, aligning managerial conduct with shareholder interests (Adams and Ferreira, 2009; El-Khatib and Joy, 2021), and improving monitoring (Jensen and Meckling, 1976; Liu et al., 2014).

The stakeholder theory argues that it is critical to consider the interests of all parties involved, including the community, customers, suppliers, and employees (Freeman et al., 2010). According to Seto-Pamies (2015), Karim (2021) and Prabowo et al. (2017), female directors can influence decision making by expressing stakeholder concerns, embracing multiple viewpoints, fostering social responsibility, and promoting accountability. Female directors can develop connections, improve financial performance, and increase board effectiveness by considering stakeholders' interests (Garcia-Torea et al., 2016).

According to the stewardship theory, directors serve as the stewards to protect shareholders' best interests (Davis et al., 1997). Female directors have a more inclusive and collaborative leadership style, and they can influence decision making by encouraging long-term



sustainability, moral behaviour, and stakeholder engagement (Du et al., 2016). Their stewardship strategy may result in stronger stakeholder interactions, better CSR practices, and better financial results.

The board of directors serves as an essential external resource that connects businesses to the outside world, and this dependence is highlighted by the resource dependency theory (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). Female directors can influence decision-making by supporting CSR projects that develop good relationships with stakeholders, reduce reliance on management, and have a positive ethical value (Terjesen et al., 2016). Female directors with distinctive personal traits can positively influence financial performance (Rubino et al., 2021) by accessing valuable resources, mitigating risks, gaining a competitive advantage (Abdullah et al., 2016), strategically managing resource dependencies (Zalata, et al. 2022), and incorporating stakeholder perspectives (Briano-Turrent, 2022).

In summary, agency theory suggests that female directors contribute to decision-making by reducing agency conflicts; stakeholder theory emphasises their role in representing stakeholder interests; stewardship theory highlights their potential for long-term sustainability and ethical behaviour; and resource dependency theory focuses on their impact on managing resource dependencies. Their contributions to decision making, stakeholder representation, and CSR can influence financial performance through improved governance, stakeholder relationships and CSR practices.

#### ***2.4 Financial Performance***

According to research by Hamdan et al. (2021), businesses with greater board diversity in terms of gender and race are more likely to have above-average financial returns. By contrast, businesses with less diversity in both areas will perform financially on par with or less than average. Similarly, Low et al. (2015) discovered that company performance improves as more females become directors. However, the effect seems lessened in nations where more females participate in the workforce. According to a US study, firms with more females in senior management teams do better than those with fewer females in leadership positions (Perryman et al., 2016). Female directors can therefore improve the financial performance of the company.

Ning et al. (2022) asserted that having females on boards tends to increase a company's profitability. Businesses with more women on their boards often experience above-average operating profitability, better organisation and higher valuations (Korenkiewicz and Maennig, 2023). Companies with female directors on their boards typically experience greater average growth, lower gearing, higher return on equity (ROE) and higher price book values (Post and Byron, 2015). According to Ararat et al.'s (2015) findings, demographic diversity improves company performance by reducing the wedge's detrimental impact on board monitoring. Mohamad Yusof et al. (2022) also found further support that a company with one or more females on its board of directors would have a greater ROE than a company without any female representation.

In addition to improving the accounting value of a company, female directors can also enhance firm performance in terms of market value. For example, Luckerath-Rovers (2013) asserted that businesses with the highest levels of gender diversity would see higher ROE, earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) and stock price growth. The most gender-diverse businesses exhibit average ROE, EBIT and stock price increases of 11%, 91%, and 36%, respectively. According to this finding, companies with greater gender diversity outperform

those with less gender diversity in financial performance. Thus, the presence of female directors on boards significantly improves company accounting and market value.

## ***2.5 Ownership Structures***

Foreign ownership refers to the extent to which a company is owned by entities from other countries (Chen & Kim, 2013). This study suggests that foreign ownership can positively moderate the relationship between female directors' contributions and financial performance. Companies with significant foreign ownership often have exposure to international standards and practices, including gender diversity and CSR expectations (Hanousek et al., 2019). Female directors' contributions in decision making, stakeholder representation, and CSR may align with these expectations, leading to improved financial performance.

Government ownership occurs when a significant portion of a company's shares is held by government entities (Farhan & Freihat, 2021). The impact of government ownership on the relationship between females directors' contributions and financial performance can be context-dependent. Government ownership may sometimes prioritize social objectives, including gender equality and CSR initiatives. Thus, women directors' contributions aligning with these objectives can positively influence financial performance. However, in other cases, government ownership may be associated with bureaucratic decision-making processes that can hinder the effectiveness of female directors' contributions (Wang et al., 2021).

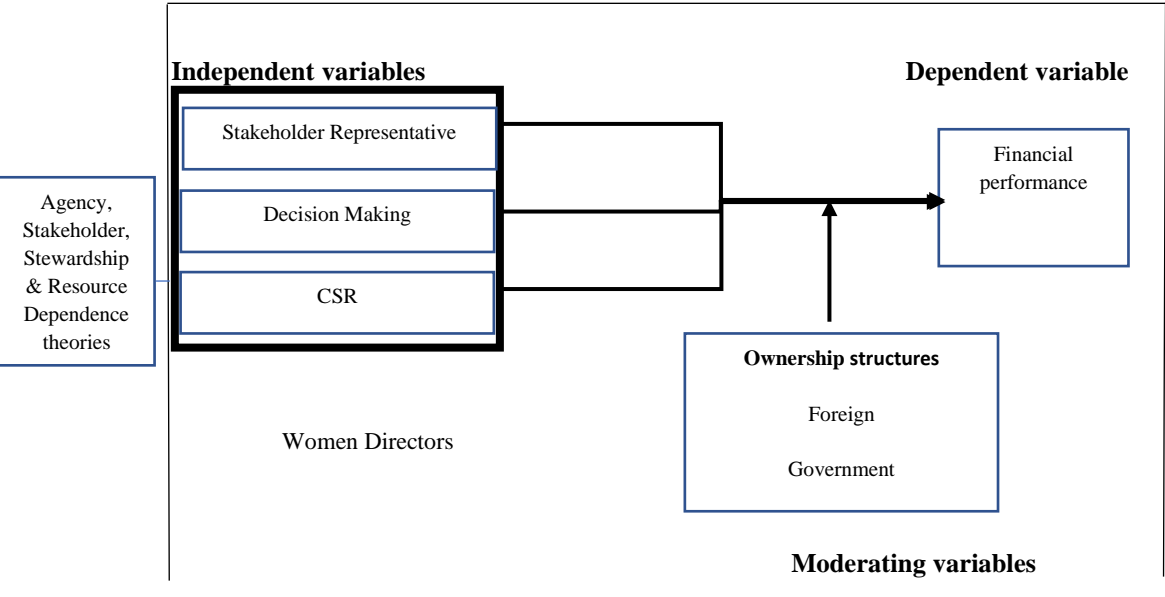
Institutional ownership involves ownership of company shares by institutional investors such as pension funds, mutual funds, and insurance companies (Zaid et al., 2020; Ghazali, 2007). Institutional ownership can positively moderate the relationship between women's contributions and financial performance (Dezhu Ye et al., 2019). Institutional investors often emphasize corporate governance, including gender diversity and CSR practices, seeking long-term sustainable returns. Female directors' contributions aligning with these expectations can enhance financial performance through improved governance and CSR practices.

Family ownership refers to companies where control is held by a family or a few individuals (Ghazali, 2007; Nguyen et al., 2021; Zaid et al., 2020). Jiang et al. (2011) argued that the impact of family ownership on the relationship between female's contributions and financial performance can vary depending on the level of minority shareholder protection. Family-owned companies may value continuity, reputation, and long-term sustainability, leading to a positive relationship. Female directors' contributions can support these values, positively impacting financial performance (Jiang et al., 2011). However, in other cases, family ownership may prioritize preserving family control, which could limit the influence of women directors and hinder their contributions.

## ***2.6 Conceptual Model of the Study***

In this study, agency theory contends that female directors contribute to decision-making by reducing agency conflicts. Stakeholder theory emphasises their role in representing stakeholder interests. Stewardship theory emphasises their potential for long-term sustainability and ethical behaviour. Finally, resource dependency theory concentrates on their influence on managing resource dependencies. Thus, having female directors could enhance governance in decision making, improve stakeholder engagement and CSR practises that result in better financial performance.

This study proposed that ownership structures have moderating effects that may strengthen or weaken the relationship between female directors' contributions and financial performance. The study adopted four types of ownership structures: foreign, government, institutional, and family. Agency theory suggests that concentrated ownership negatively impacts company performance because boards tend to make decisions biased towards a particular controlling shareholder due to high information asymmetry and conflict of interest (Ali Amin et al., 2022; Jensen & Meckling, 1976). However, companies with strong institutional shareholders may benefit because they can play an influential monitoring role to protect the interest of the shareholders (Jiang & Liu, 2021). Thus, certain types of ownership structures may strengthen or weaken the relationship between female directors' contributions and financial performance.



**Figure 1:** Conceptual model of female directors contributions, ownership structures and financial performance

**2.7 Hypotheses Development**

Companies that have more female directors on their boards perform better than boards with less female participation (Arora, 2021; El-Khatib and Joy, 2021). A board with female directors was also said to perform better financially because they play a critical role in board involvement in mitigating risk taking (Muhammad et al., 2023). Moreover, according to Francoeur et al. (2008), in 2004, Catalyst, a reputable organisation, examined the relationship between gender diversity and financial performance using a sample of 353 of Fortune 500 companies taken from 1996 to 2000. The results of this study show that companies that belong to the top quartile in having gender diversity, achieved better financial performance than the low quartile. Ararat et al. (2015) discovered that having diverse genders of board members has a beneficial influence on ROE and ROI. The presence of women on boards was found to have a strong positive connection with Tobin’s Q (Compton et al., 2019). However, Chapple and Humphrey (2014) discovered some flimsy evidence of a negative relationship between performance and having several female directors on the board. By representing the shareholders' interests, mitigating agency problems, and considering stakeholders' interests, female directors contribute to sustainable financial performance through improved decision-

making and resource utilisation. Thus, this study proposed the following hypothesis based on the existing research:

*H1: Companies with female board members perform better financially.*

De Masi (2021) investigated the association between the proportion of female directors on the board and company disclosure level and strategy adoption about environmental, social and governance. He found that female directors on corporate boards are seen as a mechanism to transit to stakeholder governance. Garcia-Torea et al. (2016) found a partial contribution of female directors to board effectiveness in protecting shareholder interests. The result implies that boards that are effective in protecting shareholder value can also effectively respond to the interests of the rest of the firm's stakeholders. In a similar vein, Lukerath-Rovers (2013) reported that a negative association exists between the presence of females on boards and the service industry. Despite these results, Nielsen and Huse (2003) suggested that through their input into board decision-making, which in turn depends on the professional experiences and unique values that female directors contribute, female directors have an impact on the strategic control of the board. Since females are now just as educated as their male counterparts, having females on boards may help a company's financial performance by attracting a larger pool of female directors on the corporate board (Solimene et al., 2017).

Ben-Amar (2017) examines how companies' responses to stakeholder demands for more frequent public reporting of risks related to climate change are impacted by the proportion of females on their boards of directors. They found that the frequency of voluntary climate change disclosures rise with the percentage of females on boards, based on data collected from a sample of publicly traded Canadian companies between 2008 and 2014. These findings support global efforts to increase gender diversity in corporate governance while highlighting the effectiveness of boards in stakeholder management. Last but not least, Bart and McQueen (2013) showed that females on boards are better equipped to safeguard stakeholders' interests than men. Stakeholder theory indicates that female directors consider stakeholders, leading to better decision-making and resource utilisation and enhancing financial performance. On the other hand, stewardship theory implies that female directors, acting as stewards, prioritise the company's long-term well-being over individual interests, contributing to sustainable financial performance. Although previous research has produced mixed results, the following hypothesis remains logical:

*H2: A significant relationship exists between the contributions of female directors as stakeholder representatives and the company's financial performance.*

A board with female directors is assumed to make sound decisions that benefit the company. Doan and Iskandar-Datta (2020) studied the influence of the CFO's gender on corporate decision making. They found that female CFOs are more ethical and avoid making riskier decisions than male CFOs. Agency theory suggests that female directors can improve financial performance by representing shareholders' interests and mitigating agency problems. Female directors in Australian companies are also perceived to make value-creating acquisition decisions (Lucas et al., 2021). Bart and McQueen (2013) discovered that women score considerably higher on Complex Moral Reasoning than men do when making judgments. Given that women are maybe better at problem solving, businesses will face fewer risks and see more revenues.

In addition, a study by Alvarado et al. (2011) utilising the Hausman test revealed a favourable correlation between the presence of female directors on boards and performance of

companies. A study by Adam and Ferreira (2009) also indicated a strong and favourable association between gender diversity and decision-making participation, which could result in improved business performance. Last, Smith et al. (2005) and Nielsen and Huse (2010) discovered a positive correlation between female directors' decisions and firm performance caused by female directors' educational backgrounds. Women directors may strengthen boards by giving specialised functional knowledge that is sometimes lacking on corporate boards. The increased board heterogeneity caused by the added expertise, as demonstrated by Kim and Starks (2016), can enhance business value. Resource dependency theory highlights those female directors, through diverse networks and resources, reduce the company's dependency on a narrow set of resources, enhancing financial performance. Thus, the third hypothesis is as follows:

*H3: A significant relationship exists between the contributions of female directors as good decision makers and a company's financial performance.*

Ararat et al. (2015) and Prabowo et al. (2017) found a substantial positive link between gender diversity and CSR, supporting the idea that having more women on the board is advantageous for CSR performance. The finding is corroborated with a study by Ibrahim and Hanefah (2016), who discovered a favourable correlation between the number of independent female directors and a firm's CSR score. They found that the proportion of senior female executives favoured the CSR rating. A recent study by Cruz et al. (2019) found that companies with family-related female directors are likely to increase CSR performance because they have more power to influence board decisions. Similarly, Formigoni et al. (2021) found that boards with a higher proportion of female directors in Brazilian companies disclose more CSR practices. Board gender diversity is favourably correlated with corporate governance and human rights disclosures, according to Beji et al. (2021). Stakeholder theory suggests that by considering the interests of diverse stakeholders, female directors can lead to more inclusive decision-making processes and better outcomes for all stakeholders, including improved CSR performance. Meanwhile, stewardship theory posits that female directors, as stewards of the organisation, prioritise the organisation's long-term well-being over individual interests, leading to sustainable CSR practices that enhance financial performance. On the basis of the above discussion, the next hypothesis is proposed:

*H4: A significant relationship exists between CSR contributions of female directors and a company's financial performance.*

Haldar et al. (2020) investigated how specific female characteristics, social capital factors and ownership structures in Indian companies influence female directors' chances to be nominated and appointed as directors. They found that ownership structure moderates the relationship between the social capital factors in appointing an independent female director. Saito (2017) examined listed companies in Japan from 2014 to 2016 and discovered a correlation between foreign ownership and the proportion of female board members. The results revealed that companies with higher levels of foreign ownership favour the appointment of female board members. Given the data were only available through 2012, Morikawa (2016) suggested that foreign ownership does not significantly affect the gender diversity of the board.

Furthermore, Ibrahim and Hanefah (2016) discovered a favourable correlation between government ownership and corporate social reporting in Jordanian listed companies but negative relationship between family and managerial ownership. The reason may be that politicians will act quickly in response to outside pressure to increase the participation of

women in numerous aspects of life, including business. The fact that women were solely appointed to fill quotas and that some were appointed because of their political ties, led the authors to conclude that state ownership could negatively affect a company's financial performance. Ozdemir's (2020) study found that board diversity has a more significant effect on financial performance when institutional ownership is low in tourism companies. Cordeiro et al. (2020) discovered that family ownership moderates the relationship between board gender diversity and corporate environmental performance. Family ownership may conflict with female directors' goals due to prioritised family interests and limited external perspectives. Institutional ownership aligns with agency theory, supporting monitoring and resources for female directors. Foreign ownership introduces external oversight and resources, benefiting female directors. Government ownership may prioritise political interests over financial performance, limiting female directors' influence. The formulation of the fifth hypothesis for this study, which is as follows, has been supported by prior studies:

*H5(a): Foreign ownership moderates the relationship between female directors' contributions and a company's financial performance.*

*H5(b): Government ownership moderates the relationship between female directors' contributions and a company's financial performance.*

*H5(c): Institutional ownership moderates the relationship between the contributions of female directors and the success of a company's financial performance.*

*H5(d): Family ownership moderates the association between the contributions of female directors and a company's financial performance.*

### **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### ***3.1 Sample and Data Source***

The study adopted the quantitative research approach in data collection and analysis. The sample of the study was selected using purposive sampling. The company must meet two key criteria: (1) it must be listed on Bursa Securities' Main Market, and (2) it must have at least one female director on its board of directors. As of January 2020, 790 PLCs are listed in Bursa Malaysia's Main Market. However, only 250 of the 790 listed organisations met the criteria set, and 244 companies (98%) responded to the questionnaire. A set of survey questions were developed to collect data on the contributions of female directors. The questionnaire has four sections. The respondents' demographic profiles are presented in Section A. Five items make up Section B's assessment of the contributions made by female directors in their capacities as stakeholders' representatives. Five items in Section C and five more in Sections D and E deal with how female directors contribute to effective decision making and CSR, respectively. A five-Likert scale is adopted. Data on financial performance (ROE), type of ownership structures, size of the company (total assets), leverage (debt ratio) and profitability (return on assets) are collected from 2019 annual reports, which are accessible from the Eikon database.

### 3.2 Regression Equation Model

The equation model of the study:

$$FPer = a + \beta_1 Dec-M + \beta_2 Sta-R + \beta_3 CSR + \beta_4 Fam + \beta_5 Gov + \beta_6 Inst + \beta_7 Fore + \beta_8 CSize + \beta_9 Lev + \varepsilon_{it} \quad (1)$$

Please refer to Appendix A for the definition of variables and measurement instruments used in this study.

SPSS software is used to analyse the data to examine the contribution of women directors to financial performance and the moderating role of ownership structures.

## 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics show that female directors' contributions as stakeholder representatives are higher, with a mean value of 3.956, followed by CSR at 3.878 and decision making at 3.79. The ownership structure of the sample's listed companies reveals that they are owned by family, the government, institutions and foreigners. Each type of ownership has a different shareholding threshold, ranging from 0% to more than 50% of the total issued share capital of a company. The vast majority of the businesses included in this survey fall into the family-owned business category. In terms of financial performance, on average, the profit made by the sample of companies is RM131,000 with a maximum value of RM1,025,000 and a minimum value of -RM94,000, indicating negative profit, or, loss. For the ownership structure results, most businesses have concentrated ownership. With a mean value of 5.896, the size of the company included in the study may be categorised as medium size. The average leverage among publicly traded corporations is 12.840, which is considered modest.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics of the study sample

Variables	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
<b>Dependent Variable</b>					
Fper	244	-0.094	1.025	0.131	0.186
<b>Independent Variables</b>					
Sta-R Perspective	244	2.83	5.00	3.956	0.484
Dec-M	244	2.83	5.00	3.739	0.449
CSR	244	3.00	4.67	3.878	0.333
<b>Moderating Variables</b>					
Fam	244	0.00	0.74	0.259	0.183
Gov	244	0.00	0.77	0.035	0.136
Inst	244	0.00	0.53	0.030	0.094
Fore	244	0.00	0.65	0.059	0.163
<b>Control Variables</b>					
CSize	244	3.25	8.92	5.896	0.809
Lev	244	0.00	60.93	12.840	13.321

Source: Authors' own work.

Table 3 Measurement scale for level of financial performance

Level of Financial Performance	Scale
High	0.76–1.13
Medium	0.38–0.75
Low	0.00–0.37

Source: Authors' own work.

The measurement scale for the level of financial performance was adopted using the same technique as Awis et al. (2017) and consists of high, medium, and poor categories. Based on the sample companies' mean ROE, which is 0.131, and as shown in Table 2, publicly traded Malaysian companies with women on the board have low ROE levels or poor financial performance. This result indicates that companies with female directors on corporate boards perform poorly financially. This outcome is congruent with research conducted on Malaysian companies (Lim et al., 2019). The reason is that female directors suffer from gender stereotypes and perceive tokenism. In contrast, a study by Ming and Hock Eam (2016) found no significant association between the presence of women directors on the board and the performance of companies. According to Hodigere and Bilimore's (2015) study, women directors are appointed to the board not because of their competency and professionalism but because of their network connection and social cohesion. They stated that this happens because, on average, women in the nation have less corporate board experience than male directors.

Table 4 Correlations analysis between independent, moderating, control and dependent variables of the study

No.	Construct Variables	(r)
<i>Independent Variables</i>		
1.	Sta-R	-0.003
2.	Dec-M	-0.056
3.	CSR	0.003
<i>Moderating Variables</i>		
4.	Fam	-0.155
5.	Gov	0.094
6.	Inst	-0.030
7.	Fore	0.235**
<i>Control Variables</i>		
8.	CSize	0.001
9.	Lev	-0.083
10.	ROA	0.734**

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

The results of the correlation analysis indicated that none of the independent variables correlates with financial performance. By contrast, there is a statistical correlation with foreign ownership and ROA. Overall, the findings of the correlation analysis do not support the idea that the contributions of female directors to the company's decision making, CSR and stakeholder representation may improve its financial performance. The findings of this study are corroborated by Francoeur et al. (2008) and Abdullah et al. (2016), who stated that the participation of women on boards has a limited influence on the financial performance of the company because they are only relevant for sensitive matters of women's interests. Similarly, Post and Byron (2015) found no correlation between the number of women on the board and the performance of the company.

Table 5 displays the results of the process analysis. Process analysis is used to examine the interactions between the independent variables (stakeholder representation, decision making and CSR) and types of ownership structure (family, government, institutional and foreign). The findings reveal that as measured by the value of  $t = -2.7615$ ,  $p = 0.05$ , only government ownership substantially predicts the association between female directors' contributions to CSR and ROE. Moreover, government ownership has a moderating effect on CSR. No interaction exists between the other independent variables and ownership structures, such as family owned, institutional or foreign owned companies. Thus, only government ownership is



included in the regression analysis to determine the relationship between female directors' contributions and financial performance.

Table 5 Process analysis results on interaction effect among CSR, government ownership and company's financial performance

<b>Model Summary</b>						
<b>R</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>MSE</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>df1</b>	<b>df2</b>	<b>p</b>
0.2208	0.0488	0.0334	2.4405	5.0000	238.000	0.0351
<b>Model</b>						
	<b>Coeff</b>	<b>se</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>LLCI</b>	<b>ULCI</b>
constant	0.0309	0.1575	0.1963	0.8446	-0.2794	0.3413
CSR	0.0175	0.0365	0.4786	0.6326	-0.0544	0.0894
Gov	3.2435	1.1281	<b>2.8751</b>	<b>0.0044</b>	1.0211	5.4659
Inst	-0.7936	0.2874	<b>-2.7615</b>	<b>0.0062</b>	-1.3598	-0.2275

The R<sup>2</sup> value of the study model is 55.9%. The adjusted R<sup>2</sup> result indicates that the model of the study is acceptable, and the variables used in the study can predict the outcome by 54.6%. None of the independent factors (stakeholder representatives, decision making and CSR) significantly affects the dependent variable (company financial performance). Thus, the regression result presented in Table 6 supports the earlier correlation analysis results. Government ownership appears to moderate the relationship between female directors' contributions and company performance in a favourable, meaningful but limited way ( $r = 0.134, p < 0.05$ ).

Table 6 Regression model summary

<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>	<b>Durbin-Watson</b>
0.747 <sup>a</sup>	0.559	0.546	0.1250640	1.993

a. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder representative, decision making, CSR, government ownership, size of Company, leverage and profitability  
b. Dependent variable: ROE

Table 7 Regression analysis on female directors' contributions, government ownership and financial performance

Model	Coefficients <sup>a</sup>							
	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF	
(Constant)	-0.051	0.114		-0.451	0.653			
Sta-R	0.001	0.020	0.003	0.057	0.955	0.718	1.392	
Dec-M	-0.018	0.022	-0.045	-0.844	0.400	0.668	1.498	
CSR	0.011	0.027	0.019	0.401	0.689	0.797	1.254	
Gov	<b>0.134</b>	0.060	0.098	2.255	<b>0.025</b>	0.982	1.018	
CSize	0.012	0.011	0.053	1.103	0.271	0.807	1.239	
Lev	0.001	0.001	0.045	0.924	0.356	0.795	1.258	

a. Dependent Variable: FPer

The findings of the study are consistent with the prior study by Ahmad et al. (2020), who concluded that female directors are not the main factors for a Malaysian company to have better financial performance. Yang et al. (2019) justified that a mandated quota of female directors will negatively affect firm performance and the risk of Norwegian companies. However, the current study results contradict those of Bennouri et al.'s (2018) and Terjesen et al. (2016) who claimed and found evidence that the contributions made by female directors can improve a company's financial performance. The reason may be that in this study, family-owned companies make up the bulk of the sample companies. Women who sit on the boards of family-owned businesses may not be carrying out their true duties as directors and were only chosen to meet quotas. Next, the selected sample companies have one or two women directors, which is fewer than three women directors, as suggested by Liu et al. (2014), if the companies wish women directors to contribute to effective decision-making that can enhance the firm's performance significantly. In addition, both research was conducted in industrialised nations, where attitudes toward women were not skewed and laws were carefully enforced to promote women on corporate boards. The study's findings also show that the association between female contribution and corporate financial performance is only moderated by government ownership. This finding aligns with Saraswati et al. (2020), who found that government ownership encourages companies to participate in more CSR initiatives which later enhance financial performance.

## **5. CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

This section details the conclusion, implications, limitation and suggestions for future research. The study aims to examine the relationship between female directors' contributions in terms of decision making, stakeholder representation and CSR on the financial performance with moderating effect of ownership structures of Malaysian publicly listed companies. The study results show that Malaysian public listed companies with female directors are underperforming because their ROE appears to be in the lower range. Next, none of the predicted contributions (stakeholder representation, decision making and CSR) of female directors has a favourable, appreciable effect on financial performance. Furthermore, government ownership can pressure companies to disclose more CSR information, encouraging them to participate in more charitable endeavours and drawing in socially conscious investors.

The lack of significant influence of women directors' contributions, including decision-making, stakeholder representation, and CSR activities, on financial performance could be attributed to various factors. One possible explanation is that the impact of women directors' contributions may be diluted or overshadowed by other factors that substantially influence financial performance, such as market conditions, industry trends, or overall corporate strategy. Additionally, the effects of women directors' contributions may take time to manifest fully, and the study period may not capture these long-term effects.

From the agency theory perspective, the lack of significant influence could suggest that the mechanisms through which women directors' contributions are supposed to enhance financial performance, such as improved oversight and alignment with shareholder interests, may not be effectively realised in practice. Stakeholder theory posits that women directors' efforts to represent diverse stakeholders' interests may not directly translate into improved financial performance, as stakeholder interests do not always align with shareholder value maximisation.

Stewardship theory would suggest that women directors, acting as stewards of the company, may prioritise the organisation's long-term well-being over short-term financial gains, which may take time to reflect in financial performance metrics. Resource dependency theory might indicate that women directors' diverse networks and resources may not be fully utilised or integrated into the company's operations, limiting their impact on financial performance.

The finding of the study has two main implications. The first implication to practice is that the nomination committee should fully exploit female directors' potential skills. The nominating committee members can use these findings to appropriately analyse which contributions from women are most appropriate for the company's future strategic direction. The nomination committee should also consider appointing at least three female directors to ensure they can significantly contribute to better decision-making, stakeholder representation and CSR practices. The second implication is related to the recruitment policy to prevent women's appointments based on favouritism and quotas. Thus, the regulators should require listed firms to fully disclose the process and procedures of directors' appointments with rationale or basis of appointment to avoid nepotism and cronyism.

This study, like many others, has some limitations. It has at least three shortcomings. First, the accounting statistics used in this study, ROE, serves as a proxy for financial performance. Although ROE has been acknowledged and utilised in numerous earlier studies, it is still regarded as historical data (De Wet and Du Toit 2007). Furthermore, the study analyses data from a single year to assess the profitability of the company, which is inappropriate given that it will take some time to assess the contributions of female directors to financial performance. Second, the study sample includes Malaysian listed companies with women directors, so the findings cannot be generalised to other companies with no women directors. Finally, the study focuses on three contributions made by female directors: stakeholder representation, decision making and CSR. Mentoring, negotiation, and lowering risks are some additional contributions that female directors might bring to the table. Future research should expand on this topic while considering the limitations above. In addition to the limitations mentioned, future studies should consider incorporating 2023 data, as Malaysian public-listed companies must now have at least one female director on their boards. This regulatory change could impact the dynamics and contributions of female directors, providing a more comprehensive understanding of their role in corporate governance and performance.

The findings in this study showed that different types of ownership structure have different moderating effects on female directors' contributions to firm financial performance. Government ownership influences the corporate board with female directors to be more sensitive and focused on CSR issues. The results of the current study do not offer conclusive proof that female directors can improve a company's financial performance. Applying agency, stakeholder, resource dependency and stewardship theories to this topic can help researchers understand that female directors' contributions to a company is not only to financial performance but also to sound decision-making, representing wider stakeholders and CSR practices. If all corporate players collaborate to give females more opportunities and empowerment to sit on corporate boards, their contributions could be significant in the long run. Numerous initiatives can be implemented by companies, regulators, policymakers and stakeholders to promote gender inclusion, which can boost the contributions of female directors, in addition to recognising and valuing the contributions of women. Setting up a suitable strategy and procedure for recruiting and selection is one option available to a company. A company should begin establishing a culture that values talent above gender. The nomination committee should actively encourage the culture of gender inclusiveness within their organisation. Law or regulation may be set up to require all businesses to have at least

one female director on corporate boards, but in the end, it is up to the female director to take the challenge and prove that they are worthy. Lastly, shareholders such as institutional investors and the government could pressure the business to add more female directors to its corporate board. With the abovementioned recommendation and efforts in place, the government's goal of having 30% female directors on corporate boards could be enabled and expedited.

Overall, promoting gender diversity and inclusivity is not only a matter of social responsibility but can also have positive effects on a company's long-term financial success, provided the right supportive structure and conditions are in place. It is important to note that the impact of women directors on decision-making can vary depending on various factors, such as their qualifications, experience, and the specific context in which they operate. Additionally, the contributions of women directors should not be viewed as inherently superior or inferior to those of male directors but rather as valuable additions that enhance the overall effectiveness and diversity of the board. The lack of significant influence of women directors' contributions on financial performance underscores the complexity of corporate governance dynamics and the need for further research to understand the interplay between gender diversity and financial outcomes.

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NA

## **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION**

SZA and NL carried out the introduction and literature review sections. SZA collected and refined the data and performed the data analysis using SPSS and Process. NL wrote the data methodology section. NL and MAR wrote the discussion and implication sections. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None declared.

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## APPENDIX A

Table 1: Definition of Variables, Measurement Instruments and Sources

No	Variables	Instruments	Measurements	Sources
<b>Dependent Variable</b>				
1	Financial Performance (FPer)	Return on Equity	Ratio of net income to shareholders' equity	Bennouri et al. 2018; Perryman et al. 2016; Low et al. 2015
<b>Independent Variables</b>				
2	Stakeholder Representative (Sta-R)	Questionnaire	5-point Likert Scale	Bart and Mcqueen (2013).
3	Decision Making (Dec-M)	Questionnaire	5-point Likert Scale	Nielsen and Huse (2010); Bart and Mcqueen (2013); Azmi and Barret (2014)
4	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)	Questionnaire	5-point Likert Scale	Hyun et al. (2016).
<b>Moderating Variables</b>				
5	Ownership structures Fam Gov Inst Fore	Family Government Institutional Foreign	Proportion of shares held by family members Proportion of shares held by Government Proportion of shares held by institutional investors Proportion of shares held by foreigner	Bennouri et al. 2018; Low et al. 2015; Liu et al. (2014)
<b>Control Variables</b>				
6	Company Size (CSize)	Total assets	Book value of total assets	Bennouri et al. 2018; Perryman et al. 2016; Garcia-Torea et al. 2016.
7	Leverage (Lev)	Debt ratio	Total debts divide by total assets	Bennouri et al. 2018 and Liu et al. 2014

**Survey Instrument****Section B: Contributions of Female Directors (Stakeholder Representative)**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Items</b>
1.	Female directors are more protective on the interests of the stakeholder compared to men.
2.	Female directors act as the role models to female employees.
3.	Female directors act as the legitimate persons to protect the welfare of all females in the company.
4.	Having more female directors on corporate boards enhance the ability of the company to attract higher female labour pools.
5.	Appointing female directors on corporate boards is considered vital for a customer-oriented company which majority of its customers are females.
6.	Female directors on boards understand more female customer's buying patterns and demands.

**Section C: Contributions of Female Directors (Decision-Making)**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Items</b>
1.	Female directors with different background lead to an effective decision making in the company.
2.	Highly educated female directors help boards to make effective decisions.
3.	Female directors are honest in making decisions thus reduce the risk of corruption in the company.
4.	Female directors are able to bring new ideas to the table.
5.	Female directors are more likely to be fair by taking into account everyone's point of view before deriving any decision.
6.	Female directors are able to reduce unethical decision making that would harm the company.

**Section D: Contributions of Female Directors (Corporate Social Responsibility)**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Items</b>
1.	Female directors lead the company to exercise effective corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities.
2.	Female directors are more likely concerned with voluntary social responsibility than their male counterparts.
3.	Female directors are more empathetic, sympathetic and active in taking care the needs of all stakeholder.
4.	Female directors are more caring towards moral and social issues rather than profits gains.
5.	Female directors are more likely to organize donation and charity programs.
6.	Female directors are more committed to do all philanthropic activities.

## In Search of Sweet Pot: Assessing Visitors' Satisfaction with Putra Mosque

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### ABSTRACT

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*This paper presents the findings of a study that examines the "sweet spot" concept, which suggests a significant association between visitors' satisfaction and engagement in four specific aspects of the tourism experience. Due to the rapid growth of Islam, mosques are being built at a faster rate than any other place of worship. These mosques vary in architectural styles and serve different purposes around the world. The mosque tourism business in Malaysia is widely recognised for its substantial contribution to community income and economic potential. This study aims to examine the relationship between the experience economy and visitors' experience at Putra Mosque. This study analysed the four realms of the tourism experience, namely education, entertainment, aesthetics, and escapism, to determine the impact on visitor satisfaction in the experience economy. A questionnaire was distributed to respondents to collect data, resulting in 281 received responses. Regression analysis was employed to examine the relationship between the variables. According to the findings, there is a significant relationship between education and aesthetic experiences within visitors' satisfaction. The research findings are analysed from the perspective of individuals who frequent mosques.*



## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Mosques are cultural and religious heritage monuments that serve as essential and understudied subjects in transdisciplinary research (Koren-Lawrence & Collins-Kreiner, 2018). Mosque tourism is a specific form of cultural and religious tourism that focuses on visiting Islamic heritage sites, which are considered part of heritage tourism. This type of tourism is particularly associated with Arabic heritage within the broader context of heritage tourism. The increasing influx of Islamic tourists who aim to establish a connection with their historical heritage presents a burgeoning prospect for tourism in Europe. Consequently, there have been suggestions for implementing suitable marketing tactics to cater to this specific form of tourism (Hall & Prayag, 2019). The potential of tourism at mosques has been acknowledged as a feasible element of this growing business (Hall & Prayag, 2019). The pleasure of guests is crucial for maintaining visitation at the mosque, as it directly impacts their experience. Studies validate that a contented client is inclined to revisit, is open to spending more, and will endorse the destination to others (Baker and Crompton, 2000; Yoon, Y. & Uysal, M., 2005). In their 1999 publication, Pine and Gilmore identified four distinct sorts of experiences that significantly impact the overall pleasure of visitors to tourism destinations. The experiences in this theory vary based on the distinction between active and passive engagement, as well as the contrast between absorption and immersion. According to the theory of Experience Economy, the most favourable outcomes are obtained when a customer engages in all four categories of experience. The concept coined by Pine and Gilmore to describe the optimal blend of experiences is referred to as the "sweet pot".

Due to the complex and diverse nature of visitors' experience, it is impossible to quantify it with a single numerical value. In order to provide a comprehensive depiction of the diverse array of experiences found in attractions and destinations, it is necessary to employ a number of methodologies to assess these experiences (Jorgenson, 2019). The research on visitor satisfaction with mosque tourism at Putra Mosque is conducted using the four-experience economy framework proposed by Pine and Gilmore. This framework includes education, entertainment, escapism, and aesthetics.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***2.1 Experience Economy***

Pine and Gilmore (1998,1999) presented the experience economy as a new paradigm for improving corporate performance in a variety of industries, including tourism and hospitality. The notion of the experience economy has been brought to tourism research providing dimensions to which to interpret visitor experience. Experiences encompass behaviour, perception, cognition, and emotions, which can be either explicitly or implicitly expressed (Oh, Fiore, Jeoung, 2007). They are formed by a process of acquiring knowledge and deriving pleasure from engaging in an activity (Stramboulis & Skayannis, 2003). Individuals construct their own unique experiences by drawing upon their personal origins, values, attitudes, and beliefs in any given setting (Jurowski, C., 2009). Pine and Gilmore (1999) proposed a framework that categorises tourism experiences into four distinct realms. These realms are defined by their level of participant engagement, ranging from active to passive, and their level of absorption or immersion. The boundaries between these realms are flexible and can overlap. This framework was further discussed by Oh et al. (2007). The experiences were categorised into four distinct realms: education, aesthetics, escapism, and entertainment.

The initial domain of *education* experience comprised individuals who belonged to the active absorption quadrant. Participants in this form of encounter actively assimilate the experiences as a cognitive state. For instance, visiting a mosque provides an educational experience that enhances visitors' understanding of Islam and its religious practices, so empowering them to make informed decisions. Moreover, a traveller assimilates the unfolding events in their surroundings while actively engaging their mind and/or body through interactive participation. Individuals enhance their understanding through firsthand experiential learning in tourism sites (Oh et al., 2007). Usually, individuals acquire broad or specific skills and knowledge through educational encounters at the locations they travel to. The second realm, *aesthetic* experiences, refer to passive absorption experiences that appeal to the senses. These experiences are referred to as aesthetic because, unlike educational experiences, they do not impact or modify the mind while being fully engaged in the world. For instance, engaging in activities like exploring a mosque with distinctive architecture and design might be categorised as aesthetic experiences when the visitors passively appreciate the surroundings without actively participating. Crozier (2012) argues that the aesthetic aspects of a mosque environment are influenced by historically significant architecture and location, as well as intangible elements that use sensory cues to stimulate visitors' imagination.

*Escapism* experiences entail active engagement and complete absorption to the extent that the tourist directly influences the performance or phenomena. Participating in mosque events such as an Islamic appreciation programme, Halal Food Festival, the apostle's maulidur discourse, and a religious talk by a notable Malaysian preacher are activities where the visitor's efforts influence the outcome of the experience. People pursue novel experiences to escape from their repetitive and predictable daily patterns (Hwang & Hyun, 2016). Escapism fosters a state of relaxation, allowing individuals to rejuvenate their mental and physical well-being (Moon & Han, 2018). In the realm of *entertainment*, individuals engage in passive absorption experiences when they do not actively influence the occurrence or environment. They simply appreciate or absorb activities and performances, such as visiting a mosque and quietly observing the actions of religious preachers (Oh, et al, 2007). According to Thyne (2001) and Scott (2007), mosques are often perceived as captivating, offering opportunities for entertainment and pleasure. The four realms were discovered to have distinct capabilities in influencing the visitor's encounter.

## **2.2 Visitor's Satisfaction**

Satisfaction is determined by the comparison of expectations before and after visiting a site (RamseokMunhurrum, Naidoo, Seebaluck, and Pillai, 2006). The satisfaction of visitors has been identified as a significant factor that impacts the success of industries (Som and Badarneh, 2011; Adetola, Adewumi, and Olonimoyo, 2016) due to its potential to shape visitors' future behaviour (Hussein, 2016) and cultivate visitor loyalty (Ohn and Supinit, 2016). According to Jensen (2017), expressive acts are the only means to generate satisfaction. According to Jensen (2017), when it comes to describing overall satisfaction, the expressive indicators that make up the fundamental recreational experiences are more significant than the other expressive indicators. Expressive aspects were regarded as highly motivating and capable of producing satisfaction, while instrumental components were seen as maintenance factors that have the potential to cause unhappiness if they are absent. Thus, it is evident that facilities and attractions have distinct expressive and instrumental functions that might contribute to overall happiness in a complimentary manner. Visitor satisfaction refers to the sense of contentment derived from the many experiences encountered during tourist activities. The tourism activities were deemed crucial in acquiring experiences that could distinguish the place from its competitors (Walls, Okumus, Wang, and Kwun, 2011). Visitor satisfaction has a crucial role in determining their future investment and intention to revisit (Choo et al., 2016). Dissatisfaction among visitors

might lead to negative behavioural intentions in the future (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2000). The level of pleasure that visitors have with the products and services provided in a tourism destination directly affects how often they choose to visit that destination. For instance, people who are content with the place are likely to return to the destination and actively endorse it to others. The contentment of visitors with the destination is a determining element in their visit to attractions. The satisfaction of tourists is influenced by the performance of attraction providers (Mahdzar, 2017). Moreover, there is a positive correlation between the level of service experience perceived by visitors at the destination attraction and their level of satisfaction (Mahdzar, 2020).

### ***2.3 Relationship between Experience Economy and Satisfaction***

Oh (2007) found that tourist contentment, good assessments of overall destination quality, psychological arousal, and strong recollections are outcomes of the experiences encountered at a place. The relationship between all four realms of experience and visitor satisfaction may be influenced by the empirical character of the force. In addition, escapism has been found to have a significant impact on pleasure with the music festival, while education has been found to affect contentment with a visit to the museum. The variables of education, aesthetics, and entertainment exerted a notable and favourable impact on happiness within the framework of a film festival (Kastenholz, 2017). Prior research has underscored the pivotal significance of each domain within the tourist sector. Chen and Chen (2010) conducted a study on 477 historical visitors in Tainan to examine the correlation between the educational experience and traveller happiness. The findings indicate that the educational experience contributes to an enhanced perception of value, resulting in a high degree of satisfaction among travellers. Hosany and Witham (2010) examined the impact of entertainment on both satisfaction and intention to refer, utilising empirical data obtained from 169 consumers in the cruise industry. They proposed that entertainment has a crucial role in influencing both contentment and intention to recommend. The aesthetic experience was discovered to augment customers' behaviour, encompassing both positive and negative responses and actions (Han, 2019). Ryu, Lee, and Kim (2012) asserted that aesthetics significantly influenced travellers' future behavioural intentions, such as word-of-mouth recommendations or revisiting. Hence, the aesthetic experience has the potential to elicit emotional responses that significantly contribute to visitors' overall happiness with their visit (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2004). Prior research conducted by Quadri (2012) has demonstrated the significance of escapist characteristics in the tourist context, which have an impact on the intention to revisit. Boorstin (2012) further corroborated this discovery that persons who lead inauthentic, alienated, and monotonous daily lives sometimes desire to escape or detach themselves in pursuit of a distinctive experience, thus fulfilling their travel aspirations. In their study on Malaysian museum visitors' experiences, Mahdzar (2017) also proposed that the four domains of the experience economy had a favourable and substantial influence on satisfaction. Qu (2017) examined the influence of experience on contentment in the context of a theme park. Oh (2007) found that tourist contentment, good assessments of overall destination quality, psychological arousal, and strong recollections are outcomes of the experiences encountered at a place. The empirical character of the four realms of experience and visitor satisfaction may potentially influence the strength of the link. In addition, escapism has been found to have a significant impact on contentment with the music festival, while education has been found to influence pleasure with a visit to the museum. The factors of education, aesthetics, and entertainment had a notable and favourable impact on happiness within the framework of a film festival (Kastenholz, 2017). Prior research has underscored the pivotal significance of each domain within the tourist sector. Chen and Chen (2010) examined the correlation between the educational background and the level of satisfaction among 477 heritage tourists in Tainan. The findings indicate that the educational experience contributes to an augmentation in perceived



value, resulting in a heightened level of satisfaction among travellers. Hosany and Witham (2010) examined the impact of entertainment on customer satisfaction and intention to refer, utilising empirical data obtained from 169 consumers in the cruise sector. They proposed that entertainment has a crucial role in influencing both contentment and intentions to recommend. The aesthetic experience was discovered to augment customers' behaviour, encompassing both favourable and unfavourable responses and conduct (Han, 2019). Ryu, Lee, and Kim (2012) asserted that aesthetics played a significant role in shaping travellers' future behavioural intentions, such as word-of-mouth recommendations or repeat visits. Therefore, the aesthetic experience has the potential to elicit emotional responses, which in turn enhance visitors' satisfaction with their visit (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2004). Prior research conducted by Quadri (2012) has established that escapist variables play a vital role in the tourism context, influencing the likelihood of repeat visits. Boorstin (2012) further corroborated this discovery that persons who lead inauthentic, alienated, and monotonous daily lives sometimes desire to flee or detach in pursuit of a distinctive encounter, thereby fulfilling their vacation experience. Bahrin (2017) proposed in their study on the experiences of museum visitors in Malaysia that the four realms of the experience economy had a noteworthy and beneficial effect on satisfaction. A study conducted by Mahdzar (2020) regarding the experiences of tourists to rural destinations in Malaysia revealed a positive correlation between the four realms of the experience economy and visitor satisfaction. Qu (2017) examined the influence of experience on satisfaction in the context of theme parks. The findings of his research indicated that aesthetic, entertaining, and educational events were strong predictors of satisfaction. Studies undertaken in various tourism contexts have empirically verified the connection between the experience economy and customer happiness. Based on the discussion above, this study proposed the following hypotheses.

Hypotheses 1: There is a significant relationship between experience economy and visitors' satisfaction.

H1a: There is a significant relationship between education experience and visitors' satisfaction.

H1b: There is a significant relationship between entertainment experience and visitors' satisfaction.

H1c: There is a significant relationship between escapism experience and visitors' satisfaction.

H1d: There is a significant relationship between esthetic experience and visitors' satisfaction.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

The sample size used in the study amounted to 278. This sample size fits in with the study according to the table of population and sample size (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Data has been collected for two weeks in June 2023 from visitors who visited the Putra Mosque. Putra mosque was chosen as it is a popular attraction among the tourists and the mosque tourism offers unique kinds of experiences. 281 questionnaires were distributed using google form and QR code to visitors visiting Putra Mosque and used for analysis. The questionnaires are prepared in English and it comprised three sections. Section A (demographic portfolio), Section B (visitors' experience at Putra Mosque) and Section C (visitors' satisfaction at Putra Mosque). Questions for the visitors' satisfaction contains 4 items and it was adopted from Farahdel (2011), and for visitors' experience, 13 items were adopted from Minkyung Park, Haemoon Oh & Jowon Park (2010). The visitors were approached by the researchers to complete a questionnaire online in a google form willingly after they had experienced the experiential attributes of the mosque.

Descriptive and Regression analysis are then used to explore the relationship between four variables of visitors' experience and satisfaction.

## 4. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

### 4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Based on Table 1, the highest mean value for visitors' mosque experiential attributes for education was 'This Putra Mosque improved my knowledge about Islam' and 'I learned many new things about Islam at Putra Mosque'. For entertainment experience, the highest mean score recorded was on item 'I enjoyed being one of the visitors at this Putra Mosque'; while for escapism experience was on item 'I was completely immersed in this Putra Mosque' and last experiential attribute of esthetics was on item 'The place of the Putra Mosque was attractive in many ways'. According to visitors at Putra Mosque, Putrajaya the least important attributes for visitors' experience were on entertainment ('I enjoyed participating in activities with others at the Mosque').

Table 1: Mean Score and Standard Deviation (SD)

Item	N	Mean Score	Sd
Education Experience			
This Putra Mosque Improved My Knowledge About Islam.	281	4.76	0.504
I Learned Many New Things About Islam At Putra Mosque.	281	4.76	0.504
This Putra Mosque Make Me Desire To Learn More About Islam.	281	4.68	0.468
This Putra Mosque Was A Good Islamic Learning Experience.	281	4.75	0.531
Entertainment Experience			
I Enjoyed Being One Of The Visitors At This Putra Mosque.	281	4.75	0.497
I Enjoyed Participating In Activities With Others At The Mosque.	281	4.42	0.766
I Enjoyed Many Activities At This Putra Mosque.	281	4.46	0.597
Escapism Experience			
I Was Completely Immersed In This Putra Mosque.	281	4.55	0.631
I Could Imagine I Was A Different Person At This Putra Mosque.	281	4.43	0.657
This Putra Mosque Made Me Feel Being In A Different World.	281	4.53	0.615
Esthetic Experience			
This Putra Mosque Setting Was Well Assembled In Harmony.	281	4.84	0.446
The Place Of The Putra Mosque Was Attractive In Many Ways.	281	4.86	0.407
The Putra Mosque Setting Offered A Good Experience.	281	4.83	0.430
Visitors' Satisfaction			
The Putra Mosque Met My Expectations.	281	4.81	0.441
This Visit Is Worth My Time And Effort.	281	4.83	0.433
I Was Really Satisfied With Visiting Putra Mosque.	281	4.84	0.433
Putra Mosque Was The Best Mosque Attraction To Be Visited Compared To Similar Mosques.	281	4.76	0.482

### 4.2 Regression Analysis

To see whether there is a significant relationship between the four realms of experiences and satisfaction of Putra mosque visitors, a linear regression was conducted. the outcomes

demonstrated that there is a significant relationship between education experience, esthetic experience, escapism experience, entertainment experience and satisfaction. these four realms of experiences were able to explain 44.1% (r-square = 0.441, f-change = 54.474, p<0.000) of the variance in visitors' satisfaction to Putra mosque.

Table 2: Coefficient

<b>Model</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Education	0.159	2.508	0.013
Entertainment	0.029	0.457	0.648
Escapism	0.120	1.798	0.073
Aesthetic	0.496	8.529	0.000

Dependent: Satisfaction

Table 2 shows the value of beta coefficient for this study. The regression results found that only Education and Esthetic showed a significant relationship with visitors' satisfaction in Putra Mosque (p<0.05), hence hypotheses H1a and H1d are accepted. Meanwhile, Entertainment and Escapism experiences were found not significant resulting in H1b and H1c rejected. Results from this study also show that Aesthetic experience is the most important factor in influencing satisfaction among Putra Mosque visitors in Putrajaya ( $\beta = .496$ ), followed by education ( $\beta = .159$ ), and escapism ( $\beta = .120$ ). Meanwhile, the lowest value is entertainment ( $\beta = .029$ ).

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The significance of attaining satisfaction with customers cannot be underestimated. The capacity of an attraction to draw in new and returning visitors is contingent upon the calibre of visitor experiences, since visitors are inclined to acquire items and services based on the anticipation of a gratifying and unforgettable encounter (Tsaur, Chiu, & Wang, 2006). While visitors may construct their own distinct experiences, it is the duty of the destination and the industry operating within that destination to offer the necessary resources for such experiences (Anderson, 2007). Establishing an appealing experience setting is crucial for attaining a competitive edge (Tsaur et al., 2006). Therefore, a comprehensive comprehension of the essence of tourism experiences is crucial for the economic prosperity of tourist locations. In order to achieve successful marketing, it is necessary to thoroughly examine the products or services being offered and carefully analyse the decisions made by consumers (Oh, et al, 2007). Tourism experiences are formed by a cognitive process of acquiring knowledge and deriving pleasure from engaging in various activities (Stramboulis & Skayannis, 2002). An enhanced comprehension of the correlation between engagement in activities and contentment is valuable for tourism destination designers and marketers.

This study aims to analyse the correlation between the four domains of experiences and the level of satisfaction among visitors. The study revealed that the educational and aesthetic aspects of mosque experiences had a substantial impact on visitor satisfaction. The study aligns with the current, scarce literature, shown by Mahdzar's works from 2017, 2020, and 2022, which demonstrate that visitors' range of experiences has a substantial influence on their contentment. The study demonstrates that aesthetics and education exert the most powerful influence and have a significant correlation with visitors' pleasure. These findings clearly demonstrate the significance of mosque tourism operators comprehending and assessing visitors' tourism experiences within the mosque environment, rather than solely concentrating on the tangible parts of their offerings and services. Visitors primarily desired to indulge, immerse themselves in the environment, and share their experiences at the site. Hence, it is

suggested that mosque tourism operators should ensure that the activities and ambiance created at the mosque are centred around providing consumers with aesthetic experiences, such as the atmosphere and mood of the physical space, in order to generate favourable evaluations of mosque visits. In addition, the mosque's notable infrastructure and strategic location, along with intangible elements, play a crucial role in utilising sensory cues to stimulate visitors' imagination. Therefore, it is crucial to provide visitors with the aesthetic qualities of Putra Mosque, including its distinctive architecture and ambiance, in order for them to fully appreciate the pleasing, positive, and artistic aspects of the mosque experience. The mosque administration may arrange events to enhance the educational experience for the guests. For instance, offering mosque tours, souvenirs, and the opportunity to meet and greet a renowned religious teacher (ustaz) in mosques, ensuring that visitors have a lasting memory of the area. The concept of mosque experience in this study enables an examination and comprehension of the effects of visiting a mosque. The mosque experience aims to create distinctive and personalised interactions that combine the favourable subconscious sensory and emotional aspects of visitors, resulting in enduring memories. The focus is on the development of emotions and values through the staged experience. This study, like most other scientific endeavours, has inherent limitations. To ensure tourist satisfaction and loyalty, it is crucial to conduct further study in various mosque tourism settings on the implementation of the four realms of the experience domain.

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## **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION**

NKMR and NKMN carried out the introduction and literature review sections. NMSM collected and refined the data and performed the data analysis as well as wrote the data methodology section. MM wrote the discussion and implication sections. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None declared

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# Addiction to Korean Drama on Purchase Intention of Korean Beauty Products among Adolescents in Malaysia

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## ABSTRACT

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*This study examines the relationship between addiction to Korean dramas and purchase intentions for Korean beauty products among Malaysian adolescents. A quantitative research approach was used to collect data from 120 respondents using a questionnaire. The methodology involved stratified random sampling of adolescents in Kuala Lumpur, with selections based on age, ethnicity, and exposure to Korean dramas, ensuring representative sampling and enhancing the reliability of the findings. The study aimed to assess how addiction influences purchase intentions and the broader impacts on individuals and the beauty industry. Results indicated a moderate preference for K-dramas and a corresponding purchase intent for Korean beauty products, with addiction levels significantly predicting purchase behaviours. Gender differences were observed affecting these outcomes. The findings underscore the significant impact of media exposure on adolescent consumer behaviour, highlighting potential areas for targeted interventions to foster responsible consumption. This study not only adds to the existing literature by quantifying the influence of K-drama addiction on consumer behaviour but also suggests the need for further research into media influences across different cultures and age groups.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Korea's globalisation through the acceptance of its culture in Asia is being accomplished rapidly, and its popularity is quickly spreading throughout Europe and the world. In North and Southeast Asia, particularly in Japan, China, Mongolia, Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Thailand, the popularity of Korean television dramas, songs, and films has increased significantly (Ariffin et al., 2018). This phenomenon is a form of the Korean Wave, or in Korean, Hallyu, which emerged in the thoughts of a Beijing journalist in 1999 when he noticed that South Korean goods were increasingly entering China (Fortunata & Utami, 2021a). It has become a massive industry characterised by attractive actors and actresses, picturesque settings, cultural and moral values, and many others (Yoke & Jamil, 2022). Moreover, any topic related to the Korean language is now an exciting and topical issue for the audience, especially Korean fashion and style (KStyle), which was indirectly conveyed through Korean drama. Due to its colonial history, Malaysia has been primarily exposed to Western media. Still, a new phenomenon has emerged in recent years: the rising popularity of Korean dramas broadcast on Malaysian television stations such as TV2, TV3, NTV7, Channel 8, and Astro (Channels 391 and 393). In addition, the internet offers numerous quickly accessible Korean entertainment websites such as DramaFever, AsianCrush, and Viu for interested viewers (Khairin et al., 2020). It has been discovered that most Malaysians prefer watching television, particularly foreign dramas, for pure entertainment (Mustafha et al., 2020). Since 2002, due to the Korean hit drama *Winter Sonata* aired on TV3, the Korean Wave has begun to penetrate Malaysia (Amaran & Wen, 2018). Thus, Malaysian television stations began subscribing to and incorporating Korean dramas into their local programming, gradually increasing the popularity of Korean dramas in the country.

Adolescents are not an exception to the widespread popularity of many Korean dramas, which profoundly affect viewers, frequently causing them to alter their motivations and objectives. They can visualise texts, relate the text to themselves and their world, ask questions, and make statements of understanding with greater accuracy (Gascon, 2019). It should be noted that when analysing the effect of films, conclusions about their effectiveness result from different methodological approaches, which have other advantages and limitations (Kubrak, 2020). A study of young adults familiar with K-drama and K-pop reveals that the Korean way of life and dress influence them to copy K-pop icons, TV show characters, or dance moves such as those in the hit song *Gangnam Style* (Lim et al., 2020). For instance, Korea's exports, especially in beauty products followed by fashion and other ancillary products, will expand due to the impact of its top television dramas (Kim, 2018). Technology development in this area (medium) is also a factor in viewing frequency, affecting an individual's behavioural intent. Many viewers no longer watch traditional (linear) programming from the TV at home but watch content online, including on mobile devices (Salehan et al., 2018). The young of today are digital natives because they have never known a world without the Internet (Szymkowiak et al., 2021). This trend is reflected in the increasing time younger people spend watching online videos (Brandwatch, 2020). Since mobile phones, tablets, and laptops can perform the same function as a television, televisions are becoming less popular.

Several studies have examined the association between audience traits, motivations, and addiction regarding specific content consumption and TV viewership. For example, prior research has demonstrated that the reasons for using a mobile phone and audience characteristics such as gender are positively associated with addictive behaviours and that the features and motivations of online users also influence their internet addiction (Hui, 2019).

There is a correlation between addiction to Korean cultures, such as K-dramas, and the growth of copying behaviour among the audience, particularly adolescents who identify with their role models (Fortunata & Utami, 2021b). Other than that, Multi-Channel Network (MCN) operators involved in Korean creative media are actively penetrating overseas and creating a benchmark for overseas expansion (Na et al., 2021). Consequently, knowledge gaps will continue to emerge between research into the relationship between viewing and addiction in new media (Internet and mobile devices) and investigation into similar relevance in "old" media such as television and radio. Even though adolescent consumers are open to making sustainable purchases, they frequently change their minds at the moment of actual purchase. This theory for the orientation gap implies that various individual characteristics, such as demography, lifestyle, or other psychological aspects, are responsible for tendency purpose gaps (Jung et al., 2020). Further research indicates that the price of a product has the most impact on a consumer's intent to buy. In contrast, personal opinions and societal norms significantly impact the consumer's final choice (Liew & Falahat, 2019). In addition, this new cultural movement has substantially affected the Korean economy through increased exports and tourism (Lkhaasuren et al., 2018). Adolescents become a target as consumers of their export market, Korea, and affect the country's economic growth.

Based on this, it can be implied that purchase intent is a subjective psychological state in which the buyer wants to take a direct action based on a thorough examination of a particular object. This study investigates Malaysian adolescents' purchasing intentions toward Korean products due to their addiction to viewing K-dramas. This study aims to see if there is a correlation between addiction to watching K-dramas and purchase intention towards Korean products. The study's findings will reveal the level of addiction to watching K-dramas and the purchase intent of Korean products among adolescents in Malaysia. In addition, several related effects on variables such as gender and the preferred platform for the viewing reach of Korean dramas were investigated to determine the study's results. The study will also give considerations and data regarding how adolescents process decision-making regarding tendencies. In this information age, policymakers will also be aware of the relationship between adolescents and their preferences or influences on the stance and concerns of society to develop and manage adolescents. Understanding adolescents' digital experiences through this functional, developmental lens can help future researchers zero in on more precise, validated constructs and provide specific recommendations for parents, teachers, clinicians, policymakers, and digital designers (Granic et al., 2020). (Nesi et al., 2020) previously argued that the concept of "screen time" is oversimplified and does not reflect the complexities of adolescents' use of digital media and that focusing on the overall effects of screen time on adolescent developmental outcomes has proven ineffective. As (Prinstein et al., 2020) point out, demographic differences in the use of digital media by teenagers will be significant future research directions.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***2.1 Korean Drama Perspective***

Based on the most recent K-drama export data, China was one of the first countries to contribute to its global distribution, heralding the birth of the Hallyu phenomenon, which Japan and Taiwan followed. Initiated by the export of television dramas, it now includes Korean pop music (K-pop), films, animation, online games, smartphones, fashion, cosmetics, food, and lifestyles, among others (Kim, 2018). Domestically, South Korean dramas have long been regarded as among the most popular television programmes, with five or six dramas typically

comprising the annual top ten list of most-watched programmes (Khairani & Simanjuntak, 2022). Beyond these three significant importers, some Southeast Asian nations have increased K-drama imports due to their regional popularity and demand from local audiences (Ju, 2018). Consequently, the influence of Korean Drama appears to be expanding rapidly across the globe recently.

Fan site members create subtitle files almost immediately after dramas air and songs are released. The work of linguistic translation indicates fan labour, collective emotional investment, and "affective translation communities" (Kim, 2021). In Turkey, a fan club produces an Internet magazine, a daily newspaper, and radio broadcasts related to Hallyu (Kaptan & Tutucu, 2021). In addition, Arab commentators believe that Korean television dramas have surpassed their Turkish counterparts (Elaskary, 2018). This chronology occurs abruptly and has a direct effect that we can essentially observe.

Fantasy and distinctive cultural and structural characteristics are the primary draws of K-drama to Western audiences and can be determined as soft power. Soft power can help us address major global issues that demand multilateral cooperation among states (Thussu, 2019). Soft power is the capacity to achieve one's goals through attraction as opposed to coercion or payment, and it stems from the attractiveness of a nation's culture, political ideas, and policies (Nye & Kim, 2019). Korean culture is heavily inspired by and firmly rooted in traditional Confucian family-centred ideals (Lee, 2018). Therefore, the allure of these traits can alter the structure and culture that dominates the existing industry in the East, especially Korea and its culture.

## ***2.2 Purchase Intention***

Purchase intention is a measure of how likely a consumer is to purchase a product or service, and it is an essential topic in marketing and consumer behaviour because it influences how firms design and promote products and connect with potential consumers. (Chen & Chang, 2018) defines purchase intention as the potential to purchase an intention among those acquiring products or services. Their study of online apparel products (Heidarian, 2019) defined purchase intention as the propensity of customers with a specific intent calculated in terms of actual purchases. In general, purchase intention is the probability consumers intend to acquire any service or product (Laksamana, 2018). Purchase intent can be viewed as a commitment to purchase particular goods or services when purchasing.

Various variables can affect purchase intent, including a consumer's needs, preferences, and attitudes toward a product, consumer attitude, or brand. Those with a favourable attitude toward a product are more likely to have a strong intent to purchase, whereas those with a negative attitude are less likely to have a solid sense to buy (Lin & Niu, 2018). Consumers are more likely to have a strong purchase intent for a product if they perceive that it gives good value for money, which can be influenced by factors such as price, quality, and features (Peng et al., 2019). Moreover, consumers are more likely to have a strong purchase intent for products from brands they trust, which can be impacted by the brand's reputation, product quality, and customer service (Bhandari & Rodgers, 2018). Accordingly, the execution of a purchase intention depends on various external variables and may be explained using the theory of reasoned action (TRA) and the product evaluation model (PEM).

Fishbein and Ajzen established the theory of reasoned action (TRA) to investigate and better comprehend the links between attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. The theory of reasoned

action postulates that the choice to perform a particular behaviour is influenced by a personal and a social factor, where the attitude toward the behaviour represents the individual factor in a specific situation. The social aspect is defined by the subjective norms that govern the behaviour in such a condition and the motivation to adhere to them (Tornikoski & Maalaoui, 2019). When an individual can assume responsibility for their buying intentions, rational action is judged beneficial (Beldad & Hegner, 2018). The study demonstrated an important link between customers' actual conduct and intentions and suggested that the hypothesis of reasoned action alone may not be entirely correct (Schmeichel et al., 2018). Recent research has demonstrated that consumer perceived value is one of the most potent and continuous factors in predicting purchase intent.

### ***2.3 Korean Beauty Products***

"Korean Beauty Products," usually abbreviated as "K-beauty," refers to a category of beauty products developed and manufactured in South Korea for males and females. These products are known for their cutting-edge formulas, unique ingredients, and original packaging designs (Kwon, 2020). Korean beauty industry products often address specific skin concerns and emphasise natural and mild ingredients (Yang et al., 2019), for example, hair cream or pomade, shampoo, face cleansing foam, and sunscreen lotion used by both genders. They also have a considerable following in many other regions of the world, which has grown significantly in recent years. They are well known throughout Asia for the body, hair, face, and makeup products that belong to this category (Xenia et al., 2020).

Korean beauty products have become famous worldwide, thanks in no small part to the proliferation of social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok. Influencer marketing, where influencers and celebrities promote and use products on social media, has proven highly successful in increasing customers' knowledge and interest in K-beauty products (Wang & Lee, 2021). In addition, social media platforms have enabled the wide dissemination of user-generated material, such as product reviews and tutorials, helping to build consumer trust and credibility (Nosita & Lestari, 2019). In addition, the appeal of South Korean culture, such as music, television series, and movies, has contributed to the rise of Korean beauty products (Alia et al., 2021). Consumers have learned to trust and rely on Korean beauty products for their efficacy, novel ingredients, and overall high standards, which has contributed significantly to the global success of K-beauty products.

Numerous Korean beauty brands offer a variety of products at different prices, making them accessible to a wide range of consumers (Tien et al., 2019). Due to fierce competition between companies in the South Korean market, Korean beauty products are often affordable, especially for young people (Yeng, 2018). This rivalry forces brands to price competitively to attract and retain customers. In addition, many Korean beauty product companies emphasise producing high-quality products at reasonable prices, which allows them to appeal to a broader range of consumers. The relatively low labour and production costs in South Korea also mean that products are more affordable than in other countries (Lee & Lee, 2021).

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methods employed to investigate the relationship between Korean drama-viewing addiction and adolescent purchase intentions for Korean beauty products in Malaysia. A quantitative research design was utilised, with a survey as the primary instrument for data collection. The survey targeted adolescents residing in Setiawangsa, Kuala Lumpur. The study population consisted of Malaysian adolescents aged 14 to 25. A stratified random sampling method was adopted to ensure representativeness across different ethnic groups within the community. This sampling method was chosen to enhance the validity of the results and allow for the calculation of sampling errors, which is crucial for generalising findings to a broader population (Ilyasu & Etikan, 2022). Respondents for the study were selected based on specific criteria to ensure a comprehensive analysis of the impacts of Korean drama viewing on the purchase intentions towards Korean beauty products among Malaysian adolescents.

The age range of participants was set between 14 and 25 years old to cover a broad spectrum from young teenagers to young adults, which allowed the study to capture varying levels of maturity and purchasing power. The inclusion of younger teenagers (14-17 years) was based on their potential influence on family purchasing decisions despite their limited direct purchasing power. This approach acknowledges the role of younger teenagers as influencers in household consumption, which is relevant in the context of media influence on purchasing behaviour (Dinesh et al., 2023). Ethnicity was also considered to reflect Malaysia's multicultural society, ensuring diverse cultural perspectives in the sample. Additionally, inclusion was limited to those who had watched at least one Korean drama in the past two years to focus on individuals with recent exposure to Korean media content.

Primary data was collected through a Google Forms survey, which included 27 items divided into three categories. Part A – Demographics profile, Part B – Addiction and inclinations to watching K-drama, and Part C – Purchase intention towards Korean Beauty Products. Part A contained 7 items, while Parts B included 10 items and Part C 10 items. Multiple-choice questions were used for Part A, while Likert Scale questions were employed for Parts B and C. An independent t-test was used to analyse the impact of gender on the variables of interest to determine the variations in replies between male and female participants. (Liang et al., 2019). The results of this study provide findings and conclusions based on the sample but cannot be generalised to the entire population. In addition, the analysis assumes that participants can accurately recall their viewing habits and behaviours related to Korean television series over the past two years. By applying the methodology described above and addressing the reviewer's concerns, this study aims to determine the relationship between adolescents' interest in Korean dramas and behavioural addiction and whether there is a relationship between their viewing habits and their intention to purchase Korean beauty products.

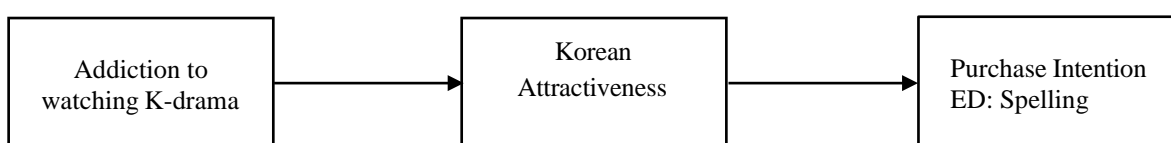


Figure 1: Research Framework.

#### 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This section examines the relationship between the findings and the study's objectives. It is separated into respondents' demographics, respondents' addiction to watching K-drama, and their intention to buy Korean beauty. Finally, the relationship between addiction and purchase intention variables exists in this study. Each factor produces the mean scores; 120 respondents responded to the questions posed via the Google Form data collection. However, 25 values are missing due to question number 4 in the demographic section. Respondents are not required to answer the following question because it is irrelevant to this study.

##### 4.1 Level of Addiction to Watching K-drama

According to Table 1, (10.8%) of adolescents in this study are highly addicted to watching Korean dramas. The medium level is (45%), while the lowest is (10.8%). The overall percentage equals 79.2%. The remaining 20.8% of respondents did not continue the survey because they do not watch or have never heard of Korean dramas. Overall, K-drama viewing is associated with a moderate level of addiction.

Table 1: Level of Addiction to Watching K-drama.

Addiction to Watching K-drama	Frequency	Percentage
High	13	10.8
Moderate	54	45.0
Low	28	23.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>79.2</b>

##### 4.2 Level of Purchase Intention towards Korean Beauty Products

Referring to Table 2, (11.7%) of adolescents have a high intent to purchase Korean beauty products. (45%) represents the medium level, followed by (22.5%) for the lowest level. The total amount is 79.2%. The remaining 20.8% of respondents did not continue the survey because they did not watch K-dramas or had never heard of them. Consequently, adolescent consumers' intentions to purchase Korean beauty products are generally moderate.

Table 2: Level of Purchase Intention towards Korean Products.

Addiction to Watching K-drama	Frequency	Percentage
High	14	11.7
Moderate	54	45.0
Low	27	22.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>79.2</b>

##### 4.3 Relationship Between Addiction to Watching K-dramas and Purchase Intention towards Korean Beauty Products.

A significant positive link exists between addiction to watching K-dramas and purchase intention towards Korean products ( $r = 0.01$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), as seen in Table 2. In this case, the greater the adolescents' addiction to watching K-dramas, the more significant their impact on purchasing intention toward Korean products. With higher addiction support, adolescents are more influenced to buy Korean products.

Table 3: Correlation Between Addiction to Watching K-dramas and Purchase intention towards Korean Products.

Correlation	Result	Addiction to Watching K-drama	
		Reliance	
Addiction	Pearson Correlations	1	.658**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	95	95
Purchase Intention	Pearson Correlations	.658**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	95	95

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

#### 4.4 Gender Differences in Addiction to Watching Korean Dramas

Table 4 displays the t-test results on independent samples used to examine the gender differences in K-drama viewing addiction. There is a significant difference between male and female adolescents concerning K-drama addiction, male ( $t = -2.086$ ), female ( $t = -2.105$ , which is more  $< 0.05$ ). It indicates that female adolescents are more likely to be addicted to K-drama viewing.

Table 4: Gender Differences in Addiction to Watching Korean Dramas.

Group Statistic	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Addiction To Watching Korean Dramas	Male	51	30.1176	9.44171	1.32210
	Female	44	33.9545	8.32188	1.25457

Table 5: Independent Sample Test.

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal Variances assumed	.174	.678	-2.086	93	.040	-3.83690	1.83974	-7.49025	-.18355
Equal Variances not assumed			-2.105	92.951	.038	-3.83690	1.82261	-7.45627	-.21753

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study shows that addiction to Korean dramas among adolescents positively correlates with purchasing Korean beauty products. It suggests that the likelihood of adolescents wanting to purchase Korean beauty products increases as they become addicted to Korean dramas. It shows adolescents' dependence on the media, particularly Korean dramas, as a

source of information and influences purchasing decisions. This finding has numerous implications for the media and beauty sectors, including the success of certain shows and genres that could increase consumer demand for similar products. It highlights the need to use media, such as Korean dramas, as a marketing strategy to reach and influence youthful customers in the beauty industry.

It is also essential to evaluate this phenomenon's potential adverse effects. Adolescents exposed to Korean media may desire to emulate their favourite stars' looks and styles. It could make them more likely to purchase Korean beauty products such as skincare and makeup products that promise to help them achieve the same flawless and youthful appearance as their idols. Teenagers may be more prone to buy items they don't need or can't afford, resulting in financial distress. In addition, repeated exposure to the unrealistic beauty standards depicted in dramas may result in a negative body image, low self-esteem, and even eating problems. The results support the theory of media influence on consumer behaviour, which states that media exposure can influence people's attitudes and purchase decisions. The results suggest that the popularity of Korean dramas among youths in Malaysia increases the demand for Korean beauty products.

It is also important to note that this study only included adolescents and may not apply to other age groups. The results may not apply to those outside the adolescent age group, indicating the necessity for additional research to explore the influence of media exposure on consumer behaviour across various age groups. The conclusions of this Malaysian study may not apply to other nations. Cultural context is essential when data analysis because media and consumer behaviour vary by culture. It's also important to consider the study's potential limitations. For example, self-reported measures of addiction to Korean television series and purchase intention could be subject to social desirability bias, in which people report what they think is expected of them rather than their actual thoughts and actions. The cross-sectional approach, which only investigates the association between Korean drama addiction and purchasing intention at a certain period, prevents causal judgments. Thus, additional research is needed to understand how media exposure affects consumer behaviour in diverse cultural contexts and age groups.

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## **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION**

NAS wrote the discussion and performed the data analysis. AAA reviewed and edited the article.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

## **APPENDIX**

Survey Instrument (quantitative study) – Appendix A: Survey questionnaire.



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## APPENDIX A

### Survey Questionnaire

I am a student at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) in Shah Alam pursuing a Master of Mass Communication. I am conducting research with the title mentioned above. This study examines addiction to watching Korean dramas on the purchase intention of Korean beauty products among adolescents in Malaysia. The information is strictly for academic purposes and is therefore considered confidential. This survey consists of three sections. Please respond to each question as thoroughly and truthfully as possible.

*Saya adalah pelajar dari Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Shah Alam dan kini mengikuti Master Komunikasi Massa. Saya menjalankan penyelidikan akademik seperti tajuk di atas. Penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui ketagihan terhadap tontonan drama Korea keatas niat membeli produk kecantikan Korea dikalangan remaja Malaysia. Ia hanya untuk tujuan akademik dan oleh itu, maklumat tersebut dianggap sulit. Soal selidik ini terdiri daripada 3 bahagian. Sila jawab setiap soalan dengan teliti dan sejujur mungkin.*

Please complete the following questionnaire regarding the above inquiry by placing a tick in the appropriate box.

*Lengkapkan borang soal selidik berikut dengan teliti berkaitan pertanyaan di atas, dan jawapan anda di kotak yang sesuai.*

#### SECTION A. DEMOGRAPHIC/DEMOGRAFI

1. Gender/*Jantina*:
  - a. Male/*Lelaki*
  - b. Female/*Perempuan*
  
2. Age/*Umur* (year/*tahun*):
  - a. 14 – 16
  - b. 17 – 19
  - c. 20 – 22
  - d. 23 – 25
  
3. Ethnicity/*Bangsa*:
  - a. Malay/*Melayu*
  - b. Chinese/*Cina*
  - c. Indian/*India*
  - d. Others/*Lain-lain*

4. Have you watched Korean TV series in the past two years?/*Adakah anda menonton drama Korea dalam dua tahun kebelakangan ini?*
  - a. Yes/Ya
  - b. No/Tidak (Please stop answering the questionnaire/*Sila berhenti menjawab soalan seterusnya*)
  
5. Frequency of watching Korean dramas/*Kekerapan menonton drama Korea:*
  - a. 1-3 times a week/*1-3 kali seminggu*
  - b. 4-6 times a week/*4-6 kali seminggu*
  - c. 7 times and above/*7 kali dan ke atas*
  
6. The preferred platform for the viewing reach of Korean dramas/*Platform pilihan untuk jangkauan tontonan drama Korea.*
  - a. Netflix
  - b. Youtube
  - c. Telegram
  - d. Facebook
  - e. Twitter
  
7. Favorite K-drama Genre/*Ganre K-drama Kegemaran.*
  - a. Adventure
  - b. Crime
  - c. Family Drama
  - d. Mystery
  - e. Romantic

**SECTION B. ADDICTION AND INCLINATIONS TO WATCHING K-DRAMA/KETAGIHAN DAN KECENDERUNGAN UNTUK MENONTON K-DRAMA**

**1. Not interested, 2. Slightly interested, 3. Moderately interested, 4. Very interested, 5. Extremely interested**

**1. Tidak Berminat, 2. Berminat, 3. Separa Minat, 4. Sangat Minat, 5. Terlampau Minat**

8. I have positive feelings toward South Korean drama/*Saya mempunyai perasaan positif terhadap drama Korea Selatan.*
9. I like to watch Korean drama/*Saya suka menonton drama Korea.*
10. I am interested in Korean drama/*Saya minat dengan drama Korea.*
11. I like the way K-drama attracts my passion/*Saya minat bagaimana drama korea menarik kehairahan saya.*
12. I like the quality of Korean Drama/*Saya suka kualiti drama Korea.*
13. I like the genre of Korean Drama/*Saya suka ganre Drama Korea.*
14. I will spend hours watching it/*Saya akan memperuntukan berjam-jam menontonnya.*
15. I am watching more and more K-drama with the same level of enjoyment/*Saya semakin banyak menonton K-drama dengan tahap keseronokan yang sama.*
16. I frequently watch K-drama for longer than planned/*Saya kerap menonton K-drama lebih lama daripada yang dirancang.*

17. I am disappointed if I miss an episode of my favourite K-drama/*Saya kecewa jika saya terlepas episod K-drama kegemaran saya.*

**SECTION C. PURCHASE INTENTION TOWARDS KOREAN BEAUTY PRODUCTS (HAIR CREAM OR POMADE, SHAMPOO, FACE CLEANSING FOAM, SUNSCREEN LOTION, ETC., USED BY BOTH GENDER)/NIAT PEMBELIAN TERHADAP PRODUK KECANTIKAN KOREA (KRIM RAMBUT ATAU POMADE, SYAMPU, BUIH PEMBERSIH MUKA, LOSYEN PELINDUNG MATAHARI, DSB., DIGUNAKAN OLEH KEDUA-DUA JANTINA)**

**1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neutral, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree**  
***1. Sangat Tidak Setuju, 2. Tidak Setuju, 3. Neutral, 4. Setuju, 5. Sangat Setuju***

18. Korean beauty products have high-quality compared to other products/*Produk kecantikan Korea mempunyai kualiti yang tinggi berbanding produk lain.*
19. Korean beauty products are more reliable in their effectiveness/*Produk kecantikan Korea lebih dipercayai keberkesanannya.*
20. When I want to purchase the related beauty products, Korean beauty products immediately come to mind/*Apabila saya ingin membeli produk kecantikan yang berkaitan, produk kecantikan Korea segera terlintas di fikiran.*
21. Korean beauty products are more readily available from anywhere/*Produk kecantikan Korea lebih mudah didapati dari mana-mana sahaja.*
22. Korean beauty products provide high satisfaction compared to other products/*Produk kecantikan Korea memberikan kepuasan yang tinggi berbanding produk lain.*
23. I would choose this product or brand over all others offered/*Saya akan memilih produk atau jenama ini berbanding semua yang ditawarkan.*
24. I am willing to suggest this product or brand to others/*Saya bersedia untuk mencadangkan produk atau jenama ini kepada orang lain.*
25. I plan to buy this product/brand soon/*Saya bercadang untuk membeli produk/jenama ini tidak lama lagi.*
26. I am willing to wait a long time to get the product I use/*Saya sanggup menunggu lama untuk mendapatkan produk yang saya gunakan.*
27. I think Korean beauty products have more exciting options than other products/*Saya rasa produk kecantikan Korea mempunyai pilihan yang lebih menarik berbanding produk lain.*

# Women's Textile Pattern Designs Based on the Principle of Geometric Perspective

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## ABSTRACT

### ARTICLE HISTORY

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### KEYWORDS

*Geometric perspective  
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Composition of points,  
lines and planes*

*Geometric perspectives, derived from mathematical principles, is a technique that combines science and art by applying perspective to painting. Geometric perspectives are divided into three categories, namely: one-point perspective, in which there is only one perspective vanishing point in the structure of the perspective, which can show a sense of three-dimensionality; angular perspective, which can bring a sense of space; and a three-point perspective, which is an aggregate of the two. Geometric elements in modern fashion design are developed from the traditional art of geometric patterns. With the rise of different disciplines and the birth of theories, as well as the artistic exploration of geometric elements by designers, geometric elements have been applied in a variety of ways in clothing design. In specific clothing design, designers can express geometric elements as integral content, or as local decorative designs to be integrated into the overall design. Based on the three categories of geometric perspective, this study explores the effects of its application in modern textile patterns respectively and analyses their functions on the clothing as a whole, such as the effect of the optical illusion caused by geometric perspectives in clothing, the expression of linear changes, and the forms of application of the elements of points, lines and planes therein. This research analyses and collates these through a case study approach, and then through a practical research approach, using Photoshop to design three clothes, using the clothing plane renderings to show the effects of each of the three categories of geometric perspectives as they are applied to the textile surface patterns. This study aims to achieve figure modification through the use of simple geometric patterns on textiles. Textile patterns can visually refine the body shape rather than through functional clothing such as corsets, which is conducive to alleviating women's body shame while protecting their health.*

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 The concept of geometric perspectives

Perspective is a theoretical term for painting that refers to the method or technique of depicting the spatial relationships of objects on a flat surface. The definition of perspective has a broad and narrow distinction: The broad perspective refers to a variety of spatial representations of the method, in the Paleolithic cave paintings 30,000 years ago; The narrow perspective refers to the 14th century depiction of the object, reproducing the space of the linear perspective and other scientific perspective methods. Geometric perspective is a collection of scientific and artistic painting techniques, mainly with the help of "near large and far small " perspective phenomena to express the three-dimensional sense of the object. Geometric perspectives are established with the formation of projective geometry, and there have long been regular theoretical generalizations in the universal application of geometric perspectives, such as the law that parallel lines parallel to the picture remain parallel in the perspective; the law that parallel lines not parallel to the picture should be concentrated and disappear at one point in the perspective; the law of near large and far small, based on the perpendicular distance between the object and the picture; the law of equal magnification and reduction of the height of perspective, etc. (Lu, et al., 1998). Lorenzi et al.(2011) noted that Perspective and Projective Geometry, developed on purpose with the aim of treating points at infinity as ordinary points and at the same time to "paint what the eyes see" and going well beyond. Different from geometry in a purely mathematical sense, the principle of geometric perspective is to express a sense of space and three-dimensionality on a plane through composition, which contains the beauty of order. There are several types of perspectives, and they are classified according to the number of vanishing points used: perspective with one vanishing point, perspective with two vanishing points, and so on(Mello, 2010). Perspective with a vanishing point is called one-point perspective, also known as parallel perspective, as shown in Figure 1-a; two-point perspective, also known as angular perspective, the object has a set of perpendicular lines parallel to the screen, and the other two groups of lines with the screen into a certain angle, and each group has a vanishing point, a total of two vanishing points, as shown in Figure 1-b; if there are three vanishing points in the picture, of which two points on the apparent horizon, then the formation of perspective is known as three-point perspective, as shown in Figure 1-c.

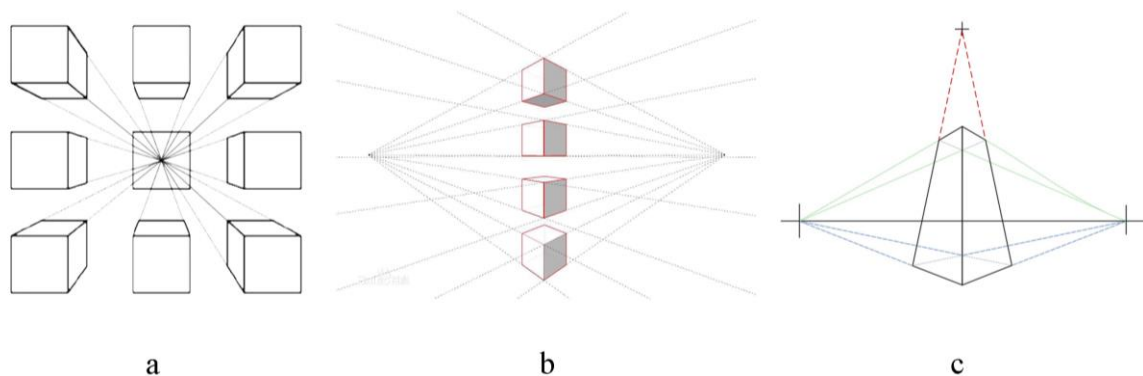


Figure 1: Geometric Perspective



## ***1.2 Application of geometric perspective in textile patterns***

In the field of fashion design, the method of geometric perspective can be applied to the design of textile patterns, which can create a variety of visual effects through the combination of different forms of points, lines and planes, as well as repetition, reality, sparsity and other forms of arrangement, which can bring people different feelings and impressions, and has a strong artistic expression. Xiong et al. (2022) pointed out that pattern is a special means of decoration in clothing design, which is used in a variety of ways, not only enriching the details of clothing design, but also highlighting the artistic and practical value of clothing. As an important part of pattern design, geometric patterns have been used by designers in different design styles, and their skillful use of points, lines and planes has a distinctive influence on the style of garments. Zhu (2020) noted that the aesthetics of geometric patterns can achieve a better spatial three-dimensional effect of garment modeling through the superimposed design of multi-layer hollowing. Martel (2016) noted that geometrical patterns tie a painting's subject matter to the picture plane, making a united environment that is embodied in the ratios and proportions that are expressed. Therefore, in the process of designing textile patterns, the proportions between various elements will all bring different effects for the practical application of geometric perspective patterns on the garment plane.

### ***1.2.1 Application of One-Point Perspective (Parallel Perspective)***

The application of one-point perspective in clothing helps to establish the unity of space, The perspective method of all the line elements pointing to a common center point in the picture, can bring about the effect of optical illusion, and it is easy for people to produce a pattern of the center of the concave. This is surrounded by the three-dimensional illusion of feelings of convexity, so that the overall clothing has a sense of contraction, a sense of lightness, and it is applied to the obesity, the shoulder width of the overly wide body shape, which can make the body shape look more coordinated. Luo (2021) noted that line elements have guiding properties, whereby the change in directions of line elements can guide the viewer's visual focus. This could cause a shift sequentially along a certain direction, and the gradual change of line elements makes the depth optical illusion pattern form spatial layers. Huang (2018) noted that line is usually a common method of conveying the designer's ideas, in clothing that meets the aesthetic and visual effects, the function of the line is to outline the outer contour, not only to highlight the outer contour to attract the eye, but also to modify the local, reflecting the details, if a design in which the line becomes the main body, it creates a visual route, leading people to follow this route to feel and experience the emotions expressed by the designer. The "visual route" in the article of Huang, in one-point perspective, can directly guide people's attention to focus on the vanishing point, this perspective method applied in clothing patterns, can make the most basic clothing modeling with a sense of three-dimensionality.

As shown in Figure 2, in Mary Katrantzou S/S 2017 Collection, the designer was inspired by the motifs of women's images in ancient Greek frescoes and Mycenaean pottery, and her bold use of geometric motifs and lines gave a three-dimensional effect to the otherwise simple shapes of the garments. The waist of these garments is the location of the vanishing point in the one-point perspective, and when people see these fashions, they are easily attracted by the pattern of the waist.



Figure 2: Mary Katrantzou S/S 2017 Collection

The use of geometric perspectives was also seen in the Mary Katrantzou S/S 2019 Collection (Figure 3), where the designer accentuated the waist-to-hip ratio of the garments through colors and lines, creating the feeling of an optical illusion and making the waist look impossibly thin.



Figure 3: Mary Katrantzou S/S 2019 Collection

Similar effects of perspective and optical illusion are found in the Y/Project S/S 2024 Collection, as shown in Figure 4.



Figure 4: Y/Project S/S 2024 Collection

### ***1.2.2 Application of Two-Point Perspective (Angular Perspective)***

If the one-point perspective emphasizes the role of points and lines, then the two-point perspective pays more attention to the "plane" of the performance of the effect of the two-point perspective in the application of textile patterns, which can bring a sense of space for clothing. Liu (2019) noted that the corresponding position of a particular space on the human body surface determines the method of spatial design of clothing, which emphasizes the use of deconstruction and reorganization of points, lines and planes to break the original form of the

geometric plane, increase the local spatial volume of the human body surface, and change the inherent morphology of the clothing that coincides with the human body surface. Applying the principle of a two-point perspective in the design of clothing patterns can make one visually feel the changes in the human body surface, and it is also easier to produce the effect of optical illusion. Mello(2010) noted that, in a perspective with two vanishing points, this is how it works: one set of parallel lines of a parallelepiped is represented as lines converging to one point, and another set as lines converging to another point, What the artist needs to do is to draw a perspective is to sketch his work by placing the objects in the areas of interest, and then draw the parallels as lines converging to the vanishing points. This painting concept is widely used in architectural design and engineering drawings, and can also be applied to the design of textile patterns, such as Optical art-style clothing. In addition to the bold use of color and light effects, the ever-extending repetition of circular and square geometric patterns and stripes is also a common technique in Op art. Dynamism, complexity, spatial three-dimensionality, changes in reality , with a sense of regularity and order are often accompanied by the characteristics of the optical pattern, and is more rigorous and complex in design, creating a strong visual impact(Zeng et al., 2017).

In women's wear design, the pattern applied to the two-point perspective principle can strengthen the chest, waist and buttocks of the clothing, making the human body curve more obvious. Such as Jean Paul Gaultier Fall 1995 Ready-to-Wear Fashion Show Collection (Figure 5), the design of the two ready-to-wear garments respectively emphasized the waist and chest, waist and hips. Polka dots make the patterns present a dynamic effect, the size of the inconsistency of the polka dots embellished in various parts. The law contained in it is similar to the perspective phenomenon of "near large, far small" in geometric perspective, which sets off the figure of the model and plays a role in modifying the human body.



Figure 5: Jean Paul Gaultier Fall 1995 Ready-to-Wear Fashion Show Collection

The same effect of the application of the two-point perspective can be seen in Paco Rabanne S/S 2022 Collection (Figure 6) homage to Victor Vasarely.

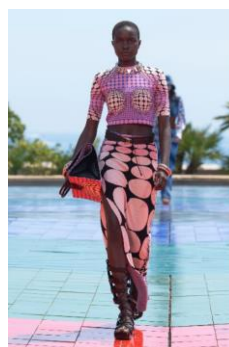


Figure 6: Paco Rabanne S/S 2022 Collection

### ***1.2.3 Application of Three-Point Perspective***

Mello(2010) noted that the use of a large number of vanishing points allows one to visualize an entire space around a point, yielding interesting images. In three-point perspective, none of the sides or surfaces of the object is parallel to the picture, the object is tilted relative to the picture. On the basis of two-point perspective, all extended lines perpendicular to the horizon are gathered together to form a third vanishing point. Three-point and multi-point perspectives have the characteristics of one-point perspective and two-point perspective, that is, they have both a sense of three-dimensionality and a sense of space. Three-point perspective is suitable for expressing tall and majestic buildings. Looking up at the building gives a sense of openness; looking down at the building gives a sense of depth. Three-point perspective in clothing in the three-dimensional use and sense of space is mainly embodied in the external form, internal structure and decorative patterns, which can be from the clothing space direction on the upper and lower, front and back, inside and outside of the relationship between the spatial level of the space level of the dislocation, asymmetric design and so on the method of expression, but also through the combination of clothing modelling and pattern. A-line garments are more likely to show the effect of three-point perspective, making the human body look taller.

As shown in Figure 7, in Rahul Mishra AFEW S/S 2024, the designer used a radial colorful stripe pattern to make the vanishing point converge between the chests. The wider line pattern at the skirt allows the overall view of the clothing to both sides. The A-line design makes the clothing look more three-dimensional and makes the human body appear more slender.



Figure 7: Rahul Mishra AFEW S/S 2024

In the Jean Paul Gaultier S/S 2018 Collection (Figure 8), Gaultier arranges the Op-style patterns in an orderly manner, using multiple "points" to form a "line", and the "line" extends to different angles to form a "surface", so that the pattern in the A-line garment to show a near large and far small perspective effect, like looking up at the angle of the building.



Figure 8: Jean Paul Gaultier S/S 2018 Collection

A similar application can be found in the Mary Katrantzou S/S 2019 Collection (Figure 9), where the perspectives of 12-a and 12-b are similar to those of the two brands above, while 12-c takes a top-down perspective. This shows that different angles can make a big difference in the presentation of the pattern, but a closer look can reveal commonalities.



Figure 9: Mary Katrantzou S/S 2019 Collection

### ***1.3 Problem Statement***

Garments designed with the optical illusion effect have gained popularity over a long period as people have tried to use the effect to enhance their appearance with A-line dresses that accentuate the waist, to striped trousers that provide a visual elongation of the individual's strides (Nyarko et al., 2022). Interesting optical illusion patterns give people a series of strong visual impacts such as distortion, contraction, jumping, etc., and can create a three-dimensional layering on the flat material without splices and folds (Zhang et al., 2023). The aesthetic principle of geometric optical illusion patterns lies in the fact that through the geometric shape of "points, lines, planes" in the angle, size, reality, length, sparseness and proximity, overlap area, as well as texture changes and other elements of the re-combination of the arrangement, to create a distinctive visual illusion effect (Zhang et al., 2023). The look of clothing can be differentiated by diverse textures, fabrics, and dividing a surface, even if the outer shapes of clothes are the same (Kwon, 2013). The different arrangements of geometric patterns show the aesthetic effect of the textile surface, in the design should always grasp the pattern of the law, the geometric pattern by the law of the orderly arrangement and combination out (Di, 2022). The curves of the human body themselves have a unique streamlined aesthetic, and to conform to this unique curvilinear aesthetic, the basic geometry of continuity needs to be appropriately altered in shape and size (Chen, 2023).

In the existing literature, the topics related to the application of geometric patterns in clothing design are the most numerous. There are also more studies and discussions on the application of optical illusion in clothing patterns. In contrast, most of the literature related to geometric perspective belongs to the fields of maths, the field of painting and architecture, or some applied sciences fields. In fact, the principles of geometric perspective can also be used to develop textile patterns. Zhang(2018) noted that the disappearance point of the one-point perspective is set in the best position of the wearer's waist, so that the clothing pattern gives a sense of visual depth, the waist becomes thin, the legs are elongated, and even to achieve the beauty of the chest, waist and hips concave and convex. Therefore, this study tries to arrange and combine simple geometric shapes with the principle of perspective so that they can show a three-dimensional effect on the basic clothing styling. The study purposes are:

- i . To analyze the effects shown on clothing of the three perspective types based on geometric perspective.
- ii . To sum up the different effects of different types of perspective patterns on textiles on women's figures.
- iii . To design a set of clothing renderings that can "show thinness", " show off one's figure " and "seem high ".

### 1.4 Research Value

Geometric elements can be found everywhere in daily life necessities such as architecture, ceramics and clothing from ancient times to the present day, and the enduring nature of geometric elements proves their good suitability. The characteristics of a combination of art and science contained in geometric perspective can be reasonably applied to the design of textile patterns. Patterns are important artistic language, based on the different forms of geometric perspective of the composition of points, lines and planes, which can bring people a variety of visual experience, so that clothing is full of artistic and interesting.

## 2. METHODS

This study used a quantitative research method to illustrate current women's requirements for dress style through descriptive research. The researchers collected search keywords for top-selling dresses from China's largest shopping website (<https://www.taobao.com>) to obtain data. The process is: first of all, enter the website to search for "dress", the price range is set between 79-260, because according to the data on the shopping site, the dresses in the price range accounted for 60% of the total sales; according to the order of sales from high to low, take the top 100 products as a sample. Statistically, in the sales of the top 100 commodities, the frequency of the keyword "show thinness " is as high as 72 pieces, the keyword "show off one's figure" is 21 pieces of merchandise, the title of the commodity includes "suitable for short women" 9 pieces of. The keywords " show thinness " and "figure" keyword have some overlap (that is, appearing in the same commodity title). In addition, other keywords such as " look younger", "French style", and "casual" also appear in the product title, but most of them appear in the same product with other keywords, and only five of them exist separately alone. Overall, "show thinness ", "show off one's figure", and "suitable for short women" appeared most frequently in the titles of the top 100 items (Figure 10).

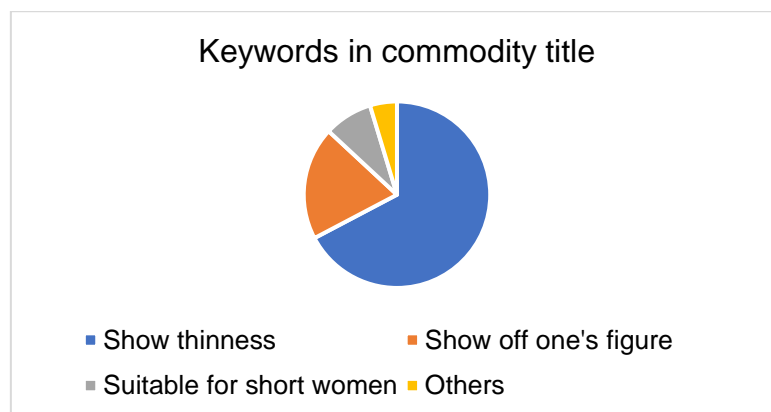


Figure 10: Keywords in Commodity Title

Through the method of literature review and case study, it was found that applying the principle of geometric perspective to textile patterns can make the garments show the three effects mentioned above. The researcher collects the application cases of geometric perspective on garments and carries out secondary research. Specifically, that is, summarise the effects of one-point perspective, two-point perspective and three-point perspective in textile patterns, and discuss their application rules as follows:

Table 1: Effects of Perspective in Textile Patterns

	Characteristic	Effect	Result
<b>One-point perspective</b>	There is only one vanishing point, which focuses all the lines in the frame to a single position.	Makes it easy for the viewer's eyesight to follow the line towards the only vanishing point.	Show thinness
<b>Two-point perspective</b>	There are two vanishing points. The more dispersed the arrangement of the two sets of lines is, the more the intersection of the lines will make the central image more prominent.	Provides a visually magnifying effect.	Show off one's figure
<b>Three-point perspective</b>	Based on the two-point perspective, there is an additional vanishing point, showing an effect similar to a wide-angle lens.	Provides a visual effect of looking up.	The human body looks more slender and taller, perfecting the proportion of the body.

Based on the above research results, this study uses Photoshop to draw clothing renderings in a practical research manner, and displays the characteristics of the three categories of geometric perspective on clothing in the form of patterns, aiming to demonstrate the role and importance of geometric perspective patterns in fashion design.

### 3. RESULTS

This practical study demonstrates the application of one-point perspective, two-point perspective and three-point perspective in clothing patterns through three design works, using rhombus of varying sizes to represent the relationship between distance and proximity. This study draws lessons from color matching of Mondrian's classic red, yellow and blue primary colors, and aims to clearly show the application effect of geometric perspective in clothing.

#### 3.1 Design 1

This work uses one-point perspective to arrange rhombus patterns in an orderly manner. The rhombus on the upper and lower body simultaneously progresses from a large-to-small fashion towards the waist, culminating in the smallest rhombus at the waist as the vanishing point. A striking yellow color is used for the rhombus pattern of the skirt, as well as blue and black are used for the rest of the skirt, in order to make the perspective more obvious, while the black on both sides can also play a role in slimming down and making the body look more slender.



Figure 11: Design 1

### 3.2 Design 2

This work uses a two-point perspective method, starting from the rhombus color blocks on the chest, arranging from large to small upwards and downwards respectively, and finally converging into two points that disappear in different directions. This method can highlight the curves of the human body. In terms of color, red, yellow and blue are used to fill the rhombus pattern which are arranged in an orderly manner to make the clothing pattern look simple and distinct.



Figure 12: Design 2

### 3.3 Design 3

This work uses an A-line design, the distribution of rhombus color blocks on the clothing applies the principle of three-point perspective and adopts a "looking up" angle. The curve of the skirt is used to make the perspective of the pattern have a sense of space and make the human body appear taller. In terms of color matching, four colors, red, yellow, blue and white, are used. Blue is used as the main color to arrange regularly, yellow and white are arranged in crosses, and red is randomly distributed. The application of multiple colors is to make the overall appearance of the clothing bright and not dull, and also to make the perspective effect clear at a glance.





Figure 13: Design 3

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Through this case study and practical research, it can be found that there are many forms of application of geometric perspective in clothing pattern design. Among them, the one-point perspective is suitable to be applied to the waist, which can make the human body look slim, as shown in Figure 14;

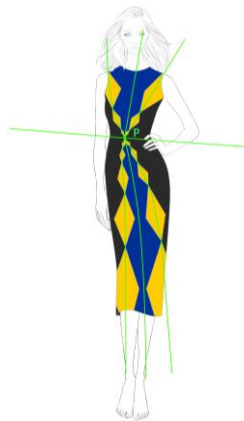


Figure 14

Two-point perspective has the characteristic of making the picture prominent, so it is suitable to be applied to the chest and hips to make the curves of the human body more obvious, as shown in Figure 15.



Figure 15

There are two basic applications of the three-point perspective in clothing design. For example, if one wants to highlight the shoulders, one can choose to arrange the patterns or lines, color blocks and other elements in a top-down manner from large to small, and this type of perspective can be used in T-line or inverted triangular clothing silhouettes; if one wants to make the body look taller, one can arrange the pattern downwards from small to large, and this perspective can be used for A-line garments or dresses with large hemlines, as shown in Figure 16; It is also possible to combine the two, focusing the vanishing point in the center on a certain part, and then arranging them up and down or to the left and right in turn. In such an application, the vanishing point in the center is the one most capable of focusing the gaze, with the rest of the vanishing points coming in a close second.

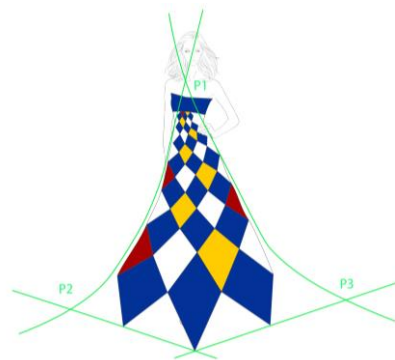


Figure 16

In the study, it was found that geometric perspective can have more than one (three or more) vanishing points, however, if we want to apply it to a garment, we can't just show it with the help of the garment pattern, but we need the interplay between the garment's silhouette, colors, patterns and other elements. A group of geometric perspective patterns of the disappearance of more points, together with the clothing style correspondingly makes it more complex. However in the clothing design work, to find the application of geometric perspective disappearance of the location of the point, will be possible after the extension of the overall shape of the garment, which will make the overall design of the garment process not only much more convenient, but also make the geometric perspective better with the combination of clothing. Therefore, the application of reverse thinking in clothing design may play a multiplier effect.

Applying geometric perspective to clothing design helps to master the combination relationship between various parts of the garment, which includes the combination relationship between the whole and local parts of the garment, and the combination relationship between the contour lines of various parts of the garment. Clothing structure and color, patterns can enrich the type of clothing styles. The application of geometric perspective can reflect the degree of adaptation of clothing to the human body. If we want to use geometric perspectives in clothing modeling, we can let it show through the structural lines of the clothing, such as division and pleat lines,

## 5. CONCLUSION

Style, color, and material are the three major elements in clothing design. The basic elements that constitute the shape are mainly combined design by the designer's combination of points, lines, planes, polyhedrons, and other elements to shape the silhouette. Common silhouettes in clothing include H-line, T-line, A-line, and O-line, etc. Pattern is the fourth design element in clothing design after style, color, and material. Textile patterns have a great decorative effect

on clothing. Although the lack of pattern as decoration in the composition of the clothing will not prevent it from becoming a piece of complete clothing, with the addition of patterns, the clothing will be more personalized and artistic.

From the perspective of the fashion design discipline, the pattern includes two parts: basic pattern and professional pattern. Basic pattern mainly researches and solves the basic knowledge of pattern image design, and explores the universal law of pattern and the method of depiction and expression. Professional patterns are divided into two categories: garment pattern design and textile pattern application. The application of geometric perspective enables designers to accurately combine textile patterns with garment modeling to make the finished garment more harmonious. Based on the method of geometric perspective, designers are able to grasp the design law of textile patterns, and the process of pattern composition and combination, color configuration, and others more quickly.

Based on the perspective of geometric perspective, designers combine and arrange patterns according to their own understanding of beauty, which can make garments express beauty and artistry while at the same time highlighting science. Different types of geometric perspective can be presented in a variety of ways, through the pattern of the form, length, number, location, and other differences, as well as between the pattern of the color contrast, the contrast between reality and contrast, static and dynamic contrast to show the relationship between the distance of the pattern, can improve the monotony of the original pattern, so that the clothing is more three-dimensional, spatial and dynamic, and ultimately to achieve the purpose of beautifying the human body.

#### **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION**

ZZW carried out the case collection, design works, and full-text writing. LZF assisted in data collection. ABA and HBA were responsible for reviewing and refining the article. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

#### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None declared.

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# Motivation to Learn Online: Analysis of the Relation Between Expectancy, Value and Social Support in Malaysian Higher Education

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## ABSTRACT

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*The rapid growth of online learning in higher learning institutions has necessitated an in-depth understanding of the factors that drive learners' motivation to engage in online educational activities. This study investigates the relationship between expectancy, value, and social support as determinants of motivation to learn online in higher learning institutions in Malaysia. Drawing upon the Expectancy-Value Theory and the importance of social support in online environments, this research aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by examining the interplay between expectancy, value, and social support in shaping learners' motivation to learn online. The study employs a quantitative research design, collecting data through surveys adapted from a previous study by Fowler (2018). A sample of 208 learners enrolled in various higher learning institutions in Malaysia was collected and analyzed. The study consisted of seven sections comprising relevant questions to assess the three factors influencing learning motivation. Overall, the findings indicate a significant correlation between expectancy, value, and social support in relation to learning motivation.*

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## *1.1 Background of Study*

Motivation is a key factor in driving students' engagement, persistence, and academic success in online learning environments. The Expectancy-Value Theory (EVT), as stated in Eccles and Wigfield (2002), provides a theoretical framework to examine the motivational factors that influence students' participation in online learning. This theory emphasizes the significance of learners' expectancy beliefs and task values in shaping their motivation to engage in learning tasks. Moreover, social support has emerged as a critical element in fostering students' motivation and enhancing their learning outcomes in online environments (Hew and Cheung, 2014). Social support can be derived from various sources, including instructors, peers, and online communities, and it plays a vital role in creating a supportive and collaborative learning environment. Various sources such as instructors, peers, and online communities can provide social support, which is crucial in fostering a supportive and collaborative learning environment.

In the Malaysian context, where online learning has gained substantial traction, understanding the unique factors that influence motivation to learn online is essential. While some studies have explored motivation in face-to-face settings, limited research has specifically examined motivation to learn online in higher learning institutions in Malaysia, (Rahman et al., 2023). With the advent of technology and the COVID-19 pandemic, many universities and colleges in Malaysia have shifted towards online and blended learning formats. Exploring the factors that influence motivation to learn online is crucial to ensuring the effectiveness and success of online education in the country. For instance, the research conducted by Noh et al. (2023) proposes that when students have reliable internet connectivity, their contentment with online learning could increase. Consequently, upholding the caliber of online education hinges on the presence of a robust internet connection, which is particularly pivotal in ensuring remote learners at home find satisfaction in their online learning experiences.

Besides, the findings of this research can have practical implications for policymakers and education stakeholders in Malaysia. By identifying the factors influencing motivation to learn online, policymakers can develop strategies to enhance student engagement, improve online course design, and provide appropriate support mechanisms to promote successful online learning experiences in higher education institutions. Since motivation is a key factor in ensuring student engagement, persistence, and academic success in online learning, examining the relationship between the three elements can provide insights into how to create a supportive online learning environment that motivates Malaysian students to actively participate and achieve positive learning outcomes.

As online learning continues to evolve, it is essential to continuously evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of online learning practices in higher learning institutions. Understanding the factors that influence motivation to learn online can contribute to ongoing efforts to improve instructional strategies, student support services, and online learning environments. Therefore, this study aims to bridge this research gap and provide insights into the relationship between expectancy, value, and social support as determinants of motivation to learn online in Malaysian higher learning institutions.

## ***1.2 Statement of Problem***

In a recent study conducted by Shang et al. (2023), the focus was on the influence of the learning environment and individual characteristics on EVT motivation within the context of physical education. The study identified three significant factors that impact students' EVT motivation: social support from classmates, motivation displayed by teachers and peers, and the presence of a positive learning environment. The findings emphasize that physical educators have the potential to foster positive outcomes, such as improved concentration, persistence, engagement, effort, in-class physical activity, and situational interests, by facilitating the development of students' expectancy beliefs and task values. Rahman et al. (2023) conducted a study among learners enrolled in an English Language Course (ELC), aiming to investigate their perceptions of the impact of expectancy, value, and social support as motivators in online learning. The findings of the study underscored the importance of motivation within the online learning context.

Several pedagogical implications have emerged from the study, including the importance of fostering effective interactions between teachers and students, promoting collaborative interactions among students, creating engaging course content and materials, and encouraging independent learning practices through the guidance of instructional designers and teachers. Additionally, the study emphasized the need for teachers to provide feedback and encouragement to students, maintain awareness of students' needs in virtual courses, and sustain dialogic interactions to enhance the learning experience. The results of Soh et al. (2022) align with these findings, emphasizing the significance of motivation as a prominent factor influencing learners' engagement in the learning process. The study underscores the importance of establishing trust between teachers and learners, particularly in online classes, to facilitate a smoother learning experience.

While there have been studies examining motivation to learn online in various contexts, a research gap exists in the specific investigation of motivation to learn online among learners in higher learning institutions in Malaysia. Although the importance of expectancy, value, and social support as determinants of motivation has been acknowledged in online learning, there is limited research that focuses on exploring the interplay between these factors, specifically in the Malaysian higher education context. Previous studies have often focused on examining motivation to learn online from a single-factor perspective, such as expectancy or value. However, there is a gap in research that comprehensively considers the combined influence of expectancy, value, and social support on motivation to learn online, especially in the Malaysian context. While some studies have highlighted the direct impact of online teaching support, learning atmosphere, and community sense on learners' online learning motivation (Pan, 2023), others have explored factors impacting students' motivation to learn through different modes like face-to-face, online, and hybrid learning, as discussed in Istijanto (2022). Additionally, research has shown that understanding students' learning styles may not significantly affect their satisfaction or motivation with online learning (Kim and Frick, 2011).

In the Malaysian context, investigating the effect of online learning on university students' motivation has been a subject of interest, including the role of learning methods, learning motivation, and the impact of the internet on students' motivation (Mardesci, 2020). Moreover, the impact of COVID-19 on student motivation, community of inquiry, and learning performance has been studied, emphasizing the importance of social presence, cognitive presence, and teaching presence in online learning environments (Tan, 2020).



Therefore, the research gap lies in the need for an in-depth analysis that specifically investigates the relationship between expectancy, value, and social support as determinants of motivation to learn online among learners in higher learning institutions in Malaysia, taking into account the unique cultural and contextual factors present in the Malaysian higher education system. This research aims to bridge this gap and provide valuable insights into enhancing motivation to learn online in the Malaysian higher education context.

### ***1.3 Objective of the Study and Research Questions***

This study is done to explore learners' perceptions of their motivation to learn online. Specifically, this study answers the following questions:

- i. How do learners perceive their expectancy in online learning?
- ii. How do learners perceive value in online learning?
- iii. How do learners perceive their social support in online learning?
- iv. Is there a relationship between expectancy, value, and social support?

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***2.1 Motivating and Demotivating Factors for Online Learning***

Online learning, also known as e-learning or distance learning, refers to the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, or education through digital platforms and the internet which allows learners to access and engage with learning from anywhere with an internet connection. According to a recent study conducted by Hamidah (2022), the dynamics of the teaching and learning process, the proficiency of instructors, the active involvement of students, the online learning environment and technical infrastructure, as well as effective time management and the implementation of interactive assessment and evaluation methods, are all motivating factors in online learning. This study concurred with Selvi's (2010) findings. On the other hand, Adara and Najmudin (2020) discovered that students feel deprived of real-life interaction and burdened by a lack of stable internet connection and appropriate online learning gadgets as demotivating factors. Thus, changing the atmosphere for learning could potentially have an impact on learners' motivation and demotivation.

### ***2.2 Past Studies on Demotivating and Motivating Factors in Online Learning***

Many studies have been done to investigate the motivating and demotivating factors of online learning. The research conducted by Hamidah (2022) and Siripol and Wilang (2021), it concurred that the role of teachers holds significance in addressing demotivating circumstances, as well as stimulating student participation in learning activities and fostering an environment conducive to relaxation. Both studies emphasized the importance of teachers in motivating students to actively engage in their educational pursuits and creating an atmosphere that facilitates effective learning.

Hamidah (2022) conducted research to identify the factors that motivate students to engage in online learning. Her research focused on the factors that affect students' motivation in an online class. The research encompassed students in the fourth and sixth semesters of the English Education Program. The participants were chosen randomly, with some of them selected for an interview after completing the questionnaire. The study identified several motivating factors that encourage student engagement in online classes, including the teaching and learning process, the roles of instructors, students' attention, the online learning environment, and time

management. Analyzing these factors holds significant importance in enhancing the learning and teaching processes within online courses.

Siripol and Wilang (2021) conducted a study focusing on demotivating factors within online teaching based on Self-Determination Theory (STD) and its psychological elements, including competence, autonomy, and relatedness. The researcher conducted an interview with three participants who willingly took part in individual semi-structured interviews to share insights regarding online teaching experiences. The study's findings indicate that demotivating situations in synchronous online class settings were connected to STD, such as the familiarity of the platform, students' attention and sense of control, as well as the teacher's beliefs regarding teaching and learning. Furthermore, the results revealed that teachers need to deal with demotivating situations by communicating with students, and engaging them in their learning activities, and offering a serene online learning atmosphere.

### **2.3 Conceptual Framework**

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of this study that explores the relationship between expectancy, value, and social support on motivation for online learning in Malaysian higher education.

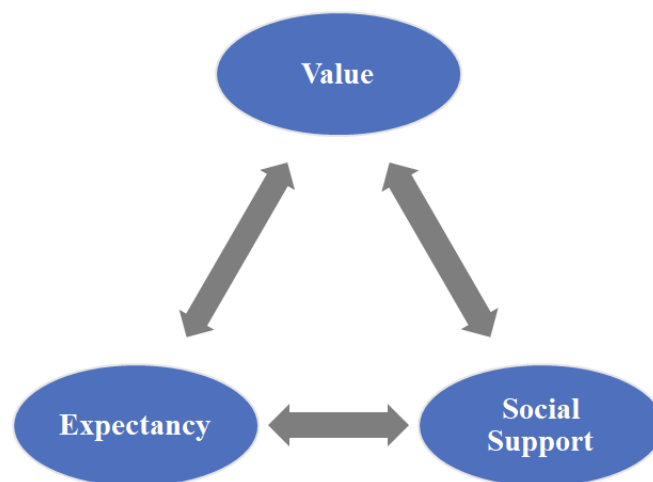


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study-Relationship between Expectancy, Value, and Social Support on Motivation for Online Learning in Malaysian Higher Education.

Given the interdependent relationship between expectancy, value, and social support components, implementing strategies that target any one of these components can potentially yield positive effects on the other two. Research by Wang and Xue (2022) demonstrates that the expectancy of success and value are crucial in influencing various educational outcomes. In essence, the two components of this model, namely, expectancy for success and task values, interact and support each other. Learners are inclined to engage in tasks that hold personal significance to them, and their involvement in these activities can subsequently influence their perception of their likelihood for success. Bandura's social cognitive theory has much to offer in the field of motivation. The theory predicts that motivation is internal, comprising such processes as self-efficacy, social comparisons, goals, outcome expectations, values, and attributions, (Schunk and DiBenedetto, 2020).

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

This quantitative study aimed to explore motivational factors for online learning among learners from higher learning institutions in Malaysia. A total of 208 participants from various levels of study at different higher learning institutions in Malaysia responded to the survey. The selected participants were invited to participate in the study through an online survey distributed via WhatsApp, email, or institutional platforms.

Table 1 displayed the distribution of items in the survey, which were rooted in Fowler (2018) and utilized a five-Likert scale.

Table 1: Distribution of Items in the Survey

Section	Motivation (Fowler, 2018)	Sub-Scales	No. of Items
B	Expectancy	Self-Efficacy	8
		Control of Learning Beliefs	4
C	Value	Intrinsic Goal Orientation	4
		Extrinsic Goal Orientation	4
		Task Value	6
D	Social Support	Social Engagement	5
		Instructor Support	7
Total			38

The survey comprised of four sections. Section A focused on gathering demographic information, including the respondent's gender, level of study, and discipline. In Section B, respondents answered 12 items related to expectancy, which assessed their beliefs regarding self-efficacy and control over learning. Section C consisted of 14 items pertaining to value, encompassing intrinsic and extrinsic goal orientation, as well as task value. Finally, Section D comprised 12 items addressing social support, exploring aspects such as social engagement and instructor support in relation to online learning experiences.

Table 2: Reliability of Survey

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.923	38

Table 2 displays the reliability of the survey, reveals Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.923, indicating a high level of reliability for the selected instrument. This substantial value signifies that the measurement tool used in the study is highly dependable. To effectively achieve the research objectives and present the study's findings, SPSS analysis was utilized.

## 4. FINDINGS

This section explained the findings of the research on demographic profile, level of study, and discipline.

### 4.1 Findings for Demographic Profile

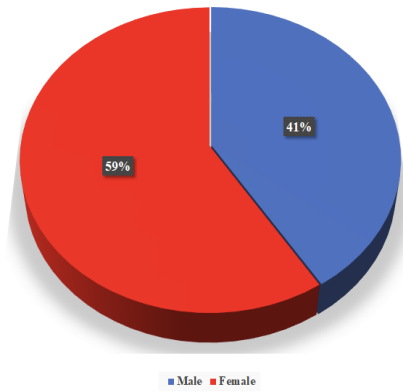


Figure 2: Percentage of Gender

Figure 2 shows the percentage by gender. Based on the figure, 41% of the respondents were male and 59% were female.

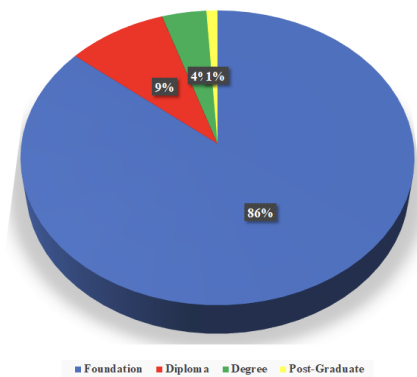


Figure 3: Percentage for Level of Study

Figure 3 displays the distribution of respondents' academic levels. The majority of 86% of respondents were from the Foundation Programme. The next largest group consisted of Diploma students with 9%, followed by Degree students at 4%. Postgraduate students represented a smaller portion, accounting for only 1% of the total respondents.

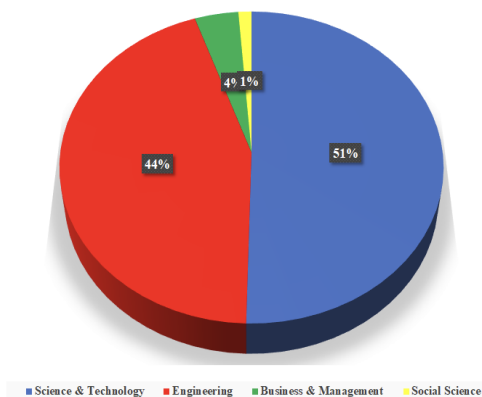


Figure 4: Percentage for Discipline

The distribution of respondents across different disciplines who participated in the study is presented in the following Figure 4. The largest proportion of respondents, accounting for 50%,

belonged to science and technology disciplines. Following this, 44% of respondents were from engineering disciplines, while 4% were from business and management disciplines. The smallest percentage of respondents, constituting only 2% of the total responses, were from social science disciplines. These findings indicated a predominant presence of respondents from science and technology disciplines, suggesting their selection of a science stream during secondary school and their potential future involvement in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields. This observation held the potential to contribute to the growth of STEM in Malaysia, aligning with the goals of Industry Revolution 4.0.

## 4.2 Findings for Expectancy

This section presents analyzed data to answer the first research question - How do learners perceive their expectancy in online learning? Learners' perceptions of expectancy in online learning can vary depending on several factors. This study considered expectancy on self-efficacy (ESE) and expectancy on control of learning beliefs (ECB).

### 4.2.1 Expectancy - Self-Efficacy (ESE)

The following Figure 5 explained the mean findings for self-efficacy components, which were measured by eight items.

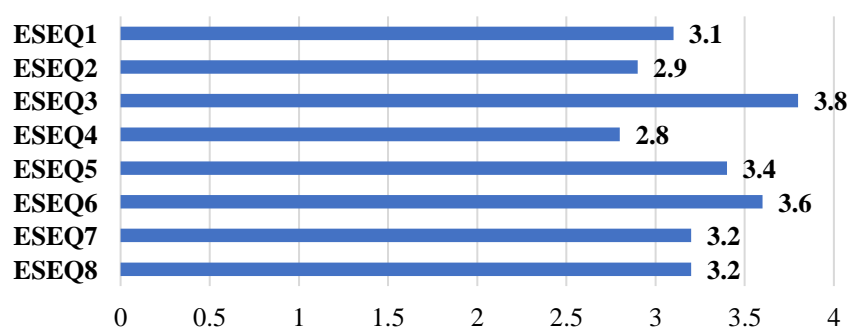


Figure 5: Mean for Self-Efficacy

The items are defined by the following statement.

- ESEQ1: I believe I'll receive excellent grades in my online classes.
- ESEQ2: I'm certain I can understand the most difficult material presented in the online classes.
- ESEQ3: I'm confident I can learn the basic concepts that are being taught online.
- ESEQ4: I'm confident I can understand the most complex material presented by the instructor online.
- ESEQ5: I'm confident I can do an excellent job on assignments and tests online.
- ESEQ6: I expect to do well in my online tests.
- ESEQ7: I'm certain I can master the skills being taught online.
- ESEQ8: Considering the difficulty of the classes, the teachers, and my skills, I think I can do well.

Five items scored moderately high (2.6 - 3.39), including the first, second, fourth, seventh, and eighth items. The remaining items scored high (3.4–4.19). Notably, items two and four had the lowest mean scores of 2.9 and 2.8, respectively, suggesting respondents could understand challenging materials presented in readings and by instructors. Conversely, item three,

pertaining to learning basic concepts, received the highest mean score of 3.8, followed by items six and five, indicating expectations of performing well on assignments and tests, with mean scores of 3.6 and 3.4, respectively. Items seven and eight had identical mean scores of 3.2, indicating respondents' confidence in mastering the taught skills. Additionally, respondents expressed confidence in their learning abilities despite considering class difficulty, teacher influence, and personal skills. Lastly, item one scored 3.1, reflecting respondents' belief in receiving excellent grades, indicating fulfillment of self-efficacy when confident in understanding subject matter and succeeding in learning endeavors, thereby motivating effective online learning.

#### 4.2.2 Expectancy - Control of Learning Beliefs (ECB)

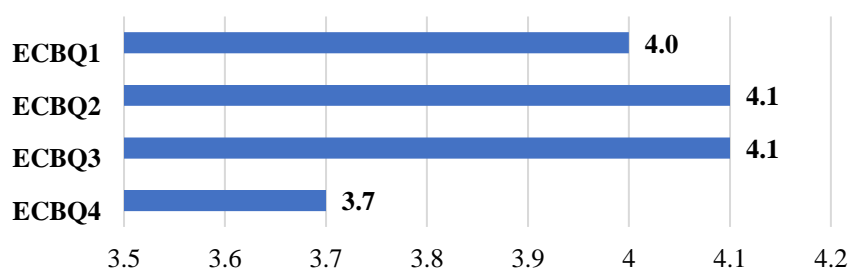


Figure 6: Mean for Control of Learning Beliefs

The description of the items is outlined in the subsequent statement.

- ECBQ1: If I study in appropriate ways online, then I'll be able to learn the material.
- ECBQ2: It's my own fault if I don't learn the material taught online.
- ECBQ3: If I try hard enough, then I'll understand the material presented online.
- ECBQ4: If I don't understand the material presented online, it's because I didn't try hard enough.

All four items received high scores (3.4 - 4.19). The second and third items were equally scored at 4.1, indicating respondents believe it's their responsibility to learn the material and they can comprehend it if they exert enough effort. Following closely was item one with a score of 4, illustrating the belief that appropriate study methods facilitate learning. Lastly, the fourth item had a score of 3.7, suggesting respondents attribute a lack of understanding to insufficient effort. This high mean score underscores respondents' agreement that diligent effort leads to comprehension, fulfilling their beliefs about control of learning. Consequently, this motivation positively influenced their online learning experience.

### 4.3 Findings for Value

This section presents data aimed at addressing the second research question: How do learners perceive value in online learning? Learners' perceptions of value in online learning can be influenced by various factors. This study examines intrinsic and extrinsic goal orientation, along with task value, as key considerations in understanding learners' perceptions of value in the online learning environment.

#### 4.3.1 Value - Intrinsic Goal Orientation (VI)

The mean findings for intrinsic goal orientation (VI) components, which are measured by four items are presented in Figure 7.

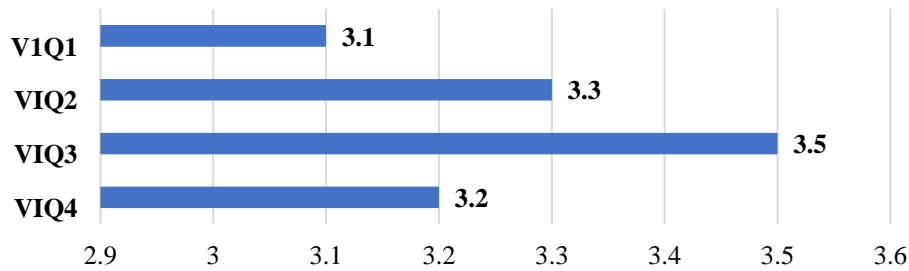


Figure 7: Mean for Intrinsic Goal Orientation

The items are described as follows.

- VIQ1: I prefer online material that really challenges me thus, I can learn new things.
- VIQ2: I prefer online material that arouses my curiosity, even if it's difficult to learn.
- VIQ3: The most satisfying thing for me is trying to understand the online content as thoroughly as possible.
- VIQ4: In online settings, I choose topics for assignments that I can learn from even if they don't guarantee a good grade.

With the exception of the third item, which received a high score of 3.5, all items scored moderately high. Respondents found the most satisfaction in thoroughly understanding the content, as reflected by the third item. Following closely was the second item, scoring 3.3, indicating respondents' preference for material that stimulates curiosity, even if it presents challenges. The fourth item received a score of 3.2, indicating respondents' inclination towards assignments that offer learning opportunities, irrespective of grade guarantees. The first item obtained the lowest score at 3.1, suggesting respondents' preference for challenging material that facilitates learning new concepts. This high mean score highlights respondents' agreement that deep understanding of subject matter leads to significant satisfaction, fulfilling their intrinsic goal orientation and thereby motivating effective online learning.

#### 4.3.2 Value - Extrinsic Goal Orientation (VE)

Figure 8 below illustrates the mean findings for the components of extrinsic goal orientation, measured by four items.

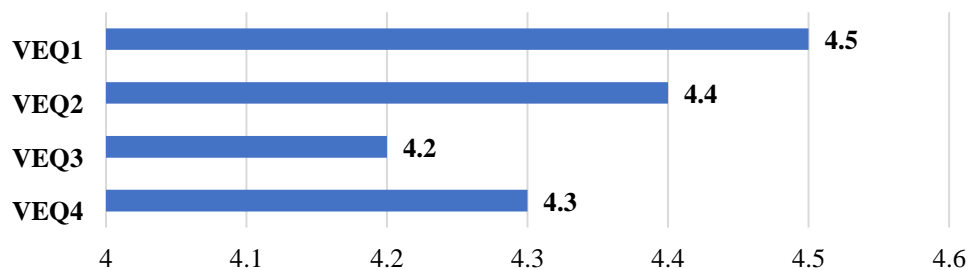


Figure 8: Mean for Extrinsic Goal Orientation

The items are defined as

- VEQ1: Getting a good grade is the most satisfying thing for me.
- VEQ2: The most important thing for me is to improve my overall grade point average thus, my concern is getting a good grade.
- VEQ3: I want to get better grades than most of the other students in my classes.
- VEQ4: I want to do well in my classes because it's important to show my ability to my family, friends, employer, or others.

All four items received exceptionally high scores (4.2 - 5.0). Item one garnered the highest score of 3.5, indicating that achieving good grades is the most satisfying aspect for respondents. Following closely, the second item scored 4.4, signifying respondents' primary concern for achieving good grades to enhance their overall grade point average. Subsequently, the fourth item obtained a mean value of 4.3, indicating respondents' desire to excel in classes to demonstrate their abilities to family, friends, employers, or others. The third item had the lowest mean value of 4.2, reflecting respondents' aspiration to outperform most classmates academically. This exceptionally high mean score suggests respondents strongly aligned their concerns about achieving good grades with their extrinsic goal orientation. Consequently, this motivation significantly propelled their engagement in online learning.

### 4.3.3 Value - Task Value (VT)

Figure 9 shows the mean findings for task value components, which are measured by six items on how the learners perceive value in their online learning.

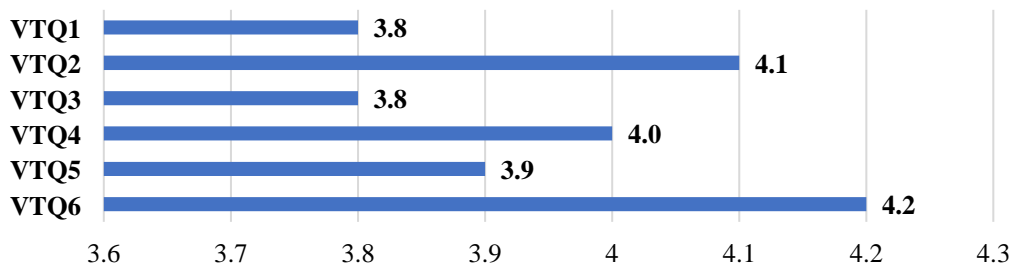


Figure 9: Mean for Task Value

The items are elaborated according to the following statements.

- VTQ1: I think I will be able to use what I learn in this course in other courses.
- VTQ2: It is important for me to learn the course material in this class.
- VTQ3: I am very interested in the content area of this course.
- VTQ4: I think the course material in this class is useful for me to learn.
- VTQ5: I like the subject matter of this course.
- VTQ6: Understanding the subject matter of this course is very important to me.

The six items produced mean scores that ranged from 3.8 to 4.2, which indicates high mean values. The sixth item has the component with the highest value of the mean of 4.2, indicating that understanding the subject matter of the particular course in their study is very important to them. This is followed by the second and fourth items, with score values of 4.1 and 4, respectively. It shows that learning the course material in class is important, and thus the course material is useful for them to learn. Then, item five, with a score of 3.9, shows that the respondents like the subject matter of the course. Meanwhile, the lowest mean is 4.1, which is



equally shared by the first item and the third item. These two results show that the respondents are very interested in the content area of the course, and they think they will be able to apply what they learn in that course to other courses. In conclusion, this high mean score indicates that the respondents agreed that their concerns about having a good understanding and knowledge of the subject matter satisfied their task value. Therefore, this motivated them very well in their online learning.

#### **4.4 Findings for Social Support**

This section presented data to answer the third research question: How do learners perceive their social support in online learning? Learners' perceptions of social support in online learning can vary depending on several factors. This study considered social engagement and instructor support.

##### **4.4.1 Social Support - Social Engagement (SSE)**

In Figure 10, the mean findings for social engagement components, which are measured by five items on how the learners perceive social support in their online learning are displayed.

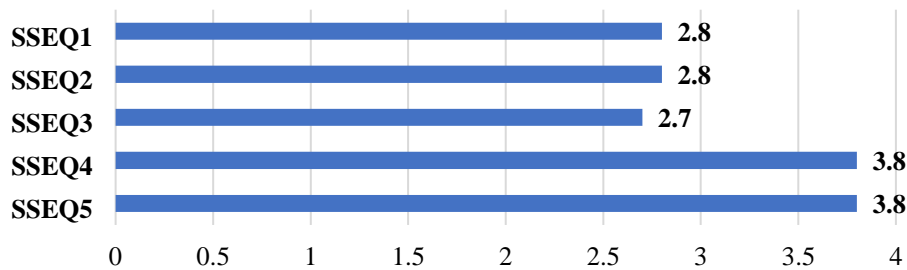


Figure 10: Mean for Social Engagement

The items are explained by the following statement.

- SSEQ1 I feel "disconnected" from my instructor and fellow students in classes.
- SSEQ2 I pay attention in classes.
- SSEQ3 I enjoy class discussions.
- SSEQ4 I feel like I can freely communicate with other students in classes.
- SSEQ5 I have strong relationships with fellow students in this course.

Based on the results, two items scored high mean values with shared scores of 3.8. These results show that the respondents feel like they can freely communicate with other students in their classes and form strong relationships with fellow students in the selected course. Meanwhile, there are three items that scored moderately high, which are the first item and the third item. The first and second items produced the same score of 2.8. These results show that the respondents feel disconnected from their teacher and fellow students in class, but they pay attention in class. Finally, with a score of 2.7 (the lowest score), they enjoy class discussions. In conclusion, the high mean score from the two items indicates that the respondents agreed that the communication and strong relationship with their peers satisfied their social engagement. Therefore, this motivated them very well in their online learning.

##### **4.4.2 Social Support - Instructor Support (SIS)**

The following Figure 11 explained the mean findings for instructor support components, which were measured by seven items. All seven items were scored highly.

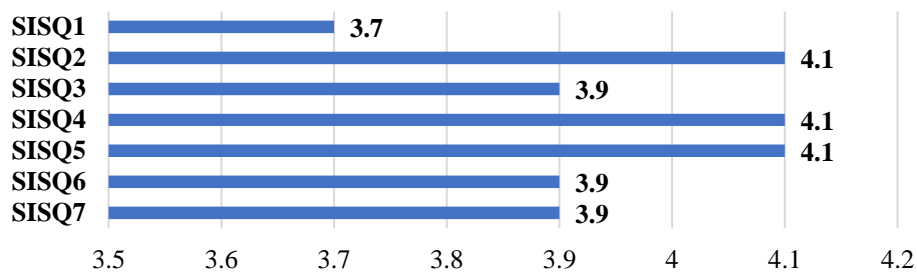


Figure 11: Mean for Instructor Support

The items are characterized as follows.

- SISQ1 I feel like I can freely communicate with the instructor in this class.
- SISQ2 The instructor responds to questions, clearly, completely, and in a timely manner.
- SISQ3 The instructor’s expectations for me in this class are clear.
- SISQ4 The instructor provides the guidance I need to be successful in this class.
- SISQ5 The instructor presents the material in a way that makes it relevant to me.
- SISQ6 In this course, I have the freedom to guide my own learning
- SISQ7 The instructor provides regular feedback that helps me gauge my performance in this class.

The second item had the highest mean score of 4.1, which is equally shared with the fourth and fifth items. These results show that the instructor responds to questions clearly, completely, and in a timely manner. Moreover, the instructor provides the guidance that the respondents need to be successful in their class and presents the material in a way that makes it relevant to the respondents. This is followed by the sixth and seventh items that share the scores equally, which are 3.9. These results indicate that the respondents have the freedom to guide their learning, and the instructor provides regular feedback that helps the respondents gauge their performance in their class. Finally, the lowest mean is 3.7, where the respondents feel like they can freely communicate with the instructor in their class. Overall, this high mean score indicates that the respondents agreed that good guidance, good presentation, and good responses and feedback satisfied their instructor support factors. Therefore, this motivated them very well in their online learning.

#### ***4.5 Findings for Relationship between Expectancy, Value, and Social Support***

In this section, data analysis addresses the fourth research question which explores the relationship between expectancy, value, and social support. Based on the conceptual framework of this research, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no significant relationship between expectancy, value, and social support.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between expectancy, value, and social support.

The statistical software SPSS is utilized to examine the correlation between these variables by analyzing the mean scores. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 3 to 6 as follows.

The results presented in Table 3 indicate a significant association between expectancy and value.

Table 3: Relationship between Expectancy and Value

		Expectancy	Value
Expectancy	Pearson Correlation	1	.555**
	Sig. (2-Tailed)		.000
	N	208	208
Value	Pearson Correlation	.555**	1
	Sig. (2-Tailed)	.000	
	N	208	208

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

Correlation analysis revealed a highly significant and positive association between expectancy and value, with a correlation coefficient of  $r = 0.555^{**}$  and a p-value of 0.000. According to Jackson (2015), a correlation coefficient is considered significant at the .05 level, and positive correlations are measured on a scale from 0.1 to 1.0. In this case, the strong positive correlation between expectancy and value suggests a robust relationship between these variables.

The findings presented in Table 4 demonstrate a significant association between value and social support.

Table 4: Relationship between Value and Social Support

		Value	Social Support
Value	Pearson Correlation	1	.643**
	Sig. (2-Tailed)		.000
	N	208	208
Social Support	Pearson Correlation	.643**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	208	208

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

Correlation analysis revealed a highly significant and positive association between value and social support, with a correlation coefficient of  $r = 0.643^{**}$  and a p-value of 0.000. As noted by Jackson (2015), a correlation coefficient is considered significant at the .05 level, and positive correlations are measured on a scale ranging from 0.1 to 1.0. In this case, the strong positive correlation between value and social support indicated a robust relationship between these variables.

The results depicted in Table 5 indicate a significant association between social support and expectancy.

Table 5: Relationship between Social Support and Expectancy

		Social Support	Expectancy
Social Support	Pearson Correlation	1	.400**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	208	208
Expectancy	Pearson Correlation	.400**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	208	208

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

Correlation analysis revealed a moderately significant and positive association between social support and expectancy, with a correlation coefficient of  $r = 0.400^{**}$  and a p-value of 0.000. As outlined by Jackson (2015), a correlation coefficient is considered significant at the .05 level, and positive correlations are measured on a scale ranging from 0.1 to 1.0. In this instance, the moderately positive correlation between social support and expectancy suggests a meaningful relationship between these variables.

## 5. CONCLUSION

### *5.1 Summary of Findings and Discussion*

The purpose of this research was to examine learners' perceptions of expectancy, value, and social support in identifying the motivating and demotivating factors in online learning. The first research question is to determine how learners perceive expectancy as a motivating factor in learning online. The findings suggest that learners are able to grasp the basic concepts during online classes and also believe that they need to put effort to excel. Meanwhile, the second research question is to determine how learners perceive value as a motivational and demotivational factor for online learning. Demotivating factors can arise when there is a misalignment between intrinsic and extrinsic goals. The study revealed that when learners make an effort to thoroughly comprehend the content, they experience a sense of satisfaction, and achieving good grades further contributes to their overall satisfaction in which they have fulfilled their intrinsic and extrinsic goals respectively. Furthermore, as the task value, it is critical for learners to understand the material that they learn online.

Research question three aims to explore learners' perspectives on social support in online learning and its impact as motivating or demotivating factors. According to the findings, learners perceive that strong friendships and the ability to freely communicate with others during online classes serve as motivating factors. Moreover, instructor support plays a crucial role, including the creative presentation of relevant materials, offering effective guidance, and prompt and clear responsiveness to questions during online learning. The findings indicate that students require assistance from their teachers in order to succeed in class.

The fourth research question aims to explore the interrelationships between expectancy, value, and social support as motivating and demotivating factors in online learning. The study findings indicate that all three motivation constructs exhibit significant relationships. This suggests that expectancy, value, and social support are interconnected factors influencing motivation and demotivation in the context of online learning. These findings align with the studies conducted by Hamidah (2022) and Siripol and Wilang (2021). The research emphasizes the significance of identifying motivating and demotivating factors in online learning to enhance the teaching and learning processes within online courses. The results highlight the importance of teachers actively addressing demotivating situations through effective communication with students, promoting student engagement in learning activities, and fostering a peaceful online learning environment as strategies to boost students' interest during online classes.

These findings can be related to existing theories and literature. The Expectancy-Value Theory of Achievement Motivation by Wigfield (1994) provides a framework for understanding how learners' perceptions of expectancy and value influence their motivation. Studies on Moodle-based learning by Aikina and Bolsunovskaya (2020) and online learning motivation discussed in Rochmawati et al. (2021) offer insights into the factors affecting motivation in online educational settings. Additionally, research on demotivation factors in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic (Iftanti et al., 2023; Khanal et al., 2021; Pratama et al., 2022; Nabila

et al., 2022; Adara and Najmudin, 2020) sheds light on challenges that learners face and how social support and value alignment can impact motivation.

The interrelationships between expectancy, value, and social support as motivating and demotivating factors align with the findings of the current research. By considering these factors together, educators can better support students' motivation in online learning environments. Addressing demotivating situations through effective communication, promoting engagement, and creating a positive learning atmosphere are strategies supported by the literature (Zaitun et al., 2021; Maemunah et al., 2021). Understanding and mitigating demotivating factors, as highlighted in various studies (Li and Zhou, 2017; Zhang, 2023; Widiyanti et al., 2021; Pratiwi, 2019; Chang, 2020), can contribute to enhancing students' motivation and engagement in online learning.

## ***5.2 (Pedagogical) Implications and Suggestions for Future Research***

The analysis of the relation between expectancy, value, and social support for higher learning institutions in Malaysia in the context of online learning can have several pedagogical implications. Understanding the factors of expectancy and value can help instructors and course designers create online learning experiences that are engaging and motivating for students. Instructors can enhance students' motivation to participate and persist in online courses by incorporating elements that increase students' expectations of success and emphasize the value of the learning content.

In addition to that, higher learning institutions in Malaysia can emphasize the importance of creating a supportive online learning community where students feel connected, valued, and encouraged. This can be achieved through various means, such as discussion forums, virtual group activities, and peer feedback mechanisms. Not only that, but social support can also be fostered through collaborative learning activities in online courses. Implementing group projects, peer-to-peer discussions, and virtual teamwork can facilitate interactions among students and create a sense of belonging within the online learning community. Collaboration can enhance motivation by providing opportunities for students to learn from each other, receive support, and collectively achieve learning goals.

Finally, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of online learning interventions in relation to expectancy, value, and social support is vital. Institutions can gather feedback from students through surveys, focus groups, or interviews to assess their motivation levels and satisfaction with the online learning experience. This feedback can then be used to identify areas for improvement and implement pedagogical strategies that enhance motivation and support students' learning in the online environment. It is important to note that these implications should be tailored to the specific context and needs of higher learning institutions in Malaysia, considering the cultural, technological, and institutional factors that influence online learning in the country.

To delve deeper into the factors that contribute to enhancing learners' motivation to learn online, future studies can adopt a focused approach by targeting a larger number of respondents from specific levels of study or disciplines. This approach allows for a more detailed investigation of other potential factors that may influence motivation, as different levels of study or disciplines often present unique challenges that can impact learners' motivation differently. In addition to that, investigating the specific roles and influence of instructors and peers in fostering motivation to learn online can provide valuable insights.

Exploring the strategies and behaviors of instructors and peers that positively impact learners' expectancy, value, and social support can inform the development of effective support systems and instructional practices. Also, designing and implementing interventions to enhance motivation to learn online based on expectancy, value, and social support can provide valuable insights. Conducting experimental studies to test the effectiveness of specific interventions and instructional approaches can help identify strategies that promote and sustain learners' motivation in online learning environments.

By exploring these research directions, we can deepen our understanding of the motivation to learn online and identify practical implications for designing effective online learning environments and interventions.

## **6. LIMITATIONS**

Several limitations are inherent in this study. The sample size is of a relatively modest scale, and the utilization of convenience sampling introduces a potential constraint on the applicability of the findings to a broader populace. The limited number of participants might restrict the generalizability of the findings to a broader student population or other educational contexts. In addition to that, this research might not account for potential fluctuations in motivation over time. External factors such as changes in course content, learning environments, or personal circumstances could influence students' motivation to learn online, but these may not be adequately captured within the research timeframe. While the study analyzes the relationship between expectancy, value, and social support, it might not establish causality. The identified correlations may not necessarily imply a cause-and-effect relationship between these variables. Moreover, incorporating qualitative methods such as interviews or open-ended surveys could provide deeper insights into students' motivations, perceptions, and experiences related to online learning. This research also does not consider potential external factors such as technological issues, personal circumstances, or external commitments that could impact students' motivation to learn online.

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## **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION**

SJA and SNAMA carried out the introduction and literature review sections. NAI collected, refined and performed the data analysis using SPSS. SJA wrote the data methodology section. SNAMA wrote the discussion and implication sections. MNM is proofreading and offering significant insights to enhance the clarity and coherence of the content. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None declared.

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# Placenta in Cosmetic Products: An Analysis from Shariah and Legal Perspective in Malaysia

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## ABSTRACT

### ARTICLE HISTORY

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Halal certification

Placenta is available in injections, tablets, creams, and dry food products. Sources of placenta used in products can be derived from humans and animals such as sheep, horses, and pigs. The use of placenta starts with the finding of its high nutrient content, which is found to be useful for skin and wound healing for humans. The issue is whether the use of placenta in cosmetic products is permissible or not. Hence, this paper focuses on the status of cosmetic products containing placenta according to Islamic perspectives and laws in Malaysia. The qualitative approach through the method of document analysis was used. The study outcomes reveal uncertainty about the halal status of cosmetic products containing placenta. According to the fatwa, placentas obtained from halal animals and slaughtered accordant to Shariah law could be used for beauty purposes. However, placentas taken from human sources are prohibited to prevent exploitation of the human body. Placenta is not listed as a prohibited ingredient in the Guidelines for Control of Cosmetic Products in Malaysia by the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency (NPRA), the Ministry of Health (MOH). However, the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) has a different status for placenta products and refuses to issue halal certificates for those products.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

At present, the development of science and technology is in line with society's need for consumer products such as medicines and cosmetics. Cosmetics nowadays can be classified as a 'must-have' item not only for women but also for a minority of men with a metrosexual personality (Nooham et al., 2020; Ahmad et al., 2015). There are various ingredients formulated in the manufacture of cosmetics, including placenta. In biological definition, placenta is used in mammals to pass nutrients from mother to foetus; and has been seen as a source of nutrition (Burton and Jauniaux, 2015). The purpose of placenta used in cosmetic products is to nourish, whiten, and provide antioxidants that can help skin self-repair. The main concern with using placenta in cosmetic products is its origin, whether it comes from human or animal placenta. When it comes to animal sources, it is important to know if *halal* animals are slaughtered according to *Shariah* law and sourced from living sources or vice versa.

From the Islamic perspective, cosmetic products are not a *ḍarūrah* (necessity) for Muslims. The common use of cosmetic products is mainly for beauty purposes, unlike pharmaceutical drugs, which are categorised as *ḍarūrah* in *Maqasid Shariah* (Ahmad and Riduwan, 2019). Basically, Islam permits Muslims to use cosmetic products as long as there is no *dalil* or evidence of its prohibition. If the source of the placenta is derived from a *halal* source, it is permissible for medical and beauty purposes. However, placenta obtained from *najs* (filthy or unclean) can only be used for medicinal purposes. Therefore, Muslim consumers must be aware of the ingredients used in cosmetics and ensure they are *Shariah*-compliant. This paper focuses on the status of cosmetic products that contain placenta according to Islamic perspectives and laws in Malaysia.

There are several valuation methods used, which cause confusion, misunderstanding, and disagreement in the determination of *halal* status. The Mufti of Federal Territory, which is responsible for determining *halal* and *haram*-related issues, allows the use of placenta for medical and beauty purposes as long as it is derived from *halal* animals and slaughtered in a *Shariah*-compliant manner (Mufti of Federal Territory, 2019). In addition, placenta is not listed as a prohibited ingredient in the Guidelines for Control of Cosmetic Products in Malaysia by the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency (NPRA) and the Ministry of Health (MOH) (NPRA, 2022). However, the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) has rejected the use of placenta in cosmetic products and has not issued *halal* certificates for any type of these products for certain reasons. Therefore, there are ambiguities about the *halal* status of placenta products that need to be scrutinised.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 What is Placenta?

Placenta is a mammalian organ that supports a developing foetus during the gestational period. It provides oxygen and nutrients from its mother to the growing baby and permits the release of carbon dioxide and waste products from the foetus (Vellasamy et al., 2016; Yoshikawa et al., 2013). Placenta is the organ that nourishes and protects the foetus from infections (Burton and Jauniaux, 2015). Then, placenta is expelled from the body during the after-birth process (Yoshikawa et al., 2013). Based on the Council Dictionary Fourth Edition, placenta is defined as the organ connecting the mother and foetus in the womb. It supplies food, including oxygen from the mother to the foetus and removes waste products from the foetus. The term placenta in Arabic is known as *al-Mashiymah*, an adventitial layer of the membrane in which a foetus is in a womb and comes out during the birth process (Majma' al-Lughah al-Arabiyyah, 2014).

In the past few years, the use of placenta in health and cosmetic products has become popular. There are various cosmetic products formulated in the manufacturing of cosmetics using placenta sources. Burton and Jauniaux (2015) have stated that the functions of the placenta are widely recognised as life-long health. In addition, placenta naturally helps with appearances, such as whitening the skin or wrinkle reduction. Other than containing high protein, placenta is rich in amino acids, vitamins, and minerals, which can moisturise the skin, improve skin texture, and maintain healthy skin (Chakraborty and Bhattacharyya, 2012; Hong et al., 2015; Wakame et al., 2019). A Japanese study by Yoshikawa et al. (2013) also found that the porcine placenta stimulates collagen production in human fibroblast cells. Added to that, a Korean study by Hong et al. (2015) explained that using porcine placenta can reduce epidermal water loss, wrinkle formation, and significantly prevent collagen loss. Therefore, placenta in cosmetic products have been developed by many pharmaceuticals nowadays.

However, there are also minimal concerns in regard to the side effects of placenta. Every placenta extract in cosmetics could lead to skin irritation, redness, feelings of burning, and stinging. Some experts stated that it could also lead to allergic reactions such as rash, fever, itching, etc. However, this reaction is temporary and subsides in a few hours (Sen, 2016). As for placenta injections, there could be reddening or pain at the injection point, heaviness in the upper arm, nausea, or general malaise when it is performed. There might also be side effects of getting an infection from placenta extract (Heerema-McKenney, 2018).

## **2.2 Halal and Haram of Cosmetic Products**

In recent years, consumers have become more interested in cosmetic products as they become more interested in improving their appearances. Cosmetics can be defined as products that are commonly used or placed in contact with various external parts of the human body, such as skin care creams, lotions, perfumes, makeup, and deodorants. The purposes of these products are for improving body odour, changing appearances, and keeping the skin in good condition (NPRA, 2022; DSM, 2019). Therefore, Muslim consumers, like any other consumers, use this product to seek a healthy and better lifestyle (Ali et al., 2019), leading to a growing demand for *halal* cosmetic products among Muslim consumers.

Generally, the term *halal* from the perspective of cosmetic products must be derived from halal ingredients such as plants, soil, water, permissible animals that are slaughtered according to Islamic law, marine animals deemed *halal*, and synthetic materials that are safe for consumers and unadulterated by *najs* (Sugibayashi et al., 2019). *Halal* products are those that are *Shariah*-compliant, do not involve the use of *haram* sources and are not harmful or intended for harmful use (Azri et al., 2017). *Haram* products that contain human parts or ingredients derived from human parts or contain animal by-products are forbidden to Muslims (Hashim and Mat Hashim, 2013). The terms *halal* and *haram* are two things that are highly emphasised in Islam. Muslims must ensure whether it is *halal* or *haram*, as described in the Quran and Sunnah. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “What is lawful is that which Allah has permitted, in His Book, and what is unlawful is that which Allah has forbidden in His Book. What He remained silent about is what is pardoned.” (Sunan Ibn Majah. Chapters on Food, No. 3367).

According to Malaysian Standard MS 2634:2019 Halal Cosmetics - General requirements (First revision), *halal* cosmetics can be defined as “cosmetic products that contain ingredients permitted under the *Shariah* law and *fatwa* and fulfil the following conditions: a) do not consist or contain any part of matter of an animal that is prohibited by *Shariah* law and *fatwa* for a Muslim to consume or that has not been slaughtered in accordance with *Shariah* law and *fatwa*; b) do not contain anything which is *najs* according to *Shariah* law and *fatwa*; c) do not intoxicate

according to *Shariah* law and *fatwa*; d) do not contain any part of human being or its yield which are not allowed by *Shariah* law and *fatwa*; e) are not poisonous or hazardous to health; f) have not been prepared, processed or manufacture using any instrument that is contaminated with *najs* according to *Shariah* and *fatwa*; and g) have not in the course of preparing, processing or storing been in contact with, mixed, or in close proximity to any materials that fails to satisfy items a) and b)”).

Naturally, there would be a high demand for *halal* cosmetics from Muslims as *halal* products are very significant in Islam (Swidi et al., 2010). This apparently prompted marketers operating cosmetic products to meet the needs of their customers by applying for *halal* certificates from the authorities of the country (Hussin et al., 2013). In Malaysia, to authenticate *halal* certificates from JAKIM, products must meet the requirements of Malaysian Standard MS 2634:2019 (DSM, 2019) and the Halal Certification Procedure Manual - Domestic 2020 (MPPHM, 2020). The *halal* certification ensures that products are good and high quality, safe, *halal* and *ṭayyibān* to be used.

From Islamic perspective, there are several methods of *legal maxims* (*qawaid al-Fiqhiyyah*) that can relate to the determination of *halal* and *haram* aspects of cosmetic products containing placenta. The first method is *al-aṣlu fī al-asyā’ al-ibāḥah*, meaning the origin of things that have been created is permissibility. Basically, using cosmetic products should be based on *nass* (authentic source) in Islam. There is no particular verse about using placenta in cosmetic products based on the *Quran* and *hadith*. However, there is a general principle that *Allah* permits Muslims to benefit from anything good or *ṭayyibān* on this earth. According to al-Sayuti (1990), the origin of things that have been created is permissible until there is a proposition that forbids it. This method shows the permissibility of things, including the use of cosmetic products. Nothing is *haram* except for the things that are clearly prohibited by *Shariah*. The issue of using cosmetic products that contain placenta should be considered based on the derived sources. If the sources are obtained from a *halal* source, they are permissible to use, and if they are obtained from a *haram* source, it is prohibited from being used.

Another method is *al-taḥrīm yatba’ al-khubthu wa al-ḍarar*, which translates to the prohibition of things due to their impurity and harmfulness. Based on this method, a cosmetic product can be *halal* or *haram* in Islam. Therefore, Muslims must consider the effects of the cosmetic products they used, whether they are harmful or beneficial to them. If something is entirely harmful, it is *haram*, and if it is entirely beneficial, it is *halal*. If something brings more harm than its benefit, it is also categorised as *haram*, while *halal* is what brings more benefit than *haram* (Al-Qaradawi, 2013). It has been mentioned in the *Quran* that “They ask thee concerning wine and gambling. Say (O Prophet): In them is great sin and some benefit for human beings, but the sin is greater than the benefit.” (Al-Quran, al-Baqarah 2: 219).

The following *fiqh* method is *an-nīat al-ḥasanah lā tubarir al-ḥarām* which means that good intentions do not make *haram* acceptable. It is important since intention is the first thing that is highlighted in Islam. If the intention is good, the action is good; if it is bad, the action is bad (Muhammad Azzam, 2005). His messenger (PBUH) Allah said: “(The value of) an action depends on the intention behind it.” (Hadith Al-Bukhari. Chapter: The intention in taking oaths, No. 33). Thus, good intention is essential for worship and obedience to *Allah*. For instance, a person who intends to use cosmetic products for *taḥsīniyyah*, is permissible in Islam. It is because a good intention accompanies any permissible action of the believer; leading their action becomes an act of worship. On the contrary, the case of the *haram* is entirely different (Al-Qaradawi, 2013). For example, the use of cosmetic products containing human placenta is *haram*, and the status remains regardless of how good one’s intention or purpose is.

The next *fiqh* methods are *al-masyaqqah tajlibu al-taīsīr* (hardship shall bring alleviation), and *al-ḍarar yazāl* (harm should be removed). These two methods are related to the method in *fiqh*, *al-ḍarūrah tubīh al-mahzūrāt*, which means necessity dictates exceptions. Allah SWT said in the Quran: “He has already explained to you what He has forbidden to you - except when compelled by necessity.” (Al-Quran, al-An’am 6: 119). This verse shows that Allah has explained what is forbidden and what is allowed in necessary circumstances. For instance, whoever is forced to eat dead animals or pork due to starvation in considerable quantities, drinks alcohol because they are choking or under total coercion, and whoever is coerced into killing or cutting other people’s organs (Muhammad Azzam, 2005). It is the same situation when using cosmetic products that contain placenta. For example, if someone suffers from a serious skin disease and only *haram* substances can cure it, it is then permissible even if it has been initially prohibited. However, if the use of cosmetic products that contain *haram* sources is only for beauty purposes and not in a *ḍarūrah* situation, it is *haram* to be used.

Islam has indicated the range of what is prohibited and what can lead to prohibition. However, the principles established by Islam do not disregard the possibility of human life being in a *ḍarūrah* situation. Thus, in this situation, whoever is in harm or distress may be given an exception to remove the biggest harm. Islam permits the use of the *haram* under the *ḍarūrah* for Muslims and following Islamic principles. The purpose is to make life easier and lift Muslims’ burdens. Then Allah SWT said in the Quran: “Allah intends for your ease and does not intend for your hardship.” (Al-Quran, al-Baqarah 2: 185).

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This study used a data collection method through document analysis based on Islamic perspectives and Malaysian law on the issue of whether the placenta used in cosmetic products is derived from a permissible source or not. Based on the law of Islamic *Shariah*, this study involved discussions by Islamic scholars from several books and journals that have discussed *halal* and *haram* perspectives. To identify the status of cosmetic products that contain placenta according to the law in Malaysia, this study also included clarification and regulation from the *Mufti* of the Federal Territory, the National Pharmaceutical Regulations Agency (NPR), the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH), JAKIM, and the Department of Standards Malaysia.

### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### ***4.1 The Law of Cosmetic Products that Contain Placenta from an Islamic Perspective***

All Muslims in the world have long been practicing using *halal* products. It is in accordance with the command of Allah SWT, that Muslims must only consume or use *halal* products, as mentioned in numerous surahs in the Quran. One of the verses that Allah has said in Surah al-Baqarah is: “O mankind, eat whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow in the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy.” (Al-Quran, al-Baqarah 2: 168). Based on this verse, Muslims are commanded to consume *halal* and *tayyib* foods that Allah has provided on this earth. Therefore, *halal* and *haram* aspects should be considered, particularly when it comes to *haram* or *syubhah* things. Likewise, the use of placenta in cosmetic products should be scrutinised to determine whether it is allowed in Islam or not.

##### ***4.1.1 Placenta Derived from Humans or Animals***

*Halal* and *haram* aspects of cosmetic products should be considered with regard to the sources from which the material is derived. Placenta used in cosmetic products can be derived in two conditions, either from humans or animals. Some scholars have discussed that placenta derived

from a human is *tāharah* (pure), and one of the scholars stated in his book: “The severed part of the living thing, and its placenta; is like (the law) of the living thing from the view of pure and impure. Therefore, the hand of man is pure, and the cow is impure” (Al-Anṣarī, 2001). Based on this statement, each part of the human body is pure, even if the placenta from a dead human is also considered *tāharah* and not a *najs* (Al-Mawsū‘ah al-Muyasirah fī Fiqh al-Qadāyā al-Mu‘aṣirah, 2014; Al-Ramlī, 1984). Thus, if a placenta is derived from a human source, it was originally pure, but it doesn't mean it is *halal* to be used in cosmetic products. This exemplifies the honour of the human body, as each part of the human body, including the placenta, is not a *najs*. As Allah mentioned in the *Quran* : “Indeed, we have dignified the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, granted them good and lawful provisions, and privileged them far above many of Our creatures.” (Al-Quran, al-Isra’ 17: 70). Therefore, the use of placenta from human sources is prohibited to protect human honour.

Even though Muslims are prohibited from using impure or *najs* sources for food or beauty purposes, there is some leniency in using *najs* for medical purposes (Salleh et al., 2018). This is based on the method of *darūrah*, particularly when there are no *halal* sources to substitute for the *haram* sources. According to *Shafi'i Madhhab* (School of thought), *darūrah* is distinct from any other common situation, which is acceptable for Muslims to eat a carcass if one is in a life-and-death situation (Ḥammad, 2004). *Najs* are only allowed for medical purposes when *halal* sources are exceptionally difficult to obtain.

#### **4.1.2 Placenta Derived from Halal Animals or Haram Animals**

Muslims should consider whether it is *halal* or *haram* if the placenta is derived from an animal source. In cases where a placenta is derived from a *haram* animal such as pig, the law of its usage is also *haram*, unless in a *darūrah* situation. Allah has stated in the *Quran*: “He has only prohibited for you carrion, blood, the flesh of swine and that upon which a name of someone other than ‘Allah’ has been invoked.” (Al-Quran, al-Baqarah 2: 173). Islam forbids this animal because it is harmful to humans. According to al-Fauzan (2011), a pig is prohibited in any circumstance since it is an impure animal. This animal is generally forbidden in Islam, especially in food or beauty products due to its unpleasant behaviour – it devours dirt. Furthermore, it also has a negative impact on the purity and *ṭayyibān* things consumed or used.

Nonetheless, there are numerous types of *halal* animals that can be consumed and used in Islam. This includes what Islam allows in terms of producing products derived from *halal* animal sources. For instance, *halal* animals can benefit from farm animals such as camels, cows, and sheep (Al-Sharbīnī, 1994). Allah SWT has said: “O you who have believed, fulfil [all] contracts. Lawful for you are the animals of grazing livestock except for that which is recited to you - hunting not being permitted while you are in the state of ihram.” (Al-Quran, al-Ma'idah 5: 1). In addition to that, placenta derived from a horse is also allowed by the majority of *madhhabs* except *Madhhab Hanafi* (Al-Fauzan, 2011). This can be proven by the original law, which stated that eating horse meat is acceptable (Mufti of the Federal Territory, 2020). As a result, it is permissible to use horse placenta.

In this regard, *madhhab* scholars have different perspectives on whether placenta from *halal* animals can be used or not, and the scholars value placenta in terms of cleanliness and purity. According to *Shafi'i Madhhab*, only placenta derived from human sources is pure; otherwise, it is considered *najs*. Therefore, the use of animal placentas is prohibited. However, according to *Maliki Madhhab*, it differs in the purity of the animal placenta. Ibn Rushd said that the placenta is pure and allowed to be used (al-Mawsū‘ah al-Fiqhiyyah al-Kuwaitiyyah, 2006). Therefore, when the law states that it is pure and can be used, it also includes the use of the product, either

internally or externally. It is also used for selling, conducting business, and engaging in its production (Abdullah & Ahmad, 2018). However, when it comes to placentas derived from *halal* animals, it is necessary to consider whether they are derived from living or dead animals.

#### **4.1.3 Placenta Derived from Living Animals or Dead Animals**

Scholars have discovered that the law of obtaining placenta or severed parts of *halal* animals should be based on its sources, whether the animal is still alive or dead. The majority of scholars agree that placenta-derived from living animals is *najs*, although it is derived from *halal* animals. According to scholars of *Shafi'i Madhhab*, placentas that are severed from animals either when they are still alive or after death, whether they are severed by humans who have cut them off or naturally died are still considered carcasses (Al-Ramlī, 1984). As Allah has said: Say, "I do not find, in what has been revealed to me, anything (out of the cattle under discussion) prohibited for anyone who eats it, unless it is carrion or blood that pours forth, or flesh of swine - because it is impure - or there be an animal slaughtered sinfully by invoking on it the name of someone other than Allah. However, if anyone is compelled by necessity, neither seek pleasure nor cross the limit" (Al-Quran, al-An'am 6: 145). Hence, placentas derived from living animals are considered carcasses and *haram*. Indeed, every carcass is unclean and *najs*, except there are propositions that exclude it.

According to Al-Sharbīnī (1994) and Al-Anṣarī (2001) of *Shafi'i Madhhab*, the determination of the carcass is due to the severed body parts of the living animal and its placenta. However, Ṭāhir (2007) of *Maliki Madhhab* explained that the carcass was due to severed parts of the body or died without being slaughtered according to *Shariah*. Al-Maqdisi (1994) of *Hanbali Madhhab* also explained that when an animal body is severed without being slaughtered, it is a carcass and impure. According to al-Kāsānī (2002) of *Hanafi Madhhab*, *halal* carcasses come from sea animals. It was narrated from 'Abdullah bin 'Umar that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: "Two kinds of dead meat have been permitted to us: fish and locusts" (Sunan Ibn Majah. Chapters on Hunting). Therefore, other than these two types of animals, the part of the animal's body that is severed from its mother while still alive and has blood is considered *najs*. This is because a thing is considered pure if there is no blood on it, and the meat is also *haram*, regardless of how little or much blood is on it (Al-Mugharbī, 2003).

Thus, it can be stated that the law of using placenta derived from living animals is considered a carcass and is prohibited from being used except in the case of *darūrah*. However, in *Maliki Madhhab*, Ibn Rusyd said, what has been severed from the body is *halal* to be consumed only if it has been slaughtered. In contrast, Abdul Hamid al-Saigh, who is also a scholar in *Maliki Madhhab*, stated that it is not permissible to consume placenta (Al-Dasūqī, nd). However, placenta derived from living animals is *haram* according to *Shafi'i Madhhab*.

#### **4.1.4 Placenta Derived from Slaughtered or Unslaughtered Animals**

The law of placentas derived from dead animals refers to how the animals died. The majority of scholars agree that placentas obtained from dead animals and unslaughtered according to *Shariah* are unclean and considered carcasses (Al-Ramlī, 1984). There are no animals that can be consumed or utilised without slaughter according to *Shariah*. Allah SWT said in the *Quran*: "Prohibited for you are: carrion, blood, the flesh of swine, and those upon which (a name) other than that of Allah has been invoked (at the time of slaughter), animals killed by strangulation, or killed by a blow, or by a fall, or by goring, or that which is eaten by a beast unless you have properly slaughtered it" (Al-Quran, al-Ma'idah 5: 3). Thus, all types of carcasses are considered *najs* and *haram* to be consumed or used in Islam. The basis of this determination is similar to the law of placenta obtained from living animals.



However, the majority of scholars, except Imam Abu Hanifah, agree that placenta obtained from dead animals and slaughtered according to *Shariah* is pure. In this statement, Allah SWT has referred to halal animals that are slaughtered in accordance with certain slaughter requirements. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “As long as it causes blood to flow, and Allah’s Name has been mentioned over it, then eat it, provided that it was not done with a tooth or nail. And I will tell you why: As for the tooth, it is a bone, and as for the nail, it is the knife of the Ethiopians.” (Jami’ at-Tirmidhi. The Book on Hunting. Chapter: What Has Been Related About Slaughtering with Reeds and the Like, No. 5475). The purpose of slaughter is to protect humans and prevent any harm from occurring to the human body. Therefore, the method of slaughter should adhere to the *Shariah* requirements to ascertain *halal* and *ṭayyibān* products, whether the meat of the animal itself or any other part of the animal can be used without hesitation.

According to Al-Zuḥailī (1985), all Muslim jurists agreed that slaughter must be accomplished by cutting two veins, *mari'* and *halkum*. However, there is disagreement among scholars regarding the minimum limit that must be cut off. *Hanaḩī Madhhab* states that it is obligatory to cut three out of four; *halkum, mari'*, and blood veins. Therefore, if the slaughterer leaves one of them, then the slaughter is *halal* and can be consumed or used. On the other hand, *Maliki Madhhab* states that slaughter must cut the *halkum* and both veins (*waddajain*). In his statement, there is no need to cut *mari'*. This statement is nearly identical to Hanafi’s. According to *Shafi’i* and *Hanbali Madhhabs*, the slaughter must be done by cutting both *halkum* and *mari'* because life ends with neither of these two. Then, it is sunnah to cut both veins, which are two veins on the right side of the neck (carotid artery and jugular vein), as a courtesy in slaughter and to prevent any disputes.

#### **4.1.5 Placenta Follows the Law of Foetus**

According to some scholars, placenta is a part of the foetus, so if the foetus is *halal*, so is the placenta. The determination of the uncleanness or purity of the foetus depends on the mother, whether *halal* or not. If the mother is *halal* and slaughtered according to *Shariah*, then the foetus and placenta are also *halal*. As narrated by *al-Tirmidhi* and classified as Hasan by Ibn Hibban, the placenta follows its mother; if the mother is *halal*, then the placenta is also *halal*, because it is part of the mother's body (Al-Anṣarī, 2001; Al-Sharbīnī, 1994). Similarly, according to Al-Ramlī (1984), the placenta follows its mother and must have *hayat mustaqirrah*, which indicates that there is some movement of that animal, and its blood is still flowing strongly even after it has been severed.

Some scholars, on the other hand, believe that the placenta is a separate organ that is not a part of the foetus or mother of the animal. This view is narrated by Al-Qalyūbī and ‘Umairah (1995) of the Shafi’i Madhhab, who said: “including the definition of ‘udhwu (organ) is nails and hair, although a strand of hair, which is from the strongest opinion. Whereas the placenta, referred to by the Arabs as al-Khalash, is the same as the organ because it is cut from the foetus, until it separates from the foetus. Whereas the placenta in which the foetus is in it is not part of the mother, nor is it part of the foetus.”. Therefore, they believe that the placenta is not a part of the foetus.

After discussing all the arguments, the determination of whether the placenta is pure or impure depends on the sources derived. Except in a *ḩarūrah* condition, human placenta cannot be used and is considered *haram*. However, placentas can be eaten or used if they are derived from *halal* animals and slaughtered according to *Shariah* compliance. Placenta derived from living *halal* animals is impure and *haram* to use. Likewise, placenta derived from *halal* animals and not

slaughtered according to *Shariah*, as well as placenta derived from *haram* animals, are both prohibited.

#### **4.2 Law towards Cosmetic Products that Contain Placenta in Malaysia**

##### **4.2.1 Mufti of the Federal Territory**

The awareness of using cosmetic products is currently increasing among the Malaysian communities, which will be very significant for them to use these products. Therefore, various cosmetic products have been marketed in Malaysia due to the increasing demand for these products nowadays. However, every production of cosmetic products must comply with the laws of the authorities regarding the production of these products. In Malaysia, the law on cosmetic products that contain placenta ingredients is allowed by the Federal territorial *fatwa* based on *Irsyad Al-fatwa* Series 281. It refers to Lajnah al-Iftaa' Jordan (2013) fatwa no.2797 that there is no harm in using an animal placenta for manufacturing medical and cosmetic products. The use of placentas from *halal* animals that have been slaughtered according to Islamic law is permitted for medical and beauty purposes. As for the use of placenta, using human or animal placenta that is *najs* is prohibited for beauty purposes. However, if there is a medical need to treat a disease, then the law of treating using human placenta is permitted only in *darurah* or desperate situations (Mufti of Federal Territory, 2019).

##### **4.2.2 National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency (NPR), Ministry of Health Malaysia**

According to Guidelines for Control of Cosmetic Products in Malaysia (2022), cosmetic products in Malaysia are regulated under the Control of Drugs and Cosmetic Regulations (CDCR) 1984, which were promulgated under the Sale of Drugs Act 1952. They are controlled through a notification procedure starting from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2008. The cosmetic notification holder (CNH) is required to comply with all requirements stated in the guideline and to make a declaration upon notification to the Director of Pharmaceutical Services through the National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency (NPR). For cosmetic products containing specific ingredients, such as ingredients derived from placenta, there should be safety tests that are quality tests for products containing specific ingredients (NPR, 2018). Therefore, cosmetic products are allowed to get approval to be on the market if they meet the evaluation criteria based on the safety and quality aspects of the product. The evaluation is based on the application that was submitted to the authorities for approval (Abdullah & Ahmad, 2018).

##### **4.2.3 Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM)**

On the other hand, JAKIM is the authority that has the largest role in determining the *halal* status of cosmetic products for Muslims and has different valuations of cosmetic products that contain placenta. JAKIM has established several guidelines for the manufacturing and handling of *halal* cosmetics. A Malaysian Standard of Halal Cosmetics has been issued by the Department of Standards Malaysia (DSM), which is MS 2634: 2019 Halal Cosmetics-General requirements (First revision). Referring to this standard, cosmetic products must not consist of or contain any part of an animal that is prohibited by *Shariah* law and *fatwa* for a Muslim to consume or that has not been slaughtered in accordance with *Shariah* law and *fatwa*. Besides, cosmetic products should not contain anything that is *najs* or does not contain any part of a human being or its yield, which is not allowed by *Shariah* law and *fatwa*. Also, the ingredients used are not poisonous or hazardous to the health of consumers (DSM, 2019). Based on this standard, *najs* refer to matters that are impure according to *Shariah* law and *fatwa*, and placenta and excrement are some of the matters that have been categorised as *najs*.

In addition, to obtain halal certification for cosmetic products in Malaysia, production must follow the guidelines or procedures provided by JAKIM and the Malaysian Halal Certification Procedure Manual 2020 (MPPHM 2020). Referring to this procedure, MPPHM 2020 has stated in Part 4 of Requirement for Certification - Specific requirements that each cosmetic product must follow the requirements of Guidelines for Cosmetic Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) and Guidelines for Control of Cosmetic Products in Malaysia. MPPHM 2020 also follows the MS 2634: 2019 Halal Cosmetics-General Requirements (First Revision), Control of Drugs and Cosmetics Regulations 1984, Guidelines for Control of Cosmetic Products in Malaysia 2017, as well as other latest legislation and regulations enforced by the relevant authorities shall comply with. Notification details from NPRA should also be submitted for each cosmetic product applied for halal certification (MPPHM, 2020).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

In a nutshell, after reviewing the requirements and procedures established by the Malaysian authorities, there are contradictions among the Mufti of the Federal Territory, NPRA, and JAKIM regarding the approval of placenta use in cosmetic products. As mentioned earlier, the use of placenta in cosmetic products is permitted by fatwa under certain conditions. In addition, the NPRA allows the use of placentas in cosmetic products as long as they meet the safety and quality requirements. Therefore, MOH has allowed products containing placentas for medical and beauty purposes. JAKIM, on the other hand, has a different status for cosmetic products containing placentas. It is not permitted to get authentication of halal certification of cosmetic products derived from placenta as they contain impure ingredients. Based on MS 2634:2019, under clause 3.6.1 regarding *najs*, according to *Shariah* law and fatwa, *najs* is any liquid or objects discharged from the orifices of human beings or animals, such as urine, blood, vomit, pus, amniotic fluids, placenta and excrement, sperm and ova of pigs and dogs, except sperm and ova of other animals. Therefore, cosmetic products containing placenta are not going to get the *halal* certificate from JAKIM.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Authors have no conflict of interest to declare

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