



# Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)

Issued since 2005

ISSN 1994-4160. E-ISSN 1994-4195  
2024. 20(2). Issued 4 times a year

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Founders: UNESCO Moscow Office, Russian Association for Film and Media Education, ICO "Information for All".  
Release date 15.06.24  
Format 21 × 29,7/4.

Editor: Cherkas Global University  
Headset Georgia.

Postal Address: 1717 N Street NW, Suite 1,  
Washington, District of Columbia, USA  
20036  
Order № 79

Website: <https://me.cherkasgu.press>  
E-mail: [me.editor@cherkasgu.press](mailto:me.editor@cherkasgu.press)

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Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)

2024

Is. 2

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Published in the USA  
 Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)  
 Issued since 2005.  
 ISSN 1994-4160  
 E-ISSN 1994-4195  
 2024. 20(2): 174-180

DOI: 10.13187/me.2024.2.174

<https://me.cherkasgu.press>


## The Frame of Asian Movement in Hollywood Films

Nasya Surya Ambar <sup>a</sup>, Frans Sayogie <sup>a,\*</sup>, Isna Khairunnisa Raschani <sup>a</sup>, Chelsea Shafa Nadine <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia

### Abstract

This study was carried out to investigate how the Asian movement is portrayed in films produced in Hollywood. The methodological approach that was taken in this investigation was qualitative and descriptive. The research was conducted using an approach developed by John Fiske called *television ethics across three levels*. The level of reality, the level of representation, and the level of ideology are the three levels that are being discussed here. Researchers find the notion of an Asian movement packed in the characters and culture of Hollywood movies by using these codes. The findings of this study demonstrate how the East has been able to advance despite the images in the film that depict it as having to succumb to the West. Because the Asian character in Hollywood is shown as a figure that is active, courageous, honest, and virtuous, one might deduce that Orientalism is the philosophy that underpins this picture. As well as the culture is shown in a manner that is quite similar to that of East Asian cultures from the beginning to the end of the movie.

**Keywords:** Asian movement, hermeneutics, Hollywood movies, orientalism.

### 1. Introduction

The Western nation is considered a country that has brought progress to a very dominant human civilization, characterized by the existence of the first industry in England. Mohajan explained that the first industrial revolution in England was known as the Industrial Revolution (IR), and it took place in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, roughly between 1760 and 1840 (Mohajan, 2019). The Industrial Revolution (IR) was the transition from human and animal labor technology to machines, new chemical manufacturing and iron production processes, and so on, which resulted in massive socioeconomic changes in England. This perception gives rise to the terms third world or sub-alter or those who are not elite and are ruled by the ruling class. As modernization and westernization spread, the subaltern became more and more dependent on the first world, or developed countries, in terms of technology, culture, the economy, and everything else (Olazabal et al., 2021). It is another way of life that makes Western culture stand out even more. By seeing the reality in society, filmmakers also dare to raise the reality in a film because a film is made based on a portrait of the truth of what is happening in society. Hollywood has dominated the international film industry since the 1920s and has created numerous films released in nearly 150 countries (Hisham, Rahman, 2018). It makes sense that the most essential part of the film industry can make high-quality and varied movies. In addition to producing films, Hollywood has also made many films set in the East (the Orient). Hollywood used the Middle East and East Asia as a backdrop. Unfortunately, not all films set in the Middle East and East Asia produced by Hollywood are detached from Western stereotypes that view the East as something low.

\* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: [frans.sayogie@uinjkt.ac.id](mailto:frans.sayogie@uinjkt.ac.id) (F. Sayogie)

The Western production team produced the Asian-themed film. This has to do with Orientalism. Orientalism has been used in many ways, describing a geographical area and comparing civilizations. It is a word that has different meanings in terms of concept, scope, and terminology (Kalayci, Kuşçi, 2021). In other words, Orientalism is the Western way of dominating, restructuring, and ruling the East. The Asian-themed movies, such as *Crazy Rich Asians*, *Mulan*, and *After Yang*, show how the West and the East are portrayed differently. In both films, the storyline and characterization are different from those of the original films. Western characters are portrayed as superior to Asian characters. The West character is always associated with an intelligent character like a professor in the movie *After Yang*. In *Mulan*, East (China) is described as a dirty and shabby country. These instances show some Western people's views towards Asian culture. Ranji discovered that media study is characterized by using binary vocabulary, collective phrases and generalizations, a one-sided interaction between the 'West' and 'non-West,' and the idea that Anglo-American research is superior (Ranji, 2021). For further instance, one of the fictional action films that inspired one of the world's wonders, *Shang-Chi and The Legend of the Ten Rings of China*, is also a Hollywood movie. *Shang-Chi and The Legend of The Ten Rings* is a film that tells the story of a European mercenary who initially wanted only to steal black powder but instead participates in a war between the troops of *Shang-Chi and The Legend of The Ten Rings* against the monster Ta Lo. The uniqueness of *Shang-Chi and The Legend of the Ten Rings* is that the first American-Chinese movie collaboration incurred an enormous cost (US\$ 150 million) because this film is included in the mainstream Hollywood productions category, which requires higher budgets to maximize its quality (Setiawan, 2020). This film entered the popular film of 2021 (IMDB, 2021). In addition to the film, this is also very close to the Chinese state, which uses the setting where *Shang-Chi and The Legend of The Ten Rings* of the Tiongkok country, which has always been glorified by the Chinese people and built for more than 1700 years to protect its people from the onslaught of danger, both known and from legends. *Shang-Chi and The Legend of The Ten Rings* are movies that highlight Chinese culture's uniqueness and beauty. This film shows the contrasting types of Asian-themed movies from Hollywood productions compared to the previous examples.

Depictions in films are important to research because films impact society. Film or cinema can significantly present social dynamics to society because it mirrors the social structure that guides society and social events (Karakartal, 2021). The relationship between film and society has always been understood linearly. That is, film always influences and shapes society based on the message behind it, without ever applying otherwise (Gupta, 2019).

This study was about the Asian movement in Hollywood movies. In this article, the New Paper mentions that *Shang-Chi and The Legend of The Ten Rings* are Hollywood movies with a touch of Zhang Yimou. Based on the facts above, the researcher wants to know the depiction of Orientalism in Hollywood movies. The film's research uses hermeneutics. Research on representation also needs to be carried out to see how Orientalism is portrayed in films.

## 2. Materials and methods

This research uses a qualitative approach, and the method used is John Fiske's television semiotics, which are commonly used in the form of reality, representation, and ideology (Febryningrum, Hariyanto, 2022). In this study, researchers used documentation data collection techniques. Documentation data collection means getting information from documents, texts, works of art, or pictures. The data obtained by the researchers is a scene in the Hollywood movies. Researchers will take shots of images from the movie scene. Researchers will collect the shots and group them by each scene in the film for researchers to analyze based on John Fiske's "The Codes of Television" to see the meaning behind such signs. The subject in this study was Hollywood movies, which were packaged in Mp4 format.

In the process of analyzing data, researchers look at a lot of Hollywood movies in several stages. The next step is to explain the shots collected and looked at from three perspectives: the reality, representation, and ideology levels.. The next step is to explain the shots collected and looked at from three perspectives: the reality level, the representation level, and the ideology level (Sabarini, 2021). Researchers will look at how the codes are depicted in the film. After that, interpret the meaning of each code separately. Researchers will look at three levels. The levels of reality, the level of representation, and the level of ideology have different aspects. Researchers will look at every code in John Fiske's television code level. Analyze the codes in Hollywood movies based on what you know about Orientalism, the film's meaning, and its techniques from reading.

Then, divide the meanings into predetermined codes, compare them with the way they are used, and last is to conclude the results of the analysis and findings of the researcher in the chapter discussion. This study uses three levels of coding by John Fiske (Febryningrum, Hariyanto, 2022). The three levels of coding are reality level, representation level, and ideology level. Using these, the data findings found by researchers will be categorized into several categories, including character and cultural depictions.

### 3. Discussion

Culture is a complex set of things people learn as a group (DeMarco, 2019). These include knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and skills. Behavior, style of dress, customs, beliefs, and traditions are some of the things that make up culture in general. From the above cultural sense, some parts of culture are shown by the codes at both the reality and representation levels, depending on how the West sees the East (Sabarini, 2021). It can be seen that the emperor's appearance in this scene is a young emperor who reminds us that in the Chinese empire, an emperor can be led by a prince or a child who is still young. The appointment of the emperor occurs when the then-serving emperor dies. Usually, the eldest son will be his successor, but sometimes, it is not like that, depending on the family decision of the emperor and the people of the time. Through this scene, the color gold is highly respected by the Orientals because the color gold is closely related to the empire. Gold often dominates palaces, palace interiors, and even the imperial family.

Orientalism can be seen as an "official institution" that "takes care of" the Asian world by making different claims about the East, giving legitimacy to different ideas about the East, and describing the East as a way to teach it, find a solution for it, and control it (Hai-hua, 2021; Hassan, 2021; Hong, 2018; Hughes, 2019; Kalayci, 2021; Kang, 2021; Pembecioğlu, Çomak, 2021; Pennington, 2020; Serrao, 2022; Vijay, 2019). To sum up, Orientalism is a way for the West to control, reorganize, and gain power in Asia (Daud, 2020). Orientalism creates this schism between East and West and associates stereotypes with each side. It is a social construction made up of interpreted implications that may or may not be true (Kang, 2021). At its core, Orientalism is a way to defend imperialism by painting Asian culture as backward and "less than." Also, Orientalism is a way of thinking about the East that comes from the West and is shown in writing, art, or study. It fits with the goals of the Western empire (Daud, 2020). So, it became the responsibility of the "advanced West as a culture" to keep their colonies in other countries going. These colonies gave the "advanced West" a reason to occupy and rule over different states.

Popular American culture is full of negative stereotypes towards Arab and Muslim people. In film and television, Arabs are associated with being bloodthirsty and dishonest. He appears to be an overly tall, capable, and ingenious individual. But basically, they are sadistic, dangerous, and low-key. In addition, they are depicted as slave traders, camel drivers, street vendors, and bastards; these are some of the traditional Arab roles in films (Daud, 2020). The Americans sought to portray the Asian region according to their imagination. The East is described as unique, ancient, and full of mystery. Therefore, the Western stereotypes that shape the audience's perception of the East are based solely on a film, without seeing Asians directly (Proudfoot, Kay, 2022). People say that this stereotype comes from Hollywood's desire to leave Asians out of their own stories.

Representation is an essential thing in the study of culture because it connects meaning and language to culture. It is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture (Hall, 2020). Hall stated that representation is the production of meaning through language and can suggest two relevant meanings for the word that can represent something to describe or depict and represent to symbolize (Hall, 2020). First, mental representation is the concept of "appropriate" that is in the heads of each of us (conceptual map). This mental representation is still something abstract. Secondly, "language" plays an important role in the process of constructing meaning. The abstract concepts in our heads must be translated into the usual "language", so that we can relate our ideas about something to the meaning of certain symbols. In representation, two possibilities arise. First, representation will confirm that ideology; second, representation will dismantle that ideology. Through representation, the author wants to see whether the Western stereotypes remain visible or fade.

As a communication logic, hermeneutics investigates the correspondence between the signs of written texts and their intended and understood meanings (Shpet, 2019). Fiske said that the study makes it clear that a cue, in this case a pronoun, is linked in a user's mind to its meaning

(Sabarini, 2021). For Saussure, a sign is a physical object with a meaning, or to use the term, a sign such as a signifier or a signified signifier. A marker is an image of a sign as we perceive it (Sabarini, 2021). Regarding sign categories, Saussure pays attention only to symbols, since symbols are words (Sabarini, 2021). For Saussure, this helps in understanding the signs in the film, especially the iconic ones, that is, the signs that crave something. If Saussure is known for his dichotomy (dyadic scheme), Pierce describes it as a triangle of meaning made up of signs, objects, and interpretants. Pierce stated one of the forms of signs is the word, whereas an object is something that the sign refers to. An interpretant is a sign in one's mind about the object to which a sign relates. If the three elements of meaning interact in a person's mind, then there is a sense of meaning about something represented by the sign. Barthes also came up with two levels of omen, which let him make meanings that were also layered based on the degree of denotation and connotation. The most critical factors in the language of communication are denotative and connotative (Pratiwi, Soemantri, 2020). Its reference to reality has an explicit, direct, definite, and apparent meaning. In short, denotation is a sign whose marker has a high degree of convention or agreement. Reality comprises the television code of appearance, costume, makeup, environment, behavior, dialogue, body language, facial expressions, and sound. Then, the representation level consists of the camera, editing, and music. The third level is the ideological level, which has social codes like individualism, patriarchy, class, race, capitalism, and materialism.

#### 4. Results

Researchers have put Asian depictions into categories, such as how characters and cultures are shown in Hollywood movies. These categories make it easy to see how Asian characters and culture are represented in Hollywood movies. Looking at some of these depictions, the Asian character in Hollywood movies is different from the concept of Said's Orientalism, which states that the characteristics of the East are described as being easily deceived, having a "lack of energy and initiative," and "lick." Pretending is cunning and unwelcome to animals. The Asians are the liars of rust; they are "lazy and suspicious" in every way, contrary to clarity, straightness, and glory (Daud, 2020). The cultural depictions in the Hollywood movies are very clearly visible. Through this film, it seems as if the Western production team wants to introduce Asian culture to the audience. They present a vibrant variety of Asian cultures. Starting from the building of *Shang-Chi and The Legend of the Ten Rings*, the interior of the palace, the pagoda building, and the clothes used in this film, values are also presented in this film, where it is shown that Western characters are portrayed as materialistic people, while Asian characters do not measure everything with money. So, it can be seen in this film that the Asian character is portrayed more nobly than the Western character.

Researchers interpreted the data analysis carried out on Hollywood movies. Researchers found that through Hollywood movies, the representation of Orientalism has been more colored by Western culture. This film shows that the Asian nation can already develop and is not entirely submissive (submissive) to the Western nation. Asia's role in American films has evolved dramatically over the last 40 years, from that of a comic book character to that of the main character in a major box-office hit. Because of the influence of films in America, these films have built many different stereotypes (Kang, 2021). At first, it seems that the Western nation is used as the hero who helps the Asian nation, but if you look deeper, it is precisely the characteristics of the West in this film that are portrayed as thieves, liars, and cunning. Although this film is a Western production, netizens admit that this film feels very close to the Asian feel that shows a landscape that is very closely related to Asia, such as *Shang-Chi and The Legend of the Ten Rings*, the royal palace, and the scenery of the others. In addition, many netizens also feel that the Western actors in this movie are forced. This film should only involve actors from Asia. Therefore, not all of Hollywood's coercion through actors is seen as good by the audience; it actually looks bad and imposes its will, which doesn't fit with the movie's story. In addition, netizens seem more interested if this film is only played by actors from Asia, without involving actors from the West. Through Hollywood movies, it can be seen that America and China have re-established a relationship in the film industry because China is one of the countries advancing in the industrial field of cinema. It is increasingly seen that not all Asian nations have always been looked down upon, but the Asian nations have been more developed. Therefore, *Shang-Chi and The Legend of The Ten Rings* are used as chi-wood (China-Hollywood) genre films with a cultural mix between Western and Asian nations.

*Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* fortress are often seen preparing positions to fight the impending danger. Through the realistic level of appearance and dress in this scene, the troops in the colored clothes are seen in archery, and the troops with the clins are seen jumping down, using swords and ropes. The appearance and clothing of the soldiers of *Shang-Chi and The Legend of The Ten Rings* are like those of other Chinese war soldiers in war, complete with steel clothes and weapons of war. Through this scene, it can be seen that the East has prepared themselves carefully by dividing the troops into groups. They have already practiced and prepared strategies to fight the upcoming enemies. In addition, in the picture, Western figures can be seen admiring the war troops of *Shang-Chi and The Legend of the Ten Rings*. In this scene from *Shang-Chi and The Legend of the Ten Rings*, William and Tovar, along with several bear soldiers and Commander Lin, one of the leaders of The Nameless Order, are seen on stage. In the first picture, two Bear Squads pull on the cover robes used by William and Tovar and discover they are wearing army clothes. Knowing this, Commander Lin directly thrusts a sword towards William's face. Through these scenes, it can be seen that in this film, Asian characters are not easy to deceive. Asian figures are not easily trusted by people who are new to them. William claimed to be a merchant, but Commander Lin didn't believe it, so he first checked the origins of William and Tovar. In many scenes, the commander is seen talking about Sir Ballard. Sir Ballard was one of the Westerners who had lived on the Great Wall for a long time with other Chinese troops. In the scene, William asks about Sir Ballard, whom Commander Lin did not release. Through the dialogue conducted by William and Commander Lin, it was as if Commander Lin had already believed in Sir Ballard, who had lived with them for a long time and was unwilling to let him go because Sir Ballard had taught him English and Latin. It can be seen that Commander Lin (East) also wants to learn about one of the Western cultures, namely English or Latin. In addition, this scene also shows that the East is not always ancient; they want to learn something new and not just be nailed into their culture.

In short, film has become one of the ways that people can send messages to other people. In Hollywood movies, Orientalism is shown as a more recent way of showing how culture has been brought to the world. So, neither of them makes either group look too much like they are better or worse than the other.

## 5. Conclusion

As a result, researchers conclude that the view of Orientalism in the film is more colored by Western culture through the depiction of characters and the depiction of culture. The characteristics of the East in this film are already described as the characteristics of yang initiative, rational, energetic, and full of glory, in contrast to Said's view of Orientalism, which says the East is an irrational, lazy character, a liar, etc. Hollywood movies show that the characters from the West are sneaky, irrational, and thieves.

In Hollywood films, it is seen how the West admires Asian culture in a way that Western nations lack, particularly when armies in Hollywood films prepare for war with expressions of awe. As a result, the Asian nation is not always submissive towards the Western nation. Through the Hollywood movies, it can be seen that America and China have again established a cooperative relationship in the film industry, because China is one of the countries advancing in the field of industry cinema. It is increasingly seen that it is not as if the Asian nation has always been looked down upon, but that the Asian nation is more developed. Even though China has its own material goals, this movie allows it to show the rest of the world more of its firm culture.

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Published in the USA  
 Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)  
 Issued since 2005.  
 ISSN 1994-4160  
 E-ISSN 1994-4195  
 2024. 20(2): 181-194

DOI: 10.13187/me.2024.2.181

<https://me.cherkasgu.press>

## Arctic Floating University Diary as the Media Genre Influencing University Students' Perception of the Arctic Issues

Nataliya Beloshitskaya <sup>a</sup>, Olga Pechinkina <sup>a,\*</sup><sup>a</sup> Northern (Arctic) Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov, Russian Federation

### Abstract

The authors of the article explore the media text of the university site. The discourse of the university site is viewed as an institutional, corporative discourse with a generalized form of the authorship. The subject of the analysis is a scientific expedition's diary. The main objectives of the analysis are to define the key value-charged meanings promoted by the diary's text in the context of the socio-cultural agenda, the main means of those values' conceptualization, and the way the University students perceive these meanings. The authors draw on the semiotic theory of the text, the presentation theory of discourse, and semiotic modelling of discourse. The main methods are semiotic and pragmalinguistic analyses, whereby the key presentemes standing for the dominant values were defined, to prove the findings the authors exploit the quantitative analysis tools. The authors conducted students' interviewing (N=20) with the aim of understanding how the media genre under analysis facilitates students' engagement into the Arctic issues. The results of the interviewing also shed light on the students' perception of the Arctic. The findings show how the media texts addresser's intentions have been implemented. The authors came to the conclusion that playful reinterpretation of reality as the leading model of reflecting the world secured by a number of communicative tactics, mainly tonality change help achieve the main goal of the media texts' addresser – to promote key values through informing, enlightening, and entertaining.

**Keywords:** arctic floating university diary, media text, media discourse, presenteme, axiological meaning, semiotic analysis, students' perception.

### 1. Introduction

Media discourse of a university site in the wide sense could be categorized as a corporative, institutional discourse. A specific feature of a suchlike discourse type is the fact that the university itself that is the corporation is the subject of the discourse. The discourse is aimed at two types of the addressee (recipient) – the internal audience (students and lecturers) and the general public (potential applicants, university's partners, and media). The discourse space of the site is a dynamic and semiotically heterogeneous construct. A detailed analysis of a corporative type of a discourse is presented in the research by L.V. Selezneva (Selezneva, 2018). The discourse subject – the university (corporation) – is of a generalized-protagonistic form. "The position of the protagonist (corporation), who initiates the discourse, is supported regardless of the authorship form" (Selezneva, 2018: 171). Exploiting scientific tools used by Michel Foucault for describing discourse, it should be noted that the university acts as a discursive formation, which forms discursive practices, and creates conditions for statements' production in accordance with regulations, norms, and values. The axiological component in the discourse of the university site is

\* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: [o.pechinkina@narfu.ru](mailto:o.pechinkina@narfu.ru) (O. Pechinkina)

significant and includes promotion of the value-based meanings through the texts of different genres making up the discourse. The global meta-goal of the university in this respect is to develop the value system of students. The subject of the analysis in this article is the Arctic floating university's diary entries. This genre is non-typical for the university site.

Nowadays there are various ways to denote pieces of writing about traveling: notes of a journey, itinerary, travel essays, account of one's travels, travel notes, travelogue, a diary etc. There is no consensus on the definition of a travelogue but most researchers (Kulakova, 2012; Lvova, 2016; Mamurkina, 2013) agree that the travelogue represents a consistent textual unity with the underlying dichotomy "friend-or-foe" that describes real or imaginary trip as well as the author's reaction to what s/he perceives. Travelogue is a permanent collision of self and non-self that results in an emerging image of the place. Yet, in this research we stick to the term diary, because this is how it is termed in the official discourse on the Northern (Arctic) Federal University site (<https://narfu.ru/en/research/expeditions/fu/expedition-2017/diaries>).

The researcher M. Stefko considers traveling as one of the forms of cross-cultural communication, a real relocation of a person across the territory of a country with its subsequent description. This definition can be applied to literary works, letters, travelogues, travel essays and others (Stefko, 2010: 4).

According to E. Krivolapova (Krivolapova, 2012), this genre possesses such key features as: a) synchronicity which defines reflection of the reality, b) auto-communication that equates the author and the addressee, c) unpolished material, d) date that constitutes the structure-forming beginning, e) intimacy, f) sincerity, and g) truthfulness of the notes.

Zasypkina concludes (Zasypkina, 2012) that the genre of travelogue incorporates historical data, archaeological data, description of monuments and landmarks, landscape sketches, dialogues, lyrical digressions, etc. but the main role is attributed to impressions of what the traveler notices, portrayal of characters' temper and so on. Rokina (Rokina, 2016) adds that any travelogue has interdisciplinary character and provides valuable information for different sciences such as history, ethnography, anthropology, philology, etc. It should be mentioned that the discourse of the travelogue includes all the main aspects: geographical, political, historical, ethnologic, semiotic, linguistic, praxeological, kratological, axiological and others (Majga, 2014; Rusakov, 2015). Thus, from the viewpoint of the university as a discourse formation, generating and transmitting values, media texts in the form of the research expedition diary (Arctic Floating University diary – AFU diary) present an interesting case for analysis regarding its influence on the students' perception of the Arctic issues. The analysis of both the AFU's diary and the way the target audience (students) perceives it will help understand functional efficacy of this media genre as the vehicle of the university's key values promotion.

## 2. Materials and methods

We witness the metonymy of the genre – the transfer of the conventionally journalistic genre into the unusual context of the corporative discourse and the transposition of the authorship form – the author remains personified but the coverage of events is carried out from the corporation's position. All these transform semiotic functions of the genre. As for semiotic functions of a text, we uphold the approach, developed by Y.M. Lotman. The approach has long become a classical one. Thus, semiotic functions of a text comprise a creative function (new meaning generation), information transmission, and a memory function: "any text is capable of keeping the memory of the previous contexts" (Lotman, 2022: 28). The transformations of the genre and style of the material under analysis open up opportunities to draw on the conceptual frameworks and research methods of a number of related humanitarian sciences with the aim of inferring the ways to signify value charged components of the corporation's conceptual system as well as the means of key values' implementation. The semiotic approach to the text, developed in the works of the Moscow-Tartu school of semiotics, the presentation theory of discourse by A.V. Olyanich, and the semiotic modelling of a discourse considering 1) tonality-pragmatic and situation and 2) regime-based parameters developed by V.I. Karasik constitute the methodological foundation of the AFU diary analysis. Moreover, the semiotic analysis of media texts is widely used not only by linguists but by pedagogues and educators as well. For instance, A.V. Fedorov and proponents of media literacy and media education applied the semiotic analysis while analysing a variety of media texts (Chelysheva, 2010; Fedorov, 2015; Romanenko, Kozlova, 2022). The semiotic comprehension of reality in the process of creating AFU diary's texts is the process of a possible world construction –

the world of enthusiastic researchers, exploring severe Arctic, and overcoming different kinds of obstacles and perils. Considering social semiotic of the text it is relevant to refer to Michael Halliday's social interpretation of language – we observe a two-level process: “the social act of narration, and the social acts that form the content of the narration” (Halliday, 1978: 146). Before moving on to the analysis itself, it is necessary to give some important facts to set a complete discursive and social context. The media texts under analysis are on the site of the Northern (Arctic) Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov (NArFU). The inner cohesion of the corporative discourse is defined by the main lines and the theme of the Arctic is one of them. This theme is clearly traced in the texts of such genres as: “the mission of the university”, “the goals of the university”: “Mission of the Northern (Arctic) Federal University named after M.V. Lomonosov consists in creating innovative scientific and human resources for the purposes of intellectual exploration of the Russian North and Arctic” ([https://narfu.ru/en/university/introducing/mission\\_goals](https://narfu.ru/en/university/introducing/mission_goals)).

Arctic exploration is regarded as the dominant of the axiological sphere of the NArFU's discourse. The AFU diary's entries could be taken as the confirmation and demonstration of the process of the goal achievement. In the light of the pragmalinguistics approach it is a complex demonstrative. The detailed description of the key research project of the university is a staged unfolding of the discourse. The subject of the discourse presents himself/herself by means of the communicative strategies complex. Following terminology of V.I. Karasik, we define these strategies as the strategy of attraction, the strategy of charging with emotions (emotiogenic strategy), and admirative strategy. The discourse corpus of the AFU diary's texts is well thought-out and spectacular. The theory of the presentative nature of any discourse was elaborately worked out by A.V. Olyanich: “Any text and first of all the text designed for mass consumption undergoes certain ‘staging’ by the individuals producing this text” (Olyanich, 2004: 175). A.V. Olyanich singles out a special unit of a discourse – the presenteme, which is the smallest unit of the informational impact – a semiotic complex consisting of cognitively acquired by the individual concepts and images, which are being transferred to another individual in the course of communication with the aim of influencing this individual.

Analysis of the 2023 AFU diary's texts as the informative concepts (the first function of the text) and finding key presentemes on the syntagmatic level will allow us to trace the main semantic chains, opening ‘content-conceptual’ and ‘content-subtextual’ (Gal'perin, 1981) information of the texts. Generation of new meanings and intertextual inclusions as the memory of the previous contexts will appear on this level of the texts. The analysis follows a three-step algorithm. The first step is finding key dominants of meaning – presentemes. Frequency and diversity of nomination will allow us to conclude about the significance of these objects. A.V. Olyanich in his typology of presentemes sets aside linguosemiotic presentemes (Olyanich, 2004: 262), among which lexical and syntagmatic presentemes are of a special interest for our research. The second step of the analysis is pragmalinguistic situational analysis of the discourse extracts with dominant presentemes. The aim of this step is to define a dominant tonality. Tonality marks leading strategies of communication. The third step of analysis is identification of the axiogenic situations, where value-marked and value-generating characteristics are accentuated.

As the second line of the research, it was important to analyze the effectiveness of the media genre of the diary regarding the promotion of the key values of the University (the discourse subject). The authors have worked out the questionnaire to reveal the students' interest to the Arctic issues and to understand whether their perceptions concur with those intended by the media texts addresser. The students (N=20), participating in the interviewing, are fourth-year students. Some of them are doing their bachelor degree on the International Affairs in the Arctic and others on the Arctic Region of Russia.

### 3. Discussion

The quantitative analysis allows us to define the most frequently mentioned Arctic objects, states of nature and atmospheric phenomena in the AFU diary's entries. The descriptions of the sea and sky are the distinctive leitmotif. The inclusions of description also constitute metatext – lyrical digressions from conveying information may contain rational component in the form of a scientific fact about some nature phenomena. Here is an example: *It is calm and sunny today, as if we were not at the White Sea, but at the Red Sea. In the morning, we could observe a solar or light column. This is an optical effect, a vertical strip of light that stretches upward from the sun during sunset*

*or sunrise, well, and our sunset smoothly passes into sunrise and in general everything around is very leisurely* (Day 3<sup>d</sup>).

The extract given as an example starts as a light sketch, which introduces 'sea' as the main presenteme of the thematic block 'the nature of the Arctic'. A quick switch of the register into a popular science register directs the discourse along the trajectory of information transmission. Suchlike passages, introducing scientific terms into the metatexts patches, give the text a specific uneven rhythm, which in its turn symbolizes instability, fragility, rocking. Sea naming (nomination) is carried out through the geographic names, similes, or a basic name 'sea'. The semiotic role of a marine space in the AFU diary's entries is significant. The presenteme of a cold, northern sea as an integral part of the Arctic space is opposed to the warm sea (Red or Mediterranean). It gives impetus to the further development of the axiologically-symbolic potential of the situations built around the lexico-semantic class of this object's nominations. The cold sea in the Arctic may be deceptively calm and remind one of some warm southern sea, yet the northern sea requires that explorers remain persistent and staunch. The descriptions of the sea states convey the psychological atmosphere, the level of performance, and the team's morale. The presenteme 'sea' may not be even introduced by direct nomination but be presented by means either of the author's or other AFU team member's emotional state description. Reoccurrence of the presenteme 'sea' results in the personification of this object. Axiological meaning of the content-conceptual layer of the diary's entries with the presenteme 'sea' is the necessity to overcome obstacles while being at sea, bravely endure rocking, inconveniences and discomfort of everyday life. At the same time, the conceptual dominants of the presenteme 'sea' emphasize the beauty and limitless source of aesthetic pleasure. Different states of the sea and sky are semiotized. Overall, in the AFU diary's entries 25 textual extracts have been found devoted to semiotic reflection of the sea and sky. According to the quantitative analysis, the exact number of the word 'sea' appearance is 65. Here we will give several examples.

1. *It is calm, sunny, warm, and not rocking. The sea sparkles and draws patterns with seaweed* (Day 3<sup>d</sup>).

2. *The feelings were terrible, considering that I felt seasick. I had not even had a minimal adaptation to the sea yet, to the ship, and here I was working at once. Luckily, everything passed, everything is interesting!* (Day 4<sup>th</sup>).

3. *The Barents Sea is rocking us very gently so far...* (Day 5<sup>th</sup>).

4. *Outside, the calm sea glanced affectionately at me, and the sky winked glumly, agreeing that getting up this early was a mockery of the body* (Day 6<sup>th</sup>).

The presenteme 'sea' accumulates a very powerful symbolic potential, the object itself gains mythological character. The extracts, depicting sea, are open for interpretation. Yet, the meanings, which are generated, are always connected with promoting the values of the endless sea space. Scientific exploration of the Arctic seas, marine inhabitants is enveloped by romantic flair, and requires strong character. This fact makes the profession of the polar researcher very important and prestigious. Enchanting impact on the addressee of the diary with a view to forming value-based guidelines is reached with the help of the admirative and emotiogenic strategies. Tonality 'as a modus category together with evaluation, comprises emotionally-expressive field' (Matveeva, 1990: 18) and acts as the tactic implementing the main strategies. The range of tonality in the diary's entries with the key presenteme 'sea' is extremely versatile – from light lyrical tonality to disturbing uncertainty and suspense. The admirative strategy is presented by mostly expressive, elevated tonality. The emotiogenic strategy is implemented by means of unexpected choice of the discourse tonality. For example, playful, joking tonality: *Greetings from the stormy Barents Sea. As some participants say, it finally looks like itself, not cosplaying the Mediterranean. It worked well, it can be repeated* (Day 19<sup>th</sup>).

The authors (the subject of the discourse) make extensive use of emotionalization while conveying the meaning by means of different creative tools – language game, theatricalization of syntagmatic presentemes, puns. It is important to note that playful reinterpretation of reality is the leading model of construing the world of the expedition on the AFU diary's pages. For this reason, the situations, conveying a powerful value-based meaning protrude more saliently. These are the so-called axiogenic (generating axiological meanings) situations. The symbolic sign 'sea' is the immediate context for most situations of such kind. Expectedly, they support the value-based dominant of overcoming difficulties for the sake of science and social good, glorifying heroic deeds of courageous polar explorers of the past. These extracts represent historic references, containing

factual information in a very restrained and low-key tonality. The point is that the addressee is to infer the idea of heroic efforts made by the polar explorers of the past. Didactic tonality does not turn to instructive and imposing. Intertextual inclusions of tales, stories, and legends create a cultural-historical context, expanding the semiotic space of the AFU diary's text. The chronotope of the narrative goes beyond the borders of the present, giving a deeper axiological meaning to the geographical space of the expedition.

Axiogenic situations built around the symbolic dominant presenteme 'sea' generate the main axiological meanings of the AFU diary – it is an integral part of the ecosystem, it is a world in itself, which is to be explored, protected and embraced.

The next significant presentemes are 'explorer' and 'scientist'. There are 21 situations with the presenteme 'explorer' and 14 situations with the presenteme 'scientist'. Neutral by their meaning lexical units acquire a powerful meaningful charge in AFU diary's entries. Multidimensionality of what is happening in reality of the expedition finds reflection in the equally multidimensional concept of the 'scientist-explorer of the Arctic'. Semiotic understanding of the concept fixes axiological features as the discourse unfolds. The unfolding narrative opens the row of usual young people, not all of them are scientists, but each of them is doing research. It is important to note that youth as the dominant feature is especially emphasized in the media discourse of the university being consistent with the meta intention of the discourse subject – involving young people into science.

The strategy of attraction is based on such features of discourse as being spectacular and dramaturgic. Focusing on dramaturgic means of the discourse, it is relevant to refer to the notion of dramaturgical action in the theory of communication by Jürgen Habermas (Habermas, 1984). Actor (the university as the subject of the discourse in our case) presents himself or herself through the evaluation of the situation: "evaluative expressions or standards of value have justificatory force when they characterize a need in such a way that addressees can, in the framework of a common cultural heritage, recognize in these interpretations their own needs. This explains why attributes of style, aesthetic expressions, formal qualities in general, have such great weight in dramaturgic action" (Habermas, 1984: 150).

Playful reinterpretation of real actions and events is the key feature of the AFU diary and this playful transformation of the real world happens with the help of means whereby the image construing of the main addressee (students, applicants) occurs. The concept of a socially approved personality of a young scientist, explorer is formed in the addressee's conceptual system. Among the tactics of the strategy of attraction the language game is the most salient – inclusions of paremiological units, numerous puns, allusions to memes, products of mass culture (cartoons, songs of popular performers, TV programs). The strategy of attraction finds its realization through intertextual presentemes as well. Patchy, clip-like texts of the AFU diary are isomorphic to the clip thinking of the addressee and are determined by the eclecticism of registers. Therefore, sketches in a popular science register give way to metadiscourse passages reflecting the author's trail of thoughts, which are in their turn followed by lyrical description of the sea or sky state. The switch of tonality happens drastically – from serious to joking by allusion to some meme or the comic description of how young explorers cope with the rocking. Playful, joking tonality, which in general is characteristic of the discourse of the young, prevails. Playful tonality emphasizes rejection of moralizing, mocking pathetic exhortations. Here is an example. The AFU diary starts with the entry on the solemn ceremony of the AFU leaving for the first expedition in 2023. The text contains factual information, solemn elevated tonality is supported by the nomination chain: "unique project", "young researchers", "northern seas", "the development vector", "a real scientist", "a young scientist", "unique ecosystem", "team work", "sustainable development of the Arctic", "to overcome marine space". The very first entry of the AFU diary introduces the dominant axiological meanings, which will be promoted by means of the diary. It is obvious that the first opening text of the diary complies with the strict requirements of the official corporative text, promoting key ideologemes, which reflect the values of the university in close connection with the national agenda. The more contrasting against the backdrop of the solemn official text looks the next entry: *The solemn ceremony of the expedition's departure with words of farewell from representatives of the regional government, NArFU, Sevgidromet, songs about the Arctic and dancing polar bears took place until noon. Its culmination was the handing over of the expedition flag to its scientific leader Anna Trofimova. Anna Nikolaevna got so emotional that hardly killed those cheerful bears from the excess of feelings* (Day 1st).

Playful reinterpretation of real events marks accentuated evaluation and is the dominant model of the communicative behavior of the AFU diary's authors. New semiotics of the situation is created by optimistic tonality and carnivalization of what is happening around – the genuine interest in science is generated not by slogans and official speeches but by personal aspirations, though the genre, the situation, and the context may dictate the necessity to follow the protocol. Thus, we observe how the addressee is being formed – switching of tonality, register change serve as the sign for those who understand, for 'ours'. For example, *that was a pause of whining, back to science* (Day 5<sup>th</sup>).

By using playful, humoristic tonality as the main discursive tactic of the strategy of attraction, the meaning-generating function of communicative situations, construed by such tonality, grows. Here are a few examples of such situations' analysis by means of the semiotic model of jokes by V.I. Karasik. Within the framework of this model there are semantic, pragmatic and syntactic classes of comic texts. Semantic class presupposes incompatibility of the object and reality (nonsense). Thus, the seal becomes the frequent image in the diary, but not in the meaning of the real member of the mammal family. Lexicographic analysis helps conclude that in colloquial register of the Russian language this word is strongly associated with metaphorical understanding "clumsy, slow-moving person, lazy and sluggish". In the thesaurus by S.A. Kuznetsov, we read: 2. Colloquial. "About a clumsy, awkward, slow person" (Kuznecov, 2000: 1357). The Explanatory Dictionary of the Living Great Russian language by V.I. Dal` gives the definition: "slow-moving lazy person" (Dal, 1882: 412). The Explanatory Dictionary of the Russian language by S.I. Ozhegov and N.Yu. Shvedova provides the definition: "about an awkward person" (Ozhegov, Shvedova, 1999: 2055). Despite the negative connotations in the situations described in the diary a very positive meaning emerges – a cute, kind, a little bit clumsy, very familiar and dear, typically Arctic animal. Here are examples, illustrating the reaction of the expedition members to a sudden meeting with the animal: *At first it was a gray spot that could hardly be called animate, but we got closer and the spot moved. We couldn't have been more delighted. It was such a pity that the seal did not understand our intention and hurried to plunge into the water. And you know what I noticed – even the toughest men in our expedition melted like ice cream in the sun when they saw a seal. So, ladies, the way to men's hearts is through cute Arctic creatures!* (Day 12<sup>th</sup>).

The 'seal', this is how the author calls herself greeting the readers at the beginning of numerous entries before going on to describe the events of the day. Naturally, symbolic self-irony appeals to readers, and as every joke it shortens the communicative distance. Here are the examples:

1. *The chief seal of the Arctic Floating University is keeping the diary!* (Day 5<sup>th</sup>).
2. *Hello! This is me again! The most dexterous seal of the expedition team!* (Day 6<sup>th</sup>).
3. *And still it's me with you, the seal, though yesterday I felt at times like a deer, and sometimes like an arctic fox, or like an elephant-like lemming, when I tried to get through the willow thickets* (Day 9<sup>th</sup>).
4. *Today I am a very sad seal* (Day 11<sup>th</sup>).

The semantic type of a joke is not the main type. The pragmatic one is more characteristic of the diary's texts. The pragmatic type means irrelevance of the subject's behavior to the situation. Indeed, it is the double planning of the situations that attaches absurd-comic flair to what is happening and serves as the main means of humoristic tonality realization. Quite often the authors compare the expedition in the high north to a cruise in warm seas. It is both a means to make the text more spectacular and a humoristic device. Long discourse extracts presenting narrative reconstruction of the complex referential situations, for example, descriptions of disembarkations belong to the pragmatic type. The pragmatic jokes make these extracts more dynamic and cinematic. Another category of humoristic discourse extracts from the AFU diary built on the pragmatic model is axiogenic personal narratives. The addresser (the author herself) introduces associatively attracted information. It contains cultural references, personal memories, the details from previous expeditions – the appeal to the background of the past always attaches the mythological features to the events in current context. Mainly, these are humoristic personal stories built on the contrast of the extreme and routine situations.

The syntactic types of jokes are based on the incompatibility of genre and style arrangement of speech with real circumstances – playful change of the code, imitation of other people's speech, register downgrading. The syntactic type is the main type of jokes in the AFU diary. The means of this type realization constitute the dominant tonality of the text – playful, humoristic tonality.

Assuming that the informative function of the text remains the leading one as the AFU diary is to educate and enlighten its readers, inclusions of factual, scientific information make up the indisputable block in every day's entry. Yet, to keep the reader, to engage him or her in the rethinking of the Arctic within the scientific paradigm, the author has to resort to the syntactic type of constructing entertaining, spectacular narration. So, seriousness and difficulty of factual information are mitigated by register downgrading. Descriptions of physical phenomena, peculiarities of flora and fauna of the Arctic are saturated with the elements of youth slang; diminutives; colloquial expressions; unusual word formations; phonetic imagery (assonance, alliteration); emotionally-evaluative lexis, comprising personal reflections of the author (the metatext). Here are some examples:

1. *I have just learned that tornadoes and whirlwinds never happen on the territory of the Russian Federation. Nor do we have hurricanes in Russia, only strong winds. If the wind comes from the ground then it doesn't count!* (Day 3<sup>d</sup>).

2. *A gannet lives along the Gulf Stream, and in the Russian Arctic it appeared at the end of the XX<sup>th</sup> century. It is a distinct symptom of the "Atlantification" of the Arctic* (Day 5<sup>th</sup>).

3. *We dropped anchor near Kolgyev island. This island is a real enchanting place!* (Day 6<sup>th</sup>). (Kolgyev sounds very similar to Russian word meaning to enchant, to practice witchcraft).

4. *The rocking scared us heftily, so only four of us signed in for the concert* (Day 9<sup>th</sup>).

5. *I had an easy-peasy landing today, because I picked mosses and lichens. It was a terrific walk!* (Day 14<sup>th</sup>).

According to the presentation theory of discourse by A.V. Olyanich (Olyanich, 2004), in the text the incompatibility of the genre and style arrangement of the speech with the real situations is carried out with syntagmatic presentemes: *Novaya Zemlya (New Land) ...New? No, I've just washed it with "Laska" (reference to the well-known commercial). Oh, forgive me, they forgot to take away the keys to the punmaking room!* (Day 14<sup>th</sup>)

Syntagmatic presentemes and accentuated tonality (humoristic, playful, elevated) allow the author to stage the situations and engage the addressee into the constructed reality. The addressee receives a chance to experience another reality, which is hidden from him or her in a real life. The AFU diary generates a feeling of belonging to the described events.

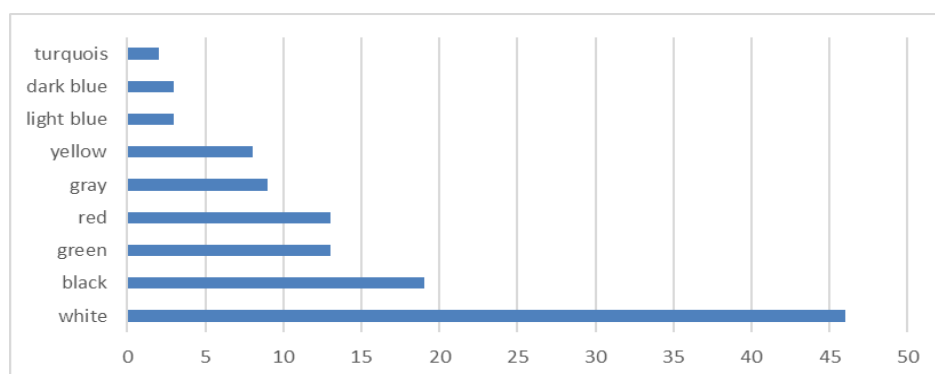
#### 4. Results

While scrutinizing the Arctic Floating University diary, we decided to carry out a short quantitative analysis to find out the frequency of some words and images or concepts. Firstly, we focused on colors. The Arctic is generally associated with the white color as the region is presumed to be covered with ice and snow. We highlighted a wide range of colors mentioned by the narrators while describing the surrounding world in the Arctic. Not surprisingly, the most frequently used adjective was white (Figure 1). Mostly, the white color was mentioned when the authors reported about polar bears (they are called white bears in Russian). For example, *"Polar bears do not avoid this island, and theoretically any snowdrift can suddenly get up and greet you"* (Day 9<sup>th</sup>). A rather rare atmospheric phenomenon "a white rainbow" is also present in the narration. For instance, *"The bright sun was shining through the fog — these are excellent conditions for creating a white rainbow"* (Day 5<sup>th</sup>). We didn't take into account hydronyms incorporating the white color such as the White Sea or the White Cape.

The second frequently used color in the text was black for depicting birds (albatross, loon, and sandpiper are named in the text), butterfly and fish: *"And since 2017, all ornithologists and zoologists who went on AFU cruise have had a dream to find another black-browed albatross and prove that it migrates from the Atlantic to the Arctic"* (Day 20<sup>th</sup>) or *"Have you ever thought why auks or penguins are black and white? Here's the answer: when it is in the water, it will be difficult for its prey to see a white belly and escape in time, and it is more difficult for predators from above to find a black back in a dark sea"* (Day 20<sup>th</sup>).

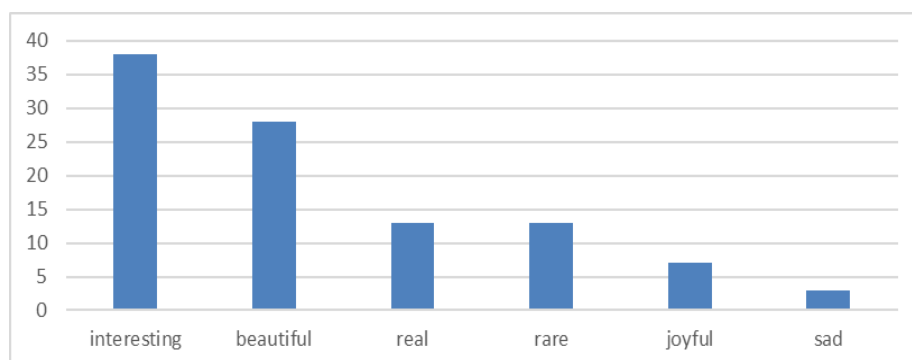
Figure 1 shows the number and frequency of colors mentioned in the diary and one sentence could list hues of several colors: *"The sea in the Ice Harbour was fantastically beautiful: deep blue, slightly greenish closer to the shore, turquoise ice floes were mirroring in it, merging in the reflection with the clouds"* (Day 17<sup>th</sup>). Thus, we conclude that although the white color is predominant in the Arctic landscape it does not exclude other colors depicting natural phenomena or personal perception.





**Fig. 1.** The color palette of the AFU cruise

As it was mentioned above the main role of any travelogue or travel notes is ascribed to the impressions from what the traveler observes and notices, that is why we analysed recurrent epithets chosen by the authors of the AFU diary to reflect their emotions throughout the cruise (Figure 2). The most frequent adjective utilized by the narrators was “interesting”, which emphasizes the intention of the addresser to involve the reader into the reconstruction of the expedition’s reality. We view this as the realization of the admirative strategy: “*Although we are already in the Barents Sea, I will tell you about very interesting and extremely rare weather phenomena that we saw during one day in the White Sea*” (Day 5<sup>th</sup>) or “*It was interesting to see the wreckage of a collapsed civilization, look at the destroyed buildings and reflect on how unpredictable human fate is after all!*” (Day 8<sup>th</sup>). The authors were delighted with landscapes, views, ice, glaciers, icebergs, ships, stones, people, interior, etc. “*We waved in the direction of the beautiful yacht “Eldorado”, which came to Arkhangelsk at night*” (Day 1<sup>st</sup>), “*It is incredibly delicious and it is impossible to refuse what you are offered, and it is always beautifully served, just like in a real restaurant*” (Day 2<sup>nd</sup>). But mostly “beautiful” was used to describe nature: “*Wow, what a beautiful sky!*” (Day 5<sup>th</sup>), “*And it seems that we have stumbled upon such a unique place where conditions contribute to the appearance of such beautiful meteorological phenomena*” (Day 5<sup>th</sup>), “*When there was even more ice, we ran out to take pictures of how beautifully it floated past us, or rather, we passed by it*” (Day 12<sup>th</sup>), and “*We are messing around with our problems there, and the glacier is so massive and beautiful*” (Day 14<sup>th</sup>). Although we encounter a sorrowful adjective “sad”, it is not connected with the surroundings but with the inner perception of the fact of celebrating a birthday away from home “*I thought that a birthday away from home and loved ones can be sad, so I began to torture Danya to see if he was sad*” (Day 14<sup>th</sup>). But this epithet is used only twice throughout the diary. So, the analysis proves that the perception of the viewers was rather admiring and enthusiastic.

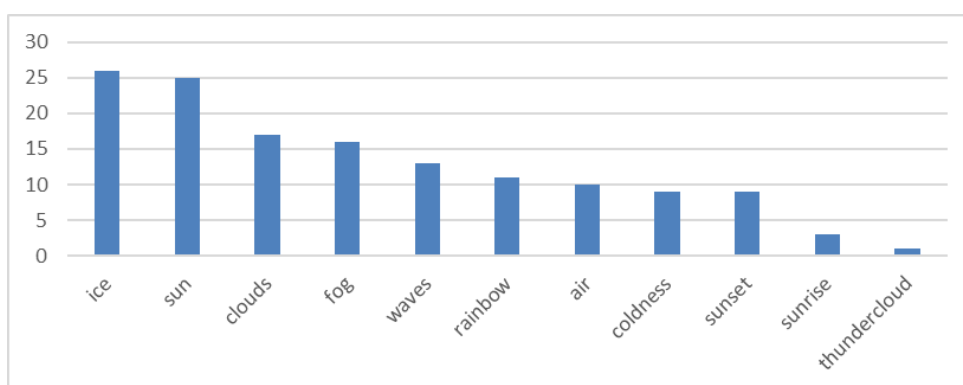


**Fig. 2.** Adjectives used by the diary’s authors to express their emotions

It was also interesting to realise that weather, atmospheric, physical, meteorological or other nature phenomena persistently attracted the narrators’ attention. Figure 3 demonstrates that ice and sun are almost equally present in the authors’ perception: “*The sun was already touching the horizon [...]*” (Day 5<sup>th</sup>), “*I look at my bright pink face and I cannot figure out whether I was so wonderfully tanned in the polar sun, or whether there was an overabundance of sea air and*

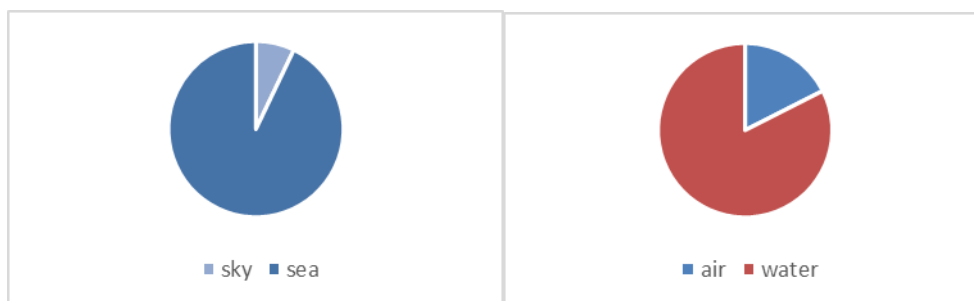
*complete delight of vessels*” (Day 15<sup>th</sup>), *“I asked, since the ice is getting smaller, if the bear can continue its evolution and move to a completely aquatic existence”* (Day 11<sup>th</sup>), or *“In general, the walk combined with the photo session with ice was extended for those who were properly dressed”* (Day 12<sup>th</sup>).

Another fact, which is worth noticing, concerns clouds and thunderclouds (Figure 3). The analysis shows that the cruise was occasionally accompanied by a variety of clouds (plumeous clouds, cumulus clouds, rolling clouds) but only once we encounter a thundercloud (*“I didn't know that tornadoes and whirlwind always start from the sky: from a thundercloud or a cloud”* (Day 3<sup>rd</sup>). Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com>) defines the cloud as a visible mass of particles of condensed vapor (such as water or ice) suspended in the atmosphere of a planet (such as the earth) or moon and the thundercloud as a large dark cloud that produces thunder and lightning during a storm. We dare conclude that the cloud in the narrators' perception is associated with something more serene and peaceful in comparison with the thundercloud. Thus, although the cruise was rather challenging, it was quite harmonious in the perception of the environment.



**Fig. 3.** Nature phenomena mentioned throughout the diary

We complete the quantitative analysis with the presenteme “sea” that is used to describe mood, performance, and atmosphere in the AFU team. Throughout the diary this presenteme is recurred to 65 times in comparison with 5 times when “sky” was mentioned. Figure 4 shows the ration of these two presenteme as well as correlation of rather similar presentemes “air” and “water”. We could conclude that the narrators got accustomed to the land as their natural environment that is why the sea constantly attracts their attention in contrast to their habitual setting: *“The transition between the sea and the sky is blurred, filled with haze or fog, and there is no border”* (Day 13<sup>th</sup>), *“This suggests that the sea throws us out, spits everything back out”* (Day 14<sup>th</sup>), *“It was quiet in the bay, and the Barents Sea there, beyond its border, continued to breathe, gaining strength to arrange further ride-ups on us”* (Day 17<sup>th</sup>).



**Fig. 4.** The ratio of the words *sky/sea* and *air/water* in the AFU diary

Meanwhile in their everyday life they observe the sky daily and it does not present any particular interest, although they notice its beauty: *“The calm sea looked out kindly, the sky winked gloomily, agreeing that getting up so early is a real mockery”* (Day 6<sup>th</sup>), *“You really need fresh air and not look at wobbly objects”* (Day 10<sup>th</sup>).

After scrutinizing the media text of the Arctic Floating University diary, we elaborated and carried out the questionnaire for two groups of bachelor students majoring in “International Affairs in the Arctic” and “The Arctic Region of Russia”. The aim was to find out how students whose education is tightly connected with the Arctic perceive the image of the Arctic conveyed by those who visited the Arctic in reality.

The first question was if students read the AFU diary on their own and if yes, what the motive for their reading was. The result shows that 30 % of respondents had not read the diary before they were asked about it. 70 % read the diary regularly but their motives were quite different. Some of them were interested to learn how contemporary Arctic expeditions differ from those of the past. Others were attracted by impressions, events, details described by the participants of the expedition. One student answered that his friend took part in the expedition, so reading the diary he followed his friend and got some information about the travel as the internet was not available all the time and friends could not communicate easily. Some respondents highlighted the interest to the routine life of a scientist in the Arctic and endeavor to see Arctic landscapes. One more answer stood apart – the respondent wanted to see the Arctic from a different angle.

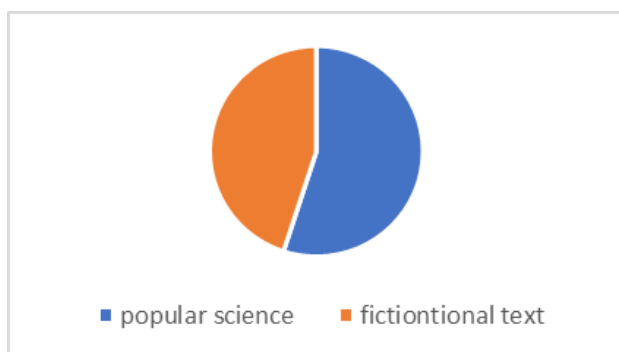
The students were asked if they felt involved and engaged while reading the diary. Most of the students (85 %) replied that they did and they shared their feeling: *when you read, pictures appear in your head; the descriptions are so vivid that you unconsciously become a participant of the expedition; stories and comments by the participants of the expedition make their image familiar and understandable; I am keen on the North and expeditions*. Suchlike answers definitely demonstrate that the main communicative strategies – the emotogenic and admirative strategies, and the strategy of attraction – exploited by the author, turned out quite effective. One response gave a detailed explanation: *you feel this involvement because the text contains three indispensable elements: narration, direct speech, and illustrations*. One more student specified that *although you feel involvement you understand how the Arctic is unfamiliar and distant from us*. Three students who did not feel involvement explained it by the presence of some terms that they did not understand, realising that the Arctic is unreachable for common people, and the text itself seemed to be graphomania.

The third question was about associations that respondents got while reading the diary. It is noteworthy that the students who had not read the diary before were asked to read it and they did it. After analysing the questionnaire’s findings, we found out that some answers of those students who were asked to read the diary had a bit negative hue. As for the associations listed by the respondents they vary from *traveling, adventures, risk to freedom, eternity, emptiness, danger, incredible beauty, craggy sea shore, sea-gulls, ice floe, and to Russian soul; lands unknown to people, and letters to the relatives on the mainland*. Answering this question, the respondents highlighted that *science can be cheerful and amusing in the context of interaction with others; research expeditions can be not only serious and challenging but interesting and useful for reaching like-minded people; the Arctic is an area that is worth preserving and studying, and people who do that make this area really warm*. Three students added that while reading they had associations with *some literary works describing nature and feelings connected with it; a contemporary trend of writing a travel-blog, and even unsuccessful imitation of the hunter's notes*. One student noted that he did not have any association while reading although he gave rather detailed answers to other questions. Thus, the tactics, employed by the author – tonality switches with dominant humoristic tonality, playful reinterpretation of the events, language game, theatricalization of syntagmatic presentemes, puns – all come as fruitful tactics of forming positively charged associations with the Arctic.

The next question was formulated as “What attracted your attention while reading?”. We did not limit answers of our respondents and did not give any direction. The responses fall in three groups. One group emphasised the narrative style focusing on *the artistic style of the narrative; dialogues; unusual and entertaining style of writing, and an artistic narrative highlighting vivid and memorable moments*. Another group concentrated on authors’ engagement in the process or writing: *frankness and sincerity of the authors, their openness; the sincere desire of the authors to convey the highlights of the journey and attract the audience not in dry scientific language, but by adapting to the reader, explaining to him/her that the people who took part in the expedition are the same as the reader*. The last group was attracted by *facts about the inhabitants of the Arctic territories and the natural features of the region, about the monitoring of marine waste; historical information, for example, about dogs for F. Nansen’s expedition; detailed*

*meteorological, biological information and historical background, and description of various animals; detailed descriptions.* However, one respondent was *irritated by designation of all the regalia of the professors and scientists.*

In the fifth question, we asked the respondents to define the style of the narration – popular science text or a fictional text. The results show (Figure 5) that most of the students (11 out of 20) conceived the diary as a fictional text though the diary is abundant in professional terminology and descriptions of physical, meteorological and other phenomena. This is definitely a sign that the media genre of the expedition diary is effective in facilitating students' perception of a complicated scientific narration.

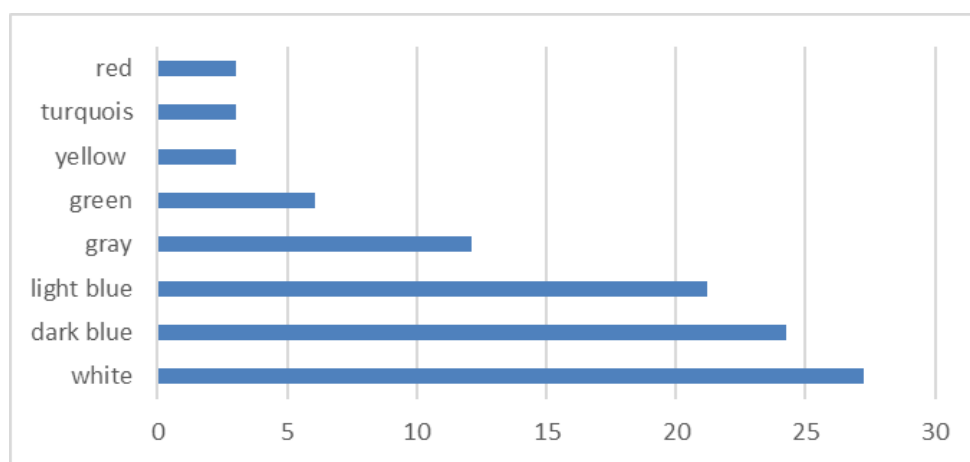


**Fig. 5.** The narrative style of the AFU diary perceived by the respondents

We also requested the students to define what images appeared most often in the diary texts. The students were supposed to evaluate their impressions rather than to calculate those images. The results break down in four clusters. The least numerous is where the respondents did not notice any repetitive images. The next two groups are almost equal in the number. One of them contains the images of nature: *images of nature and weather; Arctic conditions; images of frozen land; image of the sea, ocean, cold and emptiness, and images of animals, ice, and water.* Another group incorporates images of the team: *images of hardworking, harsh freight forwarders, images of assistant girls; images of teamwork; images of enthusiastic, brave, cheerful and active guys.* In addition, the final group focuses attention on scientific research and exploration: *the complexity of the expedition; Arctic research; images of scientific devices; images of the discoverers; images of the expanses of the Arctic and its researchers; the uniqueness of the route.*

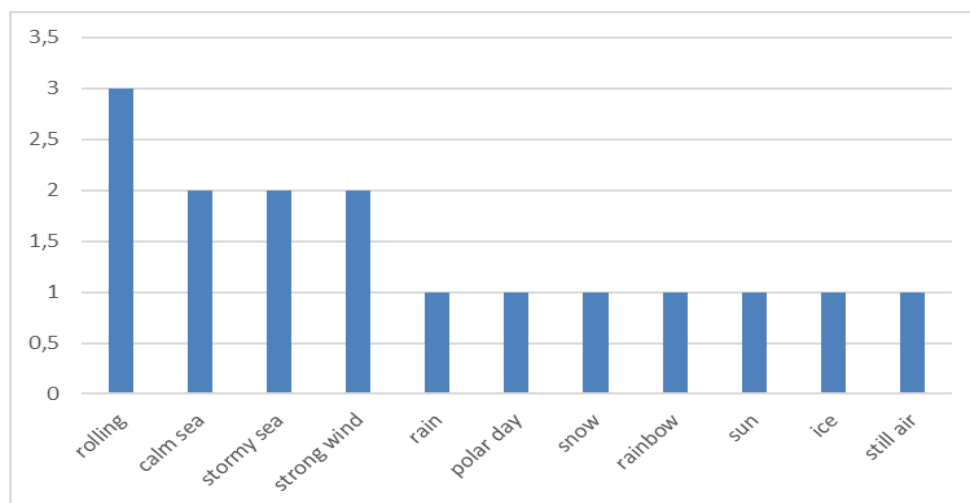
Assuming that the quantitative analysis demonstrated that the prevailing color in the AFU diary was white followed by black, the color perception of the students gained our interest (Figure 6). The most noticed color among the respondents was white which coincides with the outcomes of the diary analysis. However, two moments should be mentioned. The first is that the readers of the diary did not notice black at all or they did not pay attention to it. The second is that dark blue and light blue ranking low in the analysis took leading places in readers' perception. We dare suppose that it could be explained by numerous mentions of the sea and the sky in the diary. Although the color was not designated, students completed their impressions with colors associated with the sea and the sky.

As for the sea, its perception by the students falls down into several images with gradation. The first image is a calm, smooth, and endless sea. Then the sea transforms into *calm but uncertain concealing some kind of mysticism or calm and deceptive waters, ready to change at any moment.* Other students perceive the sea as rough and at the same time lulling, vast and keeping secrets at the bottom; unstable, changeable and fickle, and choppy sea in the AFU diary. For most respondents the sea seems to be *powerful, great, wayward; atmospheric, demanding serious attitude element; something great, exciting, distant, vast but incredibly beautiful.* There are some poetic images of the sea: *the Arctic seas are cold and harsh but if there are like-minded people and a specific task, then the sea can become a pleasant place and not so cruel; and something that should be respected and over what we have no control.* To be objective, we should mention that only one person remained indifferent to the description of the sea in the diary and answered that he did not notice any particular image of the sea.



**Fig. 6.** The color palette of the AFU cruise perceived by the respondents

During the analysis of the AFU diary, we paid attention to weather, atmospheric, physical, meteorological or other nature phenomena and found out that the most frequently mentioned phenomena were ice, the sun, and clouds. In the respondents' answers ice and the sun were mentioned a couple of times but clouds were not cited at all. The students highlighted rolling that was quite common, calm sea and stormy sea, and strong wind (Figure 7). One student wrote about a rainbow but none of them mentioned sunrise or sunset, thunderclouds or fog.



**Fig. 7.** Nature phenomena perceived by the respondents

We stated in the first part of the research that the tonality of the diary can be characterised as optimistic, playful, and humorous. The majority of the respondents defined the tonality as *active and positive; optimistic and enthusiastic; friendly and amiable*. Some students noticed that the tonality changed depending on weather, landscapes around, and feelings of the narrator. Yet again, one student considered the tonality as tedious.

The final question was about the diary authors' address to the readers. We would define this address as informal, casual, and friendly. The respondents also characterised it as polite and friendly, amiable and kind. The students thought that the authors treated them *as relatives who stayed far away, or as good acquaintances or even friends*. Some of the respondents specified that: *the authors want to attract the audience and popularize the Arctic Floating University; incite readers to travel more; share their emotions and impressions*. Two students felt that the audience was neglected by the authors.

Summing up, we can conclude that almost all the aims, modalities and impacts intended by the authors reached the audience though there is a small number of the respondents, namely, two of them, who were reluctant to discuss the diary and perceived it in quite a negative way.

## 5. Conclusion

The subject of the analysis in the article is the Arctic Floating University diary, which is a journalistic genre incorporated into the media discourse of the university site. The authors explored the diary's texts from the angle of semiotic reflection of the scientific expedition's reality and promotion of the meaningful for the discourse subject values.

1. The media text of the analyzed genre being the product of the genre transformation possesses a significant impact potential on the addressee.

2. The impact and realization of the addresser's intentions – to inform, to form value-charged meanings, to motivate – are implemented by the communicative strategy of attraction, admirative strategy, and emotiogenic communicative strategy. The reader of the AFU diary becomes a witness and a co-participant. The tripartite goal (to inform, to influence, and to entertain) is achieved.

3. The main tactic is the choice of the discourse tonality. The general optimistic tonality, playful reflection of the reality structure and construct the addressee. The targeted addressee is a student, an applicant, a young researcher. The major part of the text is created in a humoristic tonality. According to the semiotic model of jokes, the prevailing types of jokes are syntactic and pragmatic.

4. The meaningful indicators of value-charged dominants are lexico-semantic presentemes. Syntagmatic and intertextual presentemes are also employed to realize main strategies of the diary's texts. The key value-charged dominants promoted by the AFU diary are – 'We ought to preserve and explore the Arctic', 'doing science is prestigious and interesting', 'a researcher is a socially very much in demand occupation', 'the Arctic is our homeland'; 'we are to study the history and culture of our homeland'.

5. The analysis of the students' perception of the AFU's diary allows us to conclude that the media genre of the expedition diary is an effective vehicle of promoting key values of the University. The dominants of the axiological sphere of the NArFU's discourse (Arctic exploration and protection and students' involvement into the Arctic research) find immediate response in the readers. The genre of the expedition diary has profound functional potential and harmoniously fits in the University discourse as the media texts created in this genre help implement the addresser's intentions to a high extent.

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Published in the USA  
Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)  
Issued since 2005.  
ISSN 1994-4160  
E-ISSN 1994-4195  
2024. 20(2): 195-205

DOI: 10.13187/me.2024.2.195

<https://me.cherkasgu.press>



## The Sociocultural Context and the Main Developing Stages of Family Education in Russian Feature Films

Irina Chelysheva <sup>a,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Rostov State University of Economics, Russian Federation

### Abstract

Family issues have always been an important topic in Russian feature films. Films about family and family education, challenges of parent-child relationships are essential for media education of the younger generation. The educational potential of feature films is that they position family values and foundations, help build models of intra-family interaction, teach respect for the older generation, help strengthen intergenerational ties and preserve the best traditional values.

This article presents the sociocultural context of the image of family and family education based on Russian feature films. The author carried out an interdisciplinary analysis of the main approaches, concepts and family models presented in pedagogical, psychological, cultural, and sociological studies.

The main research methods are theoretical analysis and synthesis; generalization and classification, content analysis, abstraction and specification, and generalization. Using these methods, the study identifies the main transformation processes and changes characteristic of the presentation of family issues in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods, associated with the key priorities of state family policy, ideology, pedagogical views and psychological ideas. Based on the analysis, the main stages of transformational processes of reflecting images of family and family education in Russian feature cinema are identified from the point of view of the main conceptual approaches, directions, goals, and objectives of media education.

**Keywords:** family, family upbringing, media, media text, media culture, media education, feature films.

### 1. Introduction

Family issues have always been and remain one of the central themes in both Soviet and Russian feature films of various genres. The modern information society dictates new ideas about the world, man's place in it, living conditions, principles of coexistence in society and in the family. Family images in media culture including cinema media texts are also changing. Feature films, like the entire system of media culture as a whole, cannot be considered outside of interaction with "the political and cultural contexts. The reflection of the modern Russian information society is associated primarily with changes in the traditional cultural mentality, and is a kind of reaction to technical progress and technological innovation, the emergence of various models of information and communication channels. Modern media culture has ceased to be an isolated sphere, and today it is one of the most sensitive indicators, actively responding to various kinds of social, political, economic and cultural transformations (Gálik, Gáliková Tolnaiová, 2022; Gáliková Tolnaiová, Gálik, 2020; Gáliková Tolnaiová, Gálik, 2022; Kashkina, 2012). These transformations

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\* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: [ivchelysheva@yandex.ru](mailto:ivchelysheva@yandex.ru) (I. Chelysheva)



invariably influenced the images of the family and ideas about family relationships in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods.

Family images and family interaction patterns presented on the Russian film screen in different years have undergone significant transformations according to ideological, social, and worldview public ideas. In this article we will make an attempt to present the main developing stages of family education in Russian feature films (1920–2020) in the sociocultural context.

## 2. Materials and methods

The main material for our research is pedagogical, cultural, sociological, and psychological approaches to the study of the sociocultural context of the theme of family and family education in presented in Russian feature films (1920–2022) in terms of goals, objectives, key concepts and models of media education.

The following methods were used during the study: theoretical analysis and synthesis; generalization and classification, content analysis, abstraction and specification, and generalization.

## 3. Discussion

Family issues and family education are of constant relevance in Russian and foreign research.

As for some foreign scholars, who analysed Soviet and Russian audiovisual media texts about families, they fail to trace the evolution and transformation of the family image and family education in cinema (Albada, 2000; Bitney, 2022; Cheung et al., 2022; Jacoby, 2011). Although, some studies presented by foreign scientists look into the following aspects of family images presented in mass media: the family image in comedies (Douglas, Olson, 1995); youth images in cinema and television (Potter, 2022); fatherhood and masculinity in post-war Hollywood films (Bruzzi, 2005); parenting culture, adolescence, and family film in the United States (Antunes, 2017); the screen image of adulthood based on the family life cycle (Fulmer, 2017); portrayals of couples and families in Disney animated films (Tanner et al., 2003); depictions of intergenerational families in Disney animated films (Zurcher et al., 2018); analysis of the diaspora family in contemporary European cinema (Lloyd, 2014); family images in post-war British amateur films (Kerry, 2016). R. Shand also explored the structure of the post-war British family in amateur films (Shand, 2015). B. Kümmerling-Meibauer examined new perspectives for children's film studies (Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2013). E. Levy studied thoroughly the representation of family in modern mainstream American cinema and the American dream of family in cinema (Levy, 1991).

Various aspects of the sociocultural context and the periodization of the main developing stages of family and family education are presented in Russian scientific literature (Ekhayeva, 2021; Grankin, 2003; Naumov, 2004; Sannikova, Korobkova, 2016).

For instance, historical and methodological approaches to the educational potential of the family are analysed in the study carried out by A.I. Sannikova and V.V. Korobkova (Sannikova, Korobkova, 2016). The authors, describing the characteristics of the Soviet period, where the main priorities were public interests, adherence to the ideas of collectivism, and communist morality, note a close relationship between the subject-object orientation in the guiding role of the school and identify several major methodological approaches to the pedagogical guidance of family education:

- the cognitive-informative approach was dominant and promoted the ideas of family education in the spirit of state policy and its priorities and was to “equip parents with a system of psychological and pedagogical knowledge in order to apply them in their life practice” (Sannikova, Korobkova, 2016: 58);

- a system-integrated approach assumed the development of an interaction system between education and family upbringing with the active inclusion of “parents in joint socio-cultural activities. At the same time, the school is more focused on solving educational problems regarding the child, rather than on pedagogical support for the family. The family is considered as an object, as a static component included in the educational system of the school, or as an educational space created and controlled by the school” (Sannikova, Korobkova, 2016: 58);

- from the point of view of the socio-oriented approach, education in the family, as well as in school, is considered in inextricable connection with the sociocultural space and the influence of the environment that shapes the personality. At the same time, “the multi-subjectivity of the educational space, the synergistic nature of the interaction between family and society, which

determines the dynamism of the educational potential of the family,” are recognized (Sannikova, Korobkova, 2016: 59).

Numerous studies carried out in different years of the Soviet period, both pedagogical and psychological concepts, dedicated to the interaction between family and school in the Soviet period were widely reflected in educational work with parents, published in brochures for the parent society, and discussed at parent training sessions where families were provided with assistance in matters of family education.

In the Soviet educational system, the inextricable connection between family and school education was considered as an crucial factor in raising a harmoniously developed child’s personality, and it was “during this period that a scientific substantive basis was laid for the development of the cognitive component of the pedagogical competence of parents, revealing various issues of supporting the child in the family and the substantive foundations of opportunities modelling an open educational space focused on the development of the educational potential of the family” (Sannikova, Korobkova, 2016: 59).

In the post-Soviet period, which was characterized by fundamental changes in ideology, politics, economics and sociocultural sphere, the relations between school and family underwent significant transformations. They were associated, first of all, with the changes in the educational policy, the need to identify the value priorities of modern society which consisted in supporting the institution of the family and preserving the best family traditions. At the present stage, “developing the educational potential of the family is considered in modern research in the context of recognizing the partnership between the family and educational institutions, the subjectivity of the family, its ability to self-actualize and develop its internal resources” (Sannikova, Korobkova, 2016: 59).

A retrospective analysis of the relationship between family and education is considered by R.M. Ekhayeva who highlights the Soviet and post-Soviet stages of this theme and notes that “the Soviet period is characterized by increased attention to the family and its role in raising children. Preschool institutions and schools paid a lot of attention to parents: the conditions created in the family for children were monitored, the fulfilment of parents’ responsibilities for raising children was checked (feedback in the school student’s record book), parents were required to attend lectures on raising children. The ideological line of the CPSU was obvious, and the school interacted with parents as a representative of the party and the people. Russia’s transition to new economic and social relations influenced the relationship between family and school: there was a transition from control and consulting relationships to relationships of interaction and cooperation. However, in many ways, the interaction in the triad “teacher – student – parent” remains formal, and the pedagogical community is looking for methods, forms and means of transition from the formal level to the practical one” (Ekhayeva, 2021: 316).

It is worth mentioning, that “a family is influenced by the economic, social, and political spheres where society, represented by the state, legally regulates the relations within the family. Representing the centre for keeping traditions, moral and religious values, a family, as a unit of society, is responsible for the socialization and inculturation of the individual” (Topchiev, Kholova, 2020). Numerous factors influencing the transformation of the family institution provoke the continued interest in this topic in a wide field of social sciences and humanities. Various images of family and family education are reflected in fiction, music, painting, and cinema.

An interdisciplinary approach to the theme of family and family education in Russian feature films (1920–2020) predetermined our interest in the context of periodization and identifying the main developing stages based on scientific research in pedagogy (including media education), psychology, cultural studies, and sociology.

#### 4. Results

The transformation of the family image reflected in feature films of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods was researched by many Russian scholars (Chelysheva, 2016, 2022; Fedorov, Chelysheva, 2002; Kosinova, Solgi, 2022; Shestakova, 2006; Razlogov, 2019; Zhabsky, Tarasov, 2019). As evidenced by the content analysis of feature films of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods, the following factors can be identified among the main reasons for transformation processes: ideological and sociocultural changes that in one way or another left their mark on the representation of family images in Russian feature films. State family policy was also formed in close connection with ideology at different stages of social development.

Over the course of the historical development of society, ideas about family roles and models of family interaction have changed, the dominant attitudes of the younger generation to the family have shifted, which have been reflected in feature films of different years. Accordingly, both value priorities and axiological ideas about screen characters in films changed. In this regard, we can agree with the opinion of M.I. Kosinova and T. Solgi that “the screen hero accumulates the values of the era, through which he becomes a kind of sign of the times. It is the quintessence of public attitudes, desires, fears, as well as traumatic events on a national scale. An era gives rise to a screen hero, and he, in turn, becomes its axiological manifestation and document of time” (Kosinova, Solgi, 2022: 221).

The increasingly close relationship between the sphere of culture and social transformations in modern society has had a significant impact on media culture, including feature films, and influenced the approaches to media education as an interdisciplinary phenomenon. According to K.E. Razlogov, “new phenomena in pedagogical practice and media education in general predetermined the integration of cultural studies and media theory, philosophy and sociology of culture, as well as pedagogy, political science (in particular cultural policy and political economy), ethnology, social and cultural anthropology, art history (especially film studies) and religious studies” (Razlogov, 2019: 145).

At the present stage, it has become obvious that all areas of social development should be aimed at strengthening the traditions that are laid down in the family and are reflected in the family education of the younger generation. Therefore, reliance on pedagogical approaches related to the theories of family education (Grankin, 2003; Noskova, 2021; Novikova, Pristupa, 2021; Selezneva, 2022) is essential. As evidenced by the analysis of the scientific sources, the most comprehensive systematic analysis of the major developing stages of pedagogical approaches to family education, based on key theoretical concepts of Russian pedagogical thought, is presented in the dissertation research carried out by A.Y. Grankin (Grankin, 2003). The author has identified several main developing stages of pedagogical thought in family education in Russia during the Soviet period.

The first stage of the Soviet period (1917–1931) is considered as a period of active development of basic approaches to family education. It was during these years that the foundation was laid for ideas about the leading social role of education and family issues, where “raising children in the family was a purposeful activity of parents to shape the personality of the child – a future member of a socialist society, ready for work, conscious life” (Grankin, 2003: 12). Collective education became a priority ensuring the full development of the child, including moral ideals, work skills, consciousness, independence, and determination.

The next stage (1931–1945) fell on the years of emerging Soviet theoretical approaches to family education. This stage was based on the concepts of collective education, taking into account the age characteristics of children, promoting moral principles in the family, the systematic and purposeful nature of education. The key positions of family education at this stage were “disclosure of the ideal and goal of family education (comprehensive personal development achieved due to combined means of mental, aesthetic, moral, labour education and polytechnic training)” (Grankin, 2003: 13).

The third stage in developing family education concepts of the Soviet period (1946–1964) was determined by anthropological-humanistic pedagogy where family education assumes a leading role in forming a full-fledged personality, ready to live in society in accordance with the generally accepted moral and social norms. The anthropological-humanistic theory of family education (1965–1991) is characterized by a turn towards the harmoniously developed personality of the child, the humanization of the entire education aimed at developing interests and capabilities of the younger generation, when the main principle of relationships in the family is “education in the spirit of universal human values, respect for the child’s personality, their freedom, fostering high ideals of goodness, love, duty, conscience, mutual assistance, and cooperation; humane relations based on the spiritual community of parents and children” (Grankin, 2003: 14). Therefore, the main objectives of the post-Soviet pedagogical views on family education included: “preserving the spiritual and moral traditions of family education; activation of family life as a means of improving its educational function; participation of every citizen in education of children in unity and relationship with the family, etc.” (Grankin, 2003: 39). Thus, these tasks have not lost their relevance at the present time either. The main priorities of preserving and strengthening the family

and the best traditions of family education, respect for the value of family still remain vital in the modern socio-cultural situation.

As the analysis showed, psychological approaches to family and family relationships were also ambiguous at different stages of the development of our country. A historical and psychological analysis of these stages is presented in the study by A.V. Litvinova (Litvinova, 2020). For example, the period of the first years of Soviet power (1917–1936) is defined as the stage of a new psychological approach to the family model, where “changes in the psychological structure of the Soviet family determined the views of the founders of communist ideology” (Litvinova, 2020: 17). New ideological priorities had a significant impact on the psychology of family relationships which were practically levelled out in favour of the priorities of social consciousness.

The next stage of family psychology (1936–1985) was negatively influenced by the years of mass repression when “independent people, capable of free choice and responsibility” passed away (Litvinova, 2020: 17). Consequently, this could not but have psychological consequences. In addition, during this period, ideas about femininity were practically eliminated and replaced by ideas about complete equality of the sexes to fulfil the tasks of industrialization, the production sector, and work in agriculture.

In the years of post-war devastation, the focus on labour productivity and the need to solve the problems of rebuilding the country led to a weakening of intergenerational ties, “there is a massive emergence of structurally destroyed families, orphans, which deepens the developmental disorders of male and female characters, which are the result of centuries-old evolution and historical interaction. Direct emotional contact in interactions with children is disrupted. Primary attachments and the resulting identification with parents are destroyed, as well as socialization in a family based on the parents’ example” (Litvinova, 2020: 19).

Later, during the years of developed socialism, the psychological accents of family interaction patterns changed: “the relationships of spouses, children and parents are transferred from economic to moral, psychological and aesthetic. In this situation, an aggravation of the contradiction between the desired and the actual is manifested. It was proclaimed as desirable in the country that the spiritual world of Soviet people at this stage was characterized by comradeship, paternal and maternal concerns, and maintaining contact with the life of the entire Soviet people. The reality was the deformation of family values, the “fall” of the role of the father (the Soviet Union was considered a country of “lost men”), an increase in divorces, single-parent families, which aggravate the problems of raising children” (Litvinova, 2020: 22).

The post-Soviet period is characterized by A.V. Litvinova as a stage of a radical revision of attitudes towards the family, the revival of family based on a value-based attitude towards the family as the foundation of mutual support. Thus, “there are hopes for the return of property rights to the family and its acquisition of sovereignty in the sources of existence, the social resuscitation of the historically developed symbolic habitat and way of life destroyed during the Soviet period, public recognition of the priority of the family in the upbringing and socio-cultural adaptation of younger generations” (Litvinova, 2020: 24).

When identifying the sociocultural context of family issues and highlighting the key stages of the family image in Russian cinema from the point of view of media education, we should take into account the sociocultural determination of feature film production in Russia. In I.V. Shestakova’s dissertation research, the main stages of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods (in our study we limit ourselves to 1920–2020) are presented as follows.

In the 1920s, accompanied by the NEP market model of film production in Russia, “a union spontaneously formed between market production and state control. Within the framework of the market model of the film process, an economic and political compromise was observed: the government yielded to commercial priorities in politics and ideology” (Shestakova, 2006: 13).

In the 1930s – 1950s, the leading one was the “authoritarian-bureaucratic model of the film process,” when all films were created within the strict framework of the ruling ideology, and the “film distribution itself, which monopolized film services to the population and worked as a well-oiled mechanism, ensured an inextricable, automatic connection between the production of domestic films and their film exhibition, during which the sociocultural significance of the created films was revealed” (Shestakova, 2006: 14).

The next stage in the development of film production (1950–1960) was associated with the period of the political “thaw”, when “the aesthetic, moral-psychological and educational-cognitive functions of cinema began to dominate” (Shestakova, 2006: 16).

The period of the 1970s – 1980s is considered by the author in the context of the “stagnation” era, when “the burden of ideological dictate, requiring the creation of the so-called “correct” films, formed very specific mechanisms of film production. By influencing the viewer through the direct demonstration of certain patterns of the characters’ behaviour in the films, cinema performed an ideological function” (Shestakova, 2006: 18).

The period of the 1980s – 1990s (the stage of political, ideological “perestroika” and the active building of a market economy) is characterized by I.V. Shestakova as follows: “as the totalitarian one-party system of political power in the country collapsed, those tasks, for which Soviet cinematography was created, ceased to operate. On the other hand, the factor that had the strongest destructive influence on the development of the film industry disappeared. In these conditions, great opportunities opened up for the directors of the cinematography to improve its management system” (Shestakova, 2006: 20).

Representing the post-perestroika years (corresponding to the current developing stage of film production), the author puts forward the main priorities for Russian cinema which are still relevant today and set the task of strengthening “in Russian cinema the traditions of domestic cinema, preserving Russian film as a phenomenon of national culture” (Shestakova, 2006: 25).

Generalization and systematization of the studied research in sociocultural dynamics, the analysis of Russian feature films focused on family and family education (1920–2022), as well as an appeal to the main approaches in the context of media education in the USSR and in Russia based on leading Russian research findings (Chelysheva, 2013; Chelysheva, 2016; Chelysheva, 2023; Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2016, 2024; Fedorov et al., 2014; Fedorov, 2015; Mezentsev, 2021; Mikhaleva, Lozovitskaya, 2024; Ogorodnikova, 2015; Pshenitsyna, 2023; Rabzhaeva, 2004; Razlogov, 2019; Zhabsky, Tarasov, 2019) allowed us to identify the key transformation stages of family and family education in Russian feature films from the point of view of the main conceptual approaches, goals, and objectives of media education.

1. The emergence of ideas about the new family in Soviet cinema (1920–1934). This period was characterized by a new look at the family presented on the screen. In accordance with the Marxist theoretical approach to media education, the tasks of propaganda, agitation, revolutionary struggle and a new type of family aimed at building a socialist society, came to the fore. The rejection of the old, patriarchal family foundations in favour of public education with the leading role of the state presents new family images and principles of family education, where there was no room for compromise in favour of the old views. Family well-being and a happy childhood were considered in feature films of this period in inextricable connection with, first of all, public interests, collectivism and revolutionary ideology.

In media education of this period, a key role belonged to the educational and developmental role of cinema, which became a mouthpiece and conductor of new ideals, including family values.

2. Strengthening the status of the Soviet family and moral ideas in family education during the years of “Stalinist” transformations” (1935–1954). At that stage, Russian feature films contributed to strengthening the Soviet family institution and building an ideal image of family relationships, where both adults and children were included in social and production activities. In accordance with these tasks, family images were presented. From a very early age, children were brought up in a team building spirit: they became participants in social and industrial activities, technical creativity, demonstrated independence and determination. Also, the educational and ideological tasks of media education related to developing the younger generation’s correct ideas about family behaviour patterns, where parents are actively and consciously involved in labour activities and carrying out public assignments, came to the fore.

The educational and developmental role of cinema was seen at that stage in promoting clear goals for the audience related to the Soviet family which was supposed to become a role model for the mass audience. The theme of a happy childhood, actively promoted in Soviet society, was also reflected in feature films about family.

Strengthening ideological control over all spheres of Soviet life had an important impact on the image of family education presented in films. Accordingly, in media education, film studies, which took place in clubs and electives, and film lectures were subject to strict regulation and control. Along with Marxist approaches to media education, a key role was increasingly played by the practical approach associated with amateur filmmaking. Moreover, little attention was paid to the artistic and aesthetic components of amateur films during that period, and the main emphasis in media education was on studying the technical capabilities of cinema.

3. The image of family and family education during the revival of Russian media education on the Soviet screen (1955–1968). In that period, the issues of liberalization and democratization, addressing the individual, their artistic moral development, and the inner world came to the fore. The stage was represented by a significant number of films focused on family education. Unlike the previous periods of development, the mass audience met with different types of families in cinema which were not always ideal and worthy of emulation. However, one of the central themes of feature films – the theme of a happy childhood – continued to dominate on the Russian screen and was reflected in the vast majority of family-themed films.

Along with the leading concepts of media education (Marxist and practical), at that stage, the aesthetic theory began to develop in media education and predetermined the central goal of film education in those years. Gradually, the artistic and aesthetic development of personality based on the material of feature films became major in media education.

This theoretical approach gave impetus to various forms of film education. Thus, during that period, film electives, school and student film clubs began to actively open, film circles appeared. Discussion of feature films, including those on the topic of family life, became the best practice of film education in those years.

Although the dominant role of upbringing and education was assigned to school, at that stage there was a rapprochement and cooperation between the teaching and parent communities. The trend made it possible to involve families of children and adolescents in media education. For example, film clubs for parents appeared where films focused on family education were discussed and the most pressing challenges of parent-child relationships were debated.

4. Family and family education in the cinema of the “stagnation” era (the 1970s–1980s).

That stage was characterized by the active interest of the mass audience in feature films, and was quite complex and contradictory. That was due, on the one hand, to powerful state support for the release of feature films, and on the other hand, to the approaching crisis in society, which could not but have an impact on all spheres of the country’s cultural life including Soviet cinema. In addition, at that stage there was a strengthening of state control over the content of feature films which should have been fully consistent with public ideology.

The ideological and artistic component of feature films about family education came to the fore, which, as in previous periods, positioned the theme of a happy childhood for Soviet children. Life in a complete and friendly family where each person had strong prospects and confidence in the future – the ideal image that became one of the important guidelines for the wide screening of the film in cinemas across the country.

The educational role of films about families was seen in raising young builders of communism – principled towards enemies, brave, decisive, and hardworking. At the same time, the increased attention of the state to strengthening the institution of family served as an important factor in the increase in the number of Russian films on this topic. Their educational significance lay in promoting the model of a strong family, caring for children and their comprehensive development, and fostering communist morality and morality.

During the period, various forms of media education based on cinema continued to intensively develop: film clubs, school electives, a network of lecture halls at cinemas. The family theme, based on feature films, began to be actively discussed at parent meetings and at teachers’ meetings aimed at educating schoolchildren’s parents. By the beginning of the 1980s, when the elective “Ethics and Psychology of Family Life” was introduced in schools, films about families became the subject of discussion in the classroom.

5. The image of family and family education in films of the “perestroika” era (1985–2000). This period was associated with serious financial difficulties that affected all spheres of our society, including Russian film production. The rejection of the ideological principles of socialism and the country’s transition to a “market economy”, the fall of the “Iron Curtain”, the growing crime rate, the levelling of moral ideas and traditions, the increasingly strong influence of Western mass culture – all these processes became the trigger for the search for new guidelines and values in post-Soviet society.

At the stage of serious social, economic, and political transformations, the topic of family and family education became one of the most pressing on the Russian screen. The family that found itself in a difficult situation of changes in all spheres of life – financial difficulties, stratification of society along financial lines, violence and cruelty in the family – these and other hardships were raised in feature films of that difficult time. The loss of the previous educational functions which

were dominant in films of the Soviet period led the audience to the need to make independent decisions and choose life priorities.

Media education was also going through a difficult time during that period. Many film electives, media clubs, and study groups ceased to exist in schools and additional education organisations due to financial instability. However, thanks to the efforts of enthusiasts who, despite the difficulties, continued to carry out film education of the younger generation, the best forms and methods of working with film continued to be implemented.

6. The image of a modern family and the challenges of family education on the Russian film screen (2000–2020). Family issues are becoming one of the central ones in Russian feature films at the present stage. This is due to the increased attention of the state and the entire society as a whole to strengthening family foundations and preserving traditional moral values, including family well-being and stability.

The topic of family well-being and the importance of family education and care for children has become vital in media education. It is the subject of discussion in film and media clubs, media schools, and is debated at round tables and seminars. In a modern school, feature films about the family and their discussion are integrated into some academic subjects of the humanities.

In addition, today in our country there are many interesting media education projects based on feature films related to family issues: films focused on family issues are actively discussed in work with parents, at meetings of parenting schools, and in courses for young families. Films about families are presented in many thematic online communities, forums, blogs, information platforms dedicated to family education. Teachers, psychologists, representatives of school administrations and educational authorities take an active part in these events.

## 5. Conclusion

The transformation of family images in feature films of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods is closely related to social, economic, political, sociocultural processes occurring in society. Among the main reasons for transformation processes are the following: ideas about family roles and models of family interaction have changed over the course of the historical development of society; the main accents and attitudes of the younger generation concerning the family, its well-being and the way of the family as a whole have shifted; one cannot ignore the ideological and sociocultural changes that left their mark in one way or another on the representation of images of family and family education presented in Russian feature films.

As evidenced by the analysis, the control functions in relation to the family in terms of the parent community's fulfilling the responsibilities in education, characteristic of the Soviet system, today are replaced by the priority objectives of supporting and strengthening the family, respect for family traditions and strengthening intergenerational ties.

The role and importance of family and family education, as well as the reflection of these issues in Russian cinema, is becoming increasingly vital in modern society and has significant potential for school and university media education. It is especially essential to study this theme in media education of future educators, psychologists, and teachers who will soon have to educate the younger generation and organize work with the parent community.

## 6. Acknowledgements

This research is funded by the grant of the Russian Science Foundation (RSF, project No. 24-28-00032) at the Rostov State University of Economics. Project theme: "The image of family and family upbringing in Russian feature films and prospects for media education (1920-2020)". Head of the project is I.V. Chelysheva.

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Published in the USA  
Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)  
Issued since 2005.  
ISSN 1994-4160  
E-ISSN 1994-4195  
2024. 20(2): 206-217

DOI: 10.13187/me.2024.2.206

<https://me.cherkasgu.press>



## Exploring the Social Television Landscape and User Engagements: Preliminary Findings from a Northern Nigerian Study

Adamkolo Mohammed Ibrahim <sup>a, b, \*</sup>, Hajara Umar Sanda <sup>b</sup>, Usman Ibrahim Abubakar <sup>b</sup>,  
Abubakar Tijjani Ibrahim <sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> University of Maiduguri, Nigeria

<sup>b</sup> Bayero University, Nigeria

<sup>c</sup> Kano State Polytechnic, Nigeria

### Abstract

This paper presents preliminary results from a study investigating the usage patterns and dynamics of social television (TV) among university students in northern Nigeria. Grounded within the positivist research paradigm and adopting a quantitative approach, the study examines the frequency and manner in which university students engage with social TV content, focusing on the prevalence of smartphone usage and the activities carried out while watching TV. A survey methodology employing a questionnaire was used to collect data from a sample of 774 respondents drawn from six universities in northern Nigeria. The preliminary findings reveal a significant reliance on smartphones for TV viewing, with the majority of respondents reporting frequent engagement with social TV content. Activities such as chatting on social media platforms, browsing the internet and online shopping were prevalent among participants, highlighting the evolving nature of media consumption habits among digitally savvy audiences. The study underscores the transformative impact of social TV engagement on media consumption patterns and provides actionable recommendations for stakeholders in the media industry to enhance the social TV experience for audiences.

**Keywords:** social television, university students, smartphone usage, media consumption habits.

### 1. Introduction

The concept of 'social TV' was coined by Brian Seth Hurst in 1995 during the production of "The House of Blues Radio Hour," aiming to foster live, interactive experiences for listeners through call-ins, emails and online chats with hosts and guests. Brian Seth Hurst envisioned a future where television viewers could engage with content and each other via the internet, igniting further exploration and development of social TV dynamics (Market..., 2018; Proulx, Shepatin, 2012).

The fusion of television and social media has reshaped viewer engagement, facilitating widespread sharing of TV experiences on platforms like Facebook, Twitter (or X) and Instagram (Segijin et al., 2020). This trend, accelerated by broadband wireless technologies and smart devices, underscores the significance of studying social TV within Nigeria's socio-cultural context, given its 51 % internet penetration rate and substantial online presence, especially among the youth (DataReportal, 2022). Nigeria's evolving media landscape, influenced by factors such as education

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\* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: [adamkolo@unimaid.edu.ng](mailto:adamkolo@unimaid.edu.ng) (M.A. Ibrahim), [husanda.mac@buk.edu.ng](mailto:husanda.mac@buk.edu.ng) (H.U. Sanda), [sadiqtijjani@gmail.com](mailto:sadiqtijjani@gmail.com) (A.T. Ibrahim)

and age, emphasises the intertwined nature of social media and television consumption, prompting exploration of social TV's impact on viewer engagement and behaviour (Asongu, Le Roux, 2017; BBG, 2015). With a population of 214.1 million, including 109.2 million internet users and 32.90 million social media users as of January 2022, Nigeria's media landscape continues to evolve, fuelled by expanding broadband infrastructure and internet TV adoption (DataReportal, 2022; Akpoja, 2021).

Understanding user acceptance, adoption and usage behaviour of social TV technologies, particularly among university students in northern Nigeria, is imperative, as evidenced by the study's focus on an extended UTAUT2 model (Ezeh et al., 2012). This research aims to fill a gap in understanding social TV use behaviour in Nigeria, offering insights that could inform content delivery strategies and enhance viewer engagement in the internet-driven segment of the Nigerian television industry (Akpoja, 2021). Ultimately, by uncovering social TV consumption patterns and exploring its implications for audience engagement, this study seeks to contribute to the evolution of the Nigerian media landscape, facilitating tailored strategies for content creation, distribution and audience engagement.

This study focuses on students from northern Nigerian universities to investigate the acceptance and usage of social TV among this demographic, given their significant engagement with social TV-related technology. Specific objectives of the study are 1) to investigate the frequency and manner in which university students in northern Nigeria engage with social television content; 2) to explore the prevalence of smartphone usage for TV viewing among university students in the region; 3) to examine the activities carried out by university students while watching TV, focusing on social media interaction and online behaviors; and 4) to provide preliminary insights into the dynamics of social television engagement among university students in northern Nigeria.

The paper begins with an introduction outlining the rationale for the study and presenting the research objectives. It then provides a comprehensive literature review examining previous research on social television and media consumption habits among university students. The methodology section details the research design, data collection procedures and sampling techniques employed in the study. Following this, the preliminary results of the study are presented and discussed, highlighting key findings and implications. Finally, the paper concludes with a summary of the findings, recommendations for future research and implications for stakeholders in the media industry.

*Literature Review: Concept, Prototype and Technology of Social TV:* Social TV, defined as the television component of social media, differs from other social media aspects such as online newspapers or radio. It encompasses digitally televised or television-related content consumed in socially interactive online platforms, contrasting with traditional TV content consumed via analogue transmission services (Khoshrouzadeh, 2020). Social TV, extensively researched in recent years, provides technical support for TV viewers to interact irrespective of geographical boundaries. T. Gross et al. (Gross et al., 2008) emphasise the user-friendly yet sophisticated nature of social TV designs. J. Lee and Y. Choi (Lee, Choi, 2017) explore the communication aspect of social TV, noting its capacity to enhance online discussions during TV viewing. The famous bi-monthly magazine published by the equally famous Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) known as "MIT Technology Review" recognises social TV as one of the emerging technologies, with MIT's media lab contributing significantly to its development alongside Telco and online TV operators (Montpetit et al., 2011). Social TV technology offers diverse capabilities, including voice and text chats, video conferences and TV recommendations. Additionally, social TV fosters information sharing among users, integrating outcomes into TV services.

*Social TV and Television Viewership Characteristics:* Social TV's rapid growth stems from its unique features such as sociability, interactivity and engagement. S.J. Yang et al. (Yang et al., 2012) highlight social TV's ability to forge connections among dispersed individuals, fostering togetherness and communication. H. Hu et al. (Hu et al., 2014) attribute this unity to social TV's cost-effective architecture and user preference. In Nigeria, TV and online activities, particularly during football matches and political events, drive social TV engagement. Platforms like Arewa24 cater to the Hausa-speaking population, filling a gap in online TV services. Streaming TV providers like Netflix and Iroko TV have transformed viewing habits, with a demand for local content prevailing despite international competition.

*Social TV as Second Screen (Dual Screen) Viewing:* A screen refers to the display monitor of a TV set or smartphone. First screen is the TV set's screen while second screen is the smartphone's screen. Second screens, used alongside TVs, enable interaction with TV content and are increasingly common among young viewers. They serve various purposes, including information search and social networking. Viewers often multitask, using smartphones as the primary second screen. Younger demographics exhibit higher second screen usage rates. J. Karppinen (Karppinen, 2013) proposes a prototype to streamline second screen content discovery, offering alternative methods to access content.

Users, especially young users not only find using their smartphones simultaneously with social media platforms while watching their favourite TV shows worthwhile but also enjoyable. The simultaneous use of Facebook, Instagram, TikTok with TV shows is more popular among younger users while synchronising TV watching with Twitter use is more popular with older users. Typically, users share pieces of digital information about the TV show they watch with their social media networks. Some common examples of such digital pieces of information include screenshots, online news links, website links, and so on; they also perform other social activities related to the show they are watching to express their reactions, such as 'liking' and other reactions using available emojis.

*How is Social TV's Dual Screen Mode Used?:* Viewers use second screens sequentially or simultaneously, with smartphones being the primary starting point for second screen activities (as also discussed above). Multitasking is prevalent, with a significant portion of mobile internet users engaging with both mobile devices and TV simultaneously. Various methods, including Quick Response codes (QR codes in short) and social media hashtags, facilitate second screen content discovery. J. Karppinen (Karppinen, 2013) introduces a prototype to enhance content discovery, complementing existing methods.

*Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2) in Social TV Research:* The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2), developed by V. Venkatesh et al. (Venkatesh et al., 2003), extends the UTAUT1 model to better understand the acceptance and use of technology. This model has been widely applied in the fields of Information Systems (IS) and Information and Communication Technology (ICT), providing a comprehensive framework for researchers. The modified UTAUT2 model comprises 13 variables, including independent, mediator, dependent and moderator variables. Previous studies have used the UTAUT2 model to explore various aspects of technology adoption, including social TV-related services and technologies.

UTAUT2 has been particularly instrumental in examining the intention to use social TV and related technologies such as social media, social networking sites, internet TV and mobile TV. For instance, C.H. Wong et al. (Wong et al., 2014) found significant effects of Effort Expectancy, Social Influence and Facilitating Conditions on the intention to use mobile TV. Similarly, M. Zendehdel et al. (Zendehdel et al., 2015) identified Performance Expectancy and Social Influence as significant determinants of users' decision to use mobile internet services, a crucial infrastructure for social TV. Effort Expectancy, however, did not significantly influence intention in their study.

Internet-based TV technologies like 'Internet Protocol TV' (IPTV) and 'Over the Top TV' (OTT) have also received attention within the UTAUT2 framework. Indrawati and Haryoto (Indrawati, Haryoto, 2015) investigated users' perception of IPTV in Indonesia, finding that several factors, including performance expectancy and social influence, significantly affected users' intention to use IPTV. However, effort expectancy and facilitating conditions did not exhibit significant effects. Moreover, studies such as that of R. Allam and H. Dinana (Allam, Dinana, 2021) have extended the UTAUT2 model to explore the future of TV and online video platforms in evolving markets like Egypt. Their findings suggest a shift in consumer behaviour towards online video platforms, posing challenges to traditional TV broadcasters.

*Technology Use and Religiosity:* While research on mobile phone use has proliferated, studies focusing on their religious use and impact on religious imagination are limited. Digital religion, which examines the intersection of religion, media technologies and digital culture, has gained traction. Initially concentrated in the Western world, scholarly interest in digital religion is expanding to include Africa and Asia. However, there remains a dearth of research on the relationship between mobile phones and religion in African countries. Nevertheless, emerging studies explore the use of digital technologies for religious purposes in Africa and Asia, shedding light on this evolving phenomenon (Darvyri et al., 2014; Mohamad, 2023).

Since its inception by Brian Seth Hurst in 1995, the term “social TV” has witnessed notable evolution and adoption. Here are the key trends and transformations in its usage:

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, “social TV” referred to experimental endeavours and projects aimed at enriching the television viewing experience through interactive elements like chat rooms, online polls, games and personalised recommendations. Projects like TiVo digital video recorder, America OnLine TV (AOLTV) and Enhanced TV Binary Interchange Format (EBIF) exemplified this trend (Market..., 2018). In the mid-2000s, the concept expanded to encompass online video platforms such as YouTube, Netflix and Hulu, enabling users to watch, share and comment on TV content online. This era also saw the rise of user-generated content like vlogs, parodies and reviews (Fossen et al., 2018).

Transitioning into the late 2000s and early 2010s, “social TV” embraced the phenomenon of the second screen, where viewers used mobile devices like smartphones and tablets to engage with social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook while watching TV. This facilitated real-time interactions with fellow viewers, content creators and celebrities (Fossen et al., 2018; Proulx, Shepatin, 2012). From the mid-2010s onwards, “social TV” evolved to denote the integration of social media and TV content distribution. TV networks and rights holders leveraged platforms such as Twitter Amplify, Facebook Suggested Videos and Snapchat Discover to share video clips, live streams and behind-the-scenes footage, thereby monetising content through advertisements (Fortune..., 2020; Fossen et al., 2018; Market..., 2018).

While these trends epitomise the trajectory of “social TV” since its inception, it continues to evolve with the emergence of new technologies and platforms, shaping the TV industry and audience dynamics.

In the realm of social TV research, distinct trends emerge between the Western world and the Global South, particularly Africa:

In Western contexts, research predominantly focuses on the influence of social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook on TV viewing behaviour, engagement and ratings. Topics explored include second screen usage, live tweeting, social TV analytics and social TV advertising (Wong, 2023). Conversely, in the Global South and Asia, research delves into the cultural and social dimensions of TV consumption, alongside examining the implications of online streaming TV services. Themes include media imperialism, cultural values, audience preferences and content diversity (Fortune..., 2020).

In Africa, particularly Nigeria, social TV research centres on the role of TV and social media in societal development, alongside the challenges and opportunities of digital transformation. Topics explored encompass political participation, civic engagement, social movements, media literacy and the impact of social media on TV news consumption and production, especially in significant events like the #EndSARS protests, general elections and the COVID-19 pandemic (Adeyemi, Oyero, 2019; Digital..., 2024).

In a nut shell, social TV research reflects diverse regional contexts, exploring the complex interplay between technology, media and society, shaping TV viewing experiences and societal dynamics.

## 2. Materials and methods

*Research Design and Approach:* This study is grounded within the positivist research paradigm, adopting a quantitative approach aimed at theory development, facilitating the exploration of causal relationships within the UTAUT2 model. As advocated by Guba and Lincoln (1994), the positivist paradigm underscores the objective reality discernible through rigorous empirical inquiry, prioritising the testing of causal links. This paradigm aligns with previous research by K.F. Hashim (Hashim, 2012), and J. Khoshrouzadeh (Khoshrouzadeh, 2020), emphasising the examination of causal relationships among independent, dependent and moderating variables. The survey methodology, using a questionnaire as the primary data collection tool, is employed due to its ability to ensure respondent confidentiality, encourage candid responses and facilitate efficient data collection, as advocated by J.W. Creswell (Creswell, 2013). To test hypotheses and ascertain significant relationships between variables, the study adopts the Smart-PLS standard bootstrapping method.

*Population:* Survey research often involves collecting data from a sample, as a group of respondents drawn from the target population (De Leeuw, Hox, Dillman, 2012). Substantial efforts have been made by different scholars (e.g., Kotrlik, Higgins, 2001; De Leeuw, 2012) to differentiate

three types of population regarding sampling procedures including “general”, “target” and “accessible”. The “general population” is the largest cluster of potential respondents, which can be outlined as “an entire group of people in which data is required to be collected” (De Leeuw, 2012).

In the case of the current study, the general population is Nigerian university students currently studying at universities in northern Nigeria. Available data obtained from the National Universities Commission’s (NUC) indicates that as of February 6, 2023, there are 258 universities in Nigeria. Of this number of universities, 148 are privately owned, 60 are state universities (universities owned by the state governments) and 50 are federal universities (universities owned by the Federal Government).

Individuals in these clusters share a minimum of three basic characteristics including the fact that they are university students in northern Nigeria, digital TV users and social media users. Hence, focus was given to public and private universities in northern Nigeria. The second type of population is the target population, which is a “group of individuals with a minimum of one particular characteristic” (Creswell, 2013). The general population of this study, which is the population of Nigerian university students, is over 2.1 million according to data from National Universities Commission (NUC) (NUC, 2022).

The target population for the present research is university students who were currently study at both public (federal and state) and private universities in northern Nigeria. No discrimination was made between undergraduate and postgraduate students. However, a vast majority of the respondents were undergraduates. As L.A. Auverset (Auverset, 2017) noted, findings of a Pew Internet and American Life Project study showed that “the use of the Internet is greater among university students as compared to the general population” (Auverset, 2017: 7). L.A. Auverset (Auverset, 2017) also argues, “Universities are a suitable place for technological diffusion”. Supporting L.A. Auverset (Auverset, 2017), A. Quan-Haase and A.L. Young’s (Quan-Haase, Young, 2010) study found that “university students tend to be early adopters of social networking sites.” Therefore, the present research supports recruiting university enrolled students as a sample population. The population of university students who are currently studying at universities in northern Nigeria is the particular characteristic of the second cluster.

The third and final type of population is “accessible population”. In research, the accessible population which is also known as the “study population” is the population which the researcher can apply his or her conclusion. In the actual sense, “it is a subset of the target population” (Elite Institute, 2019). Thus, the accessible population of this study comprised the students who were currently studying in the above-mentioned categories of universities located in different states in northern Nigeria and who were current and active users of social TV (either double screen mode, multiscreen mode, or both) at the time the survey questionnaires were administered. The accessible population yielded the sample of the study that was selected through a multi-stage random sampling technique, which involved a random selection of universities and faculties in multiple stages.

Employing random sampling to recruit the ‘actual’ respondents (as well as the respondents’ universities and faculties) was necessary because of the positivist approach (quantitative design) that this study adopted (Wimmer, Dominick, 2011). Because this study adopted proportionate random sampling technique, the selection of samples among a total number of 164,141 students from all 18 faculties within the six universities was practically feasible because, in the end, a sample proportionate to the total population of each of the universities was selected, which means that the total of 774 sample size was selected randomly based on the proportionate sample from each of the universities (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** Proportionate Research Population and Samples from Each of the Six Universities

S/No	University	Population	Sample	Percentage
1	Baze University, Abuja	4,513	21.28	2.75
2	BUK	46,492	219.52	28.33
3	KASU	19,313	91.0	11.75
4	Nile University, Abuja	6,111	28.8	3.72
5	UNIMAID	75,311	355.6	45.85
6	YSU, Damaturu	12,401	58.8	7.6
Total		164,141	774	100

Furthermore, the sample size of 774 was distributed proportionately, calculated based on the student populations in each university. This resulted in the following number of respondents from each selected university: Baze University 21 students, Bayero University, Kano (BUK) 219 students, Kaduna State University (KASU) 91 students, Nile University 29 students, University of Maiduguri (UNIMAID) 355 students and Yobe State University (YSU) 59 students as shown in [Table 1](#).

*Sample and Sample Size:* The study's sample focuses specifically on individuals involved in social viewing of television content, simplifying the selection process and enhancing data relevance. The determination of the appropriate sample size, crucial for data accuracy and precision, relies on various factors including project type, purpose, complexity and error tolerance. According to J.F. Hair et al. ([Hair et al., 2017](#)), the recommended sample size for Structural Equation Modelling ranges from 150 to 400 respondents; while T.F. Hinkin ([Hinkin, 2005](#)) recommends an item-to-response ratio should be at least 1:10 ration for each set of scales. Considering these guidelines, the recommended sample size for this study is 774 respondents, ensuring an objective and reliable analysis.

However, given that this study focuses on examining new approaches of using old media (television, specifically), employing new approaches of determining the sample size is deemed more appropriate. New approaches of determining sample size include using statistical software packages such as a StatisticaTM or G\*Power ([Lakens, Caldwell, 2021](#)), which depend on factors such as effect size, power of the test and standard deviation. The use of the G\*Power 3.1 software supported by V. Venkatesh et al. ([Venkatesh et al., 2012](#)) and J. Khoshrouzadeh ([Khoshrouzadeh, 2020](#)) provided an optimal sample size of 774, surpassing the basic criteria for statistical validity and methodological robustness (see [Table 2](#)). D. George and P. Mallery ([George, Mallery, 2016](#)) believed that the accurate number of respondents for quantitative studies depends on effect size, power, level of significance, study design and the intended statistical method (see [Table 2](#)).

**Table 2.** Calculating Required Sample Size Using G\*Power Software

S/N	Input	Output		
1	Effect size $f^2$	0.05	Non-centrally parameter $\lambda$	15.4600000
2	$\alpha$ err prob	0.05	Critical F	2.0215313
3	Power ( $1-\beta$ err prob)	0.83	Numerator df	7
4	Number of tested predictors	7	Denominator df	765
5	Total number of predictors	7	Total sample size	774
6	-	-	Actual power	0.8500267

Sample frames for primary populations (students) were obtained from each faculty, while sample frames for secondary populations (universities) was obtained from NUC, and finally, sample frames for the tertiary population (faculties) were obtained from the relevant offices at each of the universities.

The study's focus on students from northern Nigerian universities is rooted in its research objectives, aiming to determine the acceptance and usage of social TV among this specific demographic, given their significant representation as users of social TV-related technology. Moreover, northern Nigerian universities were selected based on the predominant presence of the Nigerian Muslim population in the northern region.

### 3. Discussion

The investigation into the Research Objective delved into the diverse activities engaged in by respondents while watching TV and interacting with TV shows, shedding light on the multifaceted landscape of social TV usage. Respondents exhibited a wide array of behaviours, including using internet-connected smartphones, tablets and laptops while watching TV, as well as engaging in activities such as screenshotting and sharing TV programmes across various social media platforms including YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok and WhatsApp. Additionally, participants were found to be active in tweeting, sharing posts, recommending, rating, voting, commenting and liking TV programmes on social media (It should be noted that 'Social Media' is the umbrella platform in which social TV is largely domiciled or embedded just like 'Mass Communication' is the umbrella discipline in which television, radio, newspaper, magazine are studied, which has, recently, culminated in an attempt to unbundle it into its various sub-disciplines or components as substantive disciplines like Public Relations, Information and Media Studies, etc. similarly, when



social media is unbundled, such disciplines as social TV, social radio, social newspaper, etc. would be obtained, with social TV already gaining growing research attention globally, especially in Western, Asian and Middle Eastern contexts.

The findings revealed that a significant portion of Nigerian university students used their mobile phones while watching TV at least once a week. Furthermore, a substantial percentage engaged in chatting on tablets, laptops and smartphones about TV programmes via mobile apps like WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook, TikTok and Messenger. Moreover, a considerable majority indicated interaction with TV shows by sending text messages, voice chats, stickers and emojis on social media, as well as engaging in online shopping while watching TV weekly. Other prevalent activities among university students in northern Nigeria include browsing the internet, checking emails during commercial breaks, watching TV shows on connected smartphones, tablets and laptops, seeking complementary information online about TV programmes, and accessing social networking sites like Facebook, TikTok, Twitter and Instagram while watching TV. The study also highlighted activities such as checking TV programme schedules online, playing social TV games and using TV provider websites and apps to watch TV shows.

Similar studies conducted globally (Guo, 2019; McKinsey, 2023) corroborate these findings, emphasising the significance of social TV engagement among users and the opportunities it presents for internet-based TV technology (IPTV) service providers. Leveraging social media platforms and apps for content sharing and interaction enhances user engagement and facilitates advertising endeavours. Additionally, the prevalence of activities such as checking emails and online shopping during TV viewing underscores the evolving nature of media consumption habits, particularly among digitally savvy audiences. Moreover, the study underscores the importance of tailored app designs for social TV discussions and recommends the integration of social media links on TV-related websites. It also highlights the potential for TV programmes to create channels and groups on social media platforms to bolster interaction with users. Furthermore, the study aligns with previous research indicating the preference for app usage over websites among social media users (Investopedia, 2023; Pew..., 2024), further emphasising the need for strategic adaptation to user preferences in content dissemination.

The findings suggest avenues for internet-based TV service providers and traditional TV broadcasters to capitalise on user engagement trends such as advertising through audio-visual materials and leveraging social media followers for promotional activities. Ultimately, the study underscores the transformative impact of social TV engagement on media consumption patterns and highlights the evolving landscape of digital dual screen or multiscreen TV usage among Nigerian audiences.

#### 4. Results

*Respondents' Demographic Data:* The demographic profile of the respondents in this study was analysed to provide a socio-demographic overview. A set of five questions was used to collect data on age, gender, geographical region of origin, religion, family income, and education level. The study included 485 male and 289 female respondents, accounting for 37.3 % and 62.7 % of the participants, respectively (see Table 3). The age range of the respondents varied between 18 and 45 years, with the majority falling within the 20 to 22 years age bracket (n = 379). Notably, due to the focus on university students using digital dual screen or multiscreen social TV systems, the age range was confined to 20 to 45 years old. Geographically, participants were distributed across Nigeria's six geopolitical regions, with varying representation: north-east (n = 110), north-west (n = 158), north-central (n = 100), south-east (n = 83), south-west (n = 309), and south-south (n = 14). Regarding religion, the majority of respondents identified as Muslim (n = 481, 62.14 %), while the remaining 293 (37.86 %) identified as Christians.

Family income data revealed that approximately half of the respondents reported a monthly income ranging from N100,000 to N150,000 (48.0 %), followed by those earning between N151,000 and N200,000 (31.9 %), and those with incomes exceeding N200,000 per month (20.1 %). In terms of education, respondents represented various academic levels, including bachelor's degree (n = 507), master's degree (n = 208), and Ph.D. (n = 59) candidates (see Table 3).

*Results of the Research Objective:* To measure the frequencies of Actual Usage of Social TV among university students in northern Nigeria.

The investigation into the frequencies of social TV usage, a pivotal component of the Research Objective, was conducted subsequent to the inquiry into respondents' demographic

information and their television and media consumption habits. This segment of the research involved the administration of a questionnaire containing 6 items aimed at assessing the Actual Usage of Social TV (AUST). Respondents were prompted to rate each item on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from “never” (1) to “every day” (5). The items were categorised into four distinct groups, as delineated below.

**Table 3.** Summary of Respondents’ Demographic Data (n = 774)

Profile	Category	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender	Male	485	62.7
	Female	289	37.3
Age	18-22 years	406	52.5
	Older than 22 years	368	47.5
Geopolitical Region of Origin	Northeast	158	20.41
	Northwest	110	14.21
	Northcentral	100	12.92
	Southeast	83	10.72
	Southwest	309	39.92
	South-south	14	1.80
Religion	Muslim	481	62.1
	Christian	293	37.86
Monthly Family Income	Low Income	N100,000-N150,000	48.0
	Medium Income	N151,000-200,000	31.9
	High Income	N201,000 or Higher	20.1
Educational Level	Bachelor’s Degree	507	65.5
	Master’s Degree	208	26.9
	PhD	59	7.6
Total		774	100

Within the scope of Social TV as Second-Screening, Table 4 below presents data pertaining to the frequency of social TV usage while simultaneously viewing television (B1, B2, B3) and the devices employed for this purpose (B4, B5, B6). The prevalence of smartphone usage among the surveyed students emerged as notably high. According to the findings presented in Table 4 below, approximately 83.9 % of participants reported using mobile phones while watching television at least once a week. Similarly, 52.3 % of respondents indicated the use of tablets for TV viewing on a weekly basis. Moreover, a substantial proportion of respondents reported using laptops (72.3 %) and smartphones (90.2 %) while watching television. Furthermore, Table 4 reveals nuanced patterns of usage. For instance, 20.0 % of participants reported watching TV on their laptops at least once a week, while 37.3 % admitted to using smartphones for TV viewing on a daily basis. Similarly, varying frequencies of smartphone usage for TV viewing were reported: 13.3% (5-6 days a week), 14.6 % (3-4 days a week), 18.6 % (1-2 times a week) and 16.1 % (never).

Conversely, tablet usage for TV viewing appeared less prevalent among respondents. Specifically, percentages ranged from 17.6 % (1-2 times a week) to 12.9 % (daily usage), indicating comparatively lower levels of engagement. The use of laptops for TV viewing fell within a moderate range, with respondents demonstrating varying degrees of engagement. Notably, 47.7 % of participants reported never using laptops for TV viewing, contrasting with the higher usage frequencies observed for smartphones (see Table 4). The findings underscore the pervasive use of smartphones for TV viewing among respondents, while also highlighting distinct patterns of engagement with tablets and laptops in this context.

**Table 4.** Frequency of Social TV Usage as Second-Screen (n = 774)

Likert Scale		Never		1-2 times a week		3-4 times a week		5-6 times a week		Daily	
S/N	Items	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
B1	Using mobile phone	125	16.1	144	18.6	113	14.6	103	13.3	289	37.3

Likert Scale	Never	1-2 times a week	3-4 times a week	5-6 times a week	Daily
B2 while watching TV. Using tablet while watching TV.	369 47.7	136 17.6	94 12.1	75 9.7	100 12.9
B3 Using laptop while watching TV.	215 27.8	174 22.5	130 16.8	112 14.5	143 18.5
B9 Watching TV on smartphone.	75 9.7	97 12.5	125 16.1	188 24.3	289 37.3
B10 Watching TV on tablet.	369 47.7	136 17.6	94 12.1	75 9.7	100 12.9
B11 Watching TV on laptop.	136 17.6	155 20.0	146 18.9	188 24.3	125 16.1

Notes: F = frequency; % = percentage

## 5. Conclusion

This study sheds lights on user acceptance of social television in Nigeria, particularly within the context of northern Nigeria. Through a quantitative approach rooted in the positivist paradigm, the investigation elucidated the multifaceted landscape of social TV usage among university students. The findings underscored the pervasive nature of smartphone usage for TV viewing, alongside distinct patterns of engagement with tablets and laptops. Moreover, the study provided insights into demographic characteristics and media consumption habits of the respondents, thereby enriching our understanding of social TV dynamics in the region. Importantly, the research underscores the transformative impact of social TV engagement on media consumption patterns, highlighting opportunities for internet-based TV service providers and traditional broadcasters to leverage user engagement trends for promotional endeavours.

However, despite the valuable insights gleaned from this study, certain limitations warrant acknowledgment. Firstly, the research focused solely on university students in northern Nigeria, thus limiting the generalisability of the findings to broader demographic groups. Additionally, the study's reliance on self-reported data may introduce response bias, necessitating caution in the interpretation of results. Future research endeavours should seek to address these limitations by incorporating diverse demographic cohorts and employing mixed-method approaches to triangulate findings.

*Recommendations:* The study offers the following recommendations for research, industry and policy.

- Foster collaboration between internet-based TV service providers and traditional broadcasters to capitalise on user engagement trends observed in social TV usage.
- Develop tailored app designs for social TV discussions, integrating social media links on TV-related websites to enhance user interaction.
- Create channels and groups on popular social media platforms to facilitate dialogue and engagement with TV programmes.
- Conduct further research to explore social TV dynamics among diverse demographic cohorts, including non-student populations and individuals from different regions of Nigeria.
- Employ mixed-method approaches to triangulate findings and mitigate response bias associated with self-reported data.

*Limitations of the Study:* As with any research endeavour, it is imperative to acknowledge the limitations inherent in the study. By critically evaluating the constraints and challenges encountered during the research process, we can enhance the transparency and credibility of our findings. In this section, we delineate the key limitations of our study on social television engagement among university students in northern Nigeria. These limitations provide valuable insights into the scope, methodology and interpretation of our results, guiding future research endeavours in this burgeoning field.

1. *Sampling Bias:* The study focused exclusively on university students in northern Nigeria, potentially limiting the generalisability of the findings to other demographic groups within the region or beyond.

2. *Self-Reported Data:* The reliance on self-reported data may introduce response bias, as participants might provide socially desirable responses or inaccurately recall their social TV usage habits.

3. *Limited Scope of Variables*: While the study investigated social television usage among university students, it did not delve deeply into factors such as socio-economic status, cultural background, or technological literacy, which could impact social TV engagement.

4. *Cross-Sectional Design*: The study employed a cross-sectional design, capturing a snapshot of social television usage at a single point in time. Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into the dynamics and changes in social television engagement over time.

5. *Technological Factors*: The study did not extensively explore technological factors such as internet connectivity, device compatibility, or access to streaming services, which could impact social TV usage patterns but were not fully addressed.

6. *External Validity*: The study's findings may be limited in their applicability to contexts outside of northern Nigeria, as social TV dynamics could vary significantly in different cultural, socio-economic, or technological environments.

Addressing these limitations in future research endeavours could enhance the comprehensiveness and validity of the findings.

## 6. Acknowledgements

In the pursuit of academic research, collaboration and support play pivotal roles in shaping the trajectory and outcomes of research endeavours. We express our sincere gratitude to those individuals and institutions whose contributions have been instrumental in the realisation of this study on social television engagement among university students in northern Nigeria. Their unwavering support, guidance and assistance have enriched our research journey, and we are deeply indebted to them for their invaluable contributions. Specifically, we want to thank Professor Sagir Adamu Abbas, the Vice Chancellor of Bayero University, Kano (BUK) for his compassionate support toward the success of this study. We also want to thank the current and former Deans of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Maiduguri Prof. Danjuma Gambo and Prof. Muhammad Waziri as well as the current and former Heads of Department, Department of Mass Communication, University of Maiduguri Prof. Josph Wilson, Dr. Nassir Abba Aji, Prof. Nuhu D. Gapsiso and Dr. Abdulmutallib A. Abubakar for their unwavering administrative support toward the success of this study. Finally, we sincerely appreciate the Ihsan Scholarship support courtesy of Prof. Hajara U. Sanda. *Conflict of Interest*. We declare no conflict of interest.

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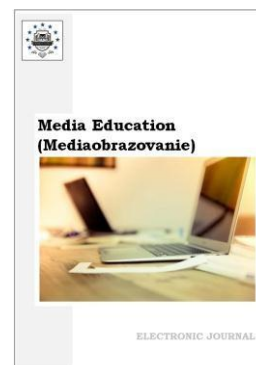
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Published in the USA  
Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)  
Issued since 2005.  
ISSN 1994-4160  
E-ISSN 1994-4195  
2024. 20(2): 218-226

DOI: 10.13187/me.2024.2.218

<https://me.cherkasgu.press>



## Modern Media Discourse and Standard in the Context of Ecological Thinking: Linguistic Tolerance

Ella Kulikova <sup>a, b, \*</sup>, Victor Barabash <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Peoples' Friendship University of Russia named after Patrice Lumumba (RUDN University named after Patrice Lumumba), Russian Federation

<sup>b</sup> Rostov State University of Economics, Russian Federation

### Abstract

Modern media discourse reflects all the trends in language development and, as a result, reflects all its inconsistencies. The modern media discourse reflects the tolerant attitude of speakers/writers towards different linguistic elements, which often do not comply with strict standard. The media text reflects all language processes the best of all, sometimes it outstrips the lingual standard. The article analyzes the concept of tolerance as a relation to modern linguistic processes, especially to borrowings, based on the material of modern media discourse. Problems of modern media discourse, modern communication, and therefore speech standard, are studied in connection with ecological thinking, language phenomena are considered from usefulness to improve language as a system. Modern orthology presupposes the extension of the framework of normativity. In the current communicative practices in relation to borrowings and different deviations, the category of tolerance dominates. But this feature does not indicate the gap of fixed ideas about normativity/non-normativity in language consciousness. The cultivation of the modern communicative space involves not only the study of the standard and its dynamics, but also the use of a system of norms, including ethics and speech norm, in media discourse. It was necessary for such a comprehensive research object to use methods of discourse analysis, linguistic pragmatics, including the variability of interpretations and stratification of linguistic units as tolerant/intolerant in media discourse and identification of interrelations between the category of tolerance and the basic principles of ecological thinking. The skills of using borrowed and jargon units when creating a media text are formed and fixed as mandatory in teaching the discipline "Modern Media Text" in professional training of specialists for the media industry.

**Keywords:** media discourse, standard, communication, tolerance, globalization, borrowings, jargon, linguoculture, ecological thinking, linguoecology.

### 1. Introduction

Modern media discourse reflects all the trends in language development and, as a result, reflects all its inconsistencies. The modern media discourse reflects the tolerant attitude of speakers/writers towards different linguistic elements, which often do not comply with strict standards.

"Tolerance" is a Latinism that has entered the Russian language (like most Latinisms) from modern European languages. Researchers consider that it is borrowed from French and from English. This fact itself prove the concept "tolerance" universality. This principle is fundamental for tolerance in the field of language communication. Nowadays the concept "tolerance" became very popular.

\* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: [kulikova\\_ella21@mail.ru](mailto:kulikova_ella21@mail.ru) (E. Kulikova), [barabash-vv@rudn.ru](mailto:barabash-vv@rudn.ru) (V. Barabash)

The image of a tolerant linguistic personality includes a variety of characteristics reflecting the ethical lines of human relationships. These are humanity in the broadest sense, flexibility (that is, the ability to build favourable communication depending on the participants and the situation), self-control, empathy.

“Tolerant speech tactics are supposed to be an alternative to the “language of hostility”. In Russian, “tolerance” is most often associated with the word “terpimost’”, which in turn is associated with *pokornost’* (humility) and *terpenie* (patience). Although these traits are inherent in the Russian cultural type, they do not always arouse sympathy, being perceived as forms of social cowardice” (Denisova, 2016: 10-11).

Of course, tolerance is not a panacea, and we cannot argue that it is a tolerant attitude and behaviour that is ideal in each particular case. Tolerance is considered to be the most important communicative category of modern media discourse (Shapovalova, 2013).

It is goes without saying, that interlocutors may have different degrees of tolerance explication and different degrees of cooperation between each other (Yuzhakova, 2013). Among the categories correlating with tolerance, politeness takes a special place.

It is very important to pay attention to the progression of linguistic flair and categories of lingual tolerance and politeness in the formation of an effective professional personality of a journalist. They are very significant for the author's idea implementation in the creation of relevant, linguopragmatically oriented media texts.

An important stage in the formation of such a personality is to ensure the relevant choice and use of borrowings and jargon units as a special class of units in media texts, as well as training in the practice of choosing linguistic units in accordance with the principles of linguistic and ecological parameters of the media text. An appropriate system of exercises aimed at the formation of skills and abilities of analysis and creation of such texts will provide it.

## 2. Materials and methods

The research was based on actual media texts. It was necessary to use methods of discourse analysis, linguistic pragmatics, including the variability of interpretations, stratification of linguistic units as tolerant/intolerant in media discourse and identification of interrelations between the category of tolerance and the basic principles of ecological thinking.

## 3. Discussion

Borrowings are connected with a euphemistic, peripheral function, that is, it contributes to the enrichment of the language, and as a result, they are aimed at saving linguistic and mental efforts. Even when there is no question of new realities for which the language has not created its own nominations, then foreign-language borrowings can be used as synonyms. Foreign-language borrowings can often be used for subtle nuance of thought in modern media discourse, for evaluation, that is, they are used as pragmatics, they are called linguistic units endowed with the “pragmatics of globalism”.

For example, when the word “kheit” (hate) is used, the author of the text in which this word expresses a certain meaning did not mean just such a strong feeling as hatred, but rather hatred expressed through the Internet, and fake is not just a deception spread in different ways, it is deception, lies, spread precisely on the Internet and in ways that are used on the Internet, for example, false (fake) accounts are created from which false information is distributed (Krongauz, 2021: 7).

A foreign-language borrowing, which is used to express such a meaning for which language has no its own unit, immediately forms a halo of derivatives around itself in the media space, in other words, assimilation of borrowings occurs, which is perfectly visible from this fragment:

*“To look over the shoulders of Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro? To climb to the roofs of Shanghai skyscrapers, that is higher than the clouds? To sit with your legs dangling on the edge of a high-rise in the evening Manhattan? When we look at the pictures of St. Petersburg rufery (roofers) Vadim Makhorov and Vitaly Raskalov, everything is possible.*

*The exciting exhibition “On High” opened today at the Erarta Museum of Modern Art. It has collected the best footage shot in the most impressive and hard-to-reach places of the globe.*

*The rufery (rufers) became world famous in 2014, after they spent eighteen hours in a row at an altitude of 650 meters in Shanghai: they waited for the clouds to gather. The next peak is an advertising board on one of the highest roofs in Hong Kong. Then there is the financial centre in*



*Shenzhen, the second tallest building in the world. But Makhorov and Raskalov take their best pictures without insurance*” (Poslyanova, 2016: 1). This fragment of media text painted a complete enough picture a phenomenon appeared in our time and received the foreign name “*rufer*”. The Russian word with the suffix *-er* could be formed from “*krysha*” (roof), but as a result of the jargonization of the Russian language, the Russian word got jargon meaning (in jargon: *krysha* is an illegal protection for a fee against racketeering, *kryshevat'* is the verb formed of the noun with corresponding meaning). This jargon meaning is far from the direct meaning of “the roof of the house” (for example, the roof of my house) (Baranova et al., 2022; Osipovskaya, Savelyeva, 2023).

The descriptive phrase “climb to the roofs”, which is used in the article to name this action, can rather be assessed as losing in comparison with foreign-language borrowing with ing form “rufing” (Manca, 2020). Non-systemic foreign borrowings, such as hackzotisms, macaronisms and barbarisms (Kayal, Saha, 2023; Kulikova, 2022; Kulikova et al., 2023; Tandoc et al., 2019; Van Duyn, Collier, 2019; Wenzel, 2019) will be useful in creating an ironic, comic modality, to express all kinds of ridicule. But it is when they express a special pragmatics:

For example, about a blogger:

“*Internet emu – kak dom* (The Internet is like a home for him).

*Tam on mozhet den' za dnem* (there day after day),

*Ispuskaya fleim i flud* (By emitting flame and flood),

*Zarabatyvat' na fud* (He can earn on food)”

(Dunaev, 2017: 16);

“*Ne grob'* (jargon; don't ruin) *khotya by vecher pri lune* (At least don't ruin the evening by moonlight):

*Ne gugl'* (occasionalism; the imperative mood of the verb to Google) *menya, krasavitsa, pri mne!*

*Don't Google me, beauty, with me!*” (Vishnevsky, 2018b: 16).

An allusion to the poem by A.S. Pushkin: “*Ne poi, krasavitsa, pri mne/Ty pesen Gruzii pechal'noi*” (“Sing, lovely one, I beg, no more/ The songs of Georgia in my presence”. Translated by Irina Zheleznova)

The title “*Kol'nye gody*” years are passing (derivative from “*kola*”, Cola).

An allusion to the poetic line “School years” famous in Russian linguoculture and evoking nostalgic memories. The nouns “*shkola*” (school) and “*kola*” (Cola) in Russian differ only by one letter, as well as the adjective *shkol'nye* formed from the noun *shkola* (school) and the occasional adjective “*kolny*” formed from “*kola*” (Cola).

In these examples, a figure of irony is formed of a language game, actualized precisely through the use of anglicisms.

“*In May, soda appeared on the shelves of Moscow supermarkets, which is bottled at “Ochakovo” factories. Tastes and import substitution? Nate!* (colloquialism, You are welcome!) *How can you not zakosit'* (jargon; mow down) *like Mayakovsky:*

*Ne nuzhna nam Cola burzhuiskaya!* (We don't need Bourgeois Cola!)

*Daesh' samostiinuyu, nashu, rodnyuyu* – (Give us a self-made, our own, native one)

*Cool, Fancy i Street* (Cool, Fancy and Street)

*Lyuboi gastrit pobedit* (It any gastritis will win!)”

It should be admitted that *Cola, Cool, Fancy, Street* is written in English (Abramov, 2022: 13).

The notes of a Muscovite published under the title “*Whose capital is this?*” are illustrative (lead “Taking into consideration the signs on Mira Avenue, Moscow is a city of the world, but not Russia”). Let's present them completely, as they give a sense of the scale of the problem:

“*I often have to walk along Mira Avenue from the metro station with the same name to Groholsky Street. It is less than four hundred meters. And that's what I see. In front of the subway exit, there is a row of cafe “DE MARKO”* (it is written in Cyrillic, but the name looks like Italian), *travel agency “TezTour”* (written in Latin alphabet) *and shops “MON AMOUR”* (written in Latin alphabet) *and “LE FUTUR”* (written in Latin alphabet). And next to the station are “OLIMPIC PLAZ” (written in Latin alphabet), “MILA MARSEL” (written in Latin alphabet), “YVES ROCHER” (written in Latin alphabet), “CHANTAL” (written in Latin alphabet), “IL PATIO” (written in Latin alphabet), “L'OCCITANE en provence” (written in Latin alphabet), “CIMONA” (written in Latin alphabet), “Wall Street English” (written in Latin alphabet).

*“Signs with the information for buyers “Sale” (the author points out that this word is written not in Russian, but in English, that is, not “Rasprodazha”, but “Sale”) are in some storefronts” (Urvachev, 2016);*

*“It was only by chance that once in the pond, Pinocchio realized that daiving (anglicism, diving) was not his” (Antonov, 2017: 48);*

*“The investigation of Svetov kopaet (slang, is digging), the Federal Security Service is holding shit (language game: the Russian word shchit (guard) is written in Latin alphabet) over everyone, the shadow of the leader is buying sneakers, Nikolai the Second is streaming myrrh...” (Bykov, 2017).*

What an irony in the words by Tatiana Moskvina, in which she expresses her attitude to foreign language labelling:

*No, I just want coffee with milk. Neither “amerikano so slivkami” (Americano with cream) nor “latte” (latte). I want it to be written in the menu, sincerely, in Russian, soulfully and ingenuously. I’d love to have “latte” (latte) in Italy. The slushy operation of a stupid demon with the name “The foreigner Vassili Theodorov” has become very active in our country. Do you remember the first chapter of “Dead Souls” by Gogol when Chichikov comes to town? “Here the houses stood crowded together and displayed dilapidated, rain-blurred signboards whereon boots of cakes or pairs of blue breeches inscribed “Arshavski, Tailor,” and so forth, were depicted. Over a shop containing hats and caps was written,” and so forth, were depicted. Over a shop containing hats and caps was written “Vassili Theodorov, Foreigner”... “This foreigner Vassili Theodorov now guides the style of our life with might and main. Violently and zealously, much more effectively than in Gogol’s time. <...> Don’t worry, the candies “Belochka” (“Squirrel”; candies known since Soviet times) were defended, “ehklery” (eclairs) and korzinochki (baskets; cream cakes) were saved, we will return “kofe s molokom” (coffee with milk), too” (Moskvina, 2020: 3).*

Tatyana Moskvina's position does not contradict the possibility of implementing the category of tolerance, but reflects the principles of semantic and situational relevance in the use of borrowings stated in modern language policy.

The category of tolerance in modern media texts is actualized on the basis of obligatory observance, first of all, of communicative standard, determining the selection of linguistic units.

Such phenomena, of course, include borrowings different in origin and stylistic functions. Since the trend towards democratization remains for Russian linguistic culture

Since the trend towards democratization remains is Russian linguoculture (Golan et al., 2019; Lane, 2020; Shilina et al., 2023; Skvortsova et al., 2022), the number of slang elements used in media texts is constantly increasing, including societal and professionally determined ones.

Sometimes borrowings or jargon units as a special class of units have significant linguistic and didactic potential, since their use makes it possible not only to create analogies for a more effective choice of linguistic units best correspond to the author's idea by embedding borrowings or jargon units into the system of paradigmatic relations of the Russian language, taking into consideration the stylistic characteristics of the units, but also to determine the dependence of such a choice on the media text genre.

In addition, the appropriate use of borrowings or jargon units in the media text makes it possible to form the author's individual style, to act as a marker of the media text author.

The skills of using borrowed or jargon units when creating a media text should be formed and fixed as mandatory in the media education system, in the professional training of specialists for the media industry.

#### 4. Results

Relevant Anglo-Americanisms are involved in the process of word formation, creating derivatives with different suffixes and prefixes (affixes):

*“Everything is as it was, from the front and from the rear: a modestly oglamurenniy (glazed) collapse” (Bykov, 2017)*

The media text reflects all the language processes the fastest. The article by A. Samokhin, E. Korobkov “Going on a quest” explains the keyword (quest is adventure game with situational tasks), it is done for semantically non-assimilated neologisms, and at the same time this media text uses derived lexemes presenting adaptation in the receptor language:

*“At last, we find out the basement of the kvestokompaniya (quest company); The customer often organizes corporate trips to kvestrumy (questtrums); Of course, kvest-meikery (quest makers) could not do without iconic personalities of the Soviet period; Some cultural institutions, however, still tolerate kvestoposetiteli (quest visitors); The absolute predominance of kvestosyuzhety (quest plots) and lokatsii (locations) from the mutnyi (slang; murky) kinomesivo (slang; negative; film mix) of uzhasniki (slang; horror films) and bloody trillery (thrillers) is understandable...A rollicking, uncontrolled and unregulated kvestovolna (quest wave) can lead to tragedy... Kvestoriya (quest story), that is, a role-playing game in the detective genre, sounded odd to my ear even more” (Samokhin, Korobkov, 2017)*

*“I would be a pranker (pranker; an allusion to poem by V. Mayakovsky “What to be”).*

*For those who are not up to speed, prankerstvo (derivative with suffix -stvo- from prank; pranking) is now a buzz type of telephone hooliganism, for which, due to his youth, laws have not been invented yet. I believe many people are up to speed of one of the latest jokes of our top-prankery (top prankers) Vovan and Lexus” (Gostomyslov, 2017: 1).*

One of the features of modern communicative situation is the duplication of the names of different urban objects (streets, metro stations, etc.) in Latin, this linguistic phenomenon attracted the attention of such a famous author, critic as Tatyana Moskvina, moreover, she chose a phrase reflecting this phenomenon in one of her latest books “Privet privet, narod narod!” (in Russian title the first word is written in Cyrillic, the second one is written in Latin “Hello privet, narod people!”) (Moskvina, 2021)

*“All these changes took place with a kind of magical invisibility. And quietly, without arguments and discussions: the unthinkable Vasileostrovskaya (in Latin) stands next to the inscription “Vasileostrovskaya” (in Cyrillic), so it should be. For visitors. They don’ learn Cyrillic, they are civilized people, and upon seeing Cyrillic they immediately get migraines and diarrhea at the same time. <...> It means – for me – some lack of self-respect. Why did this “lackey’s licking boots” start and come true – to write the names of our streets in a foreign language, to croak in English in your native people’s trolleybus?” (Moskvina, 2021: 9)*

Tatiana Moskvina consistently implements figures of irony, evaluating this linguistic phenomenon and emphasizes that such duplication is done in order to “please foreigners”.

We wholly agree with this, in fact, the problem of the appearance of the city, its design leads to a philosophical generalization, an understanding of unmotivated foreign language borrowings, to the necessity to consider language units in accordance with linguoecological principles, about the attitude to foreign languages from the point of view of linguoecology. These ideas of Tatyana Moskvina educate intellectually independent speakers of the Russian linguistic culture.

There are areas where even the maximum amount of borrowing does not cause protests. So, there are many Anglo-Americanisms in the computer field, it is impossible to do without borrowings here: modern civilization dictates their use, they are determined by it. It is as it should be, because the Internet and computer techniques have spread first of all in English, in the English-speaking space. All the terms in computer technology in the Russian language turn out to be borrowed, it is very important to pay attention that borrowings that have not received a Russian-language appearance are transferred in transliteration and transcription.

*“The globalism pragmatics of modern Anglicisms correlates the narrative with absolutely new trends in the development of society, at the same time pointing to their global significance” (Khutyz, 2008: 103-104).*

*“Sneeze like that – and the gadzhet (gadget) is outdated” (Vishnevsky, 2018a: 16).*

In our view, the use of borrowings in media texts is an important factor to compensate lacunarity. Linguists do not unambiguously evaluate borrowings in this function. Borrowing are considered to be peculiar indicators of gaps in the Russian language system. Most researchers and publicists believe that the choice of borrowing is negative for the language system, which cannot be recognized as a constant characteristic of borrowing.

One of the ways to enter the lexeme of Anglicism in the media text is to make sure that the Russian analogue is mandatory within the microtext:

*“The genre in which the writer created, we would call non-fikshen (non-fiction) today, and in Russian - an essay. At that time, many authors who could not create the plot fiction resorted to this form, but Soloukhin offered readers extra essay, raising it to the level of high intellectual prose” (Polyakov, 2017).*

So, in the era of the dominance of tolerance, the attitude towards borrowing of different types has become as loyal as possible.

“Borrowing cannot harm (as porcelain teeth placed instead of removed ones will not harm; but that's a different pair of shoes when they try to replace a living, healthy tooth with a porcelain one – you need to fight for such a tooth)” (Chelyshev, 2016: 435)

Lacunarity as a systemic feature of a language is connected with the gap of lexemes, which can be defined as predictable, expected components in the language system in the cognitive space of linguoculture and in the language itself (Belyaeva, Kulikova, 2019; Kang et al., 2022; Kulikova et al., 2023; Langer, Gruber, 2021; Manukovskaya et al., 2018; Mahonina, Sternina, 2013; Markovina, Sorokin, 2010; Jolowicz, 2006; Shin et al., 2022; Verbitskaya, 2013, etc.). The term “eliminated lacunae” is used for compensated, “filled in” forms (Akay, 2020). English borrowings in the terminological field of economics and finance are expected phenomenon in the post-Soviet period and they are considered from this point of view in the study by E.G. Korotkikh (Korotkikh, 2009). In the Russian language the activity of word-forming from its own morphemes is decreasing, and modern media discourse presents this clearly.

## 5. Conclusion

Thus, problems of modern media discourse, modern communication, and therefore speech standard, are studied in connection with ecological thinking, language phenomena are considered from usefulness to improve language as a system. The choice as a classifying factor of stabilization and improvement of ecological thinking determines the need at the initial stage to consider a speech unit with subsequent analysis of its transformation based on linguoecological parameters.

The choice of ecological thinking as a classifying factor of stabilization and improvement determines the need to consider a speech unit at the initial stage, followed by an analysis of its transformation based on linguistic and ecological parameters.

Modern ontology presupposes the extension of the framework of normativity. In the current stage of communication practices, as is known, in relation to such units as borrowings, as well as various deviations from norms, the category of tolerance dominates. But this feature does not indicate the absence of fixed ideas about normativity/non-normativity in the space of linguistic consciousness.

Modern orthology presupposes the extension of the framework of normativity. In the current communicative practices in relation to borrowings and different deviations, the category of tolerance dominates. But this feature does not indicate the gap of fixed ideas about normativity/non-normativity in language consciousness. It is against this background that deviations are realized as such.

Tolerance to “superficial norms” (N.D. Golev's term), which are far from the core of communicative intention, is a very positive sign of the times.

As it was shown, the importance of linguoecology as a regulator of the standard dynamics increases in the modern information space, including the media space, since the system gradually accumulates evaluative manifestations (both negative and positive ones).

In 2020, Professor G.G. Khazagerov addressed a “Rhetorical Manifesto” to philologists (Khazagerov, 2020; see also: Brusenskaya, Kulikova, 2021), the central idea of “Rhetorical Manifesto” is expressed in the title of one of its sections – “Decisive application of ecological ideas in rhetoric”. This is necessary in communicative situation where “nothing resists to the communicative chaos and impoverishment of language”. The cultivation of the modern communicative space is a common goal, and the most important direction of this common work consists of the thorough study of the modern field of normativity and its observance in the modern media space in the context of the ideas of ecological linguistics.

The article can be used to create specialized educational content focused on the practice of modern media, since it offers principles for creating exercises for the formation and improvement of necessary skills. The formation of an educational content aimed at the learning of different media practices, based on the traditions of the linguistic culture and defining the prospects for the development and individualization of such tradition is an obligatory component of the media education system.

Such practice should include not only with the linguistic and pragmatic, orthological parameters, but also it should be connected with linguoecology, since with the integration of such approaches it will be possible to create media texts not only thematically organized in accordance

with the modern communicative situation, but also to reach a maximum result in realization of the perlocative effect when acting on a collective addressee in the media space.

## 6. Acknowledgements

The reported study was funded by RFBR and MES RSO, project number 21-512-07001 “Linguoecological parameters of intercultural communication in post-Soviet space”.

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Published in the USA  
Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)  
Issued since 2005.  
ISSN 1994-4160  
E-ISSN 1994-4195  
2024. 20(2): 227-238

DOI: 10.13187/me.2024.2.227

<https://me.cherkasgu.press>



## Metaverse in Media: Understanding Digital Traces Towards Futuristic Technologies in India

Manoj Kumar <sup>a</sup>, Amit Sharma <sup>a,\*</sup>, Tilottama Goswami <sup>b</sup>, Akhilesh Kumar Sharma <sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> University of Allahabad, Prayagraj, India

<sup>b</sup> Vasavi College of Engineering, Hyderabad, India

<sup>c</sup> Manipal University Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

### Abstract

Metaverse has established itself as the newest advancement in the current web world. The notion has garnered significant interest across multiple industries, the community, and particularly within academic institutions. It is the future gateway for any human-computer engagement. It intends to create an immersive digital space where users interact in real time with the virtual world and similar participants. The metaverse is a dynamic concept that is continuously evolving rather than being a phenomenon that can be easily examined. Therefore, the present study applied the sentiment analysis method to generate a new understanding regarding the notion of the metaverse. The study aims to determine the nature of Indian digital media content and whether it promotes or disapproves of the concept of the metaverse. Using the web scraping code, we generate a customized dataset, an excel file comprising 614 websites. The study aims to develop a systematic and standardized method for generating novel insights about the metaverse by analyzing current resources. The present analysis encompasses a broader range of online media, including news, blogs, and articles on the metaverse, in comparison to scholarly publications. The outcome demonstrates that the metaverse has a positive trajectory in mainstream media and will be a future technology for media, entertainment, and other internet-based industries.

**Keywords:** virtual world, augmented reality, extended reality, mainstream media, sentiment analysis.

### 1. Introduction

Metaverse is the future gateway for any human-computer engagement. It is still in its infancy, but the idea of a 3D comprehensive web in which individuals can interact, educate, trade, entertain, and work stretches back decades. In the Metaverse, augmented reality, mirror worlds, virtual worlds, and lifelogging create a new paradigm. However, we can detect metaverse expectations and develop designs in digital activities based on these technologies: TikTok's augmented reality filters, Google Arts & Culture's mirror worlds, Twitch's live logging, and Minecraft's virtual worlds are mixed reality successes (Onecha et al., 2023; Samarngoon et al., 2023).

#### *Concept, meaning, and definition*

Neal Stephenson, an American sci-fi writer, introduced the phrase "metaverse" in 1992 in his novel "Snow Crash" (Condon, 2023). He combines "meta" and "universe" to arrive at the term "metaverse." The Greek word "meta" means beyond, and thus "metaverse" literally means beyond this world. Metaverse is a replicated technological ecosystem that blends the ideas of augmented

\* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: [jmcamit@gmail.com](mailto:jmcamit@gmail.com) (A. Sharma)



reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), blockchain, and modern communication to create places for rich interactivity that mimic reality (Tucci, 2022).

In 2021, Lee and his fellow researchers stated, "at the root of the metaverse is the notion of the web as a vast, integrated, enduring, and common domain." They further said, "we characterize the Metaverse as a virtual world that combines tangible and electronic elements, made possible by integrating web and Internet innovations with Extended Reality (XR)." Finally, they add the essential attributes, "The metaverse should own eternal, common, simultaneous, and 3D digital places that are synthesized into visible virtual existence (Lee et al., 2021)."

In 2021, after Facebook switched its identity to Meta, the word metaverse became more prevalent. This idea will revolutionize the way we connect with the world. Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Facebook, stated that "the next era of the web is metaverse" and that this latest influx will subsume established social platforms. Mark explains the Metaverse as "A digital ecosystem that allows users to communicate with others in digital places. It may be an internet you inhabit instead of merely viewing (Fawzy, 2022)."

Metaverse has established itself as the newest advancement of the current web world. It is a revolutionary opportunity to develop something truly innovative, like the initial stages of the Web. Billions of dollars are being poured into creating the Metaverse, which techno moguls call utopia.

#### *Metaverse using machine learning*

Metaverses connect virtual and actual worlds. It is one of the most promising 21<sup>st</sup> century ideas. Companies use web-3 technologies like cryptocurrency and NFTs to create a metaverse creator economy. The Metaverse offers unlimited job and leisure opportunities. It will be revolutionary or a web-2 monopoly in virtual reality in the next decade.

People who follow the business world do not want to refrain from writing down the technologies that will fuel the Metaverse. Because the Metaverse is evolving, many innovations that make it function are composed of multiple types of technology. Gartner, for example, uses the term "tech themes" to talk about metaverse technologies. Some themes include space-based computers, virtual persons, common interests, games, and digital assets. Metaverse tools are called "enablers of 3D development environments" by Forrester Research. Companies must hire people with skills in 3D modeling and the Internet of Things (IoT) to make digital twins (Shein, 2022). According to experts, the following seven innovations will influence the Metaverse's evolution over the next ten years: artificial intelligence; Internet of things; extended reality; brain-computer interfaces; 3D modeling and reconstruction; spatial and edge computing; blockchain.

PCs, mobile devices, AR, VR, and MR serve as metaverse entry points. Virtual reality technology hinders metaverse development and adoption. Graphics and portability are constrained by portable hardware and cost-optimized design. For visual immersion, lightweight wireless headphones struggle to achieve retina display pixel density (Wood, 2021). Hardware development seeks to enhance VR headsets, sensors, and haptic technology.

Implementations of the Metaverse utilize proprietary technologies lacking technical specifications. Transparency and privacy concerns generate interoperability challenges in the creation of the Metaverse. Many virtual environment standardization projects exist (D'Anastasio, 2021).

The Metaverse is a new notion with vast potential, raising existential issues. Virtual avatars will replace human interaction. Digitization reduces human empathy. Without social cues and human emotions, this virtual Metaverse may reduce empathy. Real-world difficulties raise concrete issues beyond philosophical ones (Bansal, 2022). The top three are below:

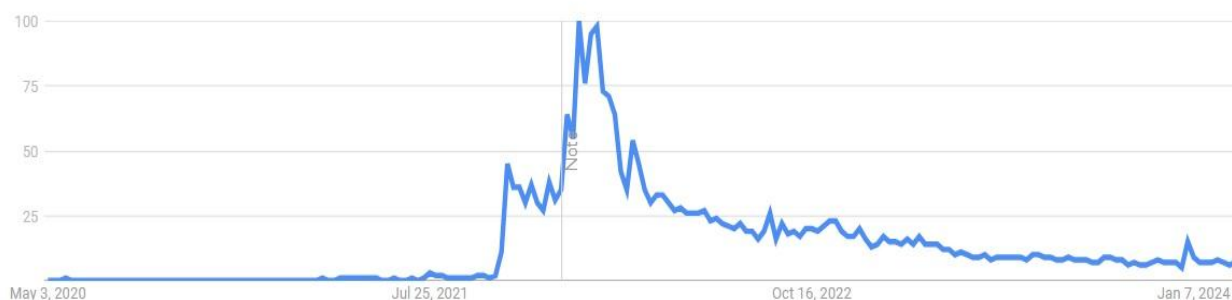
- i. *Data privacy/security*: Metaverse proponents like Meta have been poor data guardians. These metaverse companies' extensive user data access may cause worry.
- ii. *Monopoly/centralization*: Web-3 aims to fix web-2's centralization and monopoly. These monopoly problems may migrate to the Metaverse.
- iii. *Monitoring*: track what is measurable. Metaverse technologies like wearable gear create this issue.

#### *Metaverse, information and communication technology*

The evolution of information and communication technologies influences the methods and media utilized for instruction. With Augmented Reality technology, students can experience learning with real-world items. Conventional models that portray how messages are delivered through traditional media are unsuitable for depicting how they are communicated (or shared) via new media. The former represents monologic (one-to-many) communication flows, whereas dialogic (peer-to-peer and many-to-many) communication flows dominate the new media

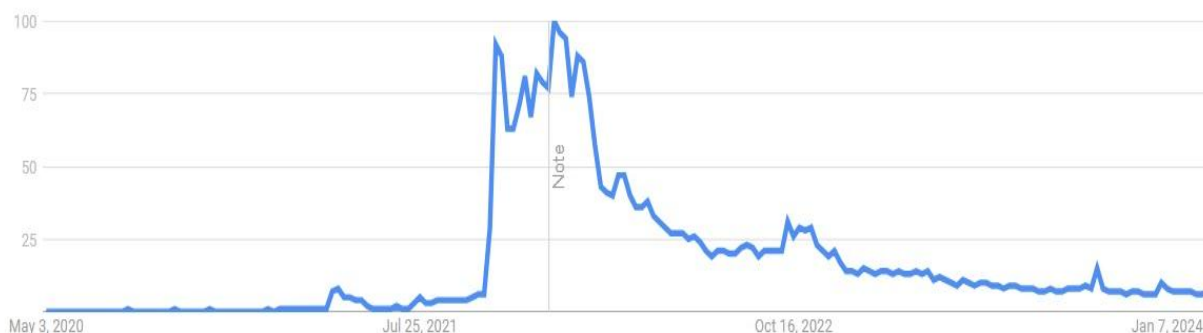
universe. However, authors in government and military circles tend not to characterize new media strategic communication as entirely distinct from conventional media strategic communication.

Metaverse intends to build an immersive digital space where users interact with the virtual world and similar participants in real-time. Recently, academia and industry have shown great interest in this notion, but many basic issues must be answered before the Metaverse can be realized. Multimedia is also a significant contributor, facing numerous risks but difficult technical difficulties. Among the most significant challenges to constructing a fully functional metaverse are the effective synthesis and creation of 3D interactive content, the optimal transmission of digital content, etc.



**Fig. 1.** Search volume for "Metaverse" over time in India (own diagram based on data from Google Trends retrieved 08 March 2024).

Figure 1 illustrates the search volume for "Metaverse" in India for more than the past four years (from 05 January 2020 to 08 March 2024). After 20 October 2021, the search trend begins to rise, and by mid-January (16-22 January 2022), it reaches its peak. After 1 December 2022, the trend remains continuing and stable.



**Fig. 2.** Worldwide search volume for "Metaverse" over time (own diagram based on data from Google Trends retrieved 08 March 2024)

Figure 2 demonstrates the global search volume for "Metaverse" over more than the past four years (05 January 2020 to 08 March 2024). The number of searches for "Metaverse" peaks twice: first, in the final week of October 2021 (24-30 October 2021), and then again in the second week of January 2022 (9-15 January 2021). Global trends remain stable after 25 December 2022.

Metaverse incorporates various multimedia elements and needs a variety of methodologies to enable the development, creation, distribution, and presentation of these materials in an efficient and high-quality manner. Network communication, artificial intelligence, virtual reality hardware, and others must operate together to provide a complete solution. While tremendous progress has been accomplished over the past decade, continued investigation is required to expose the realistic virtual world to a broader end-user audience and permit engaging and comprehensive interactions for individuals (Chen, 2022).

Digital improvements in education are a major worry for learning materials in a new global era since innovation might usher in a new era. Educational games and simulations allow students

to study via digital media. Augmented Reality (AR) can help students obtain, manage, and understand instructional materials by transforming abstract concepts into three-dimensional objects. Students in the primary grades are in the stage of practical, functional reasoning; hence, all instructional components must be explained in detail (Marini et al., 2022).

Traditional media have no edge in the intense industry competition due to the rapid development of contemporary technologies. Radio and television, as important media, should respond to the times, vigorously integrate advanced techno principles and strategies, and explore new sector growth routes throughout the reform process. Incorporating the notion of "Metaverse" provides a fresh push for transforming traditional media. The ever-improving technology can overcome current obstacles and inject new vitality into the radio and television business (Cousins, 2022).

Communication in the Metaverse of deep media has begun. When profound media communication reigns supreme in the Metaverse, media forms evolve. It lets individuals "access" via interfaces to explore and perform. It is an "experience-based" form of media and questions the concept of communicating via short video media. The metaverse era will permit humans to utilize multidimensional and multimodal ecological diversity, multi-scenario, multi-industry, and multi-energy to shorten the spread of video media (Jiang, Xu, 2022).

The history of cinema is characterized by technological experimentation, spectator/spectacle relations, and production, distribution, and presentation processes that bind the medium to social, economic, and ideological constraints. Despite the film industry's technological and aesthetic diversity, Hollywood has dominated film production, distribution, and narrative formats. Digital media technologies challenge this hegemony and create ideal platforms for independent, experimental, and expanding cinema (Shaw, 2012).

Since 2021, "Metaverse" has been gaining popularity, and its association with cinema is apparent and inextricable. Nonetheless, the Metaverse film is implied to be much more than a sci-fi subgenre. Metaverse influences film through its meaning, cultural concepts, and technologies; merged into video installations, it can bring about a fundamental shift in cinema. It will alter the aesthetics, storytelling, and film distribution in every way (Lian, Li, 2024; Pillai, Prasad, 2023).

#### *Importance of the study*

The word Metaverse has garnered much attention from various companies, the public, and, progressively, scholarly societies. It necessitates a research-based, exhaustive, and widely agreed subject taxonomy. The Metaverse is simultaneously more of an evolving concept than an observable reality. The current research aims to determine the nature of Metaverse-related information in digital media. The study will assist in establishing a rigorous and consistent approach for creating new information about the Metaverse based on an analysis of existing material; hence, the research may serve as a useful foundation for future studies.

## **2. Materials and methods**

### *Objectives of the study*

Based on the existing content of the digital media, the research paper aims to generate a new understanding regarding the notion of the Metaverse. The outcomes of the study could function as the framework for future research.

*Broad Objective:* The overarching purpose of this study is to find out the nature of the content of mainstream media, whether it is promoting or disrating the concept of Metaverse.

*Other Specific Objectives:* Specific objectives of the present study are as follows:

– *RO<sub>1</sub>:* To document the nature of content related to the term Metaverse in mainstream media.

– *RO<sub>2</sub>:* To find out the sentiments of content related to the term Metaverse in mainstream media.

– *RO<sub>3</sub>:* To explore the intent of the news/articles related to the term Metaverse in mainstream media.

### *Natural Language Processing*

The news, blogs, and articles on Metaverse are available online. To understand how well the topic is trending, the authors use Natural Language Processing (NLP), a branch of Artificial Intelligence, to understand the message conveyed on the metaverse topic.

### *Web scrapping techniques*

The data is collected online using web scrapping. The websites collected are part of the dataset. Web scrapping is a technique used to extract data from websites. It involves writing code to simulate

a user's interaction with a website, such as clicking links and filling out forms. The most popular library for web scraping is Beautiful Soup (Richardson, 2015), a Python library for parsing HTML and XML documents. Using the web scraping code, the authors generate a customized dataset, an excel file comprising 614 websites.

### 3. Discussion

Numerous studies exist that establish a foundation upon which further exploration of the metaverse can be conducted. Utilizing virtual mirrors, diverse media gadgets, and countless digital portrayals can offer significant contextual knowledge about theoretical foundations and empirical discoveries that can be further developed (Choi, Taylor, 2014; Krishen et al., 2013; Li et al., 2002).

M. Pradana and H.P. Elisa use bibliometric analysis to identify notable experts, important subtopics, and research opportunities. They also find essential articles, patterns, and subject clusters. Their key findings showed that 'education,' 'application,' and 'metaverse' were the most common and related. Their analysis suggests that 'challenge,' 'teaching,' and 'knowledge' are understudied. The findings conclude with recommendations for future research and an in-depth look at metaverses in education (Elisa, Pradana, 2023).

B. Brennen and E. Dela Cerna comprehend the emergent journalism practiced in Second Life—a computer-generated alternative reality – through an ideological analysis. They propose that journalism in Second Life should prioritize education and community development, scrutinize the impact of the virtual environment on the offline lives of residents, and present significant concerns regarding the protection of free speech (Brennen, Dela Cerna, 2010).

S. Hwang and G. Koo intend to explore the conceptual connection between audience attitude and behavioral intention using an audience's participation value in a metaverse platform performance and their choice to embrace it. The study found that aesthetics—the worth of performing on a metaverse platform – influenced performance viewing, and escapism affected metaverse platform use. In contrast, the metaverse performance did not affect audience education. This study will help us understand how to use space and experience marketing functions for metaverse performance and future communication (Hwang, Koo, 2023).

A. Venturini and M. Columbano study fashion's metaverse-based consumer values. They revised the five consumption values by including metaverse use, enhancing, and broadening the notion of consumption values. The five values are utilitarianism, social identity, personification, hedonism, and personal convictions. Fashion brand managers may use technology to provide innovative digital experiences and enhance customer engagement in the metaverse (Columbano, Venturini, 2023).

S. Chen and His fellow researchers employ an adapted conceptual framework combining destination competitiveness and stakeholder theory to demonstrate that various factors such as government, industry, tourists, local communities, and educational institutions impede the progress of metaverse tourism, while planning and management, economic, sociocultural, technological aspects, as well as recognition and acceptance contribute to its expansion (Chen et al., 2023).

P.L. Parcu and his research fellow analyze technology, enterprises, and industries that may be affected by metaverse futures. This is done to brainstorm how this technique will affect space. They differentiate between two evolving scenarios – the "metaverse shaped by reality view" and the "metaverse shaping reality view" – and their components, resulting in consequences for public policy planning (Parcu et al., 2023).

Z. Gao and X. Lyu present Planet Anima, a virtual environment designed for hosting virtual graduation events in the metaverse. They hosted a graduation ceremony and student art show online during COVID-19. Their Planet Anima user research examines collaboration and creativity. Planet Anima facilitates creative co-experiences according to their results. Headset VR exceeds desktop VR in presence, social presence, and emotional involvement (Gao, Lyu, 2023).

E. Sánchez-Amboage and his team conducted an analysis of the online tourist communication techniques employed by 20 European museums on the social media platform Facebook (Meta) during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings of their study demonstrate the influence of lockdown measures on consumption and interaction patterns, as well as the effects of message content and presentation on user engagement and involvement (Sánchez-Amboage et al., 2023).

The Metaverse, the next significant iteration of the Internet, which the authors suggest will go beyond the Internet as a successor state to the Internet, will also change society. T. Cheng-Han and

D.S. Kiat-Boon explore several pertinent concerns that have the potential to challenge the legal system and its corresponding measures, particularly in the domains of online misconduct, intellectual property, and digital assets (Cheng-Han, Kiat-Boon, 2023).

The metaverse's long-term success depends on user adoption. Despite this importance, metaverse user acceptance research is scarce. R. Wu and Z. Yu integrate social and psychological dimensions like social engagement, social presence, conformity, emotional attachment, flow, and perceived enjoyment into the technology acceptance paradigm to fill this research gap. Their findings have substantial significance for metaverse designers and promoters (Wu, Yu, 2023).

A research report in "Rebuilding" said that COVID-19 has led to the rise of another digital economy. This digital economy has led to the creation of the metaverse. During COVID-19, digital, information, and communication technology grew quickly. It has made the metaverse possible (Asan..., 2021).

The coronavirus pandemic has made space for expanding the virtual and digital worlds. The metaverse is a digital platform built on the virtual and physical worlds. K.-A. Lee has analyzed ZEPETO, a metaverse-based virtual reality platform with a creative built-in program and virtual studio. They discovered that metaverse technology had produced a digital universe (Lee, 2021).

The metaverse is like a second existence where individuals live electronically. They inhabit their own constructed space, economy, and everything else. Secondary information was gathered from diverse sources, including Google, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. By creating a 3D representation in digital reality, they discovered that engaging in many daily activities such as working, traveling, shopping, attending school, and having fun in the metaverse will be possible. As the metaverse becomes a reality, it will bolster and modify existing study fields while revealing new ones (Narin, 2021).

L.-P. Robert and V.P. Robert wrote a research report in which they talked about a virtual city that was based on the Metaverse. They said that there are two kinds of metaverses in virtual city. Firstly, a virtual city with a million people who can move freely between different worlds. On the other hand, poor people with low resolutions have a heap of black-and-white avatars (Robert, 2003).

R.M. Gil and his research team investigate the dynamic Metaverse in their study, focusing on its connection with computer games and blockchain technology, which are the primary areas of advancement, and the resulting ethical and social consequences. They focus on the increasing influence of AI in gaming, examining its involvement in addictive gaming features, possible spread of negative habits, and reinforcement of cultural biases. They highlight the continuous expansion of the Metaverse, stressing the need for further study to create innovative interaction methods that include societal viewpoints and emphasize ethical protections. This will facilitate the responsible development of the Metaverse for the benefit of all involved parties. They also suggest Metaverse and Blockchain uses for copyright management, economic conflicts, traceability, and contract transparency (Gil et al., 2023).

M. Kniazeva with his team utilize qualitative research methodologies and a grounded theory approach to explore the motivating variables that motivate fashion companies to enter the metaverse. Analyzed publicly accessible website articles to discover similarities and differences in the motivating reasons that drive luxury and fast fashion firms into the metaverse. Their study improves comprehension of the metaverse as an operational vehicle for the fashion industry and offers pragmatic insights for industry professionals contemplating joining this virtual reality sector (Kniazeva et al., 2024).

D.-A. Frank and his fellows performed a study using virtual reality (VR) with 127 participants to investigate how the level of detail in a metaverse impacts customer reactions while shopping for food in a virtual store compared to just browsing. Their findings indicate that the level of accuracy in the metaverse does not have a widespread impact on how consumers react. Male consumers showed substantially lower repeat shop visit intentions after exploring the high-fidelity VR supermarket compared to the low-fidelity condition, but female customers reacted favorably. This discovery indicates that loyalty leads to creating replies tailored to certain goals, which are influenced by consumers' gender, highlighting the need to consider the context of consumer reactions in upcoming metaverse purchasing interactions (Frank et al., 2024).

Y. Chen and his teammates observed three phases in the U.S. metaverse's development. US metaverse growth is driven by deep business participation, cutting-edge research and technology, and the industrial chain. They also evaluate China's metaverse development issues in

terms of the standard system, data security and privacy protection, and growth route. Based on this, practical recommendations are provided for the development of the Chinese metaverse (Chen et al., 2024).

#### 4. Results

##### *Text summarization*

Each of the websites mentioned in the dataset consists of a huge text. It is time-consuming for the reader to review each website and get the summary. NLP helps to automate the summarization of text. The text summarized from the website on Metaverse will capture the prominent words, projecting the concept, its applications, technology, etc. The transformers library is the latest library used for text summarization in natural language processing. It is a library that provides state-of-the-art pre-trained models for natural language processing (NLP) tasks such as text summarization. The library is built on top of PyTorch, and TensorFlow provides access to many pre-trained models, including BERT (Devlin et al., 2019) and its variants like GPT-2, XLNet, and RoBERTa.

In the dataset, a very interesting news article on “metaverse wedding” was found (Raju, 2022). The website was summarized into six lines of text using Python code. The snippet of the summarized paragraph is shown below:

“This article reports on a unique marriage reception hosted in Tamil Nadu, India, by an engaged couple. They became the first couple to host a virtual reception, or a “metaverse wedding,” in the world, aided by their revolutionary use of the Mozilla Hubs platform and other virtual technology...”

The summarization becomes more insightful if visualization is done for the important words found in the context of the topic.

##### *WordCloud visualization*

Python library, known as WordCloud, can intuitively visualize the words in the summarized text and their prominence. WordCloud is a visual representation of text data, typically used to depict keyword metadata (tags) on websites or to visualize free-form text. It displays a list of words, the importance of each being shown with font size or color. This format is useful for quickly perceiving the most prominent terms and locating a term alphabetically to determine its relative prominence. The most popular library for word cloud in natural language processing is WordCloud (Mueller et al., 2018). It is an open-source Python library for generating word clouds from text. It is easy to use and has many features, including customization options and support for different fonts.

Figure-1 showcases the word cloud of the summarized text retrieved from a news article on “metaverse wedding” (Raju, 2022).



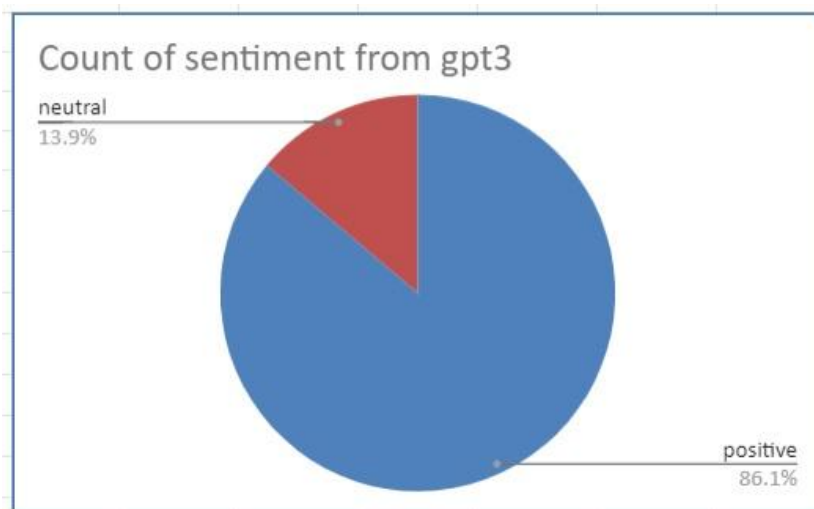
**Fig. 3.** Word Cloud of the summarized text of a news article on “metaverse wedding” (Raju, 2022).

The famous words have bigger fonts compared to less prominent ones. Some words captured are virtual, Metaverse, wedding, reception, and avatar.

##### *Sentiment analysis*

Sentiment analysis is a natural language processing (NLP) technique to identify and extract subjective information from text. It is used to determine the writer's attitude, opinions, and

emotions. Common libraries used for sentiment analysis include NLTK, TextBlob, spaCy, GPT-3. Generative Pre-Trained Transformer GPT-3 is an autoregressive language model, a deep learning model trained on large-scale datasets and designed to improve the performance of sentiment analysis tasks. It is the largest language model. GPT-3 is used for sentiment analysis by generating text that reflects the sentiment of the input text.



**Fig. 4.** Sentiment analysis of the summarized paragraphs on Metaverse

The sentiment analysis has been done on all the summarized texts, and it has been found that 86.1 % are positive sentiments, and the rest, 13.9 %, are neutral. It reinforces that Metaverse is considered a positive trend and will be one of the futuristic technologies.

#### *Applications of Metaverse*

Metaverse is becoming popular in many application domains, such as health and fitness, the medical field, eCommerce, Travel and Tourism, Teaching and Learning, Aerospace Modeling, interactive learning, and Architecture. The immersive experience for the end users makes it closer to reality – augmented or virtual reality. Further research is required for safety considerations of this technology to ensure end-user safety.

## **5. Conclusion**

The metaverse might expand material reality through virtual and augmented reality technology, enabling individuals to communicate with avatars and holograms in physical and artificial situations. M.A. Al-Sharafi and his fellows conducted comprehensive research to recognize and classify the elements that impact the implementation of Metaverse. 29 out of 279 publications gathered from the Web of Science and Scopus databases. They proposed a comprehensive Metaverse adoption framework based on this categorization to guide future empirical studies. Presented many agendas to serve as a roadmap for future research on Metaverse adoption (Al-Sharafi et al., 2023). While M. Weinberger employed a modified variation of the meta-synthesis technique to study the available literature and formulate a description approach for the metaverse. After the preliminary investigation, he focused on 24 highly referenced research papers by topic (Weinberger, 2022). On the other hand, E.A. Firmansyah and U.H. Umar review metaverse literature related to the business discipline. Their research focuses on the metaverse of business and limits Scopus search results to business, management, accounting and economics, econometrics, and finance (Firmansyah, Umar, 2023). Relatively, the scope of the present analysis extends beyond academic publications and into the mainstream media. Analyzing 614 news, blogs, and articles from mainstream media websites provides insight into the content writing tendencies associated with the phrase "metaverse."

H. Gao and his fellow researchers examine the dynamics of metaverse research and analyze potential future research directions. The authors present comprehensive research agendas that address both technological and societal challenges (Gao et al., 2023). The current study provides more support for the concept that the metaverse is regarded as a favorable trend and is poised to become one of the leading technologies of the future.

A. Tlili and his teammates examined industrial metaverse research trends, implications, and obstacles using content and bibliometric analysis. They found that metaverse application in industries is still relatively in its infancy, with most research in education and health (Tlili et al., 2023). The present study, using semantic analysis, identifies favorable inclinations about utilizing the term "metaverse" inside mainstream media websites.

T. Wu and F. Hao indicate in their study that Edu-Metaverse can enhance instructional material, lower costs, and enhance quality and efficiency, but it also poses significant hazards (Hao, Wu, 2023). The present study introduces an organized and comprehensive framework for obtaining novel insights regarding the metaverse by leveraging pre-existing content from online mainstream media sources.

Vincent Mosco critically analyzes the cultural dimensions of the metaverse, presenting it as a contemporary iteration of a series of utopian concepts revolving around a digital domain of transcendence (Mosco, 2023). In the same way, the current study also identifies favorable inclinations about utilizing the term "metaverse" within the realm of mainstream digital media.

G. Profumo and his teammates conducted a comprehensive literature review of 34 articles published from 2009 to 2022. Their analysis focuses on the function of the metaverse in the fashion industry within the management and marketing domains. Their findings indicated that the field of literature is still in its early stages of development (Profumo et al., 2024). Meanwhile, Z. Lyu provides a literature review of the latest research on Human-Computer Interaction in the Metaverse. He chosen approximately 100 sophisticated research papers on the Metaverse from a pool of nearly 20,000 articles spanning from 2018 to 2023. The evaluation states that there will be a trend towards more 'invisibility' in the interaction between people and computers in virtual environments (Lyu, 2023). Conversely, G.D. Ritterbusch and M.R. Teichmann conducted a systematic literature review (SLR) to seek a more precise metaverse definition. They examined and aggregated scientific terminology and metaverse features from 381 research articles. They also situate the activity within the taxonomy framework to determine its scope (Ritterbusch, Teichmann, 2023). On the other hand, the current research examines 614 news items, blogs, and articles from conventional online outlets to discover fresh perspectives on the metaverse. The research affirms an encouraging propensity towards futuristic technologies in India. The current study establishes a systematic and consistent approach to generating new knowledge about the metaverse based on existing mainstream digital media content.

In conclusion, the metaverse serves as a compelling sign of the internet's transformative potential. The current analysis extends beyond scholarly publications to encompass mainstream media sources. The systematic examination of 614 news stories, blogs, and articles from mainstream digital media reveals a discernible pattern indicating the emergence of 'metaverse' content as a prominent trend in authorship. However, the analysis confirms that the metaverse has a favorable tendency and will be among the future technologies for media, entertainment, and other internet-operated working fields.

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Published in the USA  
Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)  
Issued since 2005.  
ISSN 1994-4160  
E-ISSN 1994-4195  
2024. 20(2): 239-250

DOI: 10.13187/me.2024.2.239

<https://me.cherkasgu.press>



## Customer-Brand Attitude Congruence and Purchase Intentions Among Thai Media Students in Higher Education: A Case Study of the Sansiri Brand

Kittiphum Lagoonpot <sup>a, b</sup>, Smith Boonchutima <sup>a, b, \*</sup>, Ibtesam Mazahir <sup>b, c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Center for Excellence in Communication Innovation for the Development of Quality of Life and Sustainability, Thailand

<sup>b</sup> Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

<sup>c</sup> Muhammad Ali Jinnah University, Pakistan

### Abstract

This research investigates the influence of customer-brand attitude congruence on purchase intentions, with a particular focus on young Thai university students, utilizing the Sansiri brand as a case study. The study draws upon the theoretical framework of brand community and explores the intricate interplay between attitude similarity, brand value, brand awareness, brand image, reliability, sentiment engagement, community, and purchase intentions. Employing a survey methodology, a total of 434 participants responded to a self-rated questionnaire, utilizing a seven-point Likert scale for their evaluations. The analytical approach included descriptive statistics, internal consistency analysis, and the application of a structural equation model to assess the mediating effect of attitude similarity.

The outcomes of the study indicate a favorable disposition among participants towards the Sansiri brand, revealing a noteworthy connection between brand value, attitude similarity, and purchase intentions. The findings suggest a partial mediation effect, shedding light on the nuanced relationship dynamics within the consumer-brand interface. Furthermore, the study underscores the significance of brand awareness, image, and reliability as pivotal predictors influencing positive consumer behavior. Acknowledging certain limitations, such as a relatively modest sample size and the reliance on self-reported questionnaires, the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge in brand management.

**Keywords:** brand activism, attitude congruence, Sansiri, brand value, purchase intention, customer-brand relationship.

### 1. Introduction

The rapid growth of the internet and mass media platforms have enabled consumers to share their perspectives concerning controversial issues and events rapidly and efficiently. The proliferation of new media technologies has allowed consumers to share their viewpoints on a grander scale with an international community. Consumers have leveraged the availability of information on the web to examine and question the motive of organizations operating in society. The growing consumer awareness coupled with easy information access has made firms the target of growing advocacy groups culminating in the long-term establishments of social-political activism (Hollenbeck, Zinkhan, 2006). Since consumers are increasingly questioning firms' contributions besides generating profits, companies could no longer stay neutral and remain

\* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: [smith.b@chula.ac.th](mailto:smith.b@chula.ac.th) (S. Boonchutima)

detached from environmental happenings. They had to take a stand on political and social issues in the public domain through activism.

In the past, companies were extremely cautious about aligning themselves with polarizing matters. Numerous brands shied away from adopting a stance on controversial matters fearing that this would hurt their brand. As more firms in recent years openly adopt a perspective on public issues, customers have begun defining their purchase intentions based on congruence with the brand's position. Recent research established that 37 % of customers exhibited their inclination to suggest a brand to family and friends when they share a similar stand with a brand (Sprout Social, 2019). Moreover, customers believe that adopting a stand on political and social issues improves a brand's image. Nonetheless, they must exercise caution since brand activism can result in negative outcomes when the activism is incongruent with the core values or attitudes of the customer base. It may invite boycotting or backlash from loyal consumers who share varied perspectives on the matter. In this regard, it can be argued that brand activism is an art and a science. If correctly utilized, it can promote brand value as well as purchase intentions.

Several scholars (Wettstein, Baur, 2016; Moorman, 2020) advance that brands are presently comfortable isolating particular customers to adopt a position of controversial political and social issues from same-sex marriage, LGBTQIA (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, and asexual) rights, immigration, gun control, racism, and sexual harassment. D.B. Holt (Holt, 2002) asserts that when brands turn into activists concerning socio-political issues, they invite more scrutiny, and this may yield negative outcomes which can hurt the brand's equity and revenues. Customers may no longer trust or believe a brand when the firm utilizes activism (Alhouti et al., 2016; Bhattacharya, Sen, 2010). Marketing practitioners and academicians have the dangers of companies not "walking the talk" and the significance of authenticity when using activism (Kotler, Sakar, 2017; Unilever, 2019b). Similarly another study found that approximately 56 % of the customer held that companies utilize societal issues as a marketing tool to sell more products (Edelman, 2019).

On the same line few scholars advance that consumers progressively expect established brands to adopt a stance on socio-political issues (Hoppner, Vadakkepatt, 2019). Approximately 65 % of consumers want CEOs and organizations to assume a position on public issues (Barton et al., 2018; Edelman, 2018; Larcker, Tayan, 2018). Therefore, achieving congruence in attitudes between a brand and its consumers on socio-political issues emerges as critical in realizing the success of brand activism efforts. Real estate giant Sansiri is the first Thai firm to pledge to address discrimination against LGBTQIA people and support same-sex marriage. The company has signed the United Nations Global LGBTQIA Standards of Conduct for Business. It has partnered with Unilever and dtac to promote the joint vision of accomplishing equality in all dimensions (Bangkok Post, 2020; Bohwongprasert, 2022; Sansiri, 2022).

There is a budding interest among small and established brands to leverage brand activism to communicate their position on key public issues. However, information is scarce concerning how a customer's perceived congruence between the brand and themselves influences their brand attitude as a response to a brand taking a perspective. The current study seeks to determine the importance of congruence between customers and brands and how it affects brand value and purchasing intentions, within the context of Sansiri. The findings from this study will enhance the literature on brand activism which is scarce and inform companies how their perspectives on social issues affect their brand value and customers' intent to purchase.

## 2. Materials and methods

The study adopted a quantitative research design to collect data from Thai university students regarding customer-brand attitude congruence with special emphasis on the Sansiri brand. A total sample of 434 participants was attained in this study. Fifty self-rated questionnaires were administered to students selected randomly at the 12 publicly funded universities in Thailand between April and June 2022. The first section of the questionnaire sought to collect demographic statistics about the sample. The second part comprised items regarding the measures of the study: attitude similarity, awareness, image, reliability, sentiments engagement, and intentions. A seven-point Likert scale was used to frame the statements: (7) strongly agree, (6) agree, (5) somewhat agree, (4) neither agree, (somewhat disagree), (2) disagree, (1) strongly disagree. Participants were required to respond to the items by using a tick to the extent to which they agreed with statements concerning consumer-brand attitude congruence. No incentives were provided to the respondents

for participating in this study. The study focuses on young Thai university students, hence participants who were not students from these settings were excluded from the research. This was indicated by missing data on responses after administering the initial screening questions. The data used in this study were collected within the scope of a broader project. Ethical approval for this study was granted by the Faculty graduate program at Chulalongkorn University.

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was leveraged to compute the standard deviation, mean, max, and medium while the R software was utilized to calculate Omega estimates of internal consistency for each scale. A structural equation model was calculated to respond to the second research question. The interpretation of model fit and output parameters was guided by Kline (2015). Statistically significant associations and differences were exemplified by p-values < 0.05.

### 3. Discussion

A significant body of evidence has concentrated on the cases of congruence that promote customers' positive brand attitudes and purchasing intentions (Gupta, Pirsh, 2006). Based on the self-congruity theory, congruence is the degree to which two or more variables have similar traits (Kulkarni et al., 2008). Isolating points of congruence is vital for customers since they can foster their identity by identifying and connecting with an ideology (socio-political) which helps them to connect with other consumers (Flight, Coker, 2022). Literature establishes that highly congruent data connects with an individual's identity better than incongruent data (Moore et al., 2005). This results in highly congruent data being considered more favorable.

Enhancing customer engagement through positive brand experiences can foster favorable word-of-mouth and, consequently, boost purchase intent (Verhoef et al., 2020).

Few scholars suggest that consumer – product congruence enhances product attitudes and reduces advertising recognition via affective motive inference... This, in turn, strengthens purchase intentions (Belanche-Gracia et al., 2021).

Some scholars investigated the impact of self-concept congruence with brands on purchase intention while others explored the role of brand experience in building brand loyalty (Chavda et al., 2020; Farooq et al., 2021). Evidence shows that customers generate more positive attitudes toward brands when congruency is established, which is termed customer-brand congruence (Bhattacharya, Sen, 2004), and greater purchasing motives (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012). When consumers see a brand as aligning with who they are, they tend to form positive opinions about it. This alignment between self-identity and brand perception can create a good brand interaction, which can then impact the likelihood of making a purchase (Chaudhuri, Chowdhury, 2020).

Consumer behavior literature on congruence maintains that personalities have a preference for particular brands or products due to their practical value or symbolic meanings. This cognitive match between the consumer's identity and the brand's image is described by scholars as self-congruity or self-image congruence (Hosany, Martin, 2012; Leigh, Gabel, 1992), with studies elaborating its tremendous role in stimulating customer behavior (Kressmann et al., 2006; Sirgy et al., 1991).

Another research explores how corporate social responsibility (CSR) affects brand perception and the intention to purchase, with brand identification acting as a mediator. While not directly addressing customer-brand congruence, this study underscores the connection between brand attitude and the intent to buy (Lee et al., 2021).

Previous research has also shown that self-congruity between consumers and brands enhances customers' brand attitude and promotes purchasing intention (Ekinici, Riley, 2003; Sirgy et al. 1991). Another scholar corroborate the findings as they found that congruence between a brand and a customer was positively correlated with the customer's purchase intention for an organization practicing corporate social advocacy (Hong, Li, 2021). Congruence was negatively correlated with the customer's intention to boycott the brand. Attitude towards the brand mediated the relationship between customer-brand socio-political perspective congruence. On the same line, other studies have confirmed that when a customer and a brand have a mutual perspective on socio-political matters, the customers will have a positive attitude toward the brand which will enhance purchasing intention (Baek, 2010; Bhattacharya, Sen, 2004; Swimberghe et al., 2011). Based on these findings it is likely that customer-brand congruence mediates the relationship between brand value and purchasing intention.

A brand refers to much more than a name, product/service, symbol, tagline, or business name. It covers a set of mental connections held by the customer which determines the perceived

value of a good or service (Kapferer, 2004; Kotler, Keller, 2014). Brand value has been a subject of extensive debate since there are two conflicting perspectives in marketing about it. One school of thought considers brand value as the brand's financial or monetary worth. The second perspective, which was adopted in this study regards it as the perceived value of a brand or the significance customers attach a brand to their life. Studies demonstrate that greater brand awareness, image, reliability, brand-related sentiments, brand engagement, and brand community promotes the perceived worth of a brand, which further enhances its monetary worth (Bailey, Ball, 2006; Ball, Barnes, 2017; Barhemmati, Ahmad, 2015; Cheng et al., 2015; Horsfall, 2020; Malik et al. 2013; Wang et al., 2019).

Brand awareness addresses the extent to which consumers can recognize or recall a brand. The customer's aptitude to recall or recognize a brand determines willingness to make a purchase. Consumers cannot purchase a brand unless they are first aware of it. Awareness does not imply that the customer must recognize or recall a particular brand name, rather the consumer must remember the unique features of the brand to make a purchase. Few scholars that brand awareness is strengthened through repetitive exposure to the product or service. They consider brand awareness as the most basic knowledge about a brand which involves at least the identification of the brand's name or its development (Kotler, Keller, 2003; Shahid et al., 2017).

Learning about a brand is not sufficient enough to stimulate a purchase (Pelissari, Azzari, 2013). They found that brand awareness did not directly affect the intent to purchase. It was mediated by brand loyalty, brand association, and perceived quality. Perceived quality and brand awareness as antecedents of the purchasing decision. Nonetheless, scholars found that brand loyalty and brand awareness were positively correlated with purchasing intention. Existing studies suggest that brand awareness as a single construct is not enough to stimulate positive purchasing decisions. Other factors should be considered to promote consumers' perception of a brand (Malik et al., 2013; Martono, 2020).

Scholars consider brand image important for enterprises since it has been found to promote brand value (Bailey, Ball, 2006). Brand image refers to the feeling and perception that customers have concerning brands (Aaker, 1996; Zhang, 2015). It is the perception regarding a brand as exemplified by the consumer's brand associations embedded in the brain. Despite the varied definitions, scholars concur that brand image occurs in the consumers' minds based on the perception and interpretation of a brand (Hatch, Schultz, 2001; Kapferer, 2012; Keller, 1993). It is affected by consumption, communication, and social influence. Hung (2017) adds that brand image is formed through mutual interaction between consumer perception and brand stimulation. Organizations must align the brand's image with their vision to prevent and minimize ambiguity (Hatch, Schultz, 2001). Another study found that brand image enhances consumers' purchasing intention (Chen et al., 2014).

Brand reliability is one of the primary elements for evaluating customer trust in the marketing world. It occurs when a company or brand assumes responsibility for its behavior and consistently shows up in significant ways for the personalities it cares about. The modern consumer is increasingly aware of environmental happenings due to the proliferation of new media technologies and the internet. Consumers search for a trustworthy brand that is available when needed and stands by its claims. Brand reliability is exemplified in how consumers receive support and care. Existing studies have covered brand trust as a key predictor of brand reliability. A study found that the reliability aspect of brand trust enhanced consumers' willingness to make a positive purchasing decision online (Cheng et al., 2015). Another researcher identified brand trust as a major determinant of a brand's reliability and commitment (Sallam, 2017). Few others held that trust in an acquired product or service can be regarded as the fruit of its credibility and results in repetitive purchases (Sahin et al., 2011).

Brand sentiments are the opinions or fundamental emotions linked with a company and its goods and services. Attaining a favorable brand sentiment is essential for all firms since it has been revealed to generate better business outcomes and consumer loyalty. Notable factors that affect brand sentiment include the perception of a brand (negative, neutral, or positive feeling towards the product or service) and word associations (phrases or words that appear in the brain when a consumer thinks about a brand). Scholars assert a customer's brand perception openly impacts their brand trust, as well as purchasing decisions (Xue et al., 2020). A different study by H. Horsfall (Horsfall, 2020) made similar revelations that positive brand-related sentiments strengthen the likelihood of consumers making a purchase.

A brand community refers to a group of individuals brought together by their mutual interests and beliefs in the brand. The authors identified three key features of a brand community (Muniz, O'Guinn, 2001). It comprises members with a consciousness of a kind, a sense of moral obligation, and shared traditions and rituals. Brand communities are similar to contemporary fan clubs for customers. A robust brand community signifies high customer engagement and loyalty. Previous research has demonstrated the positive aspect of brand communities in promoting the relationship between consumers and brands (Ball, Barnes, 2017; Wang et al., 2019). Another group of scholars discovered that identification of a customer's brand community had a positive correlation with private and public loyalty (Mills et al., 2022). Needless to mention, constant engagement in the brand community by members is vital for its long-term success. Through promoting the experiences of brand communities, firms can strengthen customer loyalty and positive purchasing behavior. Participation can assume different forms such as appreciating, ranking, celebrating, mingling, assisting, and emphasizing (Hollebeek et al., 2017).

Brand engagement is the mechanism through which customers and brands reinforce their relationships (Hollebeek, 2011). Brands engage with customers to realize positive outcomes such as delivering services or goods with impeccable quality. Customer engagement can yield beneficial outcomes for both the brand and the customer (Barhemmati, Ahmad, 2015). They found that engaged consumers exhibit positive purchasing behavior for a particular brand. Brand engagement flourishes into brand love which enhances brand equity and purchasing decisions. Also, that brand engagement is a solid determinant of brand loyalty and promotes brand equity, as well as intent to purchase (Goyal, Verma, 2022; Verma, 2021).

In recent years, there have been various student movements in Thailand advocating for gender equality (UN Women, 2019). One of the most notable movements is the *Bad Student* movement, which began in 2020 and has since called for a curriculum overhaul, equality, and relaxation of rigid rules in high schools. Another student movement is the *HeForShe University Tour*, which is aimed at promoting gender equality on university campuses.

In addition, young people in Thailand are taking an active role in shaping conversations around gender equality, as seen in the intergenerational series for the Generation Equality campaign. Furthermore, a group of young female university students recently won the *Ambassador for a Day* video contest, where they spoke about the climate crisis and gender inequality, highlighting the importance of technology and education as possible solutions.

However, gender inequality is still prevalent in Thailand, with the country ranking 80th in the Gender Inequality Index, according to the 2020 UNDP Human Development Report (Kovavisarach, 2021). Only 14 % of parliamentary seats are held by women, and the percentage of women receiving secondary education is lower than that of men. Nevertheless, young people in Thailand are continuing to push for change and advocate for gender equality.

Gender equality has been legally advanced in Thailand, particularly through the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1985 and its Optional Protocol in 2000, the endorsement of the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995, and the commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. SDG Goal 5 for gender equality includes targets to end all forms of discrimination against women and girls and eliminate all forms of violence against them. UNDP has made gender equality central to its work in Thailand. The Thai government promulgated the Gender Equality Act in 2015, which was celebrated as a milestone, despite the coup government's appointment of only 5 % of women to its National Legislative Assembly. Despite these advancements, inequality in Thailand continues to affect the young Thai population, particularly with regards to adolescent pregnancies. Inequality is cited as the underlying cause of adolescent pregnancies in Thailand. Nevertheless, there are initiatives by the UN and other organizations to promote gender equality and address gender-based stereotypes, discrimination, and abuse through education and creative expression. There are also successful efforts to promote girls' education in Thailand, with the Ministry of Education granting all children a twelve-year education and the successful promotion of girls' right to education.

Sansiri appears to be a company that has demonstrated a strong commitment to gender equality in its organization. The company has celebrated *SansiriPride* events that aim to promote gender diversity and inclusion in the workplace (Sansiri, 2022). Sansiri has committed to the United Nations Global Standards of Conduct for Business to tackle discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people. In 2022, Sansiri was determined to equate equality as the new norm – as the first organization in Thailand and one of the top



200 companies worldwide that has committed to diversity and equality. The president of Sansiri has stated that gender equality and inclusivity are a priority and the company needs to reach out as much as possible to make Sansiri a truly inclusive organization. It is evident from the web search results that Sansiri is committed to promoting and celebrating gender equality in the workplace (Bangkok Post, 2020).

#### 4. Results

The demographic findings reveal that 434 respondents participated in this study with a majority of the sample 53 % being women and 47 % being men. All participants were 18-24 years old and students of different universities in Thailand. The descriptive data (Table 1) suggest that participants generally exhibited positive attitudes toward the Sansiri brand. Participants expressed the lowest (yet still relatively high) levels of agreement with items measuring the sense of community (i.e., perceived belonging to the Sansiri brand advocacy group), while the highest agreement was measured regarding items of awareness and image. In line with these findings, participants also exhibited relatively strong purchase intentions. Sharing opinions on social issues with brands was also evaluated as important, which provides initial arguments in favor of the relevance of the congruence between the attitudes of brands and consumers.

**Table 1.** Descriptive data of brand value, attitude congruence, and purchase intentions among citizens of Thailand (N = 434)

	item	min	max	M	SD
attitude similarity	You are more likely to buy products or services from brands that have the same stance as yours.	1	7	5.74	1.40
	You are less likely to buy products or services from brands that have the opposite stand to yours.	1	7	5.21	1.56
	You will continue to support brands that stand up for or express their opinions on current issues.	2	7	5.49	1.35
awareness	You can easily think of the Sansiri brand.	1	7	5.42	1.48
	You can recognize the Sansiri brand among other competing brands.	1	7	5.31	1.55
	You think of the Sansiri brand as the first brand when deciding to buy a product or service.	1	7	4.93	1.55
image	You feel good about the image of the Sansiri brand.	1	7	5.62	1.42
	Sansiri brand is more attractive than other brands	1	7	5.20	1.61
	Sansiri brand is different from other brands.	1	7	5.15	1.56
reliability	Sansiri brand can meet the promise made by the brand advertisers.	1	7	5.36	1.39
	The Sansiri brand has a reputation that can be trusted.	1	7	5.50	1.41
	The Sansiri brand is very interesting to you.	1	7	5.04	1.55
sentiment	You trust the Sansiri brand.	1	7	5.45	1.41
	You feel good supporting the Sansiri brand.	1	7	5.04	1.56
	Others feel good when they see that you support the Sansiri brand.	1	7	4.52	1.57
community	You feel part of the Sansiri brand advocacy group.	1	7	4.90	1.71
	You feel close to the Sansiri brand advocacy group.	1	7	4.23	1.61
	You feel a sense of fraternity with the Sansiri brand supporters.	1	7	4.10	1.58
engagement	You feel it is worth taking the time to support the Sansiri brand.	1	7	5.06	1.71

	item	min	max	M	SD
	You feel it is worth doing something more to support the Sansiri brand.	1	7	4.80	1.77
	You feel it is worth paying more money to support the Sansiri brand.	1	7	4.41	1.76
intentions	You will find out more about the Sansiri brand as it supports equal marriage.	1	7	5.29	1.68
	In a near future, if you have a chance, you are likely to buy products or services from the Sansiri brand as it supports equal marriage.	1	7	4.35	2.08
	You will not support products or services from the Sansiri brand as it supports equal marriage. (R)	1	7	2.87	1.85
	You will support products or services from the Sansiri brand as it supports equal marriage.	1	7	5.14	1.88

However, the previous estimates were based on self-observation: we may think some characteristics are important to us, but neglect them when making important decisions. Therefore, we tested the statistical model where the relationship between brand value and purchase intentions was mediated by the perceived similarity of attitudes, measured by the item "How much do you support the Sansiri brand's standpoint regarding the issue of equal marriage in Thailand?". The model fit was acceptable (robust CFI = .950, robust RMSEA = .090 [.083, .097], SRMR = .027). The complete model is presented in Figure 1. The model-implied bivariate relationships between attitude similarity and purchase intentions ( $r = .85, p < .001$ ) and brand value and purchase intentions ( $r = .95, p < .001$ ) were strong and positive, indicating that individuals perceiving a greater brand value and those exhibiting a stronger relevance of similarity in attitudes also exhibited stronger purchase intentions, respectively.

Omega estimates of internal consistency for each scale were obtained as follows: 0.95 (brand awareness) 0.99 (brand image), 0.99 (brand-related sentiment), 0.99 (brand-reliability), 0.95 (brand community), 0.97 (brand engagement), and 0.92 (intentions).

The direct path between brand value and purchase intentions was significant ( $\beta = .77, p < .001$ ), as well as the total path ( $\beta = .95, p < .001$ ). Since the indirect path was significant, as well ( $\beta = .18, p < .001$ ), we can conclude that a partial mediation occurred. In other words, a non-negligible part of the relationship between brand value and purchase intentions seems to be determined by the similarity of attitudes on relevant social issues between participants and brands.

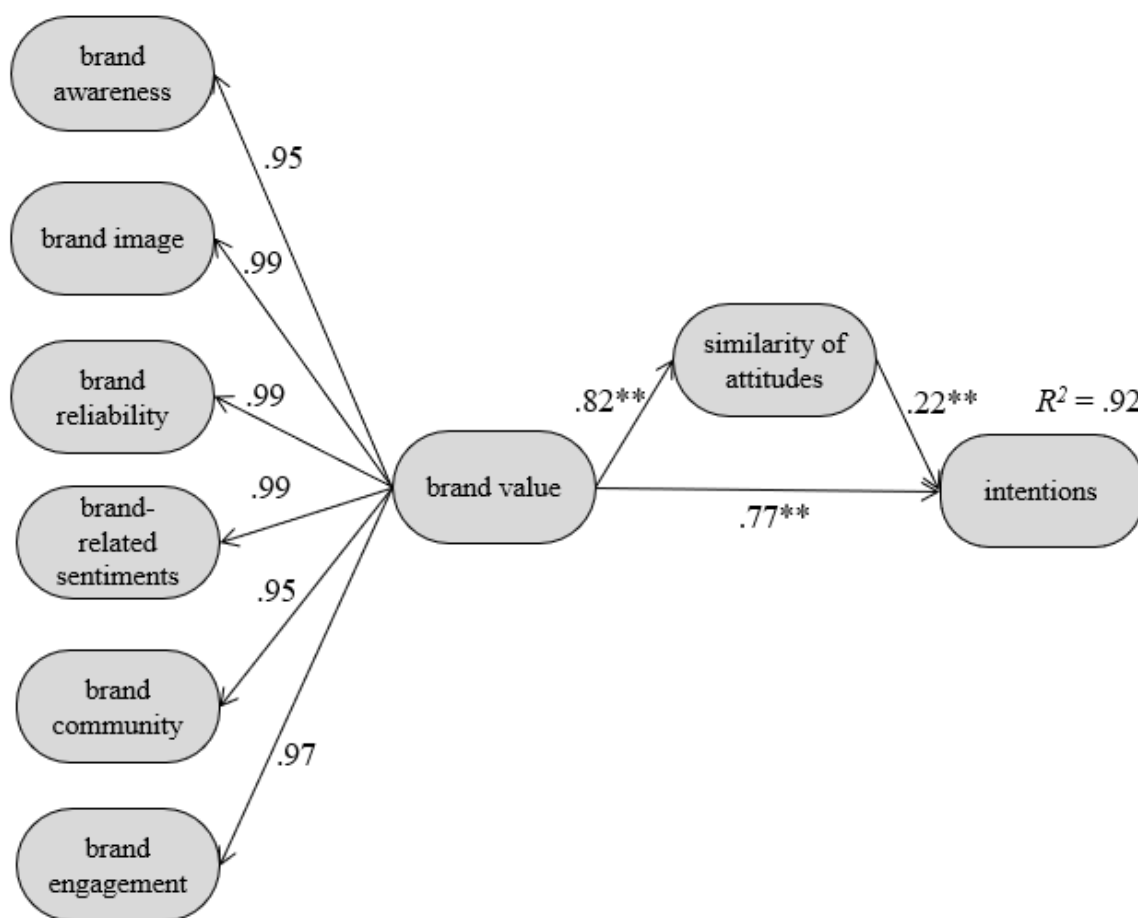
The findings suggest that the participants had various instances of congruity which enhanced their attitude toward the Sansiri Brand. The respondents indicated that they were more likely to purchase services or products from brands that had the same stance as theirs denoted by a strong mean of 5.74 and SD (1.40). In addition, the respondents noted that they were less likely to purchase services or products from brands that had an opposite stance from them. The findings are consistent with previous findings which found that congruency can stimulate more positive attitudes and diminish unfavourable ones (Moore et al, 2005; Bhattacharya, Sen 2004).

Further, the findings established that the respondents would continue supporting brands that stand up or express their perspectives on current issues. This is consistent with mainstream findings which indicate that approximately 65 % of consumers desired brands and executives who shared their perspectives on public or socio-political issues (Barton et al., 2018; Edelman, 2018; Larcker, Tayan, 2018).

Concerning the second item, brand awareness, the respondents indicated the highest agreement with the item. They asserted that they can easily think of the Sansiri brand as exhibited by mean (5.42) and SD (1.48). In addition, they could recognize the Sansiri brand among rival brands (mean=5.31, SD=1.55) and often thought of the Sansiri brand as the first brand when considering purchasing a brand (mean=4.93; SD=1.55). Nonetheless, the current findings indicate that the respondents had strong exposure to the Sansiri brands, and had sufficient knowledge about the brand which is central whenever consumers are making a purchasing decision.

The results in Table 1 indicate a high agreement with the statements or items concerning the brand image. The respondents noted that they felt good about the image of the Sansiri brand (mean=5.62, SD=1.42) and found it more attractive than other brands (mean=5.20, SD=1.61). Notably, they felt that the Sansiri brand was different from other brands in the market (mean=5.15,

SD=1.56). Existing studies hold that brand image is formed in the consumer's mind depending on the interpretation and perception of a brand (Hatch, Schultz, 2001; Kapferer, 2012; Keller, 213).



**Fig. 1.** The similarity of attitudes as a (partial) mediator of the relationship between brand value and purchase intentions

The participants held that the Sansiri brand fulfils the promise made by its adverts (mean=5.36, SD=1.39) and that the brand's reputation can be trusted (mean=5.50, SD=1.41). The participants also found the Sansiri brand interesting (mean=5.04, SD=1.55). The findings are consistent with (Sahin, 2011; Sallam, 2017) which found trust as a key driver of a brand's reliability. Regarding brand-related sentiments, the results revealed a significant agreement with item statements. Researchers including (Xue et al., 2020) maintained that brand-related sentiments which are the emotions and feelings associated with a brand often affect brand trust and intent to make a purchase. This is consistent with the current study findings whereby the respondents advanced that they trust the Sansiri brand (mean= 5.45, SD=1.41), they feel good supporting it (mean=5.04, SD=1.56), and other people felt good when they saw them supporting the Sansiri brand (mean=4.52, SD= 1.57).

A brand community is a powerful tool used by firms to create loyal members and create emotional connections. Participants in this study exhibited the lowest, yet still relatively significant levels of agreement with the item statements evaluating the sense of community or the perceived belonging to the Sansiri brand. They expressed they felt part of the Sansiri brand advocacy group (mean=4.90, SD=1.71), felt close to the brand (mean=4.23, SD=1.61), and felt a sense of fraternity with the Sansiri brand supporters (mean=4.10, SD=1.58). The findings align with earlier studies of (Ball, Barnes, 2017; Wang et al., 2019) which have confirmed that brand communities enhance the consumer-brand relationship. Concerning brand engagement, the results revealed a moderate agreement with the item statements. They observed that they felt part of the Sansiri brand advocacy group (mean=5.06, SD=1.71), felt it was worth doing something more to support the brand (mean=4.80, SD=1.77), and felt it was worth paying more money to support the Sansiri brand (mean=4.41, SD=1.76).

Brand activism gives customers a chance to compare themselves with a particular brand identity within the dimension of socio-political standing. Studies posit that customers who greatly identify with a particular brand often establish more favourable attitudes towards the brand (Bhattacharya, Sen, 2004) along with greater intentions to make a purchase (Stokburger-Sauer et al., 2012). The results of the current study align with these previous findings as the respondents' scores indicated relatively strong purchase intentions. They maintained that they would support the Sansiri brand as it supports equal marriage (mean=5.14, SD=1.88), would research more about the brand (mean=5.29, SD=1.68) and shortly whenever a chance presents itself, they would purchase services or products from the Sansiri brand (mean=4.35, SD=2.08). The participants disagreed with the statement that they would not support the Sansiri brand and its services or products due to its support for equal marriage (mean=2.87, SD=1.85). As exemplified by the findings, vocal brands that share the perspective concerning public issues in Thailand such as LGBTQIA and same-sex marriage are likely to witness an improvement in brand value and purchasing intention.

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, our study delves into the impact of congruence between consumer attitudes and brand values on purchase intentions, focusing on young Thai university students and utilizing the Sansiri brand as a case study. Rooted in the theoretical framework of brand community, our research explores the intricate relationships among attitude similarity, brand value, brand awareness, brand image, reliability, sentiment engagement, community, and purchase intentions. The findings reveal a positive inclination among participants towards the Sansiri brand, highlighting a significant association between brand value, attitude similarity, and purchase intentions. Our study provides insights into the nuanced dynamics shaping the relationship between consumers and the brand. Additionally, the research underscores the importance of brand awareness, image, and reliability as influential factors guiding positive consumer behavior. These outcomes suggest that fostering congruence between consumer attitudes and brand values positively influences brand value and encourages positive purchase intentions. Specifically, our sample of millennials exhibited predominantly favorable consumer behaviors towards the Sansiri brand, primarily attributed to shared attitudes on LGBTIQ issues and same-sex marriage. Our study emphasizes the significance of brands taking a stance on socio-political matters, particularly among millennials in Thailand. It implies that brand managers need to strategically navigate activism, aligning it with the brand's core beliefs and values while conveying sincerity in their advocacy. However, we acknowledge certain limitations, such as a relatively modest sample size, reliance on self-reported questionnaires, and the potential influence of generational differences.

Future research could explore attitudes among older individuals (above 40 years) toward brands supporting LGBTIQ and same-sex marriage, considering potential variations in perspectives. Despite these limitations, our study contributes to the field of brand management, underlining the positive influence of attitude congruence on brand-related outcomes and providing valuable insights for strategic brand communication.

## 6. Acknowledgements

The authors are also grateful for the support of the Second Century Fund (C2F), Postdoctoral Fellowship, Chulalongkorn University, and Research Unit on Center of Excellence in Communication Innovation for Development of Quality of Life and Sustainability, Department of Public Relations, Faculty of Communication Arts, Bangkok, 10330, Thailand.

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Published in the USA  
Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)  
Issued since 2005.  
ISSN 1994-4160  
E-ISSN 1994-4195  
2024. 20(2): 251-260

DOI: 10.13187/me.2024.2.251

<https://me.cherkasgu.press>



## The Political and Ideological Contexts of the Family Image and Family Education in Russian Post-Soviet and Contemporary Feature Films

Galina Mikhaleva <sup>a, \*</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Rostov State University of Economics, Russian Federation

### Abstract

The research investigates the political and ideological contexts of the family image and family education in Russian post-Soviet and contemporary feature films. The transition from the Soviet era to the post-Soviet period brought significant changes in social values which were presented in the portrayal of families on screen. With the break-up of the Soviet Union and the transition to a market economy, there was a resurgence of traditional values, including a renewed emphasis on the nuclear family as a source of stability and security in an uncertain world. Overall, the ideological and cultural analyses of contemporary Russian feature films focused on the family image reveal a complex and multifaceted portrayal reflecting the ongoing evolution of Russian society and culture. These films provide insights into the tensions between tradition and modernity, individualism and collectivism, and the impact of political and social changes on family dynamics in Russia. Thus, the depiction of the family image and family education in Russian post-Soviet and contemporary feature films is shaped by a complex interplay of political, social, and ideological factors. Recently, there has been a resurgence of conservative values and an emphasis on traditional family structures as a bulwark against perceived Western influence and moral decay. This has been reflected in some Russian feature films promoting traditional gender roles and family values as essential to national identity and stability.

**Keywords:** family, family upbringing, media, media text, media culture, media education, post-Soviet feature films.

### 1. Introduction

The reflection of political and social ideologies in Russian feature films is an important aspect of cinema production. At different historical periods in Russia, cinema served as a platform for the expression and promotion of various ideologies, reflecting public sentiments, political changes, and cultural values. Many films used ideological pathos and symbolism to convey certain political or social ideas. This was expressed through characters, dialogue, script, or music. Russian film directors have often used various narrative techniques to convey their political and social beliefs. This can be expressed through allegories, metaphors, symbolism, and other artistic techniques. All these aspects should be thoroughly analysed and critically assessed at media education lessons: “The problem of socially responsible education of youth is of particular relevance at the present stage in connection with objective changes in the cultural and historical development of our country” (Mikhaleva, 2021: 268).

In different historical periods, Russian cinema has been used to promote certain ideological theories, be it communism in the Soviet period, nationalism in the post-Soviet period,

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\* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: [galinamikhaleva@list.ru](mailto:galinamikhaleva@list.ru) (G. Mikhaleva)



or patriotism in modern Russia. Films could serve as a means of shaping public opinion and supporting political decisions. Many Russian films reflect historical events and periods, including the Soviet period, the Great Patriotic War, perestroika, and the fall of the USSR, as well as contemporary political events.

The depiction of family image and family education in Russian post-Soviet and contemporary feature films reflects the broader political and ideological contexts of the times. The transition from the Soviet era to the post-Soviet period brought significant changes in social values which were presented in the portrayal of families on screen.

Considering the crucial role of modern cinema as a factor in promoting family values among young people, we would like to emphasize the importance of developing in the younger generation critical skills and the ability to analyse present-day feature films about family and family education since “the emerging personality, faced with family problems, with the need to find an example or model of behaviour, is forced to look for ways solutions in the surrounding information field, including the film industry. It is necessary to understand the role of cinema in the youth environment, to develop media competence” (Obukhovski, 2021: 43).

## 2. Materials and methods

Russian and foreign scientific publications focused on family and family upbringing as reflected in Russian post-Soviet feature films are the materials of the study. Besides, the additional research methods are used: analysis and synthesis of articles and monographs on the research theme, generalization, and classification.

We also applied the methodologies developed by C. Bazalgette (Bazalgette, 1992), A. Silverblatt (Silverblatt, 1995, 2001, 2016), including the critical approach offered by L. Masterman (Masterman, 1985).

## 3. Discussion

During the Soviet era, the state played a dominant role in shaping family structures and values in connection with “the political and ideological contexts of that time. In the earliest Soviet feature films, the audience’s attention was focused on collective values such as solidarity, mutual assistance, and responsibility. Soviet cinema often idealized relationships within the family, emphasizing love, trust, and mutual assistance between its members. Soviet feature films emphasized the importance of socially useful work or service” (Mikhaleva, Lozovitskaya, 2024: 313).

The idealized image of the Soviet family typically revolved around collective values where individuals were expected to prioritize the interests of the state over their own personal desires. Gender roles were often rigidly defined, with women portrayed as strong and self-sacrificing mothers and workers, while men were depicted as providers and protectors of the family and the state. This was revealed in the analysis of the working dynasties representation in the Soviet cinematography offered by O. Posukhova, L. Klimenko and S. Chelyshev: “Cinema increased opportunities for legitimizing the unique status of working dynasties. That was facilitated by both technical capabilities (dynamics of visual images, light, color, sound, etc.) and a mass audience. During the periods of Soviet societies, there was also a state order to produce films about the life of working dynasties.” (Posukhova et al., 2021).

Post-Soviet Russia witnessed a period of rapid social and economic transformations which had profound implications for family values. With the break-up of the Soviet Union and the transition to a market economy, there was a resurgence of traditional values, including a renewed emphasis on the nuclear family as a source of stability and security in the uncertain world. However, this period also saw the erosion of state support for social services, leading to increased economic hardships for many families and social inequalities: “During the period of “perestroika,” a series of sketches about working families was replaced by materials about family problems, the collapse of society, and the breakdown of values. Propaganda of material values and consumer practices led to changes in moral and ethical standards and images, cultural meanings” (Mishchenko, 2014: 78).

In Russian post-Soviet cinema, the image of the family developed in the context of political and ideological changes that took place in the country after the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991. The 1990s saw significant social, economic, and cultural transformations that impacted the way family was portrayed in films. In the 1990s, Russia experienced a crisis associated with the transition to a market economy and the collapse of the Soviet political system. This brought about

changes in family structure, increased social mobility and a variety of family models which were reflected in cinema.

Analysing modern Russian feature films, cinema art critic V.S. Malyshev concludes that a significant part of Russian film production of the last five years still carries depressive motives and forms in the viewer a one-sided negative impression of today's reality and prospects for the future: "For many Russians, the perestroika era turned into a loss of hope. The depressive trend turned out to be so tenacious that it migrated to Russian cinema of the 1990s, and even to the cinema of the new, 21st century. Films of this kind no longer aroused increased audience interest" (Malyshev, 2020: 8).

The post-Soviet crisis and social changes had a significant impact on the content and themes of Russian films about family and family education. Russia faced major economic, social, and cultural transformations which were reflected in cinema. Thus, Russian feature films about family after the break-up of the USSR often mirrored the economic difficulties that families faced. The films depicted job loss, financial problems, housing difficulties and other aspects of social inequality that affected family relationships: "A mother of many children, Polina Ovechkina (*Mama*, USSR, 1999) tries in vain to straighten out the broken destinies of her sons (one of them is a patient in a mental hospital, another is a drug addict and a pimp, the third one works for pennies in a mine, the fourth son is a contract sniper in a "hot spot"...). The touching and spiritual heroines of the film *Country of the Deaf* (Russia, 1998) by V. Todorovsky turn out to be powerless victims of mafia showdowns. The boy Sanya (*The Thief*, Russia, 1997) loses faith in goodness after his "father," the "war hero", turns out to be a cruel and unscrupulous criminal. When you watch this film, frames from S. Bondarchuk's *The Fate of Man* (Russia, 1959) involuntarily emerge in your memory, where a crying Andrei Sokolov tenderly hugs a street boy lamenting "Father, dear!" (Malyshev, 2020: 13). The evolution of the father's image was also thoroughly traced in the Soviet family from High Stalinism to the Thaw and Stagnation in the book "Cinemasaurus: Russian Film in Contemporary Context" (Condee et al., 2020).

According to the research findings of A.V. Korotkova, the image of the family promoted in mass media "largely determines the current models of family behaviour, actively participates in the formation of such a complex phenomenon as fashion, creates typical images-standards of the family which subsequently accompany people throughout their lives, having a significant impact on their worldviews. Through identification and projection, a person unconsciously imitates (the process of cloning) the images of family advertised by the media" (Korotkova, 2007: 3).

In this respect a critical analysis of modern Russian audiovisual media texts about family and family relationships seems important in the context of media education and presupposes the development of critical thinking among the audience: "Analysis of media texts based on the ability for media perception, close to "complex identification", the ability to analyse and synthesize the space and time aspects of a media text, understanding, interpretation (interpretation), involving comparison, abstraction, induction, deduction, synthesis, critical assessment of the author's concept in the context of the structure of the work, historical and cultural contexts (this expresses reasoned agreement or disagreement with the author's position of the creators of the media text, critical assessment of the moral, emotional, aesthetic, social significance of a media text, the ability to correlate emotional perception with a conceptual judgment, transfer this judgment to other genres/types of media culture, connect the media text with your experience and the experience of other people, etc.)" (Fedorov, 2007: 506).

I.O. Shevchenko provided a thorough sociological analysis of the image of the father in contemporary Russian-Chinese films. It turned out that the image of a father in feature films had a largely positive connotation and coincided with the qualities of a "good father". These are both universal human qualities (kindness, sincerity, honesty, openness) and characteristics that relate only to fathers: responsibility towards family and children, willingness to do everything to maintain home comfort, etc. (Shevchenko, 2015).

L.A. Gritsai and T.V. Leontjeva examined the audiovisual media texts about family in contemporaneous Russian animated films (Gritsai, 2013; Leontjeva, 2022). Since nowadays the transmission of family values, ideas about the family, its structure, functions is carried out not only by the parental family, but also constructed through exposure to the media, they emphasized the importance of analysing "the visual image of the family reflected in modern Russian animated cartoons for children and adolescent audiences, when long-term value guidelines are laid in

marriage and family relations, which determine the overall potential of personal development” (Leontjeva, 2022: 4).

According to V.V. Tyulyunova, contemporary families in Russian films face the following problems: “hardships of young families, challenges of deviant motherhood and fatherhood, orphanhood, and single-parent families. Critics highlighted some aspects in them: the family parental function, young people’s unpreparedness for marriage and having a child, children’s reluctance to live in orphanages, orphans’ lack of independence, their unpreparedness for adult life, the emotionality of children from single-parent families” (Tyulyunova, 2020: 134).

W. Douglas and B.M. Olson examined the portrayal of family relationships in domestic comedies on account of their popularity during the period 1950-1990 (Douglas, Olson, 1995).

On the other hand, T. Kubrak analysed the impact of feature films on adolescents focusing on the changes in young people’s attitudes after watching films (Kubrak, 2020).

The study by M.I. Kosinova and T. Solgi reveals family values in Iranian and Russian cinema. The authors emphasise that “in the modern cinema of these countries, we often encounter negative trends indicating the disintegration of the traditional family. The source of these trends is the negative influence of the West, and in particular, Western cinema” (Kosinova, Solgi, 2022).

The representations of the family in the family film, including the analysis of marital relationships, images of couples and families in adult and children’s films were thoroughly studied by some foreign scholars (Allen, 1999; An, 2017; Antunes, 2017; Babarskiene, Gaiduk, 2018; Bazalgette, Staples, 1995; Brown, 2012, 2013, 2017; Chopra-Gant, 2006; Garlen, Sandlin, 2017; Norton, 2021; Tanner et al., 2003; Wadsworth, 2015; Zurcher et al., 2018, 2020).

#### 4. Results

In the context of our study, the studies related to changes taking place in the state family policy are important indeed. Their key priorities highlighted the essence of the political and ideological concepts of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods and the historical epochs of the country. As the analysis shows, at different stages of the development of our country, the state ideology put forward certain objectives for family institutions and family education and determined the priorities of the state family policy, measures to support and strengthen family values.

Let us consider the main developing stages of the state family policy in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods using the models presented by A.V. Noskova (Noskova, 2013).

For example, the post-revolutionary model (1917-1926) highlighted the task of creating new and destroying old ideas about family relationships in general. The new family in the state of socialism under construction was supposed to become a model of new, equal relations where the main objective of the family structure was the socialist construction. At the same time, the state power assumed an active mediating function “in marital and child-parent relations. The active intervention of the state in private life, its desire to eradicate centuries-old family traditions in the first post-revolutionary decade gave rise, in our opinion, to an acute contradiction between the “traditional” and the “modern”: in behavioural attitudes towards marriage, the birth of children, the format of marital and gender relations” (Noskova, 2013: 156).

In the 1930s-1950s, the “Stalinist” model (1926-1953) was dominant in the context of family relations in our country. The main priorities during that period were strengthening the unshakable foundations of a strong Soviet family, protecting the institution of motherhood, banning abortion, and actively involving parents in the production through the expansion of preschool educational institutions which accepted children under the care of the state from a very early age. In general, the government measures regarding the family were aimed at strengthening ideological control over the family, the desire to “preserve traditional family values and at the same time promote modern models of family-gender relations” (Noskova, 2013: 156).

The next, the “Soviet social” model (1954-1991), was characterized by a more lenient attitude towards divorce and childbearing planning. Consequently, “together with other socio-economic determinants, the liberalization of family relations stimulated further transformation of the marital and reproductive behaviour of Soviet people” (Noskova, 2013: 156).

Since the beginning of the 1990s, in place of the previous models of the socialist period, the “post-Soviet” model (1992 – early 2000s) became dominant when the main priorities of the family policy concerned the family institution which existence was complicated by an acute socio-economic crisis, the devaluation of moral ideas about family well-being as the main goal of human well-being, and a

sharp decline in the birth rate. During these years, “a new paradigm of state family support was built on the ruins of the Soviet family social protection system” (Noskova, 2013: 158).

The so-called newest model (since the 2000s) is characterized by “active state support for families aimed at solving demographic problems, full support for young families, solving social issues, such as the placement of “children” orphans into families, assistance to families with disabled children, the ongoing fight against family poverty, prevention of family deviance, etc.” (Noskova, 2013: 159).

In the post-Soviet period, there were drastic changes in social values and norms which were reflected in films about family and family education. Liberation from the ideological constraints of the Soviet period led to a wider variety of family patterns and relationships. Many post-Soviet Russian feature films depicted the challenges faced by families during the transition period from the Soviet era to the present day. These films often explore themes of economic hardships, social instability, and the breakdown of traditional family structures in the face of rapid societal changes (*Voroshilov Sharpshooter*, Russia, 1999).

In Russian films focused on family and family education, the disintegration of traditional family values under the influence of modernization processes and Western culture became noticeable indeed. The feature films often addressed the themes of loneliness, infidelity, and other difficult aspects of family life. Due to the above-mentioned social and cultural changes in society, family values also changed. There began to appear Russian feature films that more openly discussed the diversity of family forms and types of relationships, including divorce, new marriages, etc. The examples of Russian feature films that reflect political and social changes include *American Daughter* (Russia, 1995), *The President and His Granddaughter* (Russia, 1999), and others.

Complex family relationships were also touched upon. Russian feature films were increasingly examining complicated and controversial aspects of family relationships, such as divorce, arranged marriages, domestic violence and other problems faced by modern families. “Fundamental changes, realized primarily at the level of state cultural policy, occurred only in the second decade of the 2000s. But even currently, the heroes are bright, decent, socially responsible and carry within them a depressive aura of “ungrateful fate”. So, for example, in the film *Arrhythmia* (Russia, 2017) by B. Khlebnikov, touching, honest, selflessly fulfilling his professional and human duty, emergency doctor Oleg (A. Yatsenko) appears as a failure in the main fields of life – at work and in the family” (Malyshev, 2020: 13).

Russian cinematography of the post-Soviet period reflected the processes of family adaptation to new social, economic, and cultural realities. The films drew attention to the challenges and obstacles that families faced in new society and how to overcome them. The examples of Russian feature films that mirror changing family values include *The Return* (Russia, 2003), *Leviathan* (Russia, 2014). These films showed the diversity of forms of family life and relationships in modern Russia, thus reflecting changes in family values and their adaptation to new realities.

Post-Soviet films about family also captured a considerable change in the roles of women and men. Women were more often portrayed as independent and self-sufficient individuals striving for career growth and self-realization, while men sometimes had difficulty adapting to new social realities. In Russian post-Soviet cinema, there was less emphasis on traditional gender roles in the family, such as women as housewives and men as breadwinners. Films more often portrayed women and men as equal partners sharing responsibility for family responsibilities.

With the increase in the number of immigration processes in post-Soviet Russia, Russian feature films about family relationships began to reflect issues related to migration, adaptation to new cultural environments and finding one’s place in society. Examples of Russian feature films about family and family education, mainly dramas and melodramas, that reflect the post-Soviet crisis and social changes include *Brother* (Russia, 1997), *Night Fun* (Russia, 1991), *You’re One and Only Mine* (Russia, 1993), *Everything Will Be All Right* (Russia, 1995). The films addressed complex aspects of family life and social reality in Russia, reflecting new challenges and trends.

There was a focus on individual stories: Russian post-Soviet cinema began to explore individual family stories. The films raised issues of personal development, self-identification and overcoming family conflicts.

There is a significant exploration of gender roles in contemporary Russian films focused on family and family relationships, reflecting shifting attitudes towards gender equality and women’s

rights. Some feature films challenge traditional gender roles by portraying female characters as independent and assertive, while others reinforce traditional gender stereotypes.

There began to appear Russian feature films with the emphasis on women emancipation, women's desire for self-realization outside the family and career growth, which was reflected in family dramas and comedies. The evolution of the role of women in the family and society in modern Russian cinema reflects a wide range of changes that have occurred in Russian society over the past decades. Changes in ideas about the role of women in the family and society in Russian feature films can be presented as follows.

In Soviet cinema, women were often portrayed in the role of a "new woman", active, efficient, and independent from men. A typical Soviet woman was presented as a worker, a builder of communism, a factory worker, a doctor, a teacher, or any other professional worker. This reflected the ideology of gender equality and the socialist system. Family relationships were often idealized: a woman and a man were equal partners, raising children together and solving family problems.

In the Russian cinema of the post-Soviet period (after 1991), the role of women in the family and society began to change. Films were increasingly emphasizing the diversity of life situations women faced, from career advancement to family difficulties and relationship violence. Films began to focus on women's emancipation, self-realization, and the fight for their rights, including the right to education, work, and freedom of choice in their personal lives (*The Envy of Gods*, Russia, 2000; *March of the Slav*, Russia, 2003, *I'll Be Around*, Russia, 2012).

In modern Russian cinema (feature films released after 2000s), the role of women has become more diverse and multifaceted. Contemporary feature films reflect the complex aspects of women's lives in modern society, from balancing family and professional responsibilities to combating gender stereotypes and discrimination. Some films emphasize the importance of support and solidarity among women, the formation of networks of mutual aid and emotional support.

The portrayal of fathers in modern Russian feature films also reflects a diverse range of perspectives, influenced by societal changes, cultural values, and cinematic trends. Some films depict fathers adhering to traditional roles as the head of the family, providing guidance, discipline, and support to their children (*Father*, Russia, 2007). These characters often embody the qualities of authority, strength, and stoicism, showing conventional notions of masculinity and paternal responsibility. Given Russia's history, some films explore the legacy of Soviet-era fathers portrayed as heroic figures sacrificing personal fulfilment for the greater good of society or as flawed individuals grappling with the pressures of state ideology and personal aspirations.

In contrast, there are films that address absentee fathers, either physically or emotionally (*Compensation*, Russia, 2010; *Stirlitz's Wife*, Russia, 2012). These narratives examine the impact of paternal absence on familial dynamics, with protagonists navigating feelings of abandonment, resentment, or longing for paternal presence. Some films focus on the complexities of father-daughter relationships, depicting fathers as protective yet sometimes overbearing figures who struggle to reconcile their traditional values with their offspring's desires for independence and self-expression. Similarly, some films delve into the relationships between fathers and sons, exploring the themes of legacy, masculinity, and intergenerational conflict. These narratives often present the challenges of communication and understanding between the younger and the older generations (*Son*, Russia, 2014; *Van Goghs*, Russia, 2018; *Dad*, Russia, 2020).

A common narrative arc involves fathers seeking redemption or reconciliation with their children after past mistakes or estrangement. These stories often emphasize the transformative power of forgiveness, empathy, and familial bonds. Some contemporary films portray fathers navigating the complexities of modern life, balancing career demands, personal aspirations, and familial responsibilities. These characters may challenge traditional gender roles by actively participating in childcare and domestic duties (*Daddy's Daughters*, Russia, 2007-2013). Other films featuring single fathers offer nuanced portrayals of masculinity and parenthood, highlighting the unique challenges and triumphs of raising children alone. These narratives challenge stereotypes and celebrate the resilience of single-parent families. For instance, the film *Ice 2* (Russia, 2020) conveys the difficulties of raising a daughter by a single father. Overall, the depiction of fathers in modern Russian feature films reflects a rich tapestry of experiences, emotions, and cultural influences, capturing the complexities of fatherhood in contemporary society.

Analysing present-day Russian feature films through an ideological and cultural lens regarding the family image reveals portrayals of both traditional values and the impact of societal changes. Some contemporary Russian films evoke nostalgia for the stability and unity of the Soviet epoch, presenting

idealized images of family life during that time: “Russian cinema at the turn of the 20th-21st centuries also constructed (consciously and unconsciously) nostalgia for the Soviet, but at the same time it was also busy with the opposite work – demythologizing nostalgic sentiments” (Nemchenko, 2016: 109). These films may highlight traditional gender roles and emphasize the importance of collective values and state support for families (*The Eighties*, Russia, 2016).

Conversely, other films criticize the legacy of the Soviet social system, portraying dysfunctional or oppressive family structures that resulted from the strict adherence to ideological principles. These films explore themes of individualism, rebellion against authority, and the desire for personal fulfilment outside of traditional family roles.

Russian feature films touched upon various political and social ideologies that influenced the idea of family. For example, in the 2000s, there was an emphasis on traditional family values and patriotism.

The political climate in Russia, characterized by a resurgence of conservative values influences the portrayal of family in Russian film production. Some films promote traditional family values as essential to national identity and stability, while others criticize the government’s promotion of a narrow definition of family.

In contemporary Russian feature films, the family image portrayal mirrors these complex political and ideological transformations. On the one hand, there is often nostalgia for the stability and unity of the Soviet era, with some films idealizing the traditional family values of that time. There is also a recognition of the need to adapt to changing social realities, with feature films exploring such themes as individualism, gender equality, and the challenges of modern parenthood.

Additionally, the political climate in Russia has influenced the portrayal of family in modern film production. Recently, there has been a resurgence of conservative values and an emphasis on traditional family structures as a bulwark against perceived Western influence and moral decay. This has been shown in some Russian feature films which promote traditional gender roles and family values as essential to national identity and stability (*Bless the Woman*, Russia, 2003).

Overall, the depiction of the family image and family education in Russian post-Soviet and contemporary feature films is shaped by a complex interplay of political, social, and ideological factors, reflecting the ongoing evolution of Russian society and culture.

Contemporary Russian feature films also capture the influence of some global trends and cultural exchanges, with some films adopting narrative structures, themes, and visual styles from Western cinema. This can result in a more diverse and cosmopolitan portrayal of family life in Russia, challenging traditional narratives and stereotypes.

## 5. Conclusion

At different historical periods in Russia, feature films served as a platform for the expression and promotion of ideological ideas, reflected public sentiment, political changes, and cultural values: “the theme of family and family education has always been and continues to be one of the central in the cinema. The transformational processes taking place in society could not but influence the reflection of this topic in Russian media culture of different historical periods” (Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2022: 549).

Content analysis of feature films of the post-Soviet and modern period, presenting the family image, allowed us to formulate the following conclusions:

- The transition from the Soviet era to the post-Soviet period brought significant changes in social values which were presented in the portrayal of families on screen.
- With the break-up of the Soviet Union and the transition to a market economy, there was a resurgence of traditional values, including a renewed emphasis on the nuclear family as a source of stability and security in an uncertain world.
- Post-Soviet films about family also captured a considerable change in the roles of women and men. Women were more often portrayed as independent and self-sufficient individuals striving for career growth and self-realization, while men sometimes had difficulty adapting to new social realities.
- There is a focus on individual stories: Russian post-Soviet cinema began to explore individual family stories and the dynamics of relationships more actively within the family. The films raised the issues of personal development, self-identification and overcoming family conflicts.

– The political climate in Russia, characterized by a resurgence of conservative values influences the portrayal of family in Russian film production. Some films promote traditional family values as essential to national identity and stability, while others criticize the government's promotion of a narrow definition of family.

– Contemporary Russian feature films also reflect the influence of global trends and cultural exchanges, with some films adopting narrative structures, themes, and visual styles from Western cinema. This can result in a more diverse and cosmopolitan portrayal of family life in Russia, challenging traditional narratives and stereotypes.

## 6. Acknowledgements

This research is funded by the grant of the Russian Science Foundation (RSF, project No. 24-28-00032) at the Rostov State University of Economics. Project theme: "The image of family and family upbringing in Russian feature films and prospects for media education (1920-2020)". Head of the project is I.V. Chelysheva.

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Published in the USA  
Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)  
Issued since 2005.  
ISSN 1994-4160  
E-ISSN 1994-4195  
2024. 20(2): 261-271

DOI: 10.13187/me.2024.2.261

<https://me.cherkasgu.press>



## Messaging Apps in Teacher-Parent Digital Communication

Olga Petrova <sup>a</sup>, Irina Belyakova <sup>a,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Tyumen State University, Russian Federation

### Abstract

The authors analyze current teacher-parent digital communication practices via school group chats and define the communicative competence of stakeholders in education in connection with the use of instant messaging applications.

The latest research in pedagogy, digital and media literacy is discussed in terms of its didactic potential regarding instant messaging apps as a 'new normal' in the learning environment.

Content analysis of 32 media texts, including articles and posts, and over 800 comments published on teacher forums, professional journals and special interest magazines reveals that the roles of teachers and parents as communicators as well as their strategies for interaction are rather controversial. There is a distinct contradiction between school administrations' expectations about developing a more open and collaborative communicative environment via messaging apps and reality. Teachers complain of increased working loads and poor ethics on the part of parents; the latter disapprove of the content and amount of the received messages. As a result, teachers tend to stick to the strategy of abandoning two-way communication in favor of one-way, thus limiting the role of parents.

New styles and strategies for communication between teachers and parents using instant messaging services should be modeled.

**Keywords:** messaging apps, digital literacy, online group school chats, digital communication, learning environment.

### 1. Introduction

Nowadays, messaging applications have become an important everyday tool in the lives of participants of the secondary school educational process since they offer a wide variety of functions as a media resource.

According to the results of a 2021 survey conducted by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center (known in Russia as VCIOM), a vast majority of surveyed schoolchildren over 14 years of age, school teachers and parents use mobile messaging applications (96 %, 96 % and 95 %, respectively). For teachers, they have become indispensable work assistants; for schoolchildren and parents, they are important channels of day-to-day out-of-school communication. The most popular instant messaging services in Russia are *WhatsApp*, *Telegram*, *Vkontakte* and/or *VK Messenger*, *Viber* ([Messendzhery..., 2022](#)).

In 2023, The Institute of Education of the Higher School of Economics (HSE) with the support of the education service *Sferum* conducted a study on the use of messaging apps by school teachers: 45 % of respondents noted that such services allow them to motivate students, and most of their communication – 6 out of 7 hours a week – is remote ([Pochti..., 2023](#)). 56 % use instant

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\* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: [o.a.petrova@utmn.ru](mailto:o.a.petrova@utmn.ru) (O.A. Petrova), [i.e.belyakova@utmn.ru](mailto:i.e.belyakova@utmn.ru) (I.E. Belyakova)

messaging applications to keep parents informed about all aspects of school life, not only grades; 35 % of teachers noted that the use of technology gave them a “feeling of being heard by parents” (Tsifrovyye..., 2023). These data confirm a steady trend towards the introduction of new information and communication tools into the practice of Russian education and identify the problem field – digital family-school interaction.

The use of instant messaging in schools, despite being widespread, remains questionable. There is no consolidated opinion on the issue. Discussions in mass media and social media revolve mainly around teacher-parent and teacher-student chats and draw attention to this form of social interaction with the school as the one shaping the image of the school and the teacher.

Another aspect of the issue of including messaging apps in the educational process concerns teachers’ competencies. Analysts note that despite the overall high digital literacy in school teachers, ICT competencies require continuous improvement, including communicative literacy, which, in our opinion, is directly related to the use of messaging apps and online group chats in teachers’ daily routine (Aimaletdinov et al., 2019: 57).

Thus, messaging apps are considered as digital teaching tools and as a communication platform for the main stakeholders in education. Nevertheless, online school chats are often perceived as private everyday communication. Existing research does not take into account specifics of communication partners and the routine of their social interaction. Neither teachers nor parents have a clear strategy for their presence in instant messaging apps and school chats. The Ministry of Education regulates official resources of educational institutions, but online group chats in popular instant messaging apps remain in the “gray” zone of school life. Russian legislation does not provide any special norms regulating interaction in social media. The launch of the educational application *Sferum* in 2023 did not solve this problem. Instead, it brought about more dissatisfaction among some teachers and parents and criticism in the media.

## 2. Materials and methods

The issue of school (teacher-parent, teacher-student) chats and the use of instant messaging apps has been discussed in various media environments: in socio-political media, in professional pedagogical media, and in social media among parents, students and teachers. We assume that, on the one hand, this is how public demand is formulated for the school as a social institution responsible for holding strict moral and ethical norms and values as well as ensuring a safe environment, including safe access to digital resources. On the other hand, teachers should meet requirements about their communicative and digital competencies to prove their capability of maintaining and developing these qualities within the learning environment. Strategies for the interaction of all participants of the educational process, primarily teachers and parents, become another important research question in the context of the massive use of messaging apps. In this paper, we examine these issues in the context of media and communication literacy.

Our approach to the development of school teachers’ media competence is based on the research done by the scientific school headed by A.V. Fedorov (Fedorov, 2007; Fedorov, Chelysheva, 2007). We also rely on the concept of digital literacy and ICT competencies proposed by the Office of Financial Research (OFR) Analytical Center based on international and Russian experience (Aimaletdinov et al., 2019), and a large-scale study “Competencies of Russian teachers: digital literacy, soft skills and the ability to develop functional literacy” (Kompetentsii..., 2020: 10).

Results of the empirical study were obtained by analyzing texts describing the use of online school chats in school-related communication. The 2020-2024 publications of media and news agencies, including sources specializing in education and upbringing, provided material for textual analysis. 22 articles and 10 posts were selected from open sources, including comments on them (in cases where there was a commenting function provided). We analyzed 800 comments including discussions in open thematic groups on the social networking website *VKontakte*. Authors of these posts and comments talk about their own communicative experience, which allows us to regard this material as empirical. Moreover, teachers writing these comments do this with an intention to consolidate their experience in the public field and find solutions to the problems associated with the use of messaging services.

When analyzing social media posts and discussions, we use techniques designed for media discourse analysis and qualitative content analysis. We consider common teacher-parent communication issues and mutual expectations of teachers and parents as a wider context for online school chat discussions and the basis for their involvement in comments.

### 3. Discussion

Media communication scholars note a change in the nature of social interaction between participants of communication due to a massive spread of messaging applications. P. Kolozaridi and A. Ilyin write about the changing practices of the use of technology which is connected with its increasing mobility. They single out the following properties of new technologies: synchronous mode of communication, intimacy, total disappearance of boundaries between the online and offline spheres, and unpretentiousness. “Immediate archiving is being replaced by presence here and now, synchronous communication, constant presence on air without cutting or censoring” (Kolozaridi, Ilyin, 2015: 133).

Instant messaging platforms make a global contribution to communication processes (Kosorukova, 2018). Researcher of digital topoi E. Kozhemyakin highlights technological characteristics of digital platforms: “the ability to store information, the multimodal nature of messages, immediacy and simultaneity, accessibility and controllability” (Kozhemyakin, 2021: 787). Physical presence guarantees neither full inclusion in communication processes nor participation in problem solving, a significant part of which is resolved in the digital space.

T.V. Grebelnik and M.L. Lapteva note a wide variety of chat features in messaging applications, which ensures establishment of effective interpersonal relationships and social interactions. Owing to the informative, contacting (phatic), commissive, directive, declarative, emotive (expressive), as well as coordinative, manipulative and other functions (Grebelnik, Lapteva, 2021), messaging apps contribute to the development of communication practices and achievement of goals in various industries, including education.

Researchers around the world emphasize increasing use of digital applications to document schoolchildren’s experiences and support parent communication (Huang et al., 2023; Kuusimäki et al., 2019; Nathans, Brown, 2021; O’Byrne et al., 2022; Stratigos, Fenech, 2021).

Kyrgyz researchers assessing the Community Engagement for Better Schools project in Kyrgyzstan in 2017–2022 argue that WhatsApp groups organized by class teachers help to improve teachers’ engagement with parents/caregivers. However, “parents/caregivers noted that WhatsApp groups require better moderation since it may cause some arguments among parents/caregivers, making them leave groups and demotivate in the interaction with school and other parents” (Jailobaeva et al., 2023: 18).

However, parents are against shifting all communication online. A recent research on self-evaluation in Turkish schools notes that generally parents are satisfied with the organization of communication between teachers and parents through telephone calls and in-person meetings and only agree to posting of important announcements about the educational process “through the internet via the school website and e-mails” (Kurum, Cinkir, 2022).

A.I. Shutenko believes that in connection with educational informatization a new didactic concept of “educational communications” has emerged. It is understood as “a set of methods, channels, techniques, modes and formats for transmitting necessary educational and sociocultural information directly related to the teaching content” (Shutenko, 2021: 81). According to the researcher, development of such communication promotes interpersonal relations between the participants in the educational process. This concept is developed by A.B. Poplaukhin (Poplaukhin, 2018), L.V. Sardak and A.V. Borshchenkova (Sardak, Borschenkova, 2018), and O.N. Manapova (Manapova, Podin, 2021). The authors note that owing to messaging applications, “school communication involves all three parties – teachers, students and parents,” develops new styles and strategies such as joint creation of digital content and promotes a practice of pedagogical cooperation.

A Finnish study examined what content parents and teachers want to see in online communication. Parents wish to receive more messages about academic performance, behavioral and more sensitive issues such as health problems and conflict situations involving the child. Parents dislike getting messages only about children’s weaknesses; sometimes they would also like to see praise. On the other hand, some messages sound too positive and parents disbelieve them preferring to receive more realistic messages about their children. Teachers would be interested in archiving evaluation of pupils’ works and their attendance at lessons (Kuusimäki et al., 2019).

In spite of the fact that messaging applications are treated as a resource for ensuring better-quality interaction between teachers, parents and students, there are problems of their implementation and integration into the educational process (such as lack of netiquette between students, confidential information exchange, low level of messaging proficiency in teachers, etc.) (Manapova, Podin, 2021; Vartanov et al., 2021). Finnish teachers note the negative aspects of

digitalization in education associated with the increased workload on the teacher (checking and grading students' papers and filling out online reports) (Lutovac et al., 2024). The controversial aspect of using online communication channels is reported by US scholars: a certain discrepancy between parents' and teachers' opinion on communication was found in a project called "Partners in School: Optimizing Communication between Parents and Teachers of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. After the experiment, "Teachers reported an increase in their communication to parents. However, parents did not report an increase in their communication to teachers" (Azad et al., 2021). Thus, different perception of communication flows by teachers and parents makes establishing positive relationship even more difficult.

Over the past few years, HSE researchers have made a major contribution to the study of social networks, instant messaging and other applications used in school education. T.A. Chirkina and P.V. Osokina (Chirkina, Osokina, 2023) describe the potential of digital technologies for communicating with students' parents as positive since they make this communication more effective and help build trusting relationships.

The authors of a large-scale study "Competencies of Russian teachers: digital literacy, soft skills and the ability to develop functional literacy" focus on the efficiency and safety of using digital technologies and Internet resources, and emphasize the importance of coordinating digital communication skills in students, parents and teachers in the process of implementing a digital literacy program (Kompetentsii..., 2020: 10).

In the studies of digital skills of parents as stakeholders in education and upbringing, digital competence is assessed in four areas: working with content, communication, technosphere, and consumption (Soldatova, Rasskazova, 2020; Shugal et al., 2023). The issue of digital and media competence of parents is considered in the aspect of ICT mediation, participation in the digital socialization of children, and strategies for managing online risks. In their final study of the digital competence of children and parents, the authors record its boosting and note problems requiring further attention, in particular, lack of motivation to learn new digital skills (Soldatova, Rasskazova, 2020).

Studies have also revealed a stable correlation between the level of parental competence and their attention to children's communication (Pisarenko, Zaichenko, 2021); parents prioritize such skills as "ensuring the necessary level of security in the digital environment, the ability not to violate the boundaries of other users and a culture of mutual respect in the digital environment" (Brodovskaya et al., 2020).

Unfortunately, communication via messaging apps indicates lack of the necessary netiquette. Finnish school teachers admit difficulties in communication with parents: increased number of negative messages, aggressive and dissatisfied tone of messages from parents, not following any rules regarding the time of sending messages. Finnish schoolteachers also complain that "parents' trust in teachers and respect for teachers' work has decreased" (Lutovac et al., 2024).

In Taiwan, a smartphone application, Line, was designed to facilitate "one-to-one dialogue as well as group discussions or group chats... The communication on Line is based on written text, including emoticon-like stickers, voice messages, notes, photo and video sharing" (Lin, 2019). Despite the obviously positive intention of the designed tool, the author of the research points out that "Line chats have also become a channel to circulate misinformation and create misunderstandings. Even though teachers and parents accept some norms and rules in using Line chats, disagreements and quarrels sometimes occur" (Lin, 2019).

Canadian researchers highlight that "regarding engaging content, parents were strong advocates of keeping content volume brief" and disapproved of excessive information (O'Byrne et al., 2022).

Thus, the researchers' view on the changes in the digital educational environment (Gálik, Oprala, 2021; Gáliková Tolnaiová, 2021; Gáliková Tolnaiová, Gálik, 2020; Kačínová, 2019; Vrabc, Odziomková, 2021) and the increasing role of instant messaging services and online school chats in the learning process has prompted our study of the nature of communication strategies and competencies used by the main stakeholders in education for the purpose of digital interaction.

#### 4. Results

We analyzed texts related to the work of educational workers with messaging applications which were published in socio-political and special interest media, as well as messages and social media comments on them.

We take into account the fact that articles in the media create a media image of a particular social phenomenon. In our study, their analysis is significant for the understanding of how the topic of school chats is represented in the public field, how the role of the teacher and their competencies are assessed. Special interest media and discussions on teacher forums are engaged in forming competencies and communication strategies of participants in the educational process.

When analyzing the research material, we considered the following semantic components: newsworthy events or incidents spurring discussion; the role of the teacher, his/her image, characteristics of qualities and competencies; the role of other participants (parents, students, and school administration), characteristics of qualities and competencies; the nature and purpose (functions) of chats in the messaging application; and attitudes towards school chats.

The search for materials in open sources (22 articles in media and comments following them) and their preliminary review showed that online chats between teachers and students rarely become the subject matter of public discussion; they are typically mentioned in the form of recommendations and instructions. Advice is given on how to achieve trusting relationships, create an atmosphere of mutual respect (Kak..., 2023). Technical advice is also given on formatting texts in chats or establishing a “quiet mode” (Kak..., 2023).

*Mel* magazine addresses teachers with an intention to share knowledge about benefits of online chats and publications of methodological techniques, which can be regarded as an attempt to develop positive attitude towards using instant messaging applications in teaching and educational setting in general (Kuznetsova, 2021). School teachers often write on social networks that they are in control of the situation and do not experience any great difficulties in organizing online communication: “We created a separate chat for me and my students. I’m a homeroom teacher for a 10<sup>th</sup>-grade class. Everything is civil: we love each other, respect each other, and don’t bother each other too much”, “There was a chat with children from grades 8-11, where I published urgent news relevant to them; they wrote to me if they had any questions, shared photos, etc.” Thus, online communication in the educational setting between teachers and students via messaging applications is viewed positively; emphasis is placed on the creative use of digital technologies for the purpose of solving educational and school-related problems.

Judging by mass media and teacher forums, *online chats with parents* resonate the most. In 2020 in Volgograd, a conflict in a parent chat resulted in murder. After this tragedy, the agenda-setting dynamics shifted towards the topic of communication in parents’ chats: all types of media reported details, analyzed reasons, and discussed the rules of conduct appropriate for such online chats. The *Komsomolskaya Pravda* newspaper devoted several publications to this topic.

In one of the first reports after the murder of a schoolgirl’s father, the journalist restores messages in the online chat and makes comments about the role of the teacher: “the homeroom teacher ..., who could have stopped the mess, unfortunately came down with Covid,” then the reporter points out that the teacher had left the chat because she was in hospital on a drip (Skoibeda, 2020).

The journalist’s position regarding the role of the teacher is clear: she could have acted as a regulator in the conflict and stopped the tragedy. An extremely negative image of the parents emerges: they are aggressive and violate communication norms. Another article from *The Komsomolskaya Pravda* examines types of parents and gives advice, including calling a teacher for help, taking communication offline at the same time involving the school administration (Novikova, 2021). In *The Rossiyskaya Gazeta* article, the journalist also addresses the topic of conflicts in parents’ online chats and emphasizes the vital role of the teacher in communication (Ivoilova, 2021). Teachers’ duties include drawing up rules for effective communication and conveying them to all the interested parties as well as administering online chats.

The RBC news agency made its contribution to the development of the topic. The article called “*Sign us up’ Annoying messages in parents’ chats*” creates a negative image of parents: they have neither communication nor media literacy skills since they experience difficulties registering on new platforms, then post personal information, spam chats with uninformative messages, emoticons, gifs, pictures, advertising, and send fake messages (Akimova, 2022).

This image of parents is quite typical; their correspondence in online chat rooms is often nicknamed ‘chicken coop’. However, chats with teachers are regarded as one of the main and fast sources of school-related information. To leave them means to lose contact with the teacher and miss important information. In a number of publications containing opinions of teachers, virtual

chats are assessed ambiguously. On the one hand, they take up personal time, on the other hand, they allow to quickly solve important problems and transmit information.

The specialized online media about education and upbringing *Mel* (about 300,000 subscribers) regularly addresses the topic of school chats. The publication is open to comments which gives both parents and teachers an opportunity to speak out. The main intention of the posts is an attempt to analyze and prevent problems that parents and teachers experience when using online chat rooms.

The image of the teacher is worth researching. Most often it is a married woman handling household tasks and working full-time. The teacher is an ordinary person. They are given advice on the technical skills of online chat management – how to set up messages, upload and save information, administer and moderate communication flows. They use tips on regulating communication in chats – when and how to respond, what to do in conflict situations. In this case, the role of the teacher is that of an ‘arbiter’.

In case of conflicts, it is recommended to take participants offline and use traditional forms of “negotiating at the table” – parent-teacher conferences, meetings, etc. Parents often leave negative feedback in their comments, belittling the role of the teacher and ruining their image: “The teacher, without due diligence, dumps all the students’ problems into the chat, followed by his/her indignation, value judgments with or without any explanation regarding your or your child’s personality” (Lugovskaya, 2020). Chats are often regarded as parental privacy invasion. There is an opinion that it is impossible to stay in touch all the time.

According to parents, restrictions should be introduced regarding the number of teachers’ messages, time of their publication, and content (no personal information, no criticism of schoolchildren or publication of grades in the open chat channel). In discussions, parents argue about teachers’ professionalism if they fail to comply with ethical standards and cannot adequately administer and technically manage group chats.

According to parents and teachers, the solution to many problems of school chats can be one-way communication: “Chats with students’ parents are primarily a channel of information, not communication” (Kak..., 2020).

The teacher and, possibly, several parent representatives – members of the parents’ committee – should have the right to write in the chat. This opinion is supported by the media for teachers. In the magazine *Vesti v obrazovanii (News in Education)*, a Yandex instruction (“I am a teacher” resource) says that group chats with parents are regarded as channels of information. The teacher’s task is to organize a chat bulletin board and exclude any personal communication in the chat. To do this, the teacher needs technical skills to work with instant messaging applications and manage communication flows with parents, primarily offline but also in the digital environment.

Popular teacher forums on the social network *Vkontakte* “Overheard by Teachers” (228,000 subscribers) and “Teachers’ Night Thoughts” (29,000 subscribers) regularly publish posts about school chats. For analysis, we took 10 posts and comments on them, the number of views of these posts ranged from 10 to 100 thousand. Each post collected from 50 to 270 comments; 800 comments were analyzed.

We identified two main points for discussion. Firstly, teachers turn to the user community in conflict situations with parents that arise either during chat communication or while working out the rules for such communication: rudeness, after-hours messages, questions and requests throughout the day for any reason, flooding. Secondly, teachers turn to colleagues for advice on how to conduct school group chats and whether they are worth creating. In such posts, they seek advice, indicate that they cannot find answers in recommendations from their colleagues, and lack experience in choosing effective strategies for teacher-parent interaction.

The issue of “leaks” is discussed separately. Teachers find themselves in a situation of ethical dilemma: students and parents inform teachers what and how was discussed in their parent-children-only chats. Usually this is criticism of teachers, ridicule, dissemination of personal information about the teacher (photos, residential address, information about family, etc.). On social media, teachers share their stories and give advice whether to take any measures about this or not, whether to discuss such situations with schoolchildren and their parents.

The topic about the nature and purpose of group chats invariably arises in the comments. Several strategies are evident. The radical position implies refusal to start any group chats in mass messaging applications. Teachers emphasize that this is part of the personal, not professional digital space: “Did the school give you a phone? Does it pay for it? This is your personal gadget, not

for work.” They provide references to regulatory documents: “By the way, employment contracts and the school charter do not say HOW teachers should contact parents. That is, you don’t have to create chats or answer calls at all. I pasted the information into the diary and that’s it.” Other arguments mention poor digital communication culture in parents and teachers, ineffectiveness of group chats, and destructive psychosocial environment.

The most common strategy is to create a group chat for parents in the form of an “information board”, with limited options to reply. “It’s better to disable the option to write to all participants in the chat. Just do that. Put all the information in there, and let them ask questions directly in a personal message to you.” Such is typical advice from forum participants. Communication with parents is moved from the group chat to personal messages; there are recommendations to use telephone calls, face-to-face meetings, and communication in official resources – internal email and messaging systems, *Sferum* platform, and electronic diaries. It is also acceptable to delegate the function to inform to one of the parents. Thus, public contact with parents, where feedback is possible, is minimized.

Participants in the discussion also note poor media culture in parents and their disregard for communication norms: “from my experience, discussing the rules does not work. Everyone believes that they are an exception from the rule, so I do not let parents comment.” Moreover, the situation may be the opposite – parents do not respond to messages or do not give any feedback when expected.

Parents’ opinions in their comments to teachers’ posts are controversial. They ask for the right to communicate and give feedback: “And we, parents, are against such information boards, bulletin boards... if you have created a group, then be kind enough to communicate with the parents there.” Parents also demonstrate protest reactions: they write about the need to abandon group chats and use only traditional offline forms of communication. Delegation of rights to the parents’ committee is generally disapproved and regarded as a violation of the principle of equality in pedagogical interaction.

Creation of group chats with an equal opportunity for everyone to engage in communication has been criticized. Almost unanimously, teachers urge not to participate in group chats with parents: “Should they need another chat – let them create their own,” “A chat for chatting? Ugh! It doesn’t make any sense to me. Let the parents hang out in there,” “I would delete such group chat in principle. What is it for? You have a chat administered by one person. All notifications go there. Questions in PM. And then everything will be fine. If they need another chat, let them create their own.” Parents write about their fatigue from the number of group chats and the need to search through endless messages for the necessary information.

## 5. Conclusion

In mass media and social media, parents’ chats are presented as a “risk zone” with a high potential for conflicts, semantic noise, and excessive communication. Teachers are considered mainly responsible for the outcomes and quality of communication in group chats, even if they do not participate in the chats. The teacher must regulate and control digital communication, as well as act as a judge and, if necessary, a lawyer to resolve conflicts. At the same time, the image of a teacher is created as of an ordinary person with their own problems and concerns. On the one hand, society has high expectations of teachers. On the other hand, people admit a need to develop strategies for using messaging applications based on the Russian school reality.

Our analysis of teacher forums showed that strategies for teacher-parent communication in the digital environment are being developed by trial and error. Partially, they are found in recommendations in various professional publications. The strategy of abandoning two-way communication in favor of one-way communication is assessed as successful. It is recommended to use group chats in messaging applications for informational purposes only. Teachers’ skills such as organizing private communication online and offline, in more traditional forms – calls, personal messages, and meetings – are becoming important. The digital environment in this case is perceived as auxiliary and monofunctional.

The agency of parents as participants in digital communication is limited. The solution to the problem is also seen in regulation – transition to officially approved digital resources directly involved in the educational process – electronic diaries and special platforms. In this case, group chats move out of the gray zone of personal/private interaction. It is worth noting that the strategy of one-way communication in messaging applications does not correlate with the expectation of a more open and collaborative three-way communication between parents, teachers and children,



as formulated in multiple researches (Manapova, Podin, 2021; Poplaukhin, 2018; Sardak, Borschenkova, 2018).

Teacher-student group chats and communities in instant messaging applications do not provoke public discussions. In our opinion, this is due to the fact that the traditional pedagogical model of the relationship between teachers and students is transferred to the digital space: educational digital platforms, online group chats, etc. Certain experience has been accumulated in solving problem situations during distance learning. Responsibility to develop and improve ICT competencies in students is assigned to the Federal State Educational Standards School. This promotes a constructive approach to various digital resources.

The teacher-parent interaction in online group chats is reflected in the context of professional and personal competencies. Teachers resolve conflict situations based on the knowledge of their rights, the school charter and labor legislation. They should be able to keep and maintain dignity and personal boundaries. Organization of digital public communication with parents is quite challenging. It is assessed as necessary and useful for the educational process, but “unofficial”, unregulated, and hard work. The main focus of the discussion shifts from technical skills in working with instant messaging services to the value and motivational attitudes of the teacher. In the future, it is necessary to model new styles and strategies for such communication, as well as improve digital, media and communication literacy of both teachers and parents.

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Published in the USA  
Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)  
Issued since 2005.  
ISSN 1994-4160  
E-ISSN 1994-4195  
2024. 20(2): 272-281

DOI: 10.13187/me.2024.2.272

<https://me.cherkasgu.press>



## Microcinema: What Are the Ultra-short Films of the Digital Age?

Evgeniya Proskurnova <sup>a,\*</sup>, Xi Lin <sup>a</sup>, Aleksey Litvincev <sup>b</sup>, Leila Algavi <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN University), Russian Federation

<sup>b</sup> Moscow State University (MSU), Russian Federation

### Abstract

The distribution of content in the online environment in the 21st century required the emergence of new methods to attract an audience to online products. This trend is a response to the exponentially growing amount of content generated online and is aimed at improving the interaction between users and online products. Thus, this evolution has become a mainstream field of study as scientists seek to understand the implications of audience engagement practices for various sectors of the digital economy. Currently, users devote their attention and time to a limited number of topics and consume information that goes beyond their interests as a synopsis. In such circumstances, new media formats are emerging online. The Internet community has adopted various traditional genres from the classical arts and media, which are constantly evolving into new formats. One such genre that has emerged in recent times is microcinema. The presented study aims to analyze the specific features of a phenomenon, define it, and determine its position in modern media. The authors understand the concept of microcinema as a hybrid genre that emerged at the intersection of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. We argue that this genre inherits its roots from classical cinema while embracing new technological advancements and cultural shifts. This study analyzed the ultra-short-length films (N = 180, 2022–2023) nominated at the microcinema festivals. This analysis of the trends in the genre's development revealed the high potential of this genre to solve educational, political, economic, and cultural problems faced by specialists of different profiles, as well as in the search for answers to important philosophical questions.

**Keywords:** microcinema, short film, microfilm, online video, micro-flicks.

### 1. Introduction

The prefix "micro" is becoming one of the most significant markers of the digital age. In recent years, the content of the "ultra-compressed" format has been incorporated into all areas related to the exchange of information on screen ecosystems platforms (Hradziushka, 2022; Polyakov, 2022; Urazova, 2019; Urazova et al., 2021; Yakova et al., 2023). Microcinema remains one of the least studied among the many materials of this kind. At the same time, the micro format has been actively researched in relation to, for example, television news (Algavi et al., 2019; Dolgova, Sheptuha, 2023; Hradziushka, 2023; Kemarskaya, 2019; Lazutova et al., 2017; Proskurnova, 2020; Proskurnova et al., 2023; Skvortsova et al., 2023; Volkova, 2019; Volkova et al., 2021).

The academic community has not yet developed a comprehensive and commonly accepted definition of the term microcinema, nor a common understanding of the defining features of this phenomenon. Films of ultra-short duration are conquering the online space, being shown at

\* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: [karikh.el@gmail.com](mailto:karikh.el@gmail.com) (E.L. Proskurnova)

reputable film festivals, attracting the interest of filmmakers, and becoming the focus of attention of specialists who don't relate to the film industry but who use short films to solve professional problems. Thus, the relevance of this study lies in the reasons above.

Most Russian scholars studying the films with a low running time focused on the problems of short films (Ageeva et al., 2016; Bajrakimov, 2016; Dunkevich, Somov, 2020; Fedorov et al., 2022; Litvinev, Proskurnova, 2023; Rodionova, 2021; Zhdankina, Shipulina, 2020); microcinema is not distinguished as an independent phenomenon. Thus, in the last two decades, many European and Chinese scientists have discerned microcinema as a specific phenomenon in the modern era.

The primary aim of this article is to suggest a definition of the concept of "microcinema" and to identify the defining features of contemporary ultra-short films. During our study, we examined the programs of microcinema festivals held in different countries.

The authors propose the following hypotheses:

1. Microcinema is not purely a product of the digital age but a legacy of classical cinema; therefore, it is not correct to associate the term exclusively with online content (the terminological aspect);
2. Microcinema has immense potential in terms of the acquisition of new skills by young filmmakers; promotion of ideas, goods, and services by online users; achievement of various goals by educators in the educational process; presentation of state programs by budgetary institutions; implementation of marketing and PR strategies by private businesses (practical aspect), etc.;
3. Microcinema is a useful tool for both professional and amateur filmmakers, allowing them to broadcast their messages and explore philosophical questions.

## 2. Materials and methods

As said above, the primary goal in the first stage of our research was a comprehensive view of microcinema. To describe this phenomenon and search for a suitable definition, we used the methods of synthesis and terminological analysis.

The authors studied a corpus of academic and journalistic texts that mention the word "microcinema" and brought together the most widespread opinions about this phenomenon. And as already mentioned above, we weren't able to find a comprehensive and commonly accepted definition of microcinema among scholars worldwide.

Interestingly, the Russian academic community has yet to adopt or acknowledge the concept. However, it is worth noting that local film critics, viewers, and online users actively use the term. Furthermore, the authors of this article found that microcinema schools, educational courses, and creative competitions exist in Russia. The first section of the article outlines the most commonly used words in various countries and provides a clear definition of microcinema. The authors also delve into the reasons behind the selection of these terms, as well as their similarities and differences.

In the second stage of our research, our objective was to ascertain the defining features of contemporary ultra-short films using content analysis. To accomplish this, we scoured the internet for active microcinema festivals and scrutinized the ultra-short films featured on their websites. Our analysis encompassed a total of 180 films produced post-2020 and showcased at seven national and international festivals. This analysis allowed us to compile a comprehensive list of the primary themes explored by microcinema directors in the 21st century. Additionally, we identified the most widely used genres, the duration range of ultra-short films, and the countries where this genre is most prominent.

## 3. Discussion

Upon conducting an analysis of the defining features of contemporary microcinemas, our initial hypotheses were confirmed. We discovered that ultra-short films, which their creators refer to as "microcinema" rather than "short clips," cannot be regarded as equivalent to online videos in the modern network environment. Rather, they represent a distinct form of audiovisual production that is closely tied to traditional cinema. The techniques employed by the directors of ultra-short films and the themes they choose reveal a strong connection between microcinema and classical cinema, highlighting their unique nature.

The genre of microcinema has gathered attention for its unique approach to addressing life issues that concern humanity throughout its history. Unlike short films, which are primarily created to entertain or inform audiences about current events, microcinema delves into philosophical and abstract themes, provoking viewers to reflect on significant issues. Notably,

the microcinemas nominated at film festivals around the world are recognized for their ability to encourage viewers to engage in profound thought. Rather than serving as a form of relaxation or distraction, microcinema aims to stimulate a search for new solutions and meanings and deepen understanding of various processes. Many authors of short videos driven by financial reasons are deploying means of promoting products, ideas, or services. In contrast to them, microcinema directors prioritize the creation of films that are intellectually and conceptually stimulating rather than placing undue emphasis on commercial viability. This approach enables them to focus exclusively on meaningful and thought-provoking production.

It's worth noting that the topics of microcinema festivals are heavily influenced by ongoing global economic and political processes. This allows us to identify the issues that truly affect people, such as the fear of a major war due to conflicts escalating in multiple regions worldwide, the mass migration resulting from these military clashes, and the unstable financial state of many countries. In these circumstances, people are trying to adapt their lives to a "free digital society" that promotes instant success, a luxurious lifestyle, a certain standard of beauty, and unconditional self-love and total self-acceptance for both adults and teenagers. These topics are becoming increasingly central in a large number of short online videos.

Public institutions can utilize ultra-short films to disseminate new national ideas, showcase social projects, promote healthy lifestyles, and draw attention to the country's problems. Many educators have already adopted this format to achieve various educational goals (Bajrakimov, 2016; Kaneeva, Kozhanova, 2022; Kajzer, Shishkova, 2020; Jwo, 2015). Private companies have also realized the potential of microcinema as a marketing and PR tool (Alekhina et al., 2020; Ageeva et al., 2016). Moreover, microcinema is an effective means for professional filmmakers and amateurs alike to convey existential themes and engage in discussions on philosophical matters. It is evident from the diverse range of themes favored by microcinema creators, organizers, and juries at film festivals.

#### 4. Results

##### *Terminological analysis*

It has been discovered that there is a wide range of interpretations for what microcinema means. Different authors have approached the definition of this concept with varying degrees of freedom. For instance, some film critics use the term to describe movies that are shot through the eyepiece of a microscope, where the focus is on microscopic objects such as small insects, dust, and mold (Canales, 2015; Gribova, 2022; Prayuzan et al., 2021). Others propose that some modern music videos that address philosophical, social, intercultural, gender, religious, and other issues can also be considered microcinema (Yurgeneva, 2019). Additionally, some commercials that promote products or services while forming a deep emotional connection with the audience have been referred to as microcinema (Wei, Zhao, 2023, p. 302). There have also been references to the term microcinema when describing compact theaters (Pedrero-Setzer, 2023).

During the study, we discovered that the terms "micro movie" (micromovie, microcinema, micro movie, micro cinema) and "microfilm" (micromovie, microcinema, micro movie, micro cinema) and "microfilm" (microfilm, micro film, micro-short film) are most commonly used to indicate ultra-short films in academic papers, journalistic articles, and texts on educational portals and film festival websites (Alvin, 2007; Chen, 2021; Gilardi et al., 2020; Li, Liu, 2020; Pogue, 2013; Ye, 2012; Zhang, Yuan, 2018; Zhao, 2014). Note that the term "microcinema" is mainly used in works by English-speaking authors. As for the term "microfilm" in English, Russian and Chinese, many authors generally understand it as a significantly reduced reproduction of a handwritten, printed, or graphic document made on a roll of light-sensitive photo or film.

##### *The origin of the emergence of the microcinema genre*

Films of ultra-short length, ranging from a few tens of seconds to 5–6 minutes of timing, have been around since the early days of cinematography. However, as the art form developed and technology improved, directors were able to create longer films. Over time, a "short" film was considered a movie, the timing of which could even exceed 60 minutes. Currently, a "short" film can be up to 60 minutes long, with no defined upper limit. The Festival de Cannes accepts films of up to 15 minutes (Festival de Cannes, 2024), while the Oscars and Tribeca festivals have a limit of 40 minutes (Oscars, 2024; Tribeca, 2024). Sundance is one of the few festivals that accepts films up to 49 minutes (Sundance, 2024).

With the advent of smartphones equipped with cameras and social media platforms that provide access to wide audiences, along with the availability of user-friendly editing apps, virtually anyone can now become a filmmaker without formal training. This has led to a trend of creating very short videos that can be consumed quickly and provide viewers with emotional gratification. The emergence of microcinema as a genre is a response to this demand, and, according to our research, it has established itself as a legitimate format in the contemporary film industry.

Speaking of which, many Chinese scholars believe that the microcinema genre originated in China at the beginning of the 21st century. While some scholars view microcinema as a product of the digital age, distributed in the online environment (Chen et al., 2022; Hong, 2011; Zheng, 2011), others identify it as an independent audiovisual genre that inherits traditional cinema (Chen, 2011; Gilardi et al., 2020; Liu, Yan, 2013; Lu, 2023; Meng, 2011; Prayuzan et al., 2021).

*Analysis from the modern audiences and filmmakers' perspectives*

The scholars who examine microcinema as a fusion of cinema and amateur online content have observed that creators of ultra-short films perceive them as a popular trend. According to Chen (Chen, 2012) these films are rapidly gaining popularity among audiences as "a way to diversify leisure time." In mere moments, one can "experience a visual feast" akin to an "afternoon tea," while full-length movies are treated as a culinary experience with "three Michelin stars" (Lu, 2023: 1166).

In addition, a pivotal feature of microcinema is its unconventional composition. Usually, in short and feature-length films, directors follow a narrative that takes the viewer along the classic path of "beginning – development – climax – end." But in ultra-short films, the climax is "positioned right at the start." (Lu, 2023: 1166). The emotional component in such films is super-concentrated.

From the communication theory perspective, some authors consider microcinema "a relevant means of fixating, preserving, and popularizing cultural values." (Chen, 2012). The fact that ultra-short films provoke the viewer to display vivid emotions suggests that microcinema is an effective tool that can "teach you to think" about significant aspects of life (Lu, 2023: 1166).

Microcinema has several advantages over a full-length movie. Among the first are the low financial costs. You don't have to invest too much money to write a complex script, for a cast of actors, or for promotion. The production process is much cheaper; microcinema is often shot not with expensive professional equipment but with a smartphone.

Nonetheless, would be appropriate to acknowledge the limitations of microcinema. Its presentation in theaters or film festivals is a challenge, and viewers may find it arduous to fully absorb each brief film. Typically, these works are viewed on digital platforms, where they are rapidly consumed and passed over. Perhaps it is the pervasive culture of rapid information consumption that hinders the genre's recognition and acceptance.

*Practical aspect: the defining features of microcinema*

According to our study, microcinema festivals have been taking place in various countries since the 2000s. Today, there are several dozens of these festivals, indicating the growing popularity of this genre among both professional and amateur filmmakers.

Through an analysis of microcinema festival programs from around the globe, we discovered a diverse range of nominated films spanning fiction, non-fiction, animation, features, documentaries, and even photo series presented in a cinematic format. Our team delved into the winners of different categories in 2022 and 2023 (Table 1), meticulously examining each sample for its content and duration.

The time length of the 180 films we analyzed ranges from 40 seconds to 30 minutes. However, it is worth noting that the timing of most of the films from the total number of movies viewed (75 %) is less than 6 minutes.

The films primarily focus on a few general themes. These include 1) an individual's overcoming psychological difficulties; 2) the environmental protection issues; 3) the challenges faced by migrants in foreign countries; 4) an individual's realizing as a part of the universe and searching for the meaning of existence; 5) life during wartime; and 6) people with disabilities are coping with challenges.

Based on our study, most contemporary microcinema festivals do not impose any restrictions on the topics that filmmakers can explore. However, in some cases, a list of *suggested* topics is provided to participants. The TURI Film Festival (Turi..., 2023), for instance, encourages filmmakers to create works focused on themes such as unemployment, parental issues, child labor,



women's lives in rural areas, social media, healthcare, the environment, work-life balance, as well as the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

**Table 1.** Microcinemas presented at festivals in different countries (N=180)

Name of the microcinema festival	The number of films (winners / nominees) available on the official website of the festival	The runtime range of films	Themes in films
The Spark micro-short film fest, *founded in 2019 (USA, 2023) (Spark, 2023)	4 (winners)	1:15-8:00	Escape from war, life in war, life of a child with a congenital disease, transformation of the village in the modern world
Austin film festival, *founded in 2003 (USA, July, 2023) (Austin, 2023)	42 (winners)	0:49-6:00	Overcoming fears and challenges in life, values of the age of mass consumption, living in homes, protecting the environment, family relationships, loving relationships, mental health care, living with disabilities, thinking about the place of the human being in the universe, fairy tale motifs, the meaning of fashion, breaking up with someone you don't love, the creation phenomenon, overcoming unforeseen circumstances, friendship, trying to get away with it, adolescent issues, working in the arts, life as an outcast, people with disabilities.
Fronteras micro film festival, *founded in 2023 (USA, June, 2023) (Fronteras, 2023)	21 (participating films)	0:28-4:55	Problems of illegal migrants, intergenerational relations, xenophobia, separation process with family, problems of sexual minorities, memories of the past, reflections on human life, peculiarities of national culture, showing kindness and care, xenophobia, prisoners' dreams of freedom.
Micro μ festival, *founded in 2011 (Greece, Oct., 2023) (Micro μ, 2023)	15 (participating films)	1:12 - 23:00	The price of life, lies and their consequences, overcoming obstacles to love, pursuing dreams through hardship, the struggle of a rigid state system with the freedom of citizens, observing the lives of people in one city, memories of a life lived, the vulnerability of women, the joy of adventure on the road, supporting comrades in war, the difficulties of life in exile, trying to keep in memory a loved one who has passed away, the search for the edges of reason.

Name of the microcinema festival	The number of films (winners / nominees) available on the official website of the festival	The runtime range of films	Themes in films
Under 5 Minute Film Festival, *founded in 2016 (USA, December 2023) ( <a href="#">Under..., 2023</a> )	67 (winners)	1:00 - 5:04	Living by one's own rules, overcoming fears, mutual aid, subculture, transience of time, lost love, living under illusions, unattainable dreams, friendship, search for meaning of life, impact of artificial intelligence technology on human consciousness, power of female friendship, climate change, overcoming one's own anxieties, pleasure from fear, two sides of the same person, beauty of nature, experiencing the loss of a child, refugee issues, protecting the oceans, fashion, boundaries of fear, bullying in school, transience of life, living with failure, perception of the world's future, and the future.
Swallow film festival, founded in 2020 (international) ( <a href="#">Swallow, 2023</a> )	9 (winners)	0:40 - 30:00	A life of a low ranker, the price of human life, the creation killing the creator, the obstacles to friendship, the lives of people with disabilities, a human life on another planet in the future, memories of vacations in the countryside.
Supershorts, London (2023, UK, USA) ( <a href="#">Supershorts, 2023</a> )	22 (winners)	01:10 - 25:45	The impact of artificial intelligence on the perception of life, the clash of cultures, the destructive power of war, the power of beauty, how chronic illness can make a person better, dealing with guilt, the process of making a difficult decision, the beauty of nature, sacrificing oneself for a loved one, loss and finding meaning in life, transgender life, the unifying power of art, living with bipolar disorder, folk myths and legends, circus art, the world of hobbies, the beauty of nature.

The growing number of festivals held nationwide in the United States and dedicated to microcinema demonstrates the popularity of this genre in the country. Interest in microcinema is growing in other parts of the globe, including the Asia-Pacific region, Australia, Europe, and Russia, where filmmakers have the opportunity to participate in ultra-short film contest programs. However, currently, there are only a limited number of contests available in these regions for this type of film.

## 5. Conclusion

Thus, our study established that microcinema is a unique genre that is set to thrive in the foreseeable future. With the emergence of accessible and user-friendly modern techniques, a new wave of filmmakers and professionals will have ample opportunities to perfect their craft, express their individual styles, and create thought-provoking ultra-short films that tackle a wide range of topics. The adaptability and versatility of microcinema as a medium allow it to remain impactful and relevant in today's ever-changing media landscape. So based on these findings, it is safe to say

that microcinema will continue to evolve, with a new generation of skilled professionals utilizing modern techniques to create meaningful work that serves a variety of purposes.

#### *Research limitations*

The authors encountered several challenges while conducting their investigation into microcinema festivals online. Despite discovering over 30 festival programs that could potentially be included in the empirical basis of the study, we were able to analyze only a few of them. Most of those festival websites were poorly designed and lacked crucial data, such as films or trailer files, or at least links to third-party resources where they are uploaded, and even the directors' names and full titles of their films. The festival websites mostly provided general information on the event, author requirements, and movie release schedules for nominated years. In some instances, the websites featured only one screenshot picture per film, a poster, or the filmmaker's name. Despite these limitations, the authors attempted to locate the specified videos on hosting sites or search engines, but their efforts were largely unsuccessful.

On a number of occasions, the festival teams present on their website the films (or at least the links to) of all nominees. In others, festivals' website administrators limit their content to the winners' films. In this regard, we decided to work with accessible material and not include references to "participating films" and "winners" in the table.

Initially, the authors intended to examine samples of microcinema presented on social networks. However, during our study, we had to abandon the idea for several reasons. With the hashtag "microcinema" (taking into account all English-language translations), one can find countless videos that are almost impossible to identify as the genre we are interested in. Many users who have specified this hashtag do not have in mind the concept that has become the focus of this article.

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Published in the USA  
Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)  
Issued since 2005.  
ISSN 1994-4160  
E-ISSN 1994-4195  
2024. 20(2): 282-292

DOI: 10.13187/me.2024.2.282

<https://me.cherkasgu.press>

## Facebook Advertisements' Impact on Undergraduate Consumer's Purchasing Intention in Sindh, Pakistan

Shazia Shahab Shaikh <sup>a,\*</sup>, Azan Turk <sup>a</sup><sup>a</sup> University of Sindh, Pakistan

### Abstract

This study focuses on the impact of Facebook advertisements on undergrad consumer's purchasing intention in Pakistan. Furthermore, it explores undergraduate preferences toward Facebook advertisements. Another purpose is to determine the undergrad's attitudes toward Facebook advertisements among undergrad consumers' purchasing intentions. Last but not least is to evaluate the mediating role of brand image and brand equity through Facebook advertisements among undergrad consumers' purchasing intention. All constructs of the study are adopted from reviews of the previous literature. A total of 278 sampled data was collected among the undergraduate Facebook advertisement users at the University of Sindh, Jamshoro, Pakistan. Researchers applied the semi-structured survey within the purposive sample technique. The data was examined by SPSS version 28. The result of R Square ( $R^2 = 0.529$ ) affirmed that Facebook advertisements have a favorable impact on consumer's purchasing intentions, which ensures the primary objective of this study. The key finding of the research reveals that Facebook advertisements have a positively significant impact on preferences, attitudes, brand images, and equity among undergraduate consumer's purchasing intentions. All findings have been constituted by the means of the proposed model.

**Keywords:** Facebook advertisements, consumer's purchasing intention, preferences, attitude, brand images, and brand equity.

### 1. Introduction

In the digital age, social media platforms have become integral channels for businesses to connect with consumers and promote their products or services. Social media advertisements have a 53.5 % positive influence on Bangladeshi adolescents toward online purchasing behavior (Nobi et al., 2023). Moreover, it has become part of a trillion Facebook users in their daily lives. Besides this, people also spend more time on social media (Appel et al., 2020). The current rate of social media users in Pakistan is about 71.70 million in January 2023, which equates to 30.1 % of the total population (Digital 2023). In early 2023, Facebook had 37.30 million Pakistani users (Digital 2023). However, Facebook's potential and reach in Pakistan fell by 6.3 million (-14.4%) from 2022 to 2023 (Digital 2023).

Scholars suggested research on moderate factors of Facebook advertisements, brand image, brand equity, consumer preferences, and purchase intention (Abuhashesh et al., 2021; Imtiaz et al., 2021; Murtiasih et al., 2014; Saternus et al., 2022). Additionally, research recommends exploring a wide range of brand product categories and celebrity endorsements to understand larger and more diverse participants from various ethnic backgrounds, age groups, and genders (Min et al., 2019).

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\* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: [Shazia.shahab@usindh.edu.pk](mailto:Shazia.shahab@usindh.edu.pk) (S. Shahab Shaikh)

In Delta State, consumers don't trust digital advertisements, despite being informative (Ivwithren et al., 2023). Facebook advertisements are factors related to brand image, brand equity, and purchase intention (Imtiaz et al., 2021). In addition to this, the dominant factor among consumer purchasing intention is the competitive price (Azizan, Chew 2023).

Another factor is the consumer's buying intention influences the selection of products on Facebook (Meskaran et al., 2013). Similar to this, consumer purchase intention also influences one's decision to acquire a product or service (Marlien, 2018). However, satisfied buyers make repeated purchases of products (Marlien, 2018). Consumers have the intention to share information with them via social media (Sun et al., 2015). On the other side, the majority of new consumers hesitate to buy because of many issues in online buying, and this becomes a barrier to e-commerce growth (Nguyen et al., 2022). Hence, As a result, a greater understanding of purchase intention is critical for the company's business (Dachyar, Banjarnahor, 2017).

With the proliferation of social media platforms like Facebook, businesses have leveraged targeted advertising to reach specific audience segments. Understanding consumer preferences in Facebook advertisements is crucial for marketers to create effective campaigns that drive engagement and encourage purchasing intention. Therefore, additional study on these rising markets is required to fill the knowledge gap. This study aims to explore the undergrad's preferences towards Facebook advertisements and their impact on influencing consumers' buying intentions. Another objective is to determine the undergrad's attitudes toward Facebook advertisements on the purchasing intention of consumers. Last but not least is to evaluate the mediating role of brand image and brand equity through Facebook advertisements on undergrad consumers' purchasing intention. The present study is significant for e-commerce organizations, advertisers, social media practitioners, and government and private departments.

#### *Theoretical Background, Conceptual Framework, and Hypothesis*

Uses and Gratification (U&G) Theory: One of the most effective and useful theoretical frameworks is to examine why and how audiences use particular media to gratify their wants and needs (Menon, Meghana, 2021). Uses and gratifications (U&G) theory is essential in assessing how and why various wireless communication services are used by media audiences and in some cases replace older media (Baran, 2006). Baran (Baran, 2011) noted that this theory considers not only the people who seek pleasure but also attitudes from new media. In contrast, Facebook has emerged as the most popular and widely used social networking site for creating and distributing digital content (Menon, Meghana, 2021). Hence, the current study is primarily evaluation based on the conceptual framework of the uses and gratification theory.

Preferences towards Facebook Advertisements: In Pakistan, 75 % are Facebook users in Pakistan (Gallup Pakistan, 2022). In addition to this, advertisers pay extra attention to Facebook due to its large user base and attractiveness among young people (Nguyen et al., 2022). Facebook offers a wide range of advertising; including promoting certain Facebook pages, events, and apps, sending visitors to specific websites, and users user-generated content (Imtiaz et al., 2021). Facebook provides a "like" link feature that allows users to provide rapid input (Logan et al., 2012). In the context of Facebook advertisements, purchasing intention refers to 'a degree to which a consumer is willing to buy a product through an online store' (Pena-García et al., 2020). Imtiaz et al. (Imtiaz et al., 2021) referred the consumer intentions as 'the expressed plans, inclinations, and anticipated actions of individuals in response to a particular product, service, or brand'.

Hypothesis 1: Preferences of Facebook advertisements (PFA) have a significant impact on the consumer purchasing intentions (CPI) of undergraduate Facebook users.

H1: PFA → CPI

Attitude towards Facebook Advertisements on consumer intension: Another essential factor is the attitude towards Facebook advertisements 'is formed when the consumer evaluates the visual or verbal substance of the claim with its content' (Sander et al., 2021). When emotional responses are elicited, customers decide to buy, which is based solely on the attitude of the advertisements, without having brand information (Zhu, Kanjanamekanant, 2021). 'Attitudes toward Facebook advertisements refer to the individual's cognitive and emotional evaluation of promotional content presented on the Facebook platform' (Abuhashesh et al., 2021). Customer's attitudes towards Facebook advertisements enable marketers to work on selectively that affect or shape attitudes toward specific advertising messages or products, which also have an impact on brand images of advertising (Arora, Agarwal, 2019). Scholars found that attitude toward Facebook advertisements has a significant positive impact on the purchasing intention of consumers (Kurtz et al., 2021; Zhu,



Kanjanamekanant, 2021). Moreover, researchers affirmed that customers' intentions to buy are influenced by positive advertising (Lee et al., 2017; Weismueller et al., 2020). Hence, based on the literature review, we propose the following hypothesis:

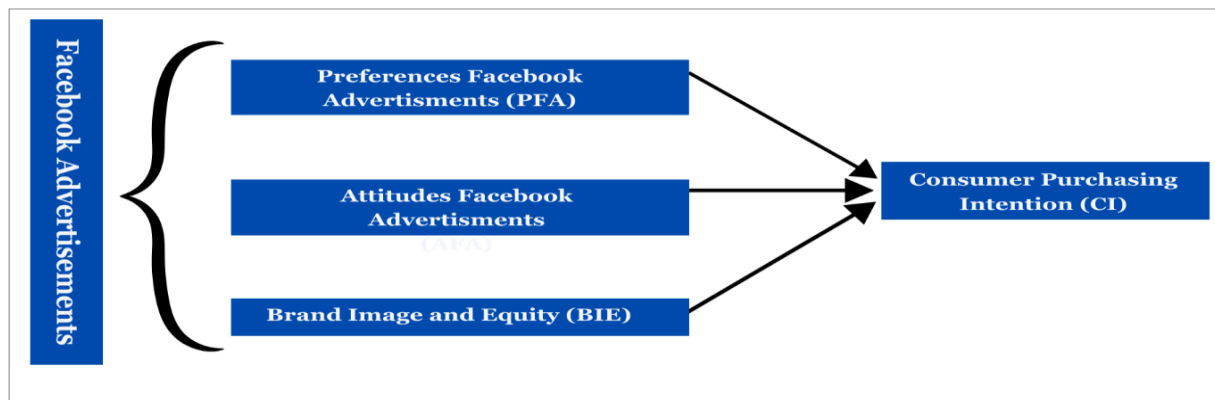
Hypothesis 2: Attitudes toward Facebook advertisements have an impact on consumers purchasing intentions.

H2: AFA->CPI

The Brand Image (BI), Brand Equity (BE), and Consumers Purchase Intention (CPI): The most important factor is a brand image(BI), and brand equity (BE) can be stated as any brand or service intelligence that persuades the customers to choose a specific brand (Meenaghan, 1995). Particularly, students are better able to identify, define, and assess brand equity when they have a strong foundation in branding (Keller, Swaminathan, 2019). Brand equity involves attributes and liking customers have for the brand, as a result of the benefits, they receive from using the brand (Kevin, 2008). As an earlier study has concluded the impact of Facebook advertisements on consumers' intentions is that advertisements positively impact brand images. Thereby, strengthening brand reliability (Durrani et al., 2015). Another study found that brand websites and brand Facebook pages positively influenced brand images (Jokinen, 2016). The use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube is increasing for marketing purposes (Nasserdeen et al., 2017). To build brand image and connect with potential customers, most companies use Facebook's efficient features (Dehghani, 2013). In parallel to this, the possibility of a customer purchasing a particular product is referred to as their purchasing intention (Edelman, 2010). According to certain researchers, consumers are persuaded to purchase products that have been verified by other users after the use of the product (Oke et al., 2016). Hence, brand image positively affects customer's purchasing intention (Li et al., 2018). 'Brand equity generates persuasion among consumers to buy a product regardless of high price' (Dehghani, 2013). In another way, we can say that brand images and equity significantly influence consumers' purchasing intention (Dehghani, 2013). Thus, the study is based on previous literature reviews. The researcher can claim the hypothesis as follows:

Hypothesis 3: Facebook advertisements of Brand Image and Equity have a significant influence on consumer purchasing intentions.

H3: BIE→CPI



**Fig. 1.** Conceptualized Model Framework

## 2. Materials and methods

This research study is based on the quantitative research method for data collection, which provides a comprehensive framework for exploring the impact of Facebook advertisements on undergrads consumers' purchasing intention. According to the universal size of 1000 (Krejcie, Morgan, 1970), 278 is the calculated size of the purposive sample technique. Hence, 278 undergraduate students, ensures enough representation of the University of Sindh, Jamshoro. This sample size aims to provide statistical significance by considering the diversity of the student population. A descriptive survey with semi-structured questionnaires of a five-point Likert scale of measurement from strongly agree to strongly disagree was applied to analyze the main constructs

of the study. Initially, the questionnaire was pretested to 25 undergrad responders particularly, users of Facebook advertisements at the University of Sindh, Jamshoro on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023.

The survey was completely based on the undergrad's Facebook advertisements users. The ambiguous and unclear questions were changed to get positive feedback from the responders. The study consists of 5 constructs including; preferences towards Facebook advertisements, attitudes towards Facebook advertisements, brand images and equity, and consumer purchasing intention. The total 37 questions were divided into five constructs. Each questionnaire was manually distributed among undergrads in the university from November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 to November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Out of 350 respondents, 300 questionnaires were received, and 22 questionnaires were rejected due to incomplete information. A total of 278 forms were analyzed completely (See detail in [Table 1](#)). We have selected reflective measurements, as changes in the construct's measures suggest changes in the latent construct ([Edwards, Bagozzi, 2000](#)). Researchers have used established scales from the literature and customized them in their research situation. The reliability and validity of the reflection measurements were evaluated using frequency distribution, Cronbach's alpha, and multi-linear regression. The data was analyzed by using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28.

**Table 1.** Research Methodology Summary (Authors Source)

Items	Description
Statistics Software	SPSS Version 28
Research Approach	Descriptive Research
Sampling Design & Type	Purposive Probability Sampling
Target Population	Undergrad Facebook advertisement users of the University of Sindh, Jamshoro
Sample Size	278
Data Collection	Descriptive survey directed to undergraduate Facebook Users

### 3. Discussion

As of early 2024, there are over 5 billion active social media user identities worldwide, with a projected total of 5.04 billion ([Kem, 2024](#)). Today's social media user uses the platform for two hours and twenty-three minutes per day ([Kem, 2024](#)). The milestone is prior of Facebook's significant in social media ([Kem, 2024](#)). Remarkably, the largest apps of social media platform is Facebook, which captures the largest share of active user's time 58 minutes per user as an average daily engagement ([Ortiz-Ospina, Roser, 2023](#)). In the context of social media has become an inspirational source of information in education ([Shaikh et al., 2023](#)), and in advertisements ([Miltgen et al., 2019](#)). Facebook advertisements bring social values, trade-offs, perceived intrusiveness, privacy invasiveness, and trust which are also key factors, which is accepted by Facebook advertisements ([Miltgen et al., 2019](#)).

Notably, businessmen employ 92 % of advertisements on Facebook, which is 18.4 % of online advertisements attributed to Facebook ([Sindhujia et al., 2023](#)). Nowadays, people actively seek information about various products and services advertised on Facebook ([Li et al., 2018](#)). Let's discuss the reviews of the previous literature.

Preference towards Facebook Advertisements: Scholars agree that social media has moderating effects of usage on the influence of advertisement ([Saternus et al., 2022](#)). Particularly, Facebook is capable of acquiring better results on 'productivity, competitive position, and customer value', in less time and budget, and it performs an important role in making any brand images ([Eiaydi, 2018](#)). Similarly, researchers have found a significant relationship between brand preferences and Facebook advertising in Ethiopia ([Mengistu, 2020](#)). Social Media users have high engagement potential for brands and consumers ([Lou, Yuan, 2019](#)). However, an advertisement disclosure has activated persuasive knowledge ([Boerman, 2020](#)). It is notable that advertising has significantly increased worldwide and social media platforms are a great source to get the attention of a large audience, especially Facebook advertisements have become a marketing 'Have', for businesses across the global world ([Saternus et al., 2022](#)).

Besides this, Deveirman and Hudders (Deveirman, Hudders, 2020) indicated that a sponsorship disclosure negatively influences a brand's images through increased advertisement recognition, which induces advertisement skepticism and lowers the influencer's credibility.

Attitudes toward Advertisements: In the contemporary era, the business landscape hasn't only been shaped by digital media, but also influencing people's attitudes by various advertising (Abuhashesh et al., 2021). Facebook advertisements play a significant role in shaping individual attitudes toward products, however, it relate to the cultural dimension too (Abuhashesh et al., 2021).

On the other side, gender has various deep attitudes towards Facebook advertisements (Lin, Wang, 2020). In the same way, men focus on sports while women focus on showbiz, fashion, lifestyle, and hobbies (Lin, Wang, 2020). Besides this, individuals with a substantial number of contacts on Facebook are likely to be influenced by other attitudes and opinions (Loureiro et al., 2018). However, customers often don't consider all of the brand's information, while purchasing a product (Zhu, Kanjanamekanant, 2021). Nevertheless, researchers have demonstrated that Facebook advertisements have an influence on customer's attitudes toward behavioral elements; such as, how people behave toward a brand's message (Wang, Sun, 2010; Wiese et al., 2020).

Another study shows that customers' attitudes did not significantly attract young female consumers' intention to online purchase beauty goods and brand loyalty (Macheka et al., 2023). However, Muslim consumers' attitude was also found to be significantly positively influenced by consumer's purchasing intention toward social media advertising (Kamalul Ariffin et al., 2022).

Brand Image and Brand Equity: Unlike traditional channels, social media offers rapid brand information dissemination and prompt customer feedback (Voorvel et al., 2018). In view of Elaydi (Elaydi, 2018) Facebook is capable of acquiring better productivity, competitive standards, and the customer's values within less time and budget, which performs an important role in making brand images successful. In addition to helping with brand positioning, this connection is crucial for businesses since they post a favorable perception among consumers (Low, Lamb, 2000). According to Yoo et al. (Yoo et al., 2000) 'brand image' is the combination of brand awareness and brand association. In addition to this, the relationship between social media participation and consumers' intentions to make both online and offline purchases is mediated by brand equity (Fatima et al., 2022). The protocol of brand images and brand association has different categories of products (Low, Lamb, 2000). On the other side, brand strategy play an essential part in building brand images, product selling and help consumers in bringing opportunities, protection and prestige (Durmaz, Vildan, 2016).

Consumer's Purchasing Intentions: The emerging usage of the Facebook platform, and advertising is altering the business world, in reaction to the consumer's needs and desires (Imtiaz et al., 2021). Another study shows the factor of trust in online purchases increases during COVID-19, with online buy intentions, whereas, social media participation shows a weaker correlation with physical purchase intentions (Fatima et al., 2022). In social media platforms, credibility and trust are still crucial in attracting the consumer's engagement in online media (Van et al., 2018). Moreover, customers' online purchases of sports products are believed to be significantly influenced by the celebrities' trustworthiness and attractiveness (Akoglu, Ozbek, 2024). From the perspective of Facebook advertising, the consumer's credibility is the key to increasing the consumer's intention to buy online products (Chen et al., 2023).

#### 4. Results

Respondent's Demographic Profile: The respondents' sample (n=278) consists of 110 (39.6 %) female and 168 (60.4 %) male. Most of the undergrad's Facebook users' age lies between 23 to 26. However, the majority of the undergrad respondents are the students of the bachelor program in the final year (BS part IV) of the study.

**Table 2.** Respondent's Demographic Profile (n= 278) (Source: Author's Data)

Variables	Frequency(n)	Percentage ( %)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender			1.40	.490
Male	168	60.4		
Female	110	39.6		

Variables	Frequency(n)	Percentage ( %)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age			1.67	.592
19 to 22	105	37.8		
23 to 26	163	58.6		
27and above	10	3.6		
Qualification			3.05	1.072
BS Part I	27	9.7		
BS Part II	56	20.1		
BS Part III	82	29.5		
BS Part IV	113	40.6		

Measurement of the Reliability: This study ensures the measurement of the reliability. The reliability of the constructs was used to evaluate the measurement model of a conceptual framework. More information is provided in Table 3. The composed reliability indexes of constructs reliability are presented in Cronbach's alpha. The value ranged from 0.5 to 0.734, which is 0.5 meets the criteria of reliability (Hair et al., 2017). One construct that has less than 0.5 did not fulfill the criteria of composed reliability. See Table 3 for details.

**Table 3.** Reliability Analysis (Source: Author's Data)

Constructs	Items	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Authors Source
Preferences towards Facebook Advertisement	9	0.221	Imtiaz et al. (2021).
Attitudes towards Facebook Advertisement	8	0.530	Abuhashesh et al. (2020)
Brand Image and Brand Equity	9	0.605	Murtiasih et al. (2013).
Consumer Purchasing Intention	11	0.734	Imtiaz et al. (2021).
Total	37	0.800	

As we can see in Table 4, Pearson's correlation between preferences towards Facebook advertisements, attitude towards Facebook advertisements, brand images brand equity, and consumer purchasing intention. Table 4 depicts that preferences towards Facebook advertisements correlate with consumer's purchasing intention, where Pearson's  $r = 0.288$  and the level of significance is  $p = .01$ . Similarly, attitudes towards Facebook advertisements show a significant relationship ( $p = .01$ ,  $r = 0.549$ ), and brand images and brand equity ( $p = .01$ ,  $r = 0.645$ ) have also a moderate correlation with consumer's purchasing intention at the level of significant  $p = 0.01$  positively correlation. As referred in the study of Hee, Yen, (2018).

**Table 4.** Correlation between variables (Source: Author's Data)

Variables	$P$	$R$
Preferences towards Facebook Advertisements → Consumer Purchasing Intention	0.01	0.288
Attitudes toward Facebook Advertisements → Consumer Purchasing Intention	0.01	0.549
Brand Image and Brand Equity → Consumer Purchasing Intention	0.01	0.645

Notes: \*\*Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**Table 5.** Model Summary, Predictors: (Constant), CI, PFA, AFA, BIE (Source: Author's Data)

Model	R	R Square	Adj R2	Std. Error of the Estimate	F
1	0.727a	0.529	0.524	0.380	102.466

Multiple Regression Analysis: [Tables 5](#) and [6](#) show the multiple linear regression analysis among independent variables and dependent variables of consumer purchasing intention. [Table 5](#) shows the R-Square ( $R^2 = 0.529$ ) of the variance of consumer purchasing intention can be interpreted by the three variables of Facebook advertisements. [Table 6](#) shows that preferences toward Facebook advertisements have a significant positive relationship with consumer purchasing behavior ( $\beta = .173$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ). Hence H1 approved. On the other side, it has been found that attitude towards Facebook advertisements has a positively significant association with consumer purchasing intention ( $\beta = .289$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ). Hence, H2 proved. One more variable has shown remarkable results that brand image and brand equity have a significantly positive relationship with consumer purchasing intention ( $\beta .497$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ). Thus, H3 is supported. See [Tables 5](#) and [6](#) for details.

**Table 6.** Regression Analysis (Source: Author's Data)

Variables	B	$\beta$	t	P	Sig	VIF
(Constant)	-.171		1.039	.300	0.001b	
PFA	.226	.173	4.080	.000		1.048
AFA	.297	.289	6.122	.000		1.297
BI&BE	.552	.497	10.700	.000		1.252

Finally, the results of the study show that preference and attitude toward Facebook advertisements, brand images, and equity relationships have a significant positive impact on the consumer's purchasing intention (See [Table 4](#) in detail). Therefore, results show that preferences, attitudes, brand images, and brand equity towards Facebook advertisements have a mediated impact on the undergrads consumer's purchasing intention.

## 5. Conclusion

The conceptual framework model is used to evaluate undergrad consumers' responses (preferences, attitudes, brand images, and brand equity, and consumer purchase intention) toward Facebook advertisements in this study. The conclusion was based on the following empirical analysis:

First, consumer preferences and consumer's attitudes toward Facebook advertisements are added to the model to further explore undergraduate buying intention. As a result, researchers have gained an understanding of these two factors' influence on the consumer's purchasing intention. According to the findings of the study, consumer preferences and attitude are the most essential predictors of consumer's purchasing intention toward Facebook advertisements. That's why, in the university, undergraduate consumers are more likely to view Facebook advertising favorably when they believe that the sources are reliable.

Secondly, the result of R Square ( $R^2 = 0.529$ ) affirmed that Facebook advertisements have a favorable impact on consumer's purchasing intentions, which ensures the primary objective of this study. These results of the study are compatible with the previous research studies ([Imtiaz, et al., 2021](#); [As'ad, Alhadid, 2014](#)).

The results show that the proposed model fits better with the data sample (see [Figure 2](#)). It has been found while analyzing the results that a moderate correlation among the constructs indicates that undergrad consumers have brand-related information and sharing of opinions through Facebook advertisements. Notably, Facebook advertisements assess enhancing brand images ([Jokinen, 2016](#); [Nasseraldeen et al., 2017](#)), brand equity, consumer's attitude towards Facebook advertisements, their preferences, and purchasing intention of the product ([Durrani et al., 2015](#)). This study proves that undergraduate consumers are more likely to prefer Facebook

advertisements and increase purchasing intention. It shows that undergrad consumers are more motivated to buy through Facebook advertisements. The result is consistent with the review of the previous research study (Chen et al., 2023).

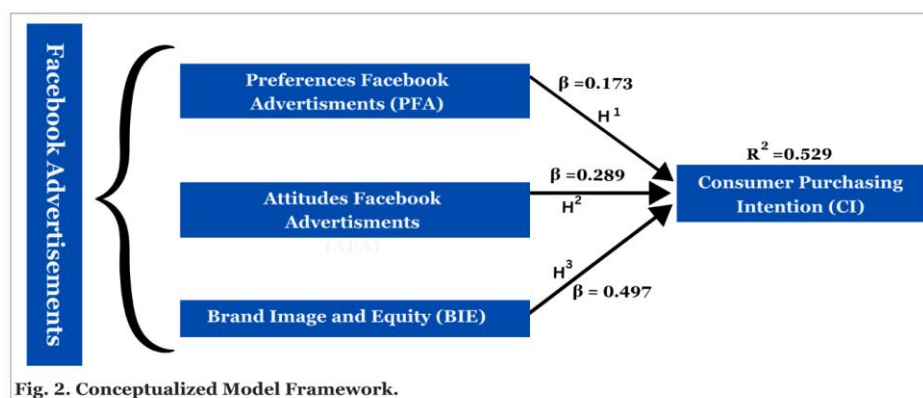


Fig. 2. Conceptualized Model Framework.

Implementation, Limitations, and Recommendation: The findings of the study would be implemented by Facebook advertisers, and international and national brand companies to customize consumer's preferences, attention, attitude, wants, and needs. In addition to this, marketers can increase the consumer's purchasing intention after paying attention to Facebook advertisements (Marlien et al., 2018). The study has considered only a limited number of responders, which is limited to generalization. This study requires evaluating more factors of consumer's purchasing intention. The more important limitation is that this study just conducted on all brands, products, and services of Facebook advertisements, and could not focus on national or international specific categories of band, geographical area, and race. Furthermore, qualitative-based research techniques need to be conducted to identify the perception of online purchasing intention of undergraduate students at the university level in the country.

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Published in the USA  
Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)  
Issued since 2005.  
ISSN 1994-4160  
E-ISSN 1994-4195  
2024. 20(2): 293-308

DOI: 10.13187/me.2024.2.293

<https://me.cherkasgu.press>



## Technology of Project Activity in Media Education (On the Example of Training Aspiring Journalists at Kazan Federal University)

Marina Simkacheva <sup>a</sup>, Roman Bakanov <sup>a,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, Russian Federation

### Abstract

The article presents the results of research on the experience and technologies of creating author's educational and creative projects in the framework of several practice-oriented disciplines in the implementation of the curriculum for training journalists at Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University. Using the methods of analyzing the progress of producing media projects from the idea to their implementation on the platforms of social communication, pedagogical diagnostics, professional self-reflection and teachers who manage media projects, analyzing the stages of project implementation, as well as evaluating the risks and opportunities of implementing student media projects in open access, the main principles of organizing project training for journalism students were identified. The pedagogical experience of teachers is systematized. The authors of the article focused on the conceptual ideas of the developers of the theory and practice of the project method by E.W. Collings, J. Dewey, W.H. Kilpatrick. Project work during training lays simulates the process as close to practice as possible and forms the necessary skills, abilities and competencies corresponding to modern trends. During the implementation of the project, each student goes through all the stages of the production cycle of the release of a media product, working in the deadline mode and responsibility for its compliance.

**Keywords:** project method, project activity, media platform, journalism, media design methodology.

### 1. Introduction

The purpose of the article is to identify and study the specifics of project activity technology in media education and, based on it, attempt to improve the level of project activity in the educational process using the example of training aspiring journalists at the High School of Journalism and Media Communications of Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University (hereinafter KFU).

The scientific problem and its relevance are predetermined by the long-term transformation of the Russian education system at all levels. One of the directions of the new approach to the preparation of bachelors and masters is the introduction of project activities in training, which is often widespread and imposed on the teaching staff by the university administration. Sometimes this happens very urgently, requiring a rapid and serious transformation of the curriculum, in the disciplines of which the hours of practical and/or independent work of students are increased, and even new courses based on project-based activities are introduced. These innovations do not always imply their methodological support and training of teachers, who have to experiment, acting on the current situation, their own intuition and based on the level of training of students. Instead of waiting for future all refresher courses, teachers need to ensure a high-quality learning

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\* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: [msimkach@yandex.ru](mailto:msimkach@yandex.ru) (M. Simkacheva), [rbakanov@yandex.ru](mailto:rbakanov@yandex.ru) (R. Bakanov)

process on a daily basis. Therefore, learning new things often happens together with students during classroom sessions. Thus, in our opinion, the vertical model of knowledge transfer (from teacher to students) is transformed into a horizontal one, in which all sides of the educational process have the opportunity to teach each other.

This is what happened at the High School of Journalism and Media Communications of KFU, where in 2020, at the initiative of the management, a new discipline “Applied Media Design” was introduced into the curricula of bachelor’s degree programs in the areas of “Journalism” and “Television” (full-time and part-time forms of study) media project. Its labor intensity includes 22 credits (792 hours out of 486 hours of practical training, 135 hours are allocated for independent work of the student, 171 hours are provided for monitoring the development of educational material). The course is developed in each semester of study (two sessions per week). It is conducted in the format of creative workshops with a mandatory reporting form for winter and summer sessions, and does not replace, but complements, students’ academic and industrial practice. Successful accomplishment of this subject involves the creation by the team of each student group of at least one educational media project, which in four years of preparation should make itself known in the Kazan media market, compete with well-known media outlets in the region and to a certain extent earn the trust of the target audience. There are still about ten practical tasks associated with achieving the goal. Each student should try out different professional roles during the course of their studies: correspondent, editor, bild-editor, coordinator, web designer, SMM-specialist, media producer, and possibly special project editor. The management of our department also expressed the idea that each student should prepare and defend a final qualification paper at the end of the fourth year, in which they would present and critically reflect on their own creative activities in this media project in the context of its release and further development in the media market of the city and region.

According to V.Z. Garifullin, R.L. Zayni and R.M. Galieva, “Media design is one of the ways to enhance students’ creativity” (Garifullin et al., 2023: 115).

Currently, most teachers read lectures on this discipline. The practice is as follows: taking a group in the first semester, the master works with it until graduation, from semester to semester complicating creative tasks and monitoring their implementation, possibly inviting practicing journalists to review student publications. There is a goal: to prepare a competitive graduate who can immediately start working successfully in the editorial office of mass media of any level. However, the reality is that there is no single methodological basis and basis for teaching the discipline “Applied Media Design”. Each teacher is guided by their own ideas about what is necessary, important or not worthy of students’ attention. In addition, this can affect the quality of training of specialists.

Project work in the framework of university practice-oriented disciplines, organized in parallel with industrial practice, has become an integral part of the training methodology for in-demand media specialists, because the educational process organized in this way prepares students as closely as possible for successful professional activity. The main method of teaching in practical and laboratory classes is the project method “a learning system in which students acquires knowledge and skills in the process of planning and performing gradually more complex practical tasks-projects” (Osmolovskaya, 2012). It always involves “solving a problem that involves, on the one hand, using a variety of teaching methods and tools, and, on the other, integrating knowledge and skills from various fields of science, technology, technology, and creative fields. The results of completed projects should be, as they say, “tangible”, that is, if this is a theoretical problem, then its concrete solution, if practical, a concrete result ready for implementation” (Mazeina, 2014).

Project activities and project training at the university are grounded on the knowledge and skills of a moderator teacher-a competent practitioner who has pedagogical technologies and skills in organizing and implementing projects at the university. Project-based training in media education is implemented by:

- as a technology for creating a creative project: from idea to implementation and forming an audience loyal to the editorial staff around it;
- as an evaluation tool for assessing the professional skills and abilities of journalism students;
- as a finished product, sold on various educational platforms (e.g., social networks and instant messengers, designers suits *Tilda*, *Shorthand*, *Google maps*, *Zen*, educational media

projects of students of the High School of Journalism and Media Communications KFU *Dragon News, Kazanskaya stujurka*, etc.);

– as a ready-made media project in various formats (print edition, video, and infographics, timeline, interactive presentation, slide show with voice-over text, panoramic photo);

– as an organization of individual and collective work of students (author's innovative projects with the distribution of areas of responsibility, positions, responsibilities, functions).

The theoretical basis of the research is the works on the theory and practice of the project approach in teaching as a whole (Alekseeva, 2021; Avtaeva, 2020; Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2023; Kornetov, 2020; Ligai, 2016; Muryukina, Gorbatkova, 2022; Sherstneva, 2019; Zatsepina, 2013 and others) and foreign researchers (Friesem, 2019; Jha, Gangwar, 2020; Lai, 2023), reflecting the historical approach to project activities and substantiating the personal factor of student development in the process of project-based learning. Currently, in the domestic and foreign literature in the theory of question, researchers are actively working on theoretical and practical aspects of the implementation of project-based learning in the educational process, exploring historical trends in the emergence of the project method as an activity-based approach to learning. At the same time, justifying the relevance and necessity of its application in the educational process, as a conceptual technological component in the bundle “education – training – upbringing”. Modern project activity is justified by scientists as innovative, that is, based on the use of modern technologies.

The principles, methodology and technology of project-based learning in the educational process, so the organizational approach, are reflected in the scientific article by S.I. Simakova, which describes different types of project activities on the example of a number of disciplines and areas of work, using her own experience (Simakova, 2011); Yu.Y. Leonova, who presented the method in one of her studies projects as a form of organization of the educational process at the university, different from the traditional lecture and seminar system, as well as an innovative model, educational technology of the educational process, involving the solution of a specific problem, contributing to the development of the student's personality, intellectual qualities and creative abilities (Leonova, 2022).

The specifics of modern media projects and the aspects taken into account in their implementation (promotion and project management) are studied (Bezruchko, 2023; Chesnova, 2020; Fadeeva, 2022).

The results of our research can be useful for researchers to prepare research papers on the technology of journalism, develop a media design methodology of media project and a practical algorithm for implementing an educational project on open media platforms, as well as further it can improve the general principles of organizing project activities in media education. The practical significance of the research results lies in the fact that the principles of organizing project activities can be implemented in the educational process during practical classes in specialized universities, training seminars for media specialists, business games and academic trainings.

## 2. Materials and methods

As an empirical basis for the study, we used:

a) curricula of the Institute of Social and Philosophical Sciences and Mass Communications of KFU in the direction of 42.03.02 “Journalism” of the profile “Multimedia journalism” (bachelor's program) and 42.04.02 “Journalism” of the profile “New Media” (master's program);

b) work programs of disciplines within which educational project activities are carried out at the Higher School of Journalism and Media Communications of KFU (“Applied media design”, “Journalism in the mass communication system”, “Data journalism”, “Creating a website on online journalism”, “Production practice”);

c) educational creative and scientific-educational projects created by students of the KFU High School of Journalism and Media Communications (*On the facts* ([https://vk.com/pofa\\_ktam](https://vk.com/pofa_ktam)), *JourLine* (<https://vk.com/zhurline>), *Radio 4U* ([https://vk.com/radio\\_4u](https://vk.com/radio_4u)), *New Media Master's Degree Program* (<https://vk.com/public212500886>)).

When performing the study, we used the following methods:

- analysis of the progress of media project production from the formulation of ideas to their implementation on social communication platforms – basic research methods and joint practical activities of teachers and students;

- the method of pedagogical diagnostics (studying and analyzing the experience of project-based training in Russia and abroad) and professional self-reflection of teachers, authors of this article, who manage media projects at the Higher School of Journalism and Media Communications of KFU;
- analysis of project implementation stages to identify successful and unsuccessful tactics and strategies for their implementation by student groups;
- assessment of risks and opportunities for implementing student media projects in the public domain.

The combination of these methods, on the one hand, provides a comprehensive analysis of educational project activities within the framework of practice-oriented disciplines, on the other hand, it helps to build effective work on providing project – based training and creating a project in a group of learners.

### 3. Discussion

The project method is not a new method in education. The origins of the project method can be traced back to the V century BC and are associated with the art of “maivetika”, created by Socrates. With the help of leading questions, Socrates helped his students to “give birth to truth” on their own (Sherstneva, 2019). This approach is an example of the origin of this method in training.

The origin of the term “project” is associated with the activities of Italian technicians and architects in the XVI century. A little later, experts noticed the inner abilities and inclinations of the child. They offered to train and educate children based on these makings. At the same time, the learning process should take place at the self-level, when the student learns about the world by performing tasks, and this implements the process of self-education and self-development in practice (Ligai, 2016).

It is believed that the project method appeared in the second half of the XIX century in the United States. The educational and pedagogical approach is based on the ideas of the American educator and philosopher J. Dewey, who promoted the slogan “Learning through activity” (Pelageichenko, 2012: 11). J. Dewey put forward the idea of instrumental pedagogy. According to this concept, learning is reduced to work and play activities, where the child’s action is a tool for learning through personal discovery and is a way to comprehend the truth. The result of this training was to develop thinking skills. Thinking skills were understood as the ability to self-study (Kumskov, 2011: 9; Ligai, 2016; Tomina, 2011: 263; Zaitsev, 2019: 9-11).

J. Dewey’s disciple and follower, American educator and psychologist W.H. Kilpatrick continued to develop the project method. He analyzed the feasibility and conditions of using this method in the educational process, gave its description, detailed theoretical justification, and implemented it in the learning process. The author noted, “the project method provides students with freedom in choosing a problem and solving it, which contributes to the formation of an active position of students” (Kornetov, 2020: 22). He paid special attention to the disclosure of the essence of the project method, which later found wide application in pedagogy and education in many countries of the world (Kornetov, 2020: 19-21).

W.H. Kilpatrick, who rejected the traditional school, proposed to build the educational process as “an organization of the child’s activity in the social environment, focused on enriching his individual experience” (Pomelov, 2021: 155).

The method of W. Kilpatrick’s projects provided for such a system of training, when “students gain knowledge and master skills in the process of performing a system of constantly complicated and pre-planned practical tasks” (The Best..., 2022). This teacher identified four phases of the project: design, process, implementation, and evaluation. By the method of projects, the outstanding teacher meant “a well-executed plan” (Kornetov, 2020: 20-22; Pomelov, 2021: 150-151).

Another founder of the project method, professor E. Collings, conducted a pedagogical experiment in a rural school in Missouri in 1917. According to the method of E. Collings, students had to design what they had to do themselves. Learning material – the everyday experience of students who chose the content of their academic work themselves. The teacher only helped them carry out their planned activities. The result of the experiment conducted at the end of the school year was that students mastered a sufficient number of skills and knowledge necessary to “enter their life”. They are literate, have an idea of what surrounds them, are able to work and show initiative (Dzhurinsky, 2000: 330-331).

In Russia, the project method was widely used in the Labor School of the 1920s. P. Blonsky should be considered the founder of the Russian school of the project method of P. Blonsky. The theoretical ideas expressed by P. Blonsky were put into practice by another Russian scientist-teacher S. Shatsky. He assumed that schools should prepare students for life, not just teach them to read and write (Mazeina, 2014).

In the pedagogical literature, the term “project method” first appeared in 1908–1910 in the reports of the Massachusetts school administration. *The American Bureau of Education* officially approved it in 1911. However, many scientists were critical of the term “project method”, considering it not entirely successful, and there was a long discussion about this in the United States (Pelageichenko, 2012: 8-10).

In our opinion, the optimal definition of the term “project” is given by O.N. Vasina and O.N. Ponomareva: “a unique activity that has a beginning and end in time, aimed at achieving a certain result/goal, creating a certain unique product or service, with specified resource and time constraints, as well as requirements for the implementation of the project” quality and acceptable level of risk” (Vasina, Ponomareva, 2012: 711).

In current scientific literature (Drozdov, 2019; Golubev et al., 2016; Ivanova, 2019; Kodanina, 2021; Korytnikova, 2013; Sharoiko, Chvyakin, 2015; Shatunova, 2021; Shesterkina, Marfitsyna, 2019; Vasilenko et al., 2016; Yudina, 2022; Zhuravleva, 2017) you can find various definitions of the term “media project”. In the modern sense, a media project can be considered “a professional collective blog on the Internet with cultural and social topics that provides the audience with unique content of author's programs, reports and videos, or a platform for conducting a dialogue with the audience on the most pressing problems of modern society” (Chesnova, 2020: 50; Plotnikov, Shamina, 2022: 136), as well as “a temporary structure intended for creating media products, performing works and rendering services in the media sphere, as well as for creating new and reorganizing existing media organizations” (Belousova, 2018: 19; Belousova, 2019: 26). V.A. Plotnikov and O.A. Shamina emphasize that “any media project, including the creation of new media organizations, can be implemented in the media sphere” it does not have all three attributes of a project (goal, time frame, and resources), but it has an indirect relation to projects and is used in the sense of, for example, “a type of business” that does not provide for a finite period of existence, but only a goal and resources” (Plotnikov, Shamina, 2022: 137).

In Russian media studies, a separate block of scientific articles is devoted to the process of implementing specific student media projects, identifying their advantages and disadvantages (Cherednichenko, Lapko, 2021; Chutcheva, Lavrishcheva, 2019; Gavrillov, 2022; Evdokimova, Kislaya, 2021; Kodanina, 2021; Myasnikova, 2017; Nazarova, Shesterkina, 2021; Nemchinova, 2017; Peniaz, 2019; Podobina, 2017; Podoprighora, 2017; Rachipa et al., 2019). Most of these works are descriptive in nature, but they contain reflection and often methodological recommendations to the authors.

As noted by V.Z. Gafullin, R.L. Zayni, R.M. Galieva, despite the fact that student media projects “do not have proper registration with Roskomnadzor, they have a lot in common with traditional media: the frequency of updating publications, mass audience, transparency of messages, relevance and lack of direct contact with the communicator in the communication process. “...” The media project is part of the educational process at the university: this is a joint research project of students and teachers. This process can be considered as a pedagogical technology: the teacher-mentor organizes the student's educational activities with the help of a media project, and the student collects a portfolio, accumulates experience and knowledge, forms skills and uses them in practice” (Garifullin et al., 2023: 115).

As you know, “students' project activities can be fully formed only within the framework of the educational process, since in professional activity in production, a specialist should already be able to carry out this activity, evaluate its results, communicate with colleagues and management and reflect” (Merenkov, 2019: 136). We agree with this researcher, who believes that “integrating a social project into the educational environment of a university, into the educational process contributes not only to the formation of professional competence and the development of creative potential among students, but also to the formation of an active, socially responsible specialist who is able to work effectively for the benefit of his country – the education of citizenship” (Merenkov, 2019: 157-158).

In modern pedagogy, project activity becomes particularly important, because in educational activities it “stimulates students’ interest due to a non-standard approach to studying the material and motivates children not only to receive new information, but also to develop creative abilities by creating a project” (Ligai, 2016).

The task of modern educators is to make the form proposed in the XIX century by the American educator W.H. Kilpatrick relevant to our time.

Many scientists consider Project-based Learning as a promising approach that enhances the level of student learning in higher education. Scientists at Leiden University (the Netherlands) conducted empirical research on project-based learning (Guo et al., 2020). In order to avoid a gap between what students study at university and what they need in the workplace, the authors of the concept propose to provide students with the opportunity to participate in real problem solving and knowledge building in a professional context. One of the attractive ways to achieve this goal is Project-based Learning. The results of their study showed that Project-based Learning had a more positive impact on students’ academic performance than direct education.

J. Sayegh and A. Rigopoulos (Sayegh, Rigopoulos, 2023) write about the effectiveness of Project-based Learning and the improvement of academic performance. In project-based training within the framework of the course “Introduction to Modern Media”, the authors applied a structured group approach. They structured the groups based on the advertising industry model. Students were assigned specific titles and interrelated responsibilities (project manager, researcher, copywriter and public relations manager). Using their method, the authors noticed an increase in academic performance. The structured group approach, according to experts, is effective and can be adapted to other courses that require students to work together.

Researchers J. Dobson and T. Dobson (Dobson, Dobson, 2021) presented an interesting approach to project-based learning as to the freedom of expression of oneself and one’s opinion among schoolchildren. Their approach demonstrates that schools need to create a freer space for students to collaborate and develop their sense of freedom. Based on the collaborative action research model, the assessment uses a combination of student-as-teacher and project-based learning approaches. This approach to learning challenges the consultative approach in teaching and teaching didactic values, empowers students, increases their activity and makes it easier for them to navigate life.

According to researcher R. Henney (Henney, 2018), any pedagogy of media practice is at the junction of teaching professional skills and critical thinking. The use of projects, the scientist believes, is the main means of structuring educational experience as a means of reflecting professional practice. This researcher believes that vocational training should take into account the social context and experience of applying projects as a real activity. This author conducts his reflections on the use of project-based learning in the curriculum of media practice based on discoveries, not on construction.

A number of scientists draw attention to modern technologies in media education, which contribute to the potential change in educational formats and interaction with students in the context of universal digitalization. We are talking about digital tools and the role of digital technologies in media education practice. For example, an extensive article by scientists from India is devoted to understanding the role of digital technologies in education, which emphasizes the importance of digital technologies as a powerful tool for achieving quality education (Haleem et al., 2022). For example, T. Coughlan, R. Pitt, R. Farrow (Coughlan et al., 2019) is studying innovative opportunities for the disclosure of educational resources in medicine.

J.V. Pavlik (Pavlik, 2023) discusses the importance of generative artificial intelligence for journalism and media education in the article. He believes that generative artificial intelligence opens up an era of potential transformation of journalism and media content. In particular, the possibilities of using *ChatGPT* in media education are described. At the same time, the researcher draws attention to the fact that his article was also written in collaboration with *ChatGPT*.

T.J. Marion and S. Fixson (Marion, Fixson, 2021) think about the process of transforming the innovation process, as well as how digital tools are changing work, collaboration and organization in the development of new products. The results of digitization of existing design and collaboration tools, as well as the introduction of completely new digital tools, affect not only the quality of products and the speed of their creation, but also the innovative work itself, change the content of work, collaboration models, decision-making powers, organizational structures, management structures, firm boundaries and, as a result, entire ecosystems.

Scientists also talk about the importance of teamwork during digital transformation (Gálik, Oprala, 2021; Guinan et al., 2019). The digital transformation that characterizes the time in which we live includes the ability of an organization to adapt, react and position itself to achieve success in an environment of rapid technological development. The most important element in achieving successful digital transformation is the digital project team. The authors identified four main command levers that enable digital transformation: (1) diverse and focused team composition, (2) iterative goal setting, (3) continuous learning, and (4) talent management.

Finally, scientists from the University of Texas (Doolani et al., 2020a) write about the use of augmented reality (XR) systems in training, education, safety and production. Having studied the possibilities of virtual, augmented and mixed reality technologies, the authors talk about the effectiveness of XR technology used in various fields of vocational training. They can be used in on-the-job training, especially because in professions where safety is important, real-world training is often too difficult, expensive or risky (Doolani et al., 2020b).

Thus, in this article, we consider project activities for university students in a bundle of concepts: project-project method – project management. At one stage, we concretize the concept of “project”, adapt it to the “media project” direction, and then work with this concept.

#### 4. Results

Taking into account the definition given by V.Z. Garifullin, R.L. Zayni and R.M. Galieva to the term “student media project” (“the process of creating a media product, often carried out collectively using modern technologies” (Garifullin et al., 2023: 118), in this article, we understand the term “project” as a joint way of organizing an individual project students’ individual and group activities, united by a common goal of activity, focused on the joint performance of tasks that contribute to the creation and implementation of the project, as well as performing a set of interrelated actions to achieve the result – the final product. This is a joint activity of students and the moderator-teacher responsible for the content, form and idea of the project. The project is subject to requirements for the presence of constituent elements, content, form of submission, formulation of a question (problem), proposal of solutions (implementation) and the possibility of implementation to obtain a result that meets the project goal.

Project characteristics:

- availability of the goal and focus on its achievement;
- project preparation regulations (rules for working in a group, requirements for materials and information);
- time limit (deadline for preparing materials and submitting the project);
- involvement of all team members in project development;
- novelty of the idea and innovativeness of the project;
- whether the project is realistic or feasible (financial, technical, or resource-based).

In training media specialists, we use the concept of “media project”, which is based on the methods of media design and media modeling. Media project – a specific format of information and communication between the author and the audience (printed, online, video, photo, audio, multimedia, infographics, etc.).

In our case, this is an educational media project that is created from scratch and implemented on a specific Internet platform. We understand an educational media project as a creative product created independently by students: from the idea, goal setting, development of a thematic concept, forms of presentation of materials, project format, aimed at a specific audience, taking into account the peculiarities of its media behavior and media consumption, with the possibility of interacting with the audience and receiving feedback in the form of various interactions.

Project management is an area of activity in which certain goals are defined and achieved, as well as the use of resources (such as time, money, labor, materials, energy, space, etc.) is optimized within the framework of a certain project (which determines the final result and limits on time and/or other resources).

Project activities help motivate students to self-study, develop a creative approach to creating media products, creative thinking, search for information, master software products, plan and organize the activity process, research skills and teamwork skills. Therefore, in our view, project activity in the training of media specialists is a kind of quest, as a result of which students have the opportunity to realize all their intellectual and creative potential and create a real and original creative product that can be placed on various open digital platforms, acquire their own permanent



audience, responses, reactions, and interaction. At the request of its authors, an educational project can eventually transform into a professional media product, gain the status of a mass media outlet, become a place for students to complete training, production and creative practices, be an object of research in final qualification papers, participate in competitions, festivals, conferences, and become an author's material for a portfolio. But in order for this to happen, the creative team will have to work long and hard. During the three years of conducting the discipline “Applied Media Design” at KFU, out of more than two dozen media projects implemented so far, not one of them has managed to reach at least a semi – professional level, because this is not only completely new type of activity and relationships in the team, but also the acquisition of new responsibilities. Work in this direction is underway.

The activity-based approach to training media specialists is grounded on creating conditions in the educational process that are as close as possible to the working conditions in real journalistic practice. It is provided by the curriculum of the bachelor's degree program in Journalism at KFU. It is included in all stages of preparation, starting from the first year of the discipline “Applied Media Design”, where the authors of this article, teachers who actively conduct this course, apply the project method. The organization of the work of project activities in the bachelor's degree is designed to imitate the organization of the work of the media editorial office as close to reality as possible, as well as to orient students to regular joint (in small groups – the so-called editorial teams) creative and research activities. Each full-time and part-time student must complete all stages of work from the idea to placing the project on other chosen open media platform. In our opinion, this creative process can be divided into the following four parts: organization, technology, implementation, and project management. They can be specified by following features.

*Organizational activities* include:

- audience identification (understanding what needs to be done and for whom, who may need it: who will be the target audience of the future media project);
- definition of the media platform (placement of the project);
- formulation of the project name, goals, objectives and expected results;
- development of a media project concept (idea);
- formulation of the thematic area (what will be included in the project) and project ideas (what the project is about);
- project content (directions, sections, thematic blocks, tags);
- media text formats (text, infographics, video, flashcards, longread, interactive, multimedia);
- design, visualization (design);
- division into subgroups (editorial departments), distribution of responsibilities and areas of responsibility.

*Technology* for creating and maintaining a media project (preparation and release):

- choosing the topic of the future media text;
- collecting data/facts;
- filtering (selection of actual data);
- fact-checking;
- content preparation (creation of media texts in different formats and genres);
- editing and proofreading;
- visualization (multi-media text addition);
- placement of finished materials in the project;
- combining finished materials into a single project (video, infographic, presentation, project on the Tilda digital platform, and many others);
- working discussion in the mode of editorial planning sessions and flying lessons (study of the current agenda, planning, distribution of topics, analysis of the quality of project tasks);
- implementation of a media project.

*Analytical activities* are as follows:

- analysis of its journalistic thematic direction in other media;
- analysis of their own scientific thematic direction in the scientific literature (preparation of scientific papers on the topic under study);
- monitoring of media of various subjects and levels, blogs, social networks, instant messengers to determine the current information agenda, current topics and problems;
- creative self-reflection;

- research of the experience of other media, creative handwriting, style and features of the work of well-known journalists (preparation of journalistic and scientific works on the topic under study);
- self-education in accordance with the chosen learning path (research of scientific literature, trends in the media sphere, changes in journalistic practice, as well as in the media industry as a whole, and an attempt to understand their causes);
- follow trends in related fields of activity (PR, SMM, advertising, storytelling, networking, public speaking).

*Management activities* that include project management:

- planning and organization of activities (individual, collective);
- development of the business plan of the media project;
- development of a media project content plan;
- calculation of possible risks (external and internal);
- development of a system for encouraging project participants (criteria for assessing competencies and skills);
- development of methods for attracting an audience (subscribers);
- development of methods of interaction with the audience;
- promotion of the media project on the Internet (promotion of the project; as an option – promotion in the search engine (SEO-optimization of the site));
- determination of project performance criteria (results);
- completion (achievement of the project goal, discussion of the implementation of its tasks, the quality of its implementation in general, professional reflection, assessment of the competencies and skills of its participants acquired in the process of its implementation).

Modern methods of project management and management contribute to the promotion and development of a startup on the Internet, attract audience traffic and give the project solidity. In this regard, one of the tasks of media specialists is to create a high quality, interesting and useful audio and video product using all modern digital services. Currently, this task can be solved almost completely. Thanks to the use of the latest IT-technologies and the opportunities they open up, you can visualize content and make it memorable to the audience. Therefore, we recommend that students:

- make the project visually more attractive or “clickable” (use expressive headlines, bright and dynamic photos, rich video materials);
- create your own recognizable style (individual design, accessible infographics, content that the audience understands and the language of media texts).

In the course of the first year of the bachelor's degree, teachers try to lay the foundations of practical activity for each student. Further, project activity becomes more complex and improved with the appearance of special disciplines in various areas of journalism. In the next academic year, as part of the discipline “Introduction to data journalism”, students learn how to create data texts, independent media projects and web content in the field of data journalism in the following available online programs:

- infographics (*Infogr.am* (<http://www.infogr.am/>), *Piktochart* (<http://www.piktochart.com>), *Creately* (<https://creately.com/>), *Visme* (<https://www.visme.co/>), *Easel.ly* (<https://www.easel.ly/>), *Venngage* (<https://ru.venngage.com/>));
- web-content (*Shorthand* (<https://shorthand.com/>));
- presentations (*Visme* (<https://www.visme.co/>), *Prezi* (<https://prezi.com/>));
- timeline (*Tiki-toki* (<http://www.tiki-toki.com/>), *Time.graphics* (<https://time.graphics/ru/>), *Timetoast* (<http://www.timetoast.com>), *Sutori* (<https://www.sutori.com/en/>), *Preceden* (<https://www.preceden.com/>)).

During the final year of the course “Journalism in mass communications”, students work one final large-scale media project, which, in fact, should demonstrate everything that students have learned during their undergraduate studies in four years. These are conceptual, author, collective, practical, and systematic approaches to creating a media product. As a rule, students perform projects in the following formats: author's video; project on digital platforms *Tilda* and *Shorthand*; project in *Google Maps*; animated videoclip; presentation and longread.

As a result of joint watching and discussion of projects, strengths and weaknesses are identified, what needs to be worked on, what is successful/unsuccessful, what ideas can be taken into account and used in future professional activities. Such collective work with presentation,

comparison, joint discussion, reworking, demonstration, and getting audience reactions to the created media project is, first of all, a good practice.

Master's degree program in "Journalism" ("New Media" program) the project methods are also used in a number of disciplines. For example, one of the activities that one of the authors of this article implements during his classes is a popular science project. Its essence is that the teacher invites each master's student to make a broad review of the scientific literature on the topic of their future master's thesis, reflect on the relevance of the topic, study the scientific approaches of other researchers to the scientific problem and definition of concepts, give a description of the methodological apparatus that is supposed to be used: what methods will be used learn what method, what can be identified, highlighted, and defined.

Students should present the results of the study in the form of scientific texts and publish them in the thematic community "Master's Degree in New Media" in the *Vkontakte* social network (<https://vk.com/public212500886>). Theses on the history of the development of the scientific problem raised in the dissertation research and scientific theses reflecting the results of the dissertation research are published by undergraduates in collections of scientific articles, participating in scientific conferences of various levels.

During the course "Research work", and then within the framework of their own research practice, students have the opportunity to collect, comprehend and systematize a significant amount of text material, which they can then use both in the text of the dissertation and in their scientific portfolio.

This project has a distributed set of areas of responsibility. The teacher is its moderator, editor, and supervisor. Among the students in each group, there is an issuing editor (publishes texts in the community), a text editor and an editor of texts of foreign students (there are more of them every year); responsible for the submission of materials and design of project work. The most popular formats for students are presentations, slideshows and longreads made in the text editor of a social network.

Thus, master's students, working on the preparation of their future final qualification work, simultaneously conduct the project: collect and summarize scientific material, share it with other project participants, as well as with all users of the social network – the community is not closed. We consider the participation of each master's student in this project to be the most important part of preparing his future dissertation, because right now he must not only reflect on the collected amount of theoretical information, as well as get acquainted with the scientific ideas and results of scientific research of his colleagues, but also receive feedback from them, support, and possibly suggestions for qualitative expansion theoretical and methodological basis of the initiated research. It seems that an interested and detailed discussion of the quality of the project task and recommendations for its improvement can give confidence to each student, which is necessary from a psychological point of view.

The second author of this article uses a similar approach in teaching the practical discipline "Creating a website in online journalism" also in the first year of the master's degree program "New media" of KFU. After a short series of lectures, a team of students works in mini-groups to prepare their original media projects. As a rule, students can create small multimedia educational projects with a primitive structure about journalists whose fates seemed interesting to students in the 12 hours allotted for practical classes. For example, if a group of foreign undergraduates is studying the discipline, the teacher gives them the task to develop a media project dedicated to the life and work of well-known journalists in China. Thus, students from different countries are acquainted with the publications and style of media representatives: Russians with authors from China and students from China with the work of Russian journalists. The teacher should pay special attention to ensuring that group members have their own creative task, and then the work will go faster. We can't do without extra-curricular activities here. This type of activity becomes, in fact, the main one, and in the classroom each group presents the results of their work for the week, receives feedback and reflection from classmates, and useful advice from the teacher. Each of the six practical sessions has a specific task: pitching ideas (first); presenting the structure of the future site and its thematic blocks (second); discussing the visual component of the site and its multimedia services (third); filling the site with interesting content (fourth and fifth); presenting a demo version of the site (sixth).

Practice shows that students (especially, foreign groups due to the complexity of communication) do not have enough hours provided for in the curriculum. Therefore, in the final

lesson, we discuss only intermediate versions of websites, the teacher gives some advice on how to improve them, fill them with a large number of interactive elements (for the first time, as a rule, there are very few of them), and asks students to finish the task before the exam in the discipline, which is held in a month and a half or two. At the same time, the final defense and discussion of each media project are organized, identifying their positive and negative aspects. Students mostly choose free accounts media platform of the *Tilda* media platform to work with, and if someone has a subscription to it, they use paid services. For example, in the spring of 2023, one of the groups created a website in memory of the recently deceased prominent public figure of the Republic of Tatarstan, a well-known Kazan journalist, media manager and local historian Eduard Khayrullin (<http://eduard.khayrullin.tilda.ws/>).

Teachers of KFU's Higher School of Journalism and Media Communications use the project method in teaching various disciplines provided for in the bachelor's and master's degree curricula. But the most important and most difficult thing, both from the methodological and practical sides, is the full-fledged implementation of the course "Applied Media Design".

Within the framework of teaching this discipline in the KFU bachelor's degree, the learning process is aimed at experimentally finding optimal solutions for the implementation of project work in the educational process and improving students' practical skills in the joint activities of the teacher and student. In fact, teachers model the working conditions of future media specialists in a real media editorial office based solely on their practical experience in the media sphere and their own pedagogical methodology. Teachers have not been trained in the implementation of something in the educational process, so each teacher who goes to this discipline develops his own teaching methodology, project concept and implementation plan, and then offers them to students. This is a kind of experiment, during which the methodology of teaching disciplines with the use of project work is developed, knowledge, skills of project activity are formed, that is, practical work among students for future free entry into the profession of journalism.

Teachers provide a base and teach you to write media texts, systematically fill the project with relevant content (the principle of consistency), understand the meaning of your work (functional approach) and feel responsible for each published word (professional ethics). Thus, even in the junior years, from the first days of training, we implement systematic, functional, professional and ethical approaches in our work. At senior courses, it is necessary to organize training and practice based on the experience of professional journalists of various levels and directly in the media offices. The reality is that currently at KFU, conceptually, meaningfully and organizationally, the entire course for four years of project activity training is organized and taught by one teacher. As part of working on a long-term project, there should be project management (including a manager from the media sphere, at least at the level of specially organized workshops), project promotion (PR, SMM, targeting). The entire educational process should be based on these workshops, which can bring the educational process closer to real media practice.

Often, when working on the creation of modern formats and design of media texts, the authors of this article are faced with the fact that previously actively used programs and Internet services have now become paid and virtually inaccessible for use in the educational process. The university management does not approve numerous applications for subscriptions to the most necessary programs in the learning process. The technical and material capabilities of classrooms, teachers, and students are different: unfortunately, it is not yet possible to provide everyone with equal conditions for working on projects.

And all this, it should be noted, without taking into account the specifics of teaching foreign students who do not know how to think and convey thoughts in a text in a foreign Russian language. To keep up with their Russian colleagues, they write texts in their native language and translate them using an online translator or artificial intelligence. Hence, the problem of the appearance and significant increase in the number of artificial texts that needs to be adapted to the format of projects in content, stylistic and semantic aspects. In this case, the teacher also becomes an editor of the texts of foreign students, since it is not always possible to entrust this work to Russian-speaking students due to their lack of many editorial skills and experience, as well as often the desire to edit the texts of foreign fellow students. Thus, we should talk about completely different specifics of teaching not only project activities, but also the basics of the media profession, and the basics of media literacy.

It turns out that without the necessary Internet programs and the necessary technical base, using the gadgets available to teachers and students, we develop and implement unique

educational media projects that are able to take their place in the niche of student projects created in an online environment, compete, participate in competitions and, most importantly, promote professional self-improvement of students-future specialists in the field of media, the formation of a creative portfolio of each student. During their senior years, they can submit an application for employment in a media editorial office. While they implement their project activities, teachers lay the foundation for the body of professional skills of the creator, forming him as a multi-faceted person who is able to work effectively in multitasking conditions. By creating a variety of educational media projects now, each teacher of the “Journalism” direction at KFU contributes to the development and contributes to the state of journalism of tomorrow and the day after tomorrow to the best of their abilities.

## 5. Conclusion

Further implementation of the project method in the system of higher education requires both a change in the trajectory of the educational process and the improvement of professional skills of teachers and especially creative disciplines. However, students also need to reconsider their somewhat inert attitude to the learning process, because their workload has significantly increased. Now they need to work hard and creatively both in the audience and independently, creating high-quality media texts for their publication in projects being developed and implemented in the public domain. In the course of project activities, students master the skills and technology of creating a media product that can attract the attention of as large an audience as possible: they study the areas of journalistic activity, programs for creating media products, layout and design, learn to develop the concept, structure, content, design of a media product, place it on open media platforms, and interact with the audience. In the process of joint media design (students – teachers), a unique intellectual and creative product is created, new production and creative skills are formed, and subsequently professional experience is accumulated.

We consider project activities in media education to be a promising research area that requires further study and development of new forms of organizing practical activities in the training of media specialists, commensurate with the requirements of the time.

The author's methodology based on this research currently demonstrates a certain effectiveness of using the project method in the educational process of training aspiring journalists at KFU in terms of introducing students to their future professional activity, obtaining and consolidating professional competencies in it, developing individual and collective work skills, instilling interest and laying the foundations of the future profession, developing a sense of responsibility and responsibility and compliance with the journal's professional ethics, altruism, and professional solidarity. We observe the manifestation of many of these qualities in second- and fourth-year students who create media projects that form the empirical basis of this article. For some, they are more pronounced, for others-less, but in comparison with the initial period of their training, a positive trend is noticeable. However, to become a professional journalist, every student still has a lot of work to do.

We consider this topic relevant and require further development in the following areas of research:

- methodology of project activity in media education (especially for foreign students, who, in our opinion, need a different approach to training than with Russian-speaking students);
- technical support for organizing project activities (multimedia project laboratories, showrooms);
- promotion and development of educational startups on open digital platforms.

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Published in the USA  
 Media Education (Mediaobrazovanie)  
 Issued since 2005.  
 ISSN 1994-4160  
 E-ISSN 1994-4195  
 2024. 20(2): 309-318

DOI: 10.13187/me.2024.2.309  
<https://me.cherkasgu.press>



## Twentieth Anniversary of the *Media Education* Journal: Main Trends in Research

Marina Tselykh <sup>a,\*</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Rostov State University of Economics, Russian Federation

### Abstract

In 2025, the *Media Education* journal has its twentieth anniversary since its founding (2005). And this is a good reason for the content of this article.

The purpose of this article is to identify through the analysis of publications in the *Media Education* journal the main trends in media education that characterize modern research areas of the last four years.

To study in detail the main directions and trends in current development of scientific research in media education area, the entire pool of articles has been divided into the key groups united by problem range considered by their authors: 1. changes in the media sphere; 2. media literacy; 3. media manipulations; 4. theoretical models of effective media educational activities; 5. media discourse; 6. history of cinema.

From the discussion it becomes clear that the pace of change in media sphere has quickened considerably since the 2020s, and that the role of media education in providing ideas and methods has come under increasing academic attention and community scrutiny.

The fact that modern people live in an increasingly media-intensive environment means that they need to acquire certain media skills and abilities, and media education becomes the basis of a strategy for improving their competency profile.

**Keywords:** media education journal, media literacy, media manipulations, media discourse, history of cinema.

### 1. Introduction

The educational implications of media remain to fully manifest themselves. But there is already growing concern that the involvement of a modern person in the media environment reflects and compounds existing problems of social communication in the digital era. This situation has already provoked widespread anxiety among scientists: the research in the realm of media pedagogy/media education is an actively developing area of scientific knowledge. In order to identify current trends in this field of theoretical thought, we turn to the analysis of publications that was made during the last 4 years in the Peer Review *Media Education* journal.

We organize our research around the most pressing issues that received coverage in the *Media Education* journal since 2020 till the end of 2023. During this period 249 articles were published, respectively 2020 – 67; 2021 – 73; 2022 – 54; 2023 – 55. The themes raised in the *Media Education* journal are very diverse and mirror fundamental debates in media pedagogy as a part of pedagogy as it is. The exploration of the articles shows that the academic subject of media

\* Corresponding author

E-mail addresses: [m.tselykh@mail.ru](mailto:m.tselykh@mail.ru) (M. Tselykh)

education is permanently developing in its content and implications; it tends to involve aspects of wide array.

## 2. Materials and methods

Methods that are used in this study are: analysis, synthesis, comparison and generalization. Using the induction method, we move from the particular to the general, summarizing the facts and trying to come to generalizations and conclusions about the main trends that determine the current situation. The comparison method is the basis for establishing common features (or differences), identifying and comparing essential features that helps to answer the main questions of the scientific research, and therefore, it leads to an understanding of the basic patterns of reality development. The named methods are interrelated, organically complement each other, and meet the objectives set in our research.

To study in detail the main directions and trends in current development of scientific research in media education area, we divided the entire pool of articles into the key groups that are united by problem range considered by their authors. Thus, we have identified the following set of topics:

1. Changes in the media sphere
2. Media literacy
3. Media manipulations
4. Theoretical models of effective media educational activities
5. Media discourse
6. History of cinema

Next, according to this continuity, we take a closer look at the most promising and important research findings presented in the *Media Education* journal.

## 3. Discussion and results

The concept “media education” is applicable both to the theoretical part of the academic discipline “Pedagogy” and to the process of acquiring the media competency themselves. Understanding of the best ways to organize the process of media education begins with studying and identifying the problems and contradictions inherent in the use of digital technologies. It is also important to consider the impact of digital transformation on the educational environment.

A clear and detailed account of innovations in the global and Russian media industry and media education is that by G. Melnik and K. Pantserev (Melnik, Pantserev, 2023). They claim that profound changes in the media sphere are caused by digitalization (For a detailed discussion of the issue, see the article: Melnik, Pantserev, 2020), artificial intelligence, active implementation of AI-based technologies, etc. As main innovations, the experts indicate: contact with content creators through likes, comments, etc.; “edutainment” – presentation of educational content in an entertaining form; targeting; processing information in seconds; strategic planning of media enterprise activities; collecting a database of readers and others. Consequently, the researchers conclude that innovative teaching of journalism should be based on “the process approach”, considering educational innovations not from the point of view of the final result, but as a technological process. A judgment about the features of Russian media literacy schools can be found in the conclusions of the article: “Unlike Western ones, universal values prevail over means in the Russian educational high school. The most attractive in terms of innovation for representatives of this school is the synergetic paradigm, which assumes open education in combination with the entire amount of means of cognition” (Melnik, Pantserev, 2023: 461).

A useful discussion of “the presence of risk zones in the process of forming students' media competence may be found in the article by E. Frolova and O. Rogach (Frolova, Rogach, 2022). Among risks they name is “insufficient attention to evaluative/interpretive and practical-operational skills of working with information”. Further on the authors take a broad look at the structure, elements, and measures of media competence and go on (based on students' survey results) considering ways of working with students that can help to develop their media skills.

Media education is inextricably bound up with mass media, digital media, media resources, interactive multimedia types of communication, and other media formats. Media education itself involves attempts to change current reality in one way or another, and therefore assumes that a person will be able to demonstrate media literacy. Many studies have proven that media literacy is crucial means that can prevent substantial negative political and social consequences. At the same

time media illiteracy can provoke a negative situation for its owner, making the person a victim of misinformation (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2020).

To show the digital threats, challenges and problems that Internet users may face today the researchers (Muzykant et al., 2023) turned to the experience of Indonesia, which is quite justified, since this country is the fourth largest Internet user globally in 2020, with more than 202 million users (73.7 % of its citizens). The figures given by the researchers convincingly show that in Indonesian society media use is constantly growing. Among the benefits of digitalization, experts drew attention to the obstacles and dangers for network users such as data security, terrorism and crime, privacy concerns, social disconnection or anti-social digital data manipulation, copyright and plagiarism, hiding identity and others.” A large number of active ICT users are associated with a low digital civilization index, hoaxes, fraud, digital intimidation, and others. It can easily breed in Indonesia without further intervention. The main issue here is digital literacy, where government policies can be resolved. Most Internet users with low digital literacy pose a significant risk from a security perspective. The netizens are vulnerable to false and fraudulent reports that can significantly affect Indonesia, especially because of their poor understanding of personal data protection, and can make malicious statements through fake news” (Muzykant et al., 2023: 101). The authors conclude that to reduce the destructive impact of technology on behavioural, sexual, reputational, and personal levels the efforts should be organized around digital literacy education from early childhood to higher education, including character-building training and state defense.

B. Bulus, M. Yilmaz, M. Isik and U. Bulus (Buluset et al., 2022) presented the results of the analysis of the adult digital literacy in South Korea and Turkey. Their findings are interesting from the point of view of a comparative analysis of the overall picture of digital literacy practices among adults and show how the content and scope of digital literacy is understood and structured in both countries. Differences in adult digital literacy practices are described in detail. At the same time, scientists point to converging perspectives and directions of development:

- creating a safe and accessible environment for children and adolescents in Turkey and South Korea;
- building opportunities that promote learning that is flexible in time and space, thereby creating a learning society for all;
- shaping each stage of digital literacy implementation regardless of the current political and economic policies of each country (Buluset al., 2022: 543).

There is no one agreed and established definition of what media education is. There are a lot of publications that explores this notion and shows how it emerged, what it used to be, how it was interpreted in time (Ivanova, Verbitskaya, 2018).

The scientific apparatus of modern media education reflects new areas of development of media pedagogy. The question of how the media impacts upon a person and especially a child has long concerned academics. And there are a number of important articles in which the authors of the period under review approach this issue.

E. Lomteva, N. Vorobyeva and A. Demidov (Lomteva et al., 2022) explore the capabilities of the media center in the development of students' general competencies. They pursue important themes and issues of media education through the framework of youth policy and additional education of youth. Data obtained during a sociological survey of 2321 people give the authors the right to assert that a media center can be an effective platform for implementing the process of developing students' general competencies. In their next publication (Lomteva, Demidov, 2023), the authors develop the idea of teaching media literacy skills through the system of secondary vocational education. This is explained by a recently emerged new trend associated with the growth of film production in Russia, which leads to a shortage of necessary specialists. It is noted that the trend of growth in the volume of films produced in Russia is already constrained by the lack of necessary specialists. As sociological data shows in August 2023, over the past six months, the number of vacancies for actors in Russia has increased by 17 %, and for film production specialists by 77 % (Lomteva, Demidov, 2023: 553). The experts also predict further development of the creative industries market in Russia: in 2022, its amount was up to 6.9 trillion rubles, by 2025 this figure will grow to 9.2 trillion rubles.

So, from the discussion it becomes clear that in Russia creative industries has quickened considerably since 2022. It means that the role of media education will continue to increase becoming one of the priority means of preserving and developing the spirituality and moral values of the population. It is obvious that media literacy is designed to help a person understand the

information flow and distinguish facts from opinions, which is very important in conditions of information confrontation and, in fact, information wars.

I. Chelysheva and G. Mikhaleva tackle many of the media education issues through the teaching process in universities and family education. In their numerous articles (Chelysheva, 2021; Chelysheva, 2022; Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2020; Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2021; Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2022; Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2023) the authors review the main trends and changes in patterns of media educational activity and concentrate on the importance of forming family values and tolerance. Future professional's and students' readiness for teaching media competence is of special interest in the articles of these authors. The results of practical experience are used to illustrate important conclusions in the technique and methodology of media education. Among the pedagogical technology there are curricular and extracurricular forms of media education, tasks for mastering the modern information field, "creating amateur media products, creative tasks based on media texts of various types and genres, and independent search work on audiovisual material, making filmographic lists on certain educational topics, and much more (Chelysheva, Mikhaleva, 2023:19).

G. Mikhaleva also examines the question of educating university students for civic engagement using the material of Russian feature films. Along with the importance of creating university students' civic-minded culture by means of film education the researcher resumes that very few feature films about youth and for youth about friendship, mutual assistance, volunteering, charity, tolerance, youth movements are being shot in present-day Russia, although these issues are widely represented in contemporary Russian documentary films (Mikhaleva, 2021: 679). However, it should be noted that since then the situation has changed somewhat. In recent years, the films which content can be analyzed with young people in order to cultivate important moral qualities have begun to appear. Among them:

- patriotic feature films/ historical dramas;
- films about famous Russian historic personalities;
- film adaptations of classic Russian literature;
- films about love for the "small" homeland including films about "ordinary" people of different professions;
- films about national heroes or famous citizens of various professions who made a great contribution to the development of our country;
- films about real military or professional exploits of heroes, etc.

Basing on the comprehensive review of current Russian and foreign publications, N. Khilko and N. Genova produced the structure of students' media literacy of culture and arts universities in the context of key competencies (Khilko, Genova, 2023). According to the authors the media literacy structure includes four components: perceptual, cognitive, interactive and value. Thus, the authors presented a model for the formation of media literacy, based on identifying the relationship of these components with methods for analyzing media value practices and methods for mastering media literacy.

The problem of meaning formation is under the consideration of I. Erofeeva, G. Melnik, N. Prostokishina (Erofeeva et al., 2021). They characterize pedagogical technologies in modern higher education for teaching text construction using conceptual ideas about society and its cultural memory, guaranteeing effective interaction with the target audience, with its value preferences and behavior patterns. The main interest of the authors lies in the cognitive and linguistic tools of the media text, which allows its creator to signify local identity and show it in certain semantic frameworks, as well as in bright and interconnected images that are attractive to the audience. As a starting point for constructing lesson design, the authors use the methodology of A. Fedorov onhermeneutical analysis of the cultural context, which allows to compare cultural tradition and reality. Presenting a strong and coherent arguments for meeting a multi-vector manner in the analysis of media products the researchers describe the package of practical exercises used in teaching students to master cognitive and linguistic resources when modeling a media text.

The issue of involving children of preschool and primary school age in the sphere of media education is under consideration in the article of N. Pavlushkina and A. Teplyashina (Pavlushkina, Teplyashina, 2023: 139-147). The authors attract attention to the necessity of studying the peculiarities of content consumption by younger children. As a means and resource of media education scientists offer children's magazines (paper and online editorial products) that suggest

new, entertaining, popular science content and a special digital reading model. New term is used – “edutainment environment” (learning through entertainment technology).

Media competence (MC) as a component in the curriculum of 33 countries in Latin America is analyzed by E.G. Rojas-Estrada, R. García-Ruiz, I. Aguaded (Rojas-Estrada et al., 2023). After systematic review of the literature published since 2012 the experts identified the number of publications made on the topic by Spanish-speaking authors. The amount of published articles on the topic of media competence is expressed as a percentage: Brazil (21.4 %), Argentina (14.3 %), Spain (11.9 %), Mexico (11.9 %), Ecuador and Colombia (both with 9.5 %), less than three manuscripts by authors from Bolivia, Venezuela, Chile, Dominican Republic, Peru, and Costa Rica. The researchers determined that the region lacks studies analyzing the issue of media competence in educational curricula, and their number has decreased over the past two years. This allowed the authors to conclude that it is necessary to establish cooperation between institutions in different countries as an important component aimed at consolidating a common project for the study of MC and its development in Iberoamerican level. Thus the authors encourage addressing future studies, projects, and curricular proposals that guarantee the development of critical, operational, and social competences, to face the socio-cultural demands and phenomena of the new media system with the dimensions of the presence of MC, media education, and media literacy in the curriculum at different stages and levels: initial education, adult education and education of indigenous populations.

In the works of A. Fedorov and A. Levitskaya media competence is considered not only as a practical necessity for maintaining the informed community but also as a theoretical phenomenon. In their numerous publications in the *Media Education* journal the scientists provide an expert analysis of the theoretical models of effective media educational activities of (future) teachers that contribute to the development of media competence of the audience. The articles of these authors are an indispensable source of information for those interested in the theory of media education.

A. Fedorov and A. Levitskaya offer a theoretical model of media competencies' development, which includes 3 components (diagnostic; content-target; efficiency) and markers of the effectiveness of media educational activities (motivational, contact, informational, technological, evaluative, creative, practical and operational) (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2021, 2021).

Another field of the researchers' interest is the problem of media manipulations. Some authors (Fedorov, 2022; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2021; Frolova et al., 2022; Kulikova et al., 2021; Kusheva, 2020; Levitskaya, 2022; Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2020; Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021; Novikov, Fedorov, 2022; Tselykh, 2021; Tselykh, Levitskaya, 2022) in their articles argue that in modern situation we increasingly collide with fakes and destructive content. This means that the issues of media literacy should be viewed with much more urgency and importance than it currently is.

In this regard it is worth mentioning the analysis of the role of professionals in media discourse. In broad study funded by the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (RFBR) “Media education of pedagogical profile students as a tool to resist media manipulation” A. Fedorov and his co-authors revealed the fact that today the media spectrum has expanded dramatically compared to the situation in the twentieth century, when only professional paper, radio and television could have a mass audience. Today, many online bloggers have millions of readers, which exceed the circulation of most traditional newspapers. This fact has significantly changed and complicated the situation because ordinary audiences may uncritically perceive false media messages created by manipulators. In this regard, it is worth mentioning scholars' analysis of how the work of media journalists is presented in cinema art. “Cinema largely portrays the media (press, television, Internet) as an agent of manipulation and fraud, and the work of media journalists is often shown as a technology of deception and manipulation of the mood of the mass audience in favor of certain influential groups” (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2021: 67).

Based on the analysis of numerous scientific sources, A. Levitskaya and A. Fedorov developed and presented not only the theoretical model of the development of media competence of students of pedagogical universities in the process of analyzing media manipulative influences, but also the theoretical models of effective media educational activities of (future) teachers, contributing to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing media's manipulative influences, as well as media educational activities that contribute to the development of media competence of the audience in the process of analyzing the reliability of media texts. More details about the model and its structure can be found in the *Media Education* journal (Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2021).

According to the research of 180 materials of 2021 on the Russian-language website of Radio France Internationale relating to Russia for the period of 2021 the experts found out that they contribute to the overall negative image of Russia as a country which foreign policy and domestic affairs should be questioned and judged (Novikov, Fedorov, 2022). An analysis of 752 materials related to Russia published in Russian on the *Euronews* website over the period 2021 allowed the scientist to conclude that most of the materials contain signs of media manipulation. A. Fedorov found out a set of manipulative techniques used by *Euronews* journalists in their materials associated with Russia. Among them are omission, selectivity and appeal to authority (Fedorov, 2022).

A. Levitskaya applied anti-manipulation media education model to analyze 70 articles on Russian topics in French and Swiss newspapers over the period 2018-2021. Her study proved the predominance of manipulative techniques in most publications (Levitskaya, 2022). In her next research of 87 articles from American and British newspapers relating to Russia A. Levitskaya also focuses upon signs of manipulation, propaganda clichés and techniques in modern American and British Press related to Russia (Levitskaya, 2022). Criticizing the main media manipulative techniques on the audience (stereotyping, labeling, plain folks, least of evils, scapegoat, distortion of data, framing, selection, weak inference, etc.) the author covers the ways of text filtering that can help the reader not to be deceived (reasoned selection of facts versus opinions in media texts, clearing information from "glittering" and "labeling" by comparing with actual facts, etc.; clearing out the halo of "typical", "common people", "authority", a critical analysis of the goals, interests of the media agency, that is, the source of information) (Levitskaya, 2022: 263).

E. Frolova, O.Rogach, A.Tyurikov (Frolova et al., 2022) argue that the ability to select, analyze and interpret data in the modern context of intensified information flows is crucial. However, the survey conducted by scientists revealed that university students do not have sufficient competence in assessing the source of information in terms of its adequacy, completeness and reliability. It was also ascertained that official channels of information, such as the press and television, are losing their popularity among students. "Young people show a higher level of trust in digital channels of network interaction" (Frolova et al., 2022: 381). These data served as the starting point for the authors to conclude that there is a need for special pedagogical practice that promotes the development of skills in evaluating information sources, assessing the reliability of the sources, the adequacy and completeness of information. According to the experts, all these are good tools to counter information manipulation.

There are a number of authors that publish in the *Media Education* journal the results of their research in the sphere of media discourse. By means of cognitive science philological hermeneutics, linguopragmatic and linguoculturological analysis, methods of sociolinguistics and contextual analysis scientists seek understanding:

- "transformations" of language norms in media (Brusenskaya et al., 2023);
- language means that makes it possible to express different connotations in media texts (Brusenskaya et al., 2023; Kulikova et al., 2021);
- general criteria for the necessity of anglicisms in Russian media texts (Kulikova et al., 2023);
- conflictogenic units in modern media communication (Brusenskaya et al., 2022);
- the phenomenon of tolerance in relation to the lexical, grammatical and ethical-linguistic standards of the modern Russian language (Kulikova, Barabash, 2022);
- communicative practices of commercial corporate media (Semashkina, Khovanova, 2022);
- the role of archaic lexis in the creation of figurativeness and expressiveness (Kulikova, Tedeeva, 2022);
- the dynamics of pragmatic connotations depending on socio-cultural conditions (Kulikova, et al., 2023);
- the pragmatic component of semantics and its role in media texts (Kulikova, et al., 2023);
- rhetorical techniques through which the sender of a multimodal message seeks to attract the attention of the audience (Tyazhlov et al., 2021).

Researchers' findings regarding the development of discourse in the media in Russia show that the modern language material is changing due to both linguistic and extralinguistic factors. Experts consider media discourse as a generalized model of the national language used by the majority of the population. This section of the *Media Education* journal is of particular interest because it presents in the most accessible form specific results in a hybrid scientific research area

of linguistics, psychology, political science, and media education with an emphasis on the role of media in the modern communication.

Articles on the history of cinema occupy a special place in the *Media Education* journal's publications. Numerous works of A. Levitskaya, A. Fedorov and other scientists (Kazakov, 2021; Kostogryz, 2021; Tselykh, 2021) are devoted to this topic. An interesting study on the coverage of issues of history, sociology and ideology of Russian and Western cinema art of different time periods on the pages of the magazine *Soviet Screen* (since 1925 till 1998) and the *Cinema Art* journal (since 1931 till 2021) belongs to A. Fedorov and his co-authors. In a series of articles the researchers present extensive analytical materials on the nature of the publications of the *Soviet Screen* magazine and *Cinema Art* journal (Fedorov, 2022; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2021; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2022; Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2023). From the material under conceptualization the writers draw out elements of concepts' change in theoretical film studies. At its heart is the key philosophical idea on the connection, interdependence and integrity of the phenomena of reality, the unity of the historical and social in knowledge. This is exactly what the authors point out: theoretical concepts in film studies are fluid and often subject to fluctuating courses of political regimes (Fedorov, 2022: 576). Thus it is understandable that the topics of the *Media Education* journal articles have changed over time, depending on ideological and sociocultural trends, as well as the political context inherent in each historical period. The researchers offer their own classification of the evolution of concepts in theoretical film studies through comprehensive content analysis and comparative interdisciplinary research. It allows the scientists to reveal the features, place, role, and significance of the evolution of theoretical film studies concepts and graphically present the main theoretical models of film studies concepts. These findings are critical because they make it possible to predict future developments of theoretical concepts in film studies.

#### 4. Conclusion

It is clear from the discussion that the pace of change in media sphere has quickened considerably since the 2020s. The main changes in the media sphere that researchers point to – are its intensification. A media-intensive environment creates complex issues and challenges, such as a lack of media literacy and the need to find effective ways to improve it. We cannot but agree with the authors that the field of media education presents opportunities and challenges for professional training of specialists to acquire specific media competencies. Media education must be the foundation for any strategy to improve the competencies profile of workforce as a whole and of ordinary people. The issues of media literacy as we collide with fakes and destructive content should be viewed with much more urgency and importance than it currently is. It proves that media education is too important to be ignored. This suggests that in the future more and more people will have to learn new media literacy skills in order to keep their jobs, not to be deceived or manipulated in digital communication.

Indeed publications of the research results in the *Media Education* journal offer the promise of upgrading the media education training, and facilitating moves between academic and educational streams which are still sometimes difficult.

To summarize, it is time for media education to broaden its traditional focus, and to view new concerns and modern challenges with the seriousness that they deserve. Without a doubt, the role of media education in providing ideas and methods for solving the problems of modern society will continue to be the subject of growing academic and public attention.

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