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C O N T E N T S

Analysis of Russian Comedy Feature Films about Family and Family Education in a Student Audience

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Abstract

The article presents methodological and practical approaches to studying Soviet and post-Soviet feature films of the comedy genre about family and family education. Watching Soviet and Russian films, the audience has an opportunity to become familiar with the system of values, traditions, and models of family education presented in audiovisual media texts of different years. Developing value attitudes about family traditions and family education in the younger generation based on Russian feature films about family is a pressing issue in the present-day socio-cultural situation. The author presents individual forms and methods of media studies in a student audience, which can be a basis for further successful application in media education focused on feature films about family and family education; development of technologies and methods for integrating media education on this issue into university courses or subjects related to the fields of education, psychology, and sociocultural studies. Media education based on feature films of the comedy genre addressing family issues from the Soviet and post-Soviet periods includes autobiographical, structural, critical, semiotic, identification analysis, cultural mythology analysis, key character analysis, and others. Film studies addressing family issues in a student audience, do not only solve the main goals of media education, but also reveal potential opportunities for using feature films in building university students' future professional trajectory for educating the younger generation, forming their value ideas about family and family relationships.

Keywords: media, media education, Russian feature films, family, family education, comedy, analysis.

1. Introduction

Studying and analysing feature films about family and family education is an important aspect of media education. One of its current areas is analysing audiovisual media texts based on the cinematographic art of various genres. Among the numerous genres of feature films, comedy films occupy a worthy place; many of them were about family both in the Soviet period and at the present stage. The choice of the family theme in analysing comedy films is due to the fact preserving and strengthening family ties, forming the true value of family relations are especially relevant in modern mediatized society. Here we can agree with the opinion of M. S. Topchiev that "the acceleration of information flows, the growth of consumption of mass culture products give rise to a desire in people to consume everything new and new, easily discarding the old. The growth of individualism and constant immersion in the virtual space of young people leads to a decrease in the value of family relations" (Topchiev, 2019: 120).

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Let us attempt to consider the most promising, in our opinion, forms and methods of analysing comedy feature films on the family theme with university students. In the process of studying and analysing films about family and family education, we will turn to comedy feature films of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods.

2. Materials and methods

The material underlying this research is Soviet and Russian comedy feature films about family and family education, forms and methods for analysing audiovisual media texts of the comedy genre in a student audience.

The research methods are the main types of analysis based on comedy feature films including structural, critical, autobiographical, semiotic, identification, analysis of cultural mythology, analysis of key characters in the process of studying comedy feature films in a student audience. Creative activities used in conducting media studies focus on the most productive methods and approaches of contemporary Russian film and media education.

3. Discussion

Comedy films have always enjoyed great popularity among a mass audience. In Russian film production there are many comedy films related to family and created in different years. The issues of studying comedy audiovisual media texts are presented in a number of scientific studies.

Comedy films, including Soviet and Russian comedy films, have been analysed in some foreign studies (Allen, 1999; Beumers, 2003; Boym, 1993; Condren, 2021; Enzensberger, 1993; Gérin, 2018; Gillespie, 2003; Horton, 1993; Johnson, 1993; Kaganovsky, 2018; Kupfer, 2013; Kupfer,2016; Leigh, 2017; MacFayden, 2003; Mitkus, Steiblytė, 2018; Sover, 2014; Taylor, 1983; Yugay, 2023).

Many Russian scientists consider cultural and art studies approaches to comedy films (Bedenko, 2020, 2021; Gabliya, 2021; Salnikova, 2022; Tueva, 2008; Zhurkova, Evallyo, 2022).

The study by V.N. Bedenko presents a detailed description of the genre specificity of comedy films. The author presents the following definition of the comedy genre in cinema: "a film comedy is a genre of cinema in which the main goal is not only to entertain the viewer, but also to make them laugh in order to provoke the so-called comic effect, which is achieved with the help of various techniques of a dramatic and technical nature, for example, an exaggerated demonstration of certain human qualities by an actor, directing and constructing comic situations, as well as combining the incompatible in real life" (Bedenko, 2020).

In the dissertation research carried out by M.I. Gitis, which presents an analysis of sound solutions in cinematographic art, it is noted that there is a consistently high interest in film comedy shown by the public in "various historical periods, the wide popularity of comedy actors, the diversity of themes of comic films chosen by scriptwriters, the significant range of expressive means used by comedy directors, make the genre in question a unique phenomenon of audiovisual culture" (Gitis, 2013: 3).

The educational potential of studying comedy films is also highly valued by many scholars: (Chelysheva, Sapozhnikova, 2024; Fedorov, 2015; Mikhaleva, Lozovitskaya, 2024). The authors point out numerous factors that influenced the popularity and interest of the mass audience, including children and youth, in the comedy genre.

Many viewers choose to watch comedy films for entertainment, a desire to get positive emotions, have fun, etc. At the same time, the comedy genre is not only a means of relaxation, but also an important factor in education, promoting ideological attitudes and values. Indeed, "the importance of comedy films in society is due to its educational potential, broad opportunities for social criticism and deconstruction, providing viewers with opportunities for relaxation. Comedy films allow you to relieve tension caused by social contradictions inherent in any society, shortcomings in certain areas of collective life" (Bedenko, 2020).

A large number of studies are devoted to the development of the comedy genre in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. For example, G.N. Ryabova describes the emergence of Soviet comedy and defines the comedy films typology of this period, including the following films: "agitation films; social and situational comedy, propaganda or agitation-propaganda, satirical comedy and parody" (Ryabova 2022: 604). The author notes that "the formation of the comedy genre in Soviet cinema involved solving at least two problems: determining the nature of the content and developing a film language. The solution to the first problem contributed to identifying the types and subgenres of

film comedies. The solution to the second problem enriched cinematography with methods and techniques for creating a comic effect" (Ryabova 2022: 603).

The analysis of Soviet comedy films of the 1930s-1950s, among which there were many films about family, is provided by some Russian researchers (Tueva, 2008; Zhurkova, Evallyo, 2022).

D.A Zhurkova and V.D. Evallyo describe the transformation which took place in the cinema of this period and emphasize that "since the formation of film comedy in the 1920s-1940s, a change in philosophical paradigms, transformations of the eccentric principle, the formation of new artistic images and motifs were recorded" (Zhurkova, Evallyo, 2022: 280). The leading role of strict adherence to ideological canons and public opinion was also reflected in comedies addressing family issues.

P.V. Knecht studies the female image in comedy films of the period and characterizes it as follows: "In Soviet comedy of this period, characteristic elements of the light genre are repeated: "a chance acquaintance", "the path from Cinderella to princess", "love confusion", "tricks of rivals", etc. As a rule, love relationships develop in public. The heroes' personal space is invaded by older comrades, who take on the role of mentors not only in everyday work, but also in matters of the heart" (Knecht, 2020: 155).

V.N. Bedenko also notes that "in the USSR during the times of totalitarianism, satire was not allowed, but comedies were encouraged that showed the happy life of workers (*Jolly Fellows* (1934), *Volga-Volga* (1938), both directed by G. Alexandrov). They produced a variety of comedies, such as sports (*Happy Finish* (1934), directed by P. Kolomoitsev), grotesque comedy (*The Adventures of Petrushka* (1936) directed by K. Isaev), musical comedies (*The Rich Bride* (1938), *Tractor Drivers* (1939), both directed by I. Pyryev)" (Bedenko, 2021: 93).

Comedy films of the "thaw" period are analyzed by some Russian researchers (Dedinsky, 2022; Kosinova, 2015; Palshakova, 2024). Emphasizing the importance of this period in the development of the comedy film genre, M. Palshakova writes: "The sixties brought Soviet comedy to a new level. For a long time, this genre existed on the periphery of Soviet film production (in the post-war years until Stalin's death, it even fell into oblivion), not distinguished by either a variety of means or a sharpness of vision. With the onset of the thaw, comedy not only returned to the screen, it appeared in an incredible variety of forms – from lyrical sketches stylized "like a document" (*I Walk Through Moscow*) to emphatically theatrical grotesque (*Aibolit-66*)" (Palshakova, 2024: 168).

When analyzing the film repertoire and audience preferences during this period, M.I. Kosinova states that the comedy genre became one of the leaders in film distribution: "in the 1960s, according to sociological research, viewers preferred films distinguished by the simplicity and clarity of the cinematic language. Among them, comedies, adventure films and melodramas were especially popular. The box office champions of this time were *The Diamond Arm* (L. Gaidai, 1968), *Kidnapping, Caucasian style, or Shurik's new adventures* (L. Gaidai, 1966), *Wedding in Malinovka* (A. Tutyshkin, 1967), *Operation "Y" and Other Adventures of Shurik* (L. Gaidai, 1965), etc." (Kosinova, 2015).

Comedy films of the 1970s-1980s have also been analysed in some Russian studies (Osinovskaya, 2008; Tsyrkun, 2022) and others. For example, O.S. Osinovskaya gives a characteristic of the carnivalization of comedy films about family. The author, for example, points out: "The film "Hello, I am your aunt!" is permeated with the idea of a carnival from the very first frames. The feeling of carnivalesque is born thanks to the black-and-white pseudo-documentary introduction, and then maintained throughout the film by the grotesque, stereotypical nature of the characters, who are more like masks than real heroes" (Osinovskaya, 2008: 263).

The features of modern comedy films and TV series about the family are presented by Z.K. Bedanokova and B.A. Gavrilova. The authors state that at the present stage the value attitude towards the family is presented far from ambiguously. Thus, analyzing well-known TV series for young people, the authors note: "Children and motherhood are perceived by the characters as something undesirable. In the TV series *Univer* and *Real Boys*, young mothers and their children are considered as something unattractive, which is why they become the object of ridicule. In the TV series *Happy Together*, the main character and his wife are not involved in raising children, they experience their problems and failures without the help of their parents" (Bedanokova, Gavrilova, 2019: 28).

4. Results

We will consider some forms and methods of analysing feature films of the comedy genre with university students in the academic course "Family Education in Russian Feature Films" (Chelysheva, 2025).

The study of family relationships in media education based on comedy films and media representation (Bazalgette, 2009) includes studying the historical and socio-cultural contexts. Teaching a student audience can be based on the criteria proposed by E.V. Zhelnina and L.N. Galiullova: "the presence of conflict situations – the presence and frequency of quarrels between spouses in the plot, misunderstanding of each other; relatives' pressure – the imposition of their own opinion, influence on the decision-making of spouses by relatives; lack of spending time together – rare presence of spouses next to each other; restriction of personal freedom – this criterion is associated with the prohibition of the spouse by the husband/wife to manage their capabilities based on their own desires; lack of trust in each other – that is, lack of confidence in themselves and in their other half; inability to make concessions – inability to come to a common opinion due to unwillingness to agree with the spouse" (Zhelnina, Galiullova, 2019: 72-73).

To complete this task, the audience is asked to analyse the relationships between the characters of a Soviet or Russian comedy feature film of the students' choice, based on choosing one of the options:

1. Relationships between the spouses.
2. Parent-child relationships.
3. Relationships in the family as a whole.

After completing the task in subgroups, the students are supposed to prepare and present the characteristics of family relationships in comedy films of a certain period. Then the results are presented and discussed during the general discussion. A mandatory condition for completing the task is providing argumentation of the stated position, evidence, describing specific examples from the selected comedy film, explaining the relationship of a particular model of family relationships with the socio-cultural situation in the country.

Another option for this task may be the media education technique "work in pairs". The activity consists in presenting a comparative description of the criteria for feature films by different directors or created in different years, identifying the representation features and specifics of the family images in a comedy media text.

Much attention in media studies should be paid to analysing parent-child relationships in feature films on family issues. To understand this phenomenon in comedy films, students are asked to fill in Table 1. They are to identify the causes of the conflict between parents and children, its resolution in the film and other options for resolving the family conflict. This activity is focused on media technology, thus allowing students to identify the presentation specifics of the problem in question in comedy feature films.

Table 1. Parent-child relationships in comedy feature films of the Soviet and post-Soviet periods

Title of the feature film	Resolving parent-child conflict		
	The cause of the conflict in the parent-child relationships	The way out of the conflict chosen by the film characters	Possible options for resolving the family conflict
...	...	...	...

As practice shows, filling in this table allows students to address the causes and consequences of conflict situations in parent-child relationships, identify the main factors that influence their occurrence and resolution; define family education styles that contribute to or, conversely, hinder adopting constructive decisions. It also develops their analytical skills when studying an audiovisual media text of the comedy genre.

While examining family images in comedy films of different years, the educational potential of the comedy film genre should be also taken into consideration. This task is given to students to draw their attention to media language. The activity includes analysing audiovisual media texts from the point of view of their educational potential. For this purpose, students discuss the educational function of comedy films using different questions.

Here is a list of questions and tasks for analysing the comedy film *Love and Doves* (1984) created by V. Menshov.

1. What means did the film makers use to show the family relationships in in Kuzyakin's family?

2. Can the Kuzyakins be called a friendly family? What signs help you determine this?

3. What is the style of communication between the parents and children in the film? What words and expressions are used by the film makers in the comedy genre?

4. Describe the main character traits of the film protagonists. Which of them are most typical for comedy films?

5. Try to predict how the adult family life of Lyuda, Lenya, Olya will develop. Argue your position, giving examples from the key episodes of the film.

6. What linguistic means did the film makers use to show the atmosphere in the families of the main characters?

7. What educational means are used in Kuzyakin's family? Justify your answer with some examples from the film.

8. How do family education methods affect the microclimate in the main characters' family?

9. What family values are key for the characters in the film? Which of them are, in your opinion, the most important?

10. What expressive means did the film makers use to convey the communication style in the families of the main characters? Which of them do you think are the most effective and relevant today?

Discussing the issues allows students to consider not only the family relationships presented in the feature film, but also to expand their knowledge on issues of family education models, responsible parenting, etc.

The media education concept – media categories can be addressed in the hermeneutic analysis of comedy audiovisual media texts by referring to the characteristics of families presented in comedy films of the period under study. For example, you can ask your students to search for comedy films that show different types of families: 1. Single-parent family. 2. Young family. 3. International family. 4. Large family. 5. Dysfunctional family, etc.

Then the students are to describe the selected family type, define its characteristic features, factors influencing family well-being, family values, traditions, interaction of this family, family upbringing, emotional microclimate, etc.

Another aspect of analysing comedy films about family and family education is identifying plot stereotypes. According to the definition offered by A.V. Fedorov, "media stereotypes (from the Greek words *stereos* – solid and *typos* – imprint) are usually understood as schematic, average, familiar, stable ideas about genres, social processes / events, ideas, people, dominating in media texts intended for a mass audience" (Fedorov, 2012: 138).

In order to complete this task, we use the scheme proposed by A.V. Fedorov (Fedorov, 2012: 139). In Table 2, we will present an example of completing this activity based on a comparative description of two film characters – Roma's fiancé and his will-be father-in-law – Boris Ivanovich from the comedy film *Gor'ko! / Bitter!* (2013), directed by Zh. Kryzhovnikov.

Table 2. The structure of plot stereotypes in comedy media texts (based on the comedy film *Gor'ko! / Bitter!*, 2013)

Characters	Significant change in characters' lives	Emerging problem	Search for the problem solution	Problem solution or return to stable life
Naive, poor character Roma	Conflict with the parents about the upcoming wedding	It is impossible to refuse the parents as they fully provide for the event	Selling a car given by the parents. Deceiving your parents to hide his plans	Reconciliation with the parents after the scandal at the wedding when the deception was revealed
Cunning rich man/official	Upcoming wedding of his daughter. Desire to look	Refusal of future newlyweds to organize a	Making a strong-willed decision	Reconciliation after the conflict and fight at the wedding

Characters	Significant change in characters' lives	Emerging problem	Search for the problem solution	Problem solution or return to stable life
Boris Ivanovich	decent in front of his colleagues and guests	wedding party according to the scenario proposed by their parents	contrary to the interests of the newlyweds	

While doing the students turn to the plot analysis of the comedy media text about family to find out that the main conflict, which acts as a trigger for the situation occurring in this film, lies in the unwillingness of the younger and older generations to come to an agreement, to meet each other halfway, resolving the situation constructively.

Based on the key concept of media audience in applying hermeneutic analysis of comedy films about family and family education, the teacher can give students a creative activity aimed at identifying the target audience of films of different years. For this, students are asked to select and justify their choice of Soviet and Russian comedy films, which, in their opinion, can be used for discussion with schoolchildren and/or parents on the topic of family. After selecting the films, students justify their choice, select information about the chosen film, determine the format of the future event (parent conference, class hour, individual work with the family concerning parent-child relationships, etc.).

Students get interested in analysing comedy films about family, for example, when they are involved in doing a creative-imitation task, during which they present their version of the continuation or change of a famous film story (at the student's choice) while preserving the comedy genre. This activity is done in subgroups and is based on the key concept – media agency. After that, you can arrange a competition for the best plot of a comedy film with a forecast of the success of this film among a mass audience; students think out a place for filming, collect funds, etc. Then the results of the work done are discussed and assessed in the student audience.

The presented activities with comedy audiovisual media texts on family issues can be used both in media studies and integrated as separate elements in the study of courses or subjects related to education and psychology.

5. Conclusion

Thus, developing value attitudes about family traditions and family education in the younger generation based on Russian feature films about family is a pressing issue in the present-day socio-cultural situation.

Watching Soviet and Russian films, the audience has an opportunity to become familiar with the system of values, traditions, and models of family education that are presented in audiovisual media texts of different years.

Analysing feature films addressing family and family education, including comedies, helps to expand university students' awareness of using methods and technologies for including media education both in specially organized media studies (extracurricular activities, electives, etc.) and in courses or subjects as integrated parts.

Thus, film studies focused on family issues in a student audience, do not only solve the main goals of media education such as developing analytical thinking skills, creative imagination, improving the skills to search, interpret media texts, creatively use the possibilities of the media, etc.), but also reveal the potential opportunities for using feature films in building university students' future professional trajectory for educating the younger generation, forming value ideas about family, family relationships, etc.

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The Role of Media in the Formation of Professional Identity of Young People (Case Study of Students Majoring in "State and Municipal Administration")

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Abstract

Modern media are a powerful tool for influencing attitudes, behavioral patterns, values of young people, including their professional orientations and professional identity. The media image of a profession performs rational-cognitive (gaining knowledge, ideas about professional activity) and emotional-evaluative functions (formation of an emotional framework of motivational attitudes). The author set the goal to determine the influence of media on the formation of professional identity of young people. As an example, a case of students of the training program "State and Municipal Administration" was taken. In the course of the work, qualitative research methods were used, the results of a focus group interview of students were analyzed. The results of the study showed that students experience a lack of comprehensive, complete and reliable information about the activities of municipal employees. Information in order to attract attention is often presented in a negative interpretation, the everyday nature of the work of municipal employees is excluded from the field of view of modern media. The negative media image of the profession has a destructive effect on the processes of formation of professional identity of students. The article presents the areas of media literacy education for students studying in the field of "State and municipal administration": the formation of an internal locus of control in the processes of searching and selecting information, understanding the selective specificity of the action of digital algorithms, subjective limitations in the practice of data analysis, development of ethical standards for working with information, anticipation of the consequences of the dissemination of information and its impact on various socio-demographic groups. Personal narrative stories of representatives of a professional group are of particular interest to students. The personalized nature of the information, according to students, allows for a correlation between personal attitudes and real requirements for professional activity, and an assessment of the prospects for implementing successful professional trajectories.

Keywords: media space, media literacy education, media image of the profession, professional identity, municipal service, information.

1. Introduction

The high dynamics of changes in the media sphere in recent years has focused the increasing attention of researchers to such topics as media competence, media manipulations, theoretical models of effective media educational activities. The characteristics of the modern media space include the intensification of the processes of production, exchange and consumption of information, the expansion of the circle of social subjects involved in communications. Despite fairly well-developed skills in navigating the Internet, modern youth have an insufficient level of media competence. First of all, scientists pay attention to the decline in cognitive functions in conditions of information overload,

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the lack of critical thinking in assessing information (Feijoo et al., 2023; Gálik et al., 2024; Gáliková Tolnaiová, Gálik, 2020; Shutenko et al., 2022). These deficiencies form the vulnerability of the younger generation in the process of interaction with the media. In this context, the relevance of media literacy education increases, which develops skills for analyzing and evaluating information and becomes a barrier to preventing the destructive influence of the media.

Modern media not only provide for the formation of the information agenda, the space of communication interactions, but also influence the needs, interests and value attitudes of individuals. Official media (television, radio, magazines, newspapers), which have traditional channels of interaction with the audience, act to a greater extent as a tool for broadcasting information, news content. In comparison with them, new media (blogs, social networks, Internet platforms) have a higher potential for influencing public opinion, as they ensure the active involvement of users in the media process (Goncharenko, 2020). Such properties of new media as openness, dynamism, immersion are their competitive advantage in the processes of influencing the opinions, values and attitudes of individuals.

At the same time, the risks of the development of the modern media space can be identified: the erosion of reality, the chaos of images and their interpretation, the manipulation of public consciousness, the destructive impact on the individual, the erosion of social identity (Gonotskaya, 2018). These risks can have the most negative consequences for young people and the processes of their socialization (Rogach et al., 2024). The unstable social and professional identity of young people can be subject to additional destructive impact from the media. "Fake" news, an aggressive agenda present in modern media to attract attention, can distort the meanings and values of professional culture, deform the perception of the activities of representatives of certain professional groups.

As rightly noted in scientific research, the it is necessary to update pedagogical concepts for the development of media literacy education. New risks are associated with a selective approach to obtaining information, the action of algorithms that limit users in information navigation. Algorithms in social networks push to obtain information that coincides with a personal point of view, which reduces criticality in assessing the reliability of data (Nekmat et al., 2019). In this context, only media literacy education can be considered as an effective tool for forming an internal locus of control in assessing information, reducing the risks of manipulating public opinion.

2. Materials and methods

The purpose is to analyze of the influence of media on the development of professional identity of students studying in the field of training "State and municipal administration".

Research objectives:

1. Analysis of subjective assessments of students in terms of their perception of media information characterizing various aspects of their future professional activity, study of the influence of media on the choice of a professional path.

2. Analysis of symbolic interpretations of municipal service as reflected in the media (according to student youth), determination of the media image of the profession of a municipal employee in the minds of young people.

3. Study of the role of media in the formation of professional identity of students, their readiness to work in local government bodies, the influence of media on the formation of the prestige of municipal service.

4. Analysis of the role of media literacy education in the preparation of students studying in the field of "State and municipal administration".

Considering the specific nature of collecting student assessments and the need for a qualitative description, a focus group discussion was chosen as the basic method. The use of qualitative research methods within the framework of this topic is due to the need to obtain detailed information, interpret the content and meanings of media consumption, and conduct a detailed assessment of the impact of media on the professional identity of the student. During the study, 1 focus group was held, participants – 7 third-year bachelor's students studying in the specialty "public and municipal administration". The reduction in the number of participants is due to the need to detail the information provided, and to remove time deficits when discussing issues.

3. Discussion

The profession of a municipal employee in modern conditions can be considered in two aspects that complement each other: as a social lift for young people who have entered the political

field and as public service, helping the local population in solving primary issues of life. Such socially significant professions as a doctor, teacher, municipal employee are at the forefront of working with people, their needs, requirements and problems (Amadsun, 2020). In this context, the analysis of the factors of the prestige of these professions, the dynamics of their demand in the eyes of young people is a relevant area of scientific research (Kraft, Lyon, 2024). The factors that form the prestige and demand for municipal service can include both internal motivational needs of the individual and external ones associated with the influence of family, school, social environment and various media. As rightly noted in Russian studies, media education tools are the most effective tool for shaping the worldview of young people and their professional orientations. The sustainable consolidation of value attitudes towards creative work and public service can be ensured through verbal forms, meanings and visual means presented in educational publications, mass media and the blogosphere.

The idea of civic media literacy, focusing the criteria for assessing information in the plane of public good (Mihailidis, 2018), is of great importance in new approaches to media literacy education. It seems important to develop not only the skills of content evaluation, but also its creation, transmission of information, reflection on the consequences of its dissemination, and subjective presence in the media environment (Festle, 2020).

In scientific discourse, attention is focused on the study of the media image of the profession. According to scientists, the media image of the profession is "metaphorical, symbolic and associative" (Frolova, 2018). The media image reflects typical features, behavioral models, and work values of representatives of a particular socio-professional group. Publicistic texts are based on factual material, its generalization and interpretation. In this context, it is appropriate to talk about the rational-cognitive function of the media image. It arms with knowledge about the basics of professional activity, focuses on the resources and limitations of the development of professional tracks in this area. At the same time, the media image concentrates the individual features of a specific representative of the profession, the hero of a publicistic text or a work of fiction. Both in a publicistic text and in a work of fiction, when describing the actions of a specific hero, there are subjective assessments of the author of the media content, narrative practices and reflection of individual professional experience. In this context, it is appropriate to talk about the emotional function of the media image of the profession. Maximization of the emotional component is characteristic of works of art, where the author's imagination and creative interpretations are used to a greater extent. Film production, which is a cultural artifact, a driver of the formation of value orientations of young people, plays a special role in the morphogenesis of emotions and impressions.

The key risks of media image formation are the focus of modern media on the values of consumer society. According to scientists, the information agenda was often characterized by the meanings of individualistic hedonism, epicureanism, mass consumption of goods and services (Davydova, 2021). The transfer of short-lived consumer values to media images of a profession impoverishes the semantic content of labor functions and devalues the significance of painstaking daily work. These destructions pose particular risks for socially significant professions, where public service and dedication are dominant in professional activity.

The media image of the profession is also formed in the blogosphere, in the practices of narrative stories of representatives of certain professional groups. Cognitive-evaluative and emotional discourses perform a generative function in understanding the professional existence of an individual (Larson, Pearson, 2012). Foreign scientists also noted that an important role is played by "a conversation about disappointment in the profession." An emotional narrative does not narrow the boundaries of the formation of professional identity, but on the contrary, ensures the construction of a foundation for resolving subjective conflicts in the professional sphere (Mitra et al., 2024). Reflection on professional experience (including negative) crystallizes the media image of the profession, allows one to correlate individual professional expectations of the individual and the requirements of corporate professional ethics (Humphreys, Brown, 2002).

4. Results
The results of the study showed that in the process of choosing a profession, students did not use the means of analyzing the specifics of professional activity, its resources and limitations.

Olga: "When entering, I did not read much about the profession, I was more guided by the opinions of friends, parents. Well, and then it seemed interesting – to work in government bodies,

to implement projects ... Now you understand that the work of a state and municipal employee is difficult ... ".

Olesya: "Yes, I read something in publics, local publics about how it is to work in the City Administration ... ".

It can be noted that the information that is in the media space did not have a significant impact on the choice of the professional path of the informants. The above circumstances serve as an indirect illustration of the problems of developing students' media competence, dysfunctions of media education in the area of developing young people's skills of purposeful activity in the practice of searching for professional information. On the other hand, students noted that the activities of municipal employees are insufficiently represented in modern media sources.

Nikita: "It's rare to read interesting material about municipal employees... At best, it will be some official report on the work done... There is no live information there...".

Oleg: "In blogs, for example, you often come across things like "I worked as a waiter" or "how my friend and I opened a cafe" or something else... But there are few places to read interesting experiences, where the everyday life of a municipal official is actually described...".

The results of the focus group are confirmed by quantitative research data. Thus, A.A. Bukhner notes that during the survey, student youth talk about the insufficient level of information coverage of the work of municipal employees in the media and the Internet. It is concluded that the media often incorrectly reflect the specifics of the activities of municipalities, there is inaccurate information (Bukhner, 2020). These dysfunctions not only create an information vacuum around the profession of a municipal employee, but also distort its value meanings. At the same time, the students noted that during their studies they began to pay more attention to the news agenda. Reports on the activities of municipal employees attracted their attention and became the subject of discussion in personal discussions.

Anna: "Now I read more information, I find it interesting, I can discuss it later with my mother, she is also a civil servant...".

Maria: "I read on Telegram, there is information there, official media – no, I practically don't read...".

It can be assumed that media literacy education should become an organic part of the professional training of state and municipal employees. The role of media literacy education is to create conditions that encourage young people to actively search for information, its critical perception, interpretation and evaluation.

During the focus group, students noted the need for more complete information about the chosen professional field, its limitations and deficiencies. Of particular interest to young people is reflection on the real work experience of representatives of this professional group.

Anna: "Recently, interesting blogs of deputies and managers have appeared, they write about how they solve various problems...".

Olesya: "When I entered, I had no clear idea about the profession...".

Students were asked whether the media helps them to form ideas not only about the advantages but also about the difficulties of professional activity. Opinions were expressed that the information is mostly of a reporting nature and does not allow for a holistic perception of the activities of municipal employees. It is difficult for students to form their ideas about the profession, their professional identity, relying on the media. An interesting opinion was expressed about the lack of objective information, the focus of media content on the emotional aspects of professional activity. The need to attract public attention orients journalists to publish materials that are action-packed. In this context, the role of media literacy education is seen in developing skills that allow differentiating between objective information and counterfeiting, and assessing the reliability of data.

During focus groups, students pointed out the lack of information:

Maria: "Unfortunately, it is the teachers who tell us more about the difficulties, about the cost of a mistake in work... Many of them themselves had experience working in the state or municipal service... They tell us about it... But there is little such information in the media. Well, or it is there, but it is more of an official language that it is difficult to understand right away...".

Oleg: "We had an event at the university, graduates who have been working in the municipal service for a long time came... Yes, there was a lot of necessary information, personal information about the difficulties, about how to build work... But in public groups or the media there is especially no such thing...".

The obtained results may indirectly indicate the lack of media competence of young people, the lack of skills for targeted information search. In addition, it can be assumed that digital algorithms form individualized media worlds, "information bubbles" in which the user consumes familiar content that coincides with his behavioral choices and beliefs (Fletcher et al., 2021). Given these risks, pedagogical practices of media literacy education should create conditions for understanding the boundaries and risks of media consumption in modern conditions. These skills are of particular importance for specialists in the field of public and municipal administration. The social significance of the profession associated with making strategic management decisions places special demands on critical thinking and unbiased assessment of data. The scientific literature substantiates the importance of the following approaches in the updated concept of media literacy education (Cho et al., 2022):

– the presence of a relationship between the individual needs (interests) of the student and the disadvantages of searching for information content, choosing tools for selecting sources, and analyzing them.

– understanding by students of the algorithms of artificial intelligence in the process of selecting information, the functioning of social networks, awareness of the fact that the consolidation of familiar models of searching for information content narrows the horizons of objective perception of reality.

– awareness of the polysubjectivity of social networks, the commercial logic of the subjects of creating media content, understanding their explicit and latent motivation in the process of creating and broadcasting media content.

The media perform a dual function in increasing the attractiveness of municipal service. On the one hand, a positive image of a professional is formed, which ensures the demand for this area of training among young people. On the other hand, it is important to discuss in the media the problems and challenges that modern municipal employees face. This content contributes to the formation of a realistic picture of the world, a relevant perception of the difficulties of public service at work in the municipality. This function of the media ensures the formation of filters that limit the influx into the profession of those young people who are not ready to perform complex, systemic tasks for the development of territories and life support of the population. In particular, public discourse in the media draws attention (Dunn, 2018). Drawing public attention in the media, on the one hand, forms the basis for taking corrective actions, on the other hand, it equips students with a realistic view of the difficulties of professional activity.

During the study, students interpreted municipal service in such evaluative judgments as *"complicated", "allows you to help people", "important", "responsible". However, negative associations were also expressed: "bureaucracy", "routine".*

During the focus group discussion, issues of analyzing the news agenda in the media space were raised. Among the students, anxiety prevails in the perception of news content, which dominates today in the official media and informal online communities. In particular, students provide multiple examples of negative interpretation of municipal practices, corruption offenses and discontent of residents. According to some students, this contest forms a negative perception of the professional activities of a municipal employee in their immediate circle.

Anna: "... they whip up negativity... my friends, when they find out that I will work in government, immediately remember bribes, corruption... unpleasant...".

A.S. Nikitina and V.S. Kyazimova also came to the conclusion that attention is concentrated on negative facts and negative examples of the activities of employees of local government bodies. At the same time, positive experience and success in solving problems of local importance remain on the periphery of the media agenda (Nikitina, Kyazimova, 2018). It can be concluded that dysfunctions in the presentation of materials in the media negatively affect the professional orientations of young people and reduce the prestige of municipal service.

Similar conclusions are present in the works of foreign scientists. In their opinion, the negative image of the profession in the media limits the opportunities for strengthening a positive professional identity (Soral et al., 2022) and the effective performance of work functions. Based on the results of a study of the media image of the profession of a social worker in Sweden, it was concluded that the reflection of key aspects of the profession in public narratives socially and morally stigmatizes social work specialists (Nilsson et al., 2025).

The negative media image of socially significant professions, such as a doctor, teacher, social worker, municipal employee, destroys solidarity ties in society, raises doubts about the social reliability of these professional groups (Blomberg, 2019). Overcoming these destructions is

associated with the active development of media literacy education of young people. Filling the media space with "shock content" requires the development of skills for constructive assessment of the motives and interests of the authors broadcasting this information. In modern conditions, media literacy education should form a stable immunity of young people to "fake news" that have become an attribute of everyday life. Immunity to disinformation is especially important for future state and municipal employees. Distortions in the assessment of information when they make decisions can have extremely negative consequences for the economy and the social sphere.

The study found that the prestige of municipal service is not high enough in comparison with civil service. However, informants believe that modern media have not played a significant role in shaping the prestige of the profession. In their opinion, the key factor in shaping the prestige of a particular profession is objective conditions, primarily remuneration.

Alexander: "Payment – I think this is the main factor. Even if the media doesn't write anything, but the youth knows that there is an opportunity for good pay, then yes... everyone will go there...".

Nikita: "Yes, the media plays a role, but not the most important one... Prestige is formed differently... It's a complicated story."

An opposite point of view was also expressed, according to which the media has a powerful authority in shaping the attractiveness of a profession, its prestige.

Olesya: "It seems to me that the media and online reports are all important. We discuss this, and this is how the prestige of the profession is formed. Or, on the contrary, when you read some negative reviews, you think, well, no, I don't need to go there... Everything is rotten there... But I think if you are really interested in this, you will find objective information...".

Anna: "It is important to be interested in the profession, to search for more information... I recently read about the "Service to society" award for municipal officials. The teacher first told us about it in class. And about the competition for the best municipal practice. All this is on the Internet... And there really is good experience there...".

It can be concluded that the teacher plays a significant role in developing the skills of searching for and systematizing professional information. In the conditions of chaotic information flows, the struggle for the attention of the reading audience, young people find themselves in an extremely vulnerable position in front of unverified and unreliable information. The role of the teacher is to develop the skills of assessing the reliability of information, and, what is especially important, the skills of searching for information on professional information resources.

The results of the study showed that municipal service is perceived as a social lift, allowing one to master professional competencies and develop one's career. Students noted that the reflection of this aspect in personal stories or interviews had a positive impact on their perception of their professional role and career prospects. However, a low level of trust distorts the perception of information about the activities of government bodies and devalues even highly professional journalistic content (Rogach, Frolova, 2023).

5. Conclusion

The theoretical analysis illustrates the importance of media in developing students' professional identity and shaping the prestige of the profession. The media image of the profession performs rational-cognitive and emotional-evaluative functions. Rational-cognitive functions consist in forming a realistic picture of the perception of the profession and various aspects of professional activity. Based on media materials, a student can form an objective idea of the difficulties, risks of the profession, and limitations in implementing their career trajectories. This information helps prevent such negative phenomena as disappointment in professional activity and professional burnout. The emotional-evaluative potential of the media image of the profession appeals to feelings, emotions, and inner experiences. Analysis of personal stories and achievements of representatives of a professional group, reflection of their subjective experience becomes the foundation of motivation to master professional knowledge and skills. Emotional-evaluative functions of the media image of the profession form a stable professional identity of a future specialist.

The media image of the profession in students' assessments is quite contradictory. There is an understanding of the importance of municipal service, on the other hand, a negative symbolic interpretation of such aspects as bureaucracy, routine nature of activities, and corruption risks has been formed. The study found that information in modern media is often contradictory and aimed at attracting the attention of the audience. These trends exclude everyday practices of municipal

employees from the focus of media attention. Particular risks are associated with distortion of information, the prevalence of negative connotations in the presentation of material.

These risks highlight the role of media literacy education in training students majoring in "State and municipal administration". In particular, special attention should be paid to the following aspects:

– formation of an internal locus of control in the processes of searching and selection of information, understanding the specifics of the action of artificial intelligence algorithms, which reinforces the usual logic of providing standard, familiar user content;

– development of critical thinking skills, analysis of the needs of subjects of media content creation, assessment of their motives, commercial interests;

– development of critical thinking skills, analysis of the needs and motives of authors broadcasting aggressive media content;

– formation of skills in assessing the reliability of information, the ability to distinguish reliable data from falsified;

– formation of skills in analyzing the consequences of dissemination of media information, anticipation of possible negative effects;

– establishment of standards for information search and fact checking;

– consolidation of ethical norms of behavior in the media environment.

Students are more interested in reflecting on personal narrative stories of municipal employees. Personification of information allows satisfying not only the cognitive needs of students, but also forms an emotional framework of motivational attitudes to creative work. Personal narratives illustrating the limitations and advantages of municipal service act as a factor in the formation of a stable professional identity.

Further areas of research may be the following: analysis of factors in the formation of a media image of a profession, study of the role of media education in the formation of stable professional orientations and professional identity of students.

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Educational Branding Through Instagram Influencers: Effectiveness of Collaborative Approaches

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Abstract

In the ever-evolving digital landscape, collaborations on various social media platforms are on the rise, encompassing both advantages and disadvantages for brands. This research investigates collaborations on Instagram with educational brands and their impact on audience engagement, evaluates their influence on consumer attitudes, perceptions, and trust regarding educational content and associated brands, and identifies the role these collaborations play in shaping consumer decision-making. It addresses the core question: What are the effects of influencer collaborations on visibility, engagement, and perceived ethicality of educational brands? By situating the findings within the framework of media literacy, the study underscores how critical assessment skills empower audiences to navigate influencer content responsibly. The research employs a thorough survey of 285 active Instagram users, utilizing a mixed-method questionnaire comprising Likert and nominal scale questions to provide both quantitative evaluations and qualitative insights. The survey responses were analyzed using correlation analysis through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), ensuring methodological rigor. The results highlight the dual nature of influencer collaborations: while they enhance brand visibility, they also raise questions about ethical practices and learning outcomes, underscoring the need for improved media literacy. Additionally, these collaborations significantly affect customer perceptions and trust, providing businesses with an authentic identity and influencing consumer decision-making processes. This study also contributes to media and marketing research by offering insights for practitioners aiming to design effective and ethical influencer strategies in education, while promoting media literacy among audiences.

Keywords: educational brands, collaborations, instagram, influencers, consumers, brand benefits, social media, digital media, media literacy, branding.

1. Introduction

In this day and age of digital technology, the way in which businesses connect with their customers has been radically revolutionized by the platforms that are available on social media. Instagram is one of these platforms that stands out as a dynamic area where influencers significantly affect the behavior of customers and how they view companies. Instagram is one more platform that stands out. Within the scope of this research study, an investigation is conducted on the expanding pattern of collaborations between educational organizations and Instagram influencers. In order to explore the effectiveness and impact of these partnerships within the context of the educational setting, the goal of this research project is to investigate.

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Over the last several years, Instagram has developed into a strong competitive force in the field of marketing and the promotion of brands. It offers a platform that is visually interesting and communicates with a broad variety of customers, such as students, instructors, and those who choose to continue their education throughout their lives. It is a compelling chance to harness the reach and credibility of social media superstars to communicate with target groups in meaningful ways, and collaborations between educational enterprises and influencers provide this potential. This cooperative endeavour is being carried out within the confines of this flourishing environment. In recent years, Instagram has not only become a platform for personal expression and social connection but also a vital space for businesses to cultivate their brand presence and engage with consumers. Its visually driven interface and user-friendly features have made it a preferred choice for millions of users worldwide, including those within the educational sphere.

With students, educators, and lifelong learners actively participating in the platform, Instagram has evolved into a multifaceted space where educational content thrives alongside entertainment and lifestyle posts. Against this backdrop, collaborations between educational brands and influencers have emerged as a strategic approach to reaching and resonating with target audiences. Influencers, individuals who have garnered sizable followings and wield significant influence over their followers' preferences and behaviors, play a pivotal role in shaping consumer perceptions and driving engagement on Instagram. By partnering with influencers, educational brands can tap into their authenticity, creativity, and rapport with their audience to amplify their message and foster meaningful connections. These collaborations extend beyond traditional advertising methods, offering educational brands the opportunity to showcase their offerings in a more organic and relatable manner. Whether through sponsored content, product endorsements, or co-created educational material, influencers have the ability to inject personality and authenticity into brand messaging, making it more compelling and memorable for their followers. In turn, this can lead to increased awareness, trust, and loyalty towards educational brands among Instagram users.

However, amidst the allure of influencer collaborations, challenges and considerations abound. From finding the right influencers whose values align with those of the educational brand to navigating ethical considerations and disclosure requirements, there are various factors to weigh in ensuring the success and integrity of such partnerships. Additionally, measuring the effectiveness of these collaborations in terms of reach, engagement, and impact on consumer behavior requires robust analytics and evaluation methodologies.

To provide a structured lens for analyzing these dynamics, a conceptual framework (Figure 1) has been developed to evaluate the efficacy of collaborations between influencers and educational brands on Instagram. The framework outlines the relationships between influencer collaborations, content formats, consumer demographics, and brand outcomes. The primary independent variable is the *collaboration of educational brands with influencers on Instagram*, implemented through varied content formats such as pictures, stories, and reels, which serve as mediating variables.
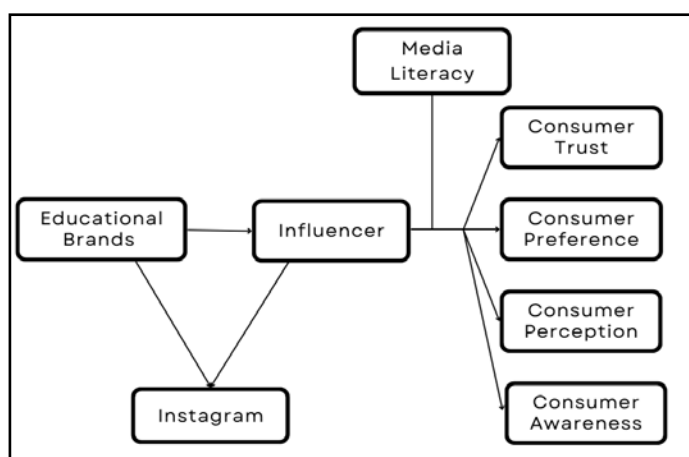
Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework of Influencer–Educational Brand Collaborations on Instagram
Source: authors

These formats interact with consumer demographics — including age, parental status, and social media habits — to influence perceptions, engagement, and ultimately deliver brand benefits to educational brands. Additionally, the framework incorporates *media literacy* as a moderating variable that influences how audiences critically evaluate the authenticity, ethicality, and effectiveness of influencer-driven educational content. Audiences with higher media literacy are expected to engage more critically with branded content and form more informed perceptions of educational brands.

2. Materials and methods

The study incorporates the application of quantitative statistical methods and research methodologies. The efficacy of embedded advertising for educational brands developed as a result of partnerships and collaborations with influencers on Instagram has been quantified using the survey research method. Leveraging the capabilities of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), an exhaustive statistical analysis was run over the results derived from the survey. After data cleaning and data coding, the connection of causes and their effects on various research variables was computed using correlation analysis.

Research Design

− *Research Type.* Exploratory (aimed at uncovering the nuances of influencer-brand collaborations in the education sector).

− *Research Purpose.* To examine, assess, and measure the impact of influencer-driven collaborations on key effectiveness metrics.

− *Research Approach.* Inductive in order to allow patterns and insights to emerge from the observed data.

− *Sampling Strategy.* Simple Random Sampling, to ensure each member of the target population has an equal probability of selection.

Data Collection

Survey Method

The survey questionnaire is designed basis the inverted funnel sequence. The questionnaire comprises 19 items inclusive of respondent demographics and the responses have been collected using the Likert and Nominal scales. The survey questionnaire was shared among potential respondents as parents and relatives of children as users of the social media platforms Instagram and YouTube to gather relevant data as per the instrument designed. To determine the required sample size for this survey, an N-Test was run. The study aimed to ensure that the sample size was sufficient to detect statistically significant effects given the expected effect size and needed level of statistical power. 285 samples were determined to be necessary in order to get the requisite power. The survey was conducted for a duration of 1 month amongst parents/relatives of children who are users of the social media platform Instagram from Delhi/NCR.

− Structure of Survey: Questionnaire (closed-ended questions).

− Calculated survey sample size: 285.

− Sample Frame – Instagram and YouTube Users aged 18 and above who are parents and relatives of children.

− Respondents: Parents/relatives of children who are users of the social media platform Instagram from Delhi/NCR.

− Time horizon: From August 2023 to September 2023 (One Month).

Correlation Variable Sets:

The following sets (Table 1) of variables were used in the correlation analysis:

Table 1. Correlation Variable Sets

Objective-Based Models	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Model 1: Impact of Instagram Influencer Partnerships on Brand Visibility and Awareness	Impact of Instagram influencer partnerships on brand visibility and awareness	Visibility and awareness metrics of educational brands
Model 2: Effectiveness of Influencer-Driven Learning Content on Student Engagement	Effectiveness of influencer-driven learning content in improving student engagement	Engagement metrics of influencer-driven learning content

Objective-Based Models	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Model 3: Contribution of Collaboration to Learning Outcomes for Students	Contribution of influencer-driven learning content to improved learning results	Learning outcomes for students
Model 4: Success Perception of Partnerships between Brands and Influencers	Perception of the success of partnerships between educational brands and influencers	Perceived success of partnerships between brands and influencers
Model 5: Importance of Ethical Considerations in Influencer Partnerships	Importance of ethical considerations in influencer partnerships	Perception of ethicality in partnerships
Model 6: Agreement on Necessity of Rules and Regulations	Agreement on the necessity of clear rules and regulations governing partnerships	Perception of the effectiveness of rules and regulations
Model 7: Prioritization of Student Interests by Brands and Educational Institutions	Agreement on prioritizing student interests over promotional activities	Prioritization of student interests by brands and educational institutions

This methodological framework, anchored in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)-driven analysis and meticulous survey design, ensures rigor, reliability, and relevance in capturing the intricate interconnections between influencer-driven collaborations and embedded advertising effectiveness in the educational domain. By maintaining methodological precision, the study facilitates an in-depth examination of the research questions under investigation.

3. Discussion

Social networks have become essential spaces for interaction, entertainment, and professional engagement (Martínez, 2016), increasingly influencing human development domains such as education. As in other sectors, Instagram hosts influencers who leverage their visibility to influence audiences (Nieto, 2018). The educational sphere, always striving to innovate and adapt to digital realities, has embraced these environments to disseminate pedagogical content and engage with diverse educational stakeholders (Aldridge, 2019). In this context, educational influencers have emerged as leaders for new audiences, creating and sharing transmedia productions that resonate within the educational field (Marcelo, Marcelo-Martínez, 2021).

On Instagram, various profiles of educational influencers are evident, distinguished by their content types. *Stud-grammers*, for instance, share notes, reflections, and academic tips (Izquierdo-Iranzo, Gallardo-Echenique, 2020), while *bookstagrammers* promote reading culture by showcasing books and literary reflections (Fernández, 2017). *Learning influencers*, often teachers, use Instagram to promote interactive and participatory learning opportunities (Quintana, De León, 2021). Other profiles share didactic resources for classroom or home use, acting as learning mediators (Torres, 2019). Additionally, some educational influencers employ humor and memes to communicate messages effectively to younger audiences (Pérez-Curiel, 2017).

Yet, alongside these innovative uses, influencer-driven educational content has also been drawn into the mercantilist tendencies of digital marketing, with influencers offering their profiles as platforms for promotional and paid partnerships (SanMiguel, 2017).

Two key qualities — credibility and perceived trustworthiness – define a successful influencer as an effective brand advocate (Chu, Kamal, 2008). Credibility remains one of the most crucial elements in persuasion, particularly in digital contexts where consumers cannot physically evaluate products or services. Studies such as Erkan and Evans (Erkan, Evans, 2016) and Katyal et al. (Katyal et al., 2024) have emphasized how perceived credibility of information, argument quality, and message usefulness influence purchase intention. Trust, as explored across disciplines (Cowles, 1997; Fisher et al., 2010), is similarly central in educational influencer collaborations, which must be built upon authentic, transparent narratives to resonate with audiences. Our findings revealed that while influencer collaborations enhance visibility, their impact on engagement and learning outcomes is more ambiguous. This aligns with previous research suggesting that while influencers enhance engagement, they may not directly translate to improved learning (Katyal et al., 2024).

Influencer marketing studies (Audrezet et al., 2020; Lee, Watkins, 2016; Wolny, Mueller, 2013) reveal its potential for boosting visibility, engagement, and brand authenticity. Researchers have documented how influencers' reputation, legitimacy, and transparency are critical in shaping

consumer response (Chu, Kim, 2011; Evans et al., 2017; Lu et al., 2014; Schivinski, Dabrowski, 2016). Other scholarship has highlighted the importance of strategic planning (Borchers, Enke, 2021), ethical collaboration (Borchers, Enke, 2022), and the alignment of influencer and brand values (Booth, Matic, 2011; Uzunoğlu, Kip, 2014). Collectively, these studies underscore that successful collaborations depend on more than reach – they require authentic storytelling, ethical standards, and audience trust.

Consistent with Moorman et al. (Moorman et al., 1993), this study found that trust in influencer content strongly influences perceptions of brand authenticity and ethicality, underscoring the need for transparent and credible narratives. Research has shown that content quality, message credibility, and social similarity positively influence trust in digital contexts (Racherla et al., 2012; Lee, Chung, 2009). In the context of this study, these dynamics are critical in understanding how influencer-driven educational content impacts audience engagement and decision-making.

Crucially, this study also highlights the role of media literacy in moderating audience perceptions of influencer collaborations. Being media literate does not mean rejecting influencer-driven educational content outright; rather, it enables audiences to critically assess collaborations and engage more meaningfully with those aligned to their educational values and needs (Song, Kim, 2025). For parents and relatives – the primary audience in this research – who are continually exposed to influencer narratives, media education fosters a critical lens that helps them discern intent, credibility, and ethicality in content (Naderer, 2023). As Livingstone et al. (Livingstone et al., 2013) emphasize, media literacy has dual benefits: it shields audiences from manipulation while empowering them to engage constructively and creatively with digital narratives. Educational brands can enhance their strategies by comprehending how media-literate consumers assess the authenticity and ethicality of influencer collaborations. This approach ensures transparency, fosters trust, and establishes more robust, value-based relationships with their audiences.

In today's digital ecosystem – where audiences are inundated with a mix of influencer content, AI-generated media, and branded user-generated posts – it has become increasingly difficult to discern genuine narratives from manufactured ones. This growing ambiguity heightens the importance, yet complicates the achievement, of perceived authenticity in influencer communications (Kaufmann et al., 2016; Lou, Xie, 2021). Building trust in such an environment requires not only adherence to ethical standards but also a nuanced application of storytelling tools and techniques that resonate credibly with informed, media-literate audiences.

Overall, these findings reinforce that while influencer collaborations in education offer significant opportunities for increasing brand visibility and audience engagement, their effectiveness ultimately depends on credibility, ethics, and the media literacy of their audiences. Thus, fostering media literacy becomes not just a protective measure but a strategic necessity for cultivating trust and promoting informed, critical engagement in digital education environments.

4. Results

Correlation Analysis: All seven pairs of variables examined across the models show measurable correlations, indicating meaningful relationships between the independent and dependent variables in each case. Specifically, the analysis suggests that changes in factors such as the impact of influencer partnerships, effectiveness of influencer-driven content, perceptions of ethicality, and prioritization of student interests are associated with corresponding shifts in brand visibility, engagement, learning outcomes, and stakeholder perceptions. The results reveal significant positive correlations for visibility, but mixed or negative correlations for engagement, learning outcomes, and ethical perceptions, suggesting both opportunities and challenges in educational influencer collaborations.

The detailed correlation coefficients and significance levels for each model derived using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) are presented in separate tables below.

Model 1: Impact of Instagram Influencer Partnerships on Brand Visibility and Awareness

Table 2. Correlation Between the Impact of Instagram Influencer Partnerships and Brand Visibility and Awareness

Correlations			Impact of Instagram influencer partnerships on brand visibility and awareness	Visibility and awareness metrics of educational brands
Spearman's rho	Impact of Instagram influencer partnerships on brand visibility and awareness	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.567**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	285	285
	Visibility and awareness metrics of educational brands	Correlation Coefficient	.567**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	285	285
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

– Independent Variable: Impact of Instagram influencer partnerships on brand visibility and awareness.

– Dependent Variable: Visibility and awareness metrics of educational brands.

– Spearman's rho (ρ) correlation coefficient: 0.567.

– Significance level (2-tailed): p < 0.001 (highly significant).

– Sample size (N): 285.

Model 1 investigates the effect of Instagram influencer connections on visibility and awareness in the education industry. The independent variable, which represents the effect of these collaborations, has a substantial positive correlation (Spearman's rho = 0.567, p < 0.001) with the visibility and awareness measures of educational brands, the dependent variable (Table 2). The correlation is highly significant, implying that as the effect of Instagram influencer collaborations grows, so will the visibility and awareness of educational companies. The sample size for this research is 285, ensuring an adequate foundation for the discovered connections. These results indicate that influencer collaborations on Instagram play an important role in increasing the visibility and awareness of educational businesses, emphasizing the significance of such partnerships in the digital marketing environment.

Model 2: Effectiveness of Influencer-Driven Learning Content on Student Engagement

– Independent Variable: Effectiveness of influencer-driven learning content in improving student engagement

– Dependent Variable: Engagement metrics of influencer-driven learning content

– Spearman's rho (ρ) correlation coefficient: -0.007

– Significance level (2-tailed): p = 0.898 (not significant)

– Sample size (N): 285

Model 2 investigates the effectiveness of influencer-driven learning material in enhancing student engagement, using engagement metrics as the dependent variable. Surprisingly, no significant link was found between the efficiency of influencer-driven learning material and engagement measures (Spearman's rho = -0.007, p = 0.898) in a study of 285 samples (Table 3). This lack of significance implies that the efficacy of influencer-driven learning material has little impact on student engagement measures in this setting. While unexpected, these results suggest that variables other than influencer-driven material may play a larger role in promoting student engagement in educational environments.

Model 3: Contribution of Collaboration to Learning Outcomes for Students.

Table 3. Correlation Between Effectiveness of Influencer-Driven Learning Content on Student Engagement

Correlations			Effectiveness of influencer-driven learning content in improving student engagement	Engagement metrics of influencer-driven learning content
Spearman's rho	Effectiveness of influencer-driven learning content in improving student engagement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.007
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.898
		N	285	285
	Engagement metrics of influencer-driven learning content	Correlation Coefficient	-.007	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.898	.
		N	285	285

Table 4. Correlation Between Contribution of Collaboration to Learning Outcomes for Students

Correlations			Contribution of influencer-driven learning content to improved learning results	Learning outcomes for students
Spearman's rho	Contribution of influencer-driven learning content to improved learning results	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.420**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	285	285
	Learning outcomes for students	Correlation Coefficient	-.420**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	285	285
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

– Independent Variable: Contribution of influencer-driven learning content to improved learning results.

– Dependent Variable: Learning outcomes for students.

– Spearman's rho (ρ) correlation coefficient: -0.420.

– Significance level (2-tailed): $p < 0.001$ (highly significant).

– Sample size (N): 285.

Model 3 investigates the contribution of influencer-driven learning material to enhanced learning outcomes, using student learning outcomes as the dependent variable. Based on a sample size of 285, the research shows a substantial negative correlation (Spearman's rho = -0.420, $p < 0.001$) between the impact of influencer-driven learning material and student learning outcomes (Table 4). This highly significant link shows that as the contribution of influencer-driven learning material grows, students' learning results are likely to decline. Such results suggest that, although influencer partnerships may have certain advantages, they may not always translate into better learning outcomes for students in this specific situation.

Model 4: Success Perception of Partnerships between Brands and Influencers

– Independent Variable: Perception of the success of partnerships between educational brands and influencers.

– Dependent Variable: Perceived success of partnerships between brands and influencers

– Spearman's rho (ρ) correlation coefficient: -0.299.

– Significance level (2-tailed): $p < 0.001$ (highly significant).

– Sample size (N): 285.

Table 5. Correlation Between Success Perception of Partnerships between Brands and Influencers

Correlations			Perception of the success of partnerships between educational brands and influencers	Perceived success of partnerships between brands and influencers
Spearman's rho	Perception of the success of partnerships between educational brands and influencers	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.299**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	285	285
	Perceived success of partnerships between brands and influencers	Correlation Coefficient	-.299**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	285	285
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Model 4 investigates the perception of the effectiveness of collaborations between educational companies and influencers, with perceived success serving as the dependent variable. Based on a sample size of 285, the study shows a substantial negative correlation (Spearman's rho = -0.299, p < 0.001) between the perceived success of partnerships and their perceived success (Table 5). This extremely significant correlation shows that when perceptions of the effectiveness of relationships between educational businesses and influencers rise, the perceived success of these partnerships falls. Such results point to a possible mismatch between stakeholders' perceptions and the actual success outcomes of brand-influencer relationships in the education sector.
Model 5: Importance of Ethical Considerations in Influencer Partnerships

Table 6. Correlation Between the Importance of Ethical Considerations in Influencer Partnerships

Correlations			Importance of ethical considerations in influencer partnerships	Perception of ethicality in partnerships
Spearman's rho	Importance of ethical considerations in influencer partnerships	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.265**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	285	285
	Perception of ethicality in partnerships	Correlation Coefficient	-.265**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	285	285
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

– Independent Variable: Importance of ethical considerations in influencer partnerships.
– Dependent Variable: Perception of ethicality in partnerships.
– Spearman's rho (ρ) correlation coefficient: -0.265.
– Significance level (2-tailed): p < 0.001 (highly significant).
– Sample size (N): 285.
Model 5 analyzes the significance of ethical issues in influencer collaborations and their relationship to perceived ethicality in partnerships. Based on a sample size of 285, the research shows a substantial negative correlation (Spearman's rho = -0.265, p < 0.001) between the relevance of ethical concerns in influencer collaborations and the sense of ethicality (Table 6). This very substantial correlation shows that as the relevance of ethical issues grows, the impression of

ethicality in relationships decreases. Such results emphasize the importance of ethical concerns in influencer relationships in the educational sector, as well as the necessity for stakeholders to prioritize ethical practices to improve the perceived ethicality of these collaborations.

Model 6: Agreement on Necessity of Rules and Regulations

Table 7. Correlation Between Agreement on Necessity of Rules and Regulations

Correlations			Agreement on the necessity of clear rules and regulations governing partnerships	Perception of the effectiveness of rules and regulations
Spearman's rho	Agreement on the necessity of clear rules and regulations governing partnerships	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.418**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	<.001
		N	285	285
	Perception of the effectiveness of rules and regulations	Correlation Coefficient	-.418**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	285	285
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

– Independent Variable: Agreement on the necessity of clear rules and regulations governing partnerships.

– Dependent Variable: Perception of the effectiveness of rules and regulations.

– Spearman's rho (ρ) correlation coefficient: -0.418.

– Significance level (2-tailed): $p < 0.001$ (highly significant).

– Sample size (N): 285.

Model 6 investigates the agreement on the need for clear norms and regulations regulating partnerships, as well as the correlation between this agreement and perceptions of their efficacy. The study demonstrates a substantial negative correlation (Spearman's rho = -0.418, $p < 0.001$) between the agreement on the importance of clear rules and regulations and the assessment of their efficacy, based on a sample size of 285 (Table 7). This extremely substantial link shows that when people agree on the need for clear rules and regulations, their perceptions of their efficacy tend to decline. These results point to possible inconsistencies between stakeholders' understanding of the need for laws and their trust in the efficiency of current regulatory frameworks regulating influencer collaborations.

Model 7: Prioritization of Student Interests by Brands and Educational Institutions

– Independent Variable: Agreement on prioritizing student interests over promotional activities.

– Dependent Variable: Prioritization of student interests by brands and educational institutions.

– Spearman's rho (ρ) correlation coefficient: -0.007.

– Significance level (2-tailed): $p = 0.898$ (not significant).

– Sample size (N): 285.

In *Model 7,* the research looks at the agreement on prioritizing student interests above promotional efforts, as well as the relationship between brand and educational institution priority. Based on a sample size of 285, the study finds a non-significant correlation (Spearman's rho = -0.007, $p = 0.898$) between the agreement to prioritize student interests over promotional activities and the actual prioritization of student interests by businesses and educational institutions (Table 8).

Table 8. Correlation Between Prioritization of Student Interests by Brands
and Educational Institutions

Correlations			Agreement on prioritizing student interests over promotional activities	Prioritization of student interests by brands and educational institutions
Spearman's rho	Agreement on prioritizing student interests over promotional activities	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.007
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.898
		N	285	285
	Prioritization of student interests by brands and educational institutions	Correlation Coefficient	-.007	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.898	.
		N	285	285

These data indicate that there is no substantial correlation between stakeholders' agreement on prioritizing student interests and the degree to which brands and educational institutions prioritize these interests in practice within the educational sector.

5. Conclusion

Collaborations between educational businesses and Instagram influencers are becoming more popular in the field of digital marketing. The purpose of this research was to evaluate the effectiveness of such collaborations in the educational area, specifically their impact on audience engagement, consumer perceptions, and decision-making processes. The study imparted insights into the potential and constraints of influencer partnerships in the educational setting by conducting a thorough investigation of seven models using correlation analysis. The data revealed a robust relationship between influencer collaborations and brand visibility and awareness, demonstrating influencers' capacity to increase brand exposure on Instagram. While influencer-driven material showed promise in increasing engagement metrics, its effect on actual learning outcomes was less clear, indicating a need for further research into the elements influencing educational outcomes in such partnerships. Furthermore, stakeholders' views of partnership success sometimes differed from actual results, emphasizing the significance of matching expectations with reality for successful partnerships.

The findings highlighted a substantial correlation between influencer collaborations and brand visibility and awareness, demonstrating influencers' capacity to increase brand exposure on Instagram. While influencer-driven material showed promise in increasing engagement metrics, its effect on actual learning outcomes looked less certain, indicating the need for more investigation into the elements influencing educational outcomes in such partnerships. Furthermore, stakeholders' views of partnership success sometimes differed from actual results, emphasizing the necessity of matching expectations with reality for successful partnerships. Ethical issues and legal frameworks have emerged as significant elements in influencer partnerships. The research emphasized the necessity of transparent and ethical behaviors in maintaining credibility and found a strong correlation between stakeholders' attention to ethics and perceptions of ethicality. Furthermore, although stakeholders generally agreed on the significance of prioritizing student interests, there seemed to be a disconnect between intentions and behavior in reality.

In conclusion, although influencer collaborations provide potential opportunities for educational companies to interact with audiences and increase their exposure on Instagram, they also present ethical, regulatory, and stakeholder alignment concerns. Addressing these issues requires a holistic strategy that prioritizes openness, honesty, and stakeholder participation. Educational businesses may maximize the impact and integrity of influencer collaborations by employing comprehensive assessment processes, ethical rules, and legal frameworks, resulting in increased efficacy in the digital marketing environment. This study provides useful insights for

both theory and practice, setting the way for future research and innovation in influencer marketing in the education sector.

A key implication of these findings lies in the role of media literacy as a crucial moderating factor. In an increasingly saturated digital ecosystem, where consumers are continually exposed to persuasive messaging and influencer-driven narratives, media literacy empowers audiences to critically evaluate the credibility, authenticity, and intent of brand communications. Audiences equipped with stronger media literacy skills are better positioned to identify manipulative tactics, discern authentic content, and align their trust with brands that reflect genuine values and ethical conduct. Promoting media literacy, therefore, becomes essential not only for protecting audiences from misinformation but also for fostering more informed, trust-based, and ethical relationships between educational brands and their audiences.

In conclusion, while influencer collaborations offer significant potential for educational organizations to engage audiences and elevate their presence on platforms like Instagram, these partnerships also raise critical ethical, regulatory, and stakeholder alignment concerns. A comprehensive strategy that prioritises transparency, accountability, ethical practices, and stakeholder engagement is necessary to address these challenges, while concurrently promoting media literacy among audiences. By adopting such holistic strategies, educational brands can maximize the impact and integrity of influencer collaborations, ensuring greater efficacy and trust in the evolving digital marketing environment. This study contributes valuable insights for both theory and practice, providing a foundation for future research and innovation at the intersection of influencer marketing, education, and media literacy.

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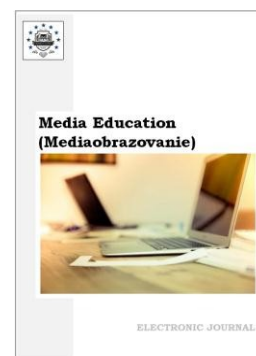
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Media Education Traditional Spiritual Model Protection and Moral Values of Students in Modern Animation in the Context of Pentabasis

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Abstract

This study found that the protection of traditional spiritual and moral values is most effective in the model of mass media education carried out by means of Russian animation in a pentabasis system of five components, each of which has its own value dominant "Man – Creation, Family – Traditions, Society – Consent, State – Trust in institutions, Country – Patriotism". It forms the pedagogical potential of the spiritual and moral content of cartoons in the audience culture of students. However, their media educational support is based on the principles: reflection of the spiritual and moral values of animation in the behavior of students.

In this study, our attention is drawn to the educational model, which is understood as integration attractive properties of the process of youth animation creativity; the association of animation with family values and upbringing; protection of ethnocultural values in animation as part of intangible cultural heritage; overcoming the destructive socio-psychological consequences of breaking the connection between aesthetics and morality and the anti-breeding role of animation. An analysis of the plot content and value meaning of modern Russian cartoons shot in 2025 showed a significant shift in the spiritual and moral connotation of screen images of Russian animation towards humanization and reaching traditional values.

Keywords: media educational model, system of traditional spiritual and moral values, connection of aesthetics and morality, modern Russian animation, pentabasis, animation support for children and youth.

1. Introduction

The theme of analysing the problem of modeling media education in the field of protecting traditional spiritual and moral values. It is based on a combination of systemically holistic and activity approaches to the problem of the moral appearance of students by means of animation. In our opinion, the use of a system-holistic approach (Sergeev, Serikov, 2007): the influence of indicative and emotional-need foundations on the formation of moral behavior.

The study of the features identified above led M.A.R. Abdullah actualizes the question to distinction between good and bad moral values, affecting the moral development of the anti-esthetic content of the cartoons. The article presents the seeing the popularity of healthy humor in animation. In this case, the emphasis is on lineнаimitation "the good moral values portrayed in the cartoons they watched" (Abdullah, 2023). This kind of identification is characteristic not only of children, but also

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of young viewers, as J. Wang rightly pointed out. He stressed that the translator is online "young people identified more with the traditional cultural features of the film" (Wang, 2023).

In this regard, Xue Gu in discussions about modern images of cartoon characters, states trends online translator "the low level of recurring character images and the loss of traditional national elements are the limitations of mythological animated films in presenting modern roles. Based on Chinese traditional national culture and role building, mythological animated films introduce new creative design and emphasize the emotional communication of characters" (Xue, 2023).

In this context, the activity approach determines the attitudes and priorities in the course of attracting significant human values by the viewer's personality (Prikhodchenko et al., 2017). In the context of our study, the protecting spiritual and moral values in the context of animated pedagogy, the concept of pentabasis includes methodological basis for research. "Pentabasis in the current sense is a basic structure that includes five interconnected" supporting "elements: "Man – family – society – state – country," through which the identity of a person is found, correlating himself with each of these elements "This is a system of five components, each of which corresponds to its own value dominant Man – Creation, Family – Traditions, Society – Consent, State – Trust in institutions, Country – Patriotism" (Artyukhin et al., 2023: 190).

2. Materials and methods

The theoretical material of the study was articles by Russian and foreign publications on media education in the field of animation pedagogy and audience culture. The empirical material for the article was the images of modern Russian animation of the studio "Soyuzmultfilm" (Moscow, 2025). Research methods are content analysis of animationimages, systemic and comparative methods of pedagogical research.

3. Discussion

The main aspects of research in the field of the traditional formation spiritual and moral values in the context of social ideals and standards in behavior are considered by a number of Russian and foreign scientists. Within the framework of this article, it is planned to study the influence of animated films on the development of the personality of students on the basis of plots and images of cartoon characters as translators of spiritual and moral norms and values.

These include the following six areas of research: 1.pedagogical potential of training through animation aimed at the spiritual and moral content of cartoons in the audience culture of students; online driver pedagogical potential of spiritual and moral content of cartoons in the audience culture of students; 2. reflection of the spiritual and moral values of animation in the behavior of students; 3. attractive properties of the process of young animation creativity; 4. association of animation with family values and upbringing; 5. protecting ethnocultural values in animation as part of intangible cultural heritage; 6. devastating socio-psychological consequences of breaking the connection between aesthetics and morality in animation images.

Let's consider each of these aspects.

The pedagogical potential of learning through animation that aimed to the spiritual and moral content of spectator culture based on watching cartoons of students. It is covered in the following works. Obviously, the basis of the pedagogical potential of animation is spectator culture. Its formation, according to N.V. Oleinik, "is an educational mechanism during which the full development of the child (mental, moral, social, mental)... and the enrichment of emotional and creative experience (aesthetic taste and feelings, artistic and creative abilities)" (Oleinik, 2014: 68).

An extensive idea of the students audience culture possibilities in the course of combining environmental, family and personal values was presented by S.A. Baranova. She concludes that "high potential for the merger of artistic, aesthetic and moral-emotional impact on the audience in the process of forming such values as goodness, love, family, friendship, humane attitude to nature" (Baranova, 2014: 1).

The structure of the pedagogical potential of animation was presented by A.K. Razimova, including the following formed qualities: deep moral feelings and experiences, moral attitudes towards understanding norms and spiritual and moral values and, finally, identification with heroes and form moral values in children (Razimova, 2024: 130-132). This is in accordance with the opinion of Kristanti and Maisarah who consider that moral values in the animated produced by Walt Disney Pictures and Pixar Animation Studios have "a wide range of volitional and Gmuanistic qualities cultivated by this show: courage and kindness" (Kristanti, Maisarah, 2023: 53).

At the same time, Russian studies of modern Russian animation in the stop-motion animation technique based on the material of A.P. Chekhov, conducted by Tatiana Poskakalova, showed "the effectiveness of the use of practices for creating digital stories by adolescents for establishing interpersonal communication, appropriating moral and prosocial behavior patterns, developing interest in classic literature, and creative self-realization" (Poskakalova, 2023: 177).

In the context of ethnocultural content of animation images is of great educational importance, which is most effective in the pedagogical sense, which contributes, the development of 2D animated edutainment software using folktales to teach moral values (Azan, 2007). In this sense, Baoyi Peng is right, which considers countering individualism and clan values and sees the possibility of multipliac value in the future" (Baoyi Peng, 2023: 32). Also, one of them is model Y. Ma, extending the humanization of moral values in the sphere of the cultural industry and linking it with ethnic culture. One cannot but agree with his statement that "looking ahead, this model will enable ethnic culture to be more extensively and profoundly represented in animated films, thereby securing a more prominent position in the global cultural industry landscape. From here it becomes clear that "this will facilitate the cultural transmission and development from tradition to modernity, providing sustained momentum and new opportunities for global cultural diversity and symbiosis" (Ma, 2025:348).

The aspect of the problem under consideration related to teaching using animation is consecrated in following works of the modern foreign researchers.

Pedagogical dimension of animation the basis of sanity states concludes claims Paul Graham Ajard (Ajard, Graham, 2003). In the study by Heng Yang New affirms that "animation capabilities arising from digital technologies (its brightness, the attractiveness of visual images, which significantly affects the moral side of the activity due to the fact that "in reproducing the learned behavior by students, animation increases the active involvement of students and leads to improved learning outcomes" (Yang, 2023: 61).

The role of animation in understanding moral ideas is argued by Mou, meaning "accommodating individual learning preferences regarding time, location, and pace. It offers clear explanations of intricate concepts and fosters students' freedom in learning" (Mou, 2023).

The moral foundations of any media content, including animation, are considered by A.J. Gonzalez, D.P. Cingel and L. Vandenbosch, to be based on impact, which is that "moral content may influence the relative salience of different moral foundations among consumers, with implications for their moral decision-making and reasoning" (Gonzalez et al., 2024: 1580). In this case, animation is considered, according to S. Curtis "as everything from pencils to electron microscopes" (Curtis, 2022: 147).

Speaking about the role of describing aanimation, M.A. Karal, O. Hazir rightly point to what is seen in the images of animated videos on the choice of positive moral values. The authors states that "descriptive statistics and thematic analysis under a mixed-method convergent parallel design were used to indicate quantitative trends and qualitative insights" (Karal, Hazir, 2025: 401).

In the same direction, a study was conducted by Guha et al., noting the importance of criticism focused on, "how media is made or put together, not just in terms of its constituent parts but in the context in which the assembly takes place" (Guha et al., 2025: 1).

A critical, anti-mainstream concept provides "*strategies that grant it narrational authority*" (Bondt et al., 2024: 66).

Along with the above concepts in media education, there is a certain model of cognitive mediation, in which the main emphasis is on the influence of motives" (attention, elaboration, discussion) on social media were associated ... knowledge acquisition and preventive behavioral intentions" (Wu et al., 2025: 1). Also, the emphasis on a high level of motivation is important (Cevahir et al., 2022: 226).

Consideration of the advantages of anime for generating new ideas and developing the creativity of students, which makes it possible to define it as a perfect educational tool (Abd Razak, Ibnu, 2022: 37).

However, the positive properties of animated learning should not obscure the dangers of the destructive effect of the screen on the psyche of students in cases of excessive exposure to screen images (Raj et al., 2022).

The aspect of reflecting spiritual and moral norms and values of animation in the behavior of students in the process of mastering media educational technologies was considered by V.S. Samoilova, O.V. Kunichenko, K.N. Bilinskaya, N.G. Savkina and N.P. Sheveleva. The initial

role of modern cartoons in the mechanisms of transmission of important spiritual and moral values through cognitive activity is noted by V.S. Samoilova (Samoilova, 2023: 19). It seems that this provision is undoubtedly fundamental in the link in spiritual and moral education by means of animation in early preschool age.

Let us turn to the essence of the spiritual and moral subtext to the cartoon in pedagogical terms that analyzed by N.G. Savkina and N.P. Sheveleva, who note that "the use of specially selected animated works... presupposes the formation in children of initial ideas about moral norms, values, rules of behavior, as well as about the essence of moral deeds and moral behavior" (Savkina, Sheveleva, 2021: 210).

In the same direction, the moral behavior of students in the conditions of screen culture is substantiated by O.V. Kunichenko, who believes that it is "formed on the basis of moral qualities and motives through the knowledge of moral ideas in animated images, then towards orientation towards another, as a result of which a chain of morally directed deeds is formed" (Kunichenko, 2025: 201). Of course, the position of this study can be considered altruistic without reservations. Hence, the author approves the requirements for the moral problems of the film, putting the viewer in front of moral problems, situations of choice and decision-making; "affirmation of the absolute value of any being, idea of friendship, togetherness, mutual assistance, goodness and justice; formulation in an explicit or hidden form of moral conclusions ("morality" of the cartoon)". The researcher considers that is a "established between situations, fragments of the cartoon with the life situation of the child, his relations with peers and adults" (Kunichenko, 2025: 201).

The moral connection of animation images with reality that arises in this way create conditions for the inclusion of children in the sphere of the formation of moral experience in the following areas: "*exclusion; Extension; and Empowerment*" (Staksrud et al., 2025). The established connection of regulating the interaction of the viewer with screen images cannot but take into account, according to Ting He Colin Agur, the phenomenon of gamification, which "to regulate" emotional interactions "and establishes emotional connection over gaming skills (Ting, Colin, 2025).

The aspect of various types of animation creativity is manifested in the analysis of the effectiveness of post-screening and author's animation creativity in the process of creating cartoons and in professional media education.

The researchers considered that the strategy of attraction is based on features of discourse as being of children's post-screening and author's animation creativity in the process of creating cartoons (Anofrikov, 2011, Asylgareeva, Ovsyannikova, 2023; Bilinskaya, 2020).

Analysis of the post-screening creativity of the audience led K.N. Bilinskaya to the fact that she discovered the connection of spiritual and moral motivation and aesthetic values of students. And this, in our opinion, is true. At the same time, the author believes that the main condition for strengthening the depth of spiritual comprehension and moral values is the multi-artistic embodiment of the cartoon images. In this sense, it is fair to point out that "for a deeper exploration of the moral and aesthetic world of the cartoon, acquaintance with the specifics of artistic expressiveness in different types of art, children can be offered to compare the book, illustrate it with a cartoon created on the basis of this book. In addition, according to the results of the watched cartoon, children can be offered visual activity" (Bilinskaya, 2020: 554).

By using playful the purpose of educational activities of viewers, according to Formenti et al., the organization of excursions and tours of animation studios is especially effective "a focus on local animation production because, when organizing them, Animated Media SIG co-chairs have abided by the principle of putting members into contact with the animation culture" (Formenti et al., 2023: 1).

It can be considered quite productive and exhaustive analysis of the process of creating cartoons R.U. Asylgareeva and O.A. Ovsyannikova, who revealed a number of moral qualities developing in this process of personal and social development of students. For this reason, during the initial creative classes, the students discovered the initial qualities: "hard work, empathy, empathy, patriotism; sociability, responsiveness; initiative, punctuality, patience. Further, in the course of reflection, the highest spiritual qualities develop: self-criticism, responsibility, honesty, conscience, independence" (Asylgareeva, Ovsyannikova, 2023: 13). One cannot but agree that there is the most important feature of animation classes – the spiritual attraction of animated creativity, discovered by the P.I. Anofrikov, who focuses on creating an atmosphere of attractiveness for children's animated creativity and spiritual motivation. The author-creator of the Search cartoon

studio writes "Meet children's creativity more often: it pleases the heart and touches the soul, gives life energy, and hope for the future" (Anofrikov, 2011: 23).

The aspect related to the pedagogical conditions of focusing on family values and giving them a humanistic character in modern crisis conditions in the context of animated pedagogy was considered by a number of the following authors.

Pedagogical conditions for the formation of family spiritual and moral values that are part of the development potential of students in the media education system, according to the fair opinion of a group of authors (S.I. Karpova, N.S. Murodkhodzhaeva, O.V. Tsaplina, A.P. Kaitov), is the selection of cartoons "in accordance with age-related developmental features" according to spiritual and moral criteria and their viewing under the control and accompanied by adults, followed by a discussion of the watched (Karpova et al., 2020).

The aspect of ethnocultural traditional values through animation, presented as measures to preserve and protect intangible cultural heritage, is considered by the following authors.

So, the main goal in media education by means of animation E.G. Savchenko sees in the appropriation of traditional values of the Russian people, contributing to the formation of a value attitude towards the world around children (Savchenko, 2024:183).

The problem of the gradual loss of the spiritual and moral content of animated images and the historical and cultural heritage of minority peoples, their language, customs and traditions is raised by J.D. Wimberg. Animation can play a prominent role in its decision. It allows "the popularization of folk traditions through video content, which will help draw attention to the problem of assimilation of minority peoples and the preservation of their unique heritage (Wimberg, 2021: 16). So, the relevance of the "problem of the disappearance of languages is substantiated and the need to search for new, effective approaches to their media revitalization is emphasized" (Martynov, 2024: 44). Also, V.A. Sazonova sees the possibilities of artistic interpretation of objects of intangible cultural heritage in animated cinema and their individual elements, context and mechanisms of perception of created images (Sazonova, 2022). These pedagogical means cannot but affect the formation of spiritual and moral values of students.

As a result of a number of studies, the conditions for the formation of spiritual and moral immunity are developed in the context of proposing new ways to "document and protect cultural heritage from such threats as environmental damage and degradation" (Rozhkova, Mukhamadeeva, 2025: 169).

The aspect denoting the connection between the aesthetic component of animation and morality can have both a positive and destructive effect on students, which is noted as a violation of this connection. It is associated both with traditional representations in the aesthetics of the figurative properties of animation, and with all kinds of image deformation technologies by artificial intelligence and forms of computer image processing. At the same time, the substitution of living empathy with a cold-blooded analysis of rational relations between people is indicated, which contributes to the development of mercantilism, utilitarianism, and the loss of ties of purely human relations. These means achieve the goal of killing feelings, making the viewer an insensitive strategist. The geometry of facelessness, enclosed in impersonal personality traits, indulges the aesthetics of the post avant-garde, the main postulates of which are: simplification, absurdity, sarcasm, sharpness of deformations, erasing anthropomorphism and replacing it with zooanthropomorphism, displacing the soul and humanity from animation.

The study of R.U. Asylgareeva and O.A. Ovsyannikova, in which the authors assert a deep connection between the aesthetics of the cartoon and morality, formed in the process of interaction between the viewer and the convoys of animation. However, the reflective side of spectator culture clearly lags behind the perceptual, as confirmed by the following position. "Unfortunately, modern adolescents rarely think of cartoons as deep works that carry not only an aesthetic and entertaining character, but also can... teach morality, since the art contains the experience of value relations, including moral relationships and deeds" (Asylgareeva, Ovsyannikova, 2023: 13).

The aesthetics of animation views are often contrary to moral norms that are clearly not correlated with the aesthetics of postmodernism, which is clearly destroy adequate representations of reality.

According to Sang Jung Kim, the emotion of trust, built on the ethnocultural dissemination of moral qualities among the audience, acquires considerable importance "used the emotions of trust and fear differently depending on the issue" (Kim, 2022).

As consequences of a rupture of an esthetics and the moral of animation in the form of the psychological destructions caused by influence of anti-values of some modern animatedfilms a number of authors.

According to the fair statement of O.V. Kunichenko, cartoons demonstrate to the student in a "figurative form.... the consequences of non-compliance with moral norms and the resulting vices in difficult to assimilate and realize the opposition of abstract concepts representing values and anti-values: kindness, generosity, greed, envy, responsiveness" (Kunichenko, 2013: 201).

Deeper and more aggravated this problem is seen by I.S. Nikulova and K.I. Shishkina. The authors argue that "when watching many modern cartoons, negative behavior patterns are determined, aggression is recorded; there is a distortion of familiar feelings, instead of which children enjoy striking, insulting and their own all-permissiveness; imitation mechanisms are formed". Thus, entertainment leads viewers to a decrease in emotional sensuality and manifestations of empathy, "denigration of the soul." The authors' comments that this "problem is due to an increase in the number of modern cartoons containing elements of aggression, violence and cruelty, the inability to adequately evaluate such cartoons" (Nikulova, Shishkina, 2019: 262-266).

In this direction, Yu Wang sees wide opportunities for globalization to act in terms of "the new generation of animators' understanding of traditional themes and modern animation film from the perspective of breakthrough of role modeling at that time and the perfect integration of fashion and traditional culture, which is an attempt of transformation of modern animation film, and has provided reference prototype for its further development" (Wang, 2016).

4. Results

The basis of the media educational model for the formation and protection of the system of traditional spiritual and moral values of modern animation is the concept and system of pentabasis, correlated with the cultural code of Russia, which underlies its value basis.

It seems that this model can serve as a means of critical thinking of students acting as spectators, whose attention is directed "to protection of critical infrastructure" (Doyle et al., 2025). At the same time, the intersystem connection of the "Man – Creation" block is responsible for the traditional value of continuity, historical truth and historical memory through the attitude to historical memory and creation as values, which manifests itself in the values of faith, truth, creativity, immortality and counteracts unconsciousness and loss of historical memory. In the third part of the pentabasis "Society – Consent," moral ideals are concentrated that determine the direct attitude towards people through the values of goodness, love, justice, mercy, reverence for parents, family, social ideals, collectivism, opposing individualism, consumerism, hedonization, materialism.

The second part of the pentabasis – the family – traditions are aimed at unity and mutual assistance, which develops a collectivist attitude towards the Motherland: patriotism, citizenship, which is manifested in the value of love for the Fatherland and sacred spirituality and opposes spirituality, anti-human rationalism.

In the third part of the pentabasis "Society – Consent," moral ideals are concentrated that determine the direct attitude towards people through the values of goodness, love, justice, mercy, reverence for parents, family, social ideals, collectivism, opposing individualism, consumerism, hedonization, materialism.

The fourth part of the pentabasis "State – Trust in Institutions" is aimed at the traditional values of humanism and justice in the above block of attitude towards people.

Finally, the intersystem connection of the "Country – Patriotism" blok is based on the values of life, dignity, rights, freedom, which forms a true attitude to the world in the value space of truth, beauty, hard work, love of knowledge, which, in our opinion, can overcome skepticism and blurring of truth.

The methods of forming values in media education are to identify values, update them, involve empathy and inclusion in this process, and also reflect students.

Methods of general value protection in media education are built on the active attraction of media educational objects through the creation of alternative images. At the same time, methods of debunking anti-values and their desabsurdization acquire an important role. Of particular importance is the spiritual immunization of the perception of audiovisual information, including the constant desacralization of anticenticities.

In this vein, it is productive to use artificial intelligence, which is able to withstand anti-values thanks to "transforms the function of cultural patterns, and breaks social norms, raising philosophical, ethical, moral, and legislative questions" (Roubal, Narusevych, 2025).

Specific methods of value protection in animation work through the display of humane rationalism. Next comes the sacralization of feat and heroism, which subsequently allows you to create a kind of "immune shield of criticism," achieve the romanticization of patriotism, and in the end, revive (animate) values through the classics.

An analysis of the plot content and value meaning of modern Russian cartoons shot in 2025 showed a significant shift in the spiritual and moral connotation of screen images of Russian animation towards humanization and reaching traditional values (Table 1). In the first place in the rating of the value content of modern cartoons in 2025 was the picture *Ay, yes Pushkin!*, which includes the story of how young Pushkin, faced with a difficult situation of exile for him, successfully copes with the support of faithful friends and a meeting with the heroes of Russian fairy tales. Here, the first block of the concept of pentabasis affected the subtext of the film, reflecting in the value of creativity, creative work on the ideal of Pushkin's genius.

Table 1. Plot content and value meaning of modern cartoons

№	Cartoon title	Plot	Cartoon value meaning
1.	*Ay, yes Pushkin!*	The story of how young Pushkin, faced with a difficult situation of exile for him, successfully copes with the support of faithful friends and a meeting with the heroes of Russian fairy tales.	creativity
2.	*Batman Ninja vs. Yakuza League*	Travel on the time and sphere	heroizm
3.	*Jurassic Jungle*	Modern inhabitants of Africa will meet with their frightening ancestors – dinosaurs.	Romanization of courage
4.	*Dogman: Fuzzy Justice*	Confrontation between a dog-headed policeman and a villainous cat who aims to conquer the whole world	freedom and justice
5.	*Kayara. The Way of Destiny*	Brave Kayara from the Inca empire dreamed of being part of the prestigious league of envoys since childhood.	Romanization of courage and heroism
6.	*Crosses*	An inseparable pair of high-end sneakers are once separated. in New York street life	consumerism, materialism
7.	*Madagascar*	A meteorite falls on the zoo, which causes a chain reaction: animals begin to turn into zombie hybrids.	There is a hint of collectivism
8.	*Dolphin Boy*	The sudden appearance of huge whales and evil crabs in the sea instills fear in the hearts of islanders and marine life. Fate throws dolphin boy a new challenge, but with it gives hope.	friendship and heroism

The heroic ideals of traditional values were shown in the cartoon *Batman Ninja vs. the Yakuza League*, which tells about a journey through time and space. The second film of this direction was the picture *Jurassic Jungle*. In the plot of the film, the modern inhabitants of Africa will meet with their frightening ancestors – dinosaurs, which, together with the values of heroism, also cultivates the romanticization of courage, which is quite compatible with heroism. Both of these films correspond to the second block of the pentabasis.

With the above named film echoes another: *Dolphin Boy.* Its plot is based on the sudden appearance of huge whales and evil crabs in the sea, which instills fear in the hearts of islanders and marine life. Fate throws a new challenge to the dolphin boy, but with him gives hope. Here there is a revival of the focus of children's animation on combining the values of friendship with the values of heroism.

The third block of the pentabasis is answered somewhat with a stretch by the cartoon *Dogman: Fluffy Justice.* The plot is based on the confrontation of a policeman with a dog's head

and a villainous cat, which is aimed at conquering the whole world. Of course, the images of the cartoon are directed against the values of individualism, consumerism, hedonization, defending freedom and justice.

The cartoon *Madagascar* can be directed to the same pentabasis block. Its plot is concluded in a situation caused by a fallen meteorite on the zoo, as a result of which the animals begin to turn into zombie hybrids. You can see that the subtext of this picture contains a certain hint of collectivism.

However, of the seven cartoons analyzed, there is a picture of *Crosses*, the plot of which unfolds on the streets of New York. It should be noted that this is the only cartoon of 2025 from the above list in which spiritual and moral values are replaced by the pursuit of fashion, expressing anti-values of consumerism and materialism.

5. Conclusion

This study found that the protection of traditional spiritual and moral values is most effective in the model of mass media education carried out by means of Russian animation in a pentabasis system of five components, each of which has its own value dominant "Man – Creation, Family – Traditions, Society – Consent, State – Trust in institutions, Country – Patriotism." It forms the pedagogical potential of the spiritual and moral content of cartoons in the audience culture of students. However, their media educational support is based on the principles: reflection of the spiritual and moral values of animation in the behavior of students.

In this study, our attention is drawn to the educational model, which is understood as integration attractive properties of the process of youth animation creativity; the association of animation with family values and upbringing; protection of ethnocultural values in animation as part of intangible cultural heritage; overcoming the destructive socio-psychological consequences of breaking the connection between aesthetics and morality and the anti-breeding role of animation. An analysis of the plot content and value meaning of modern cartoons shot in 2025 showed a significant shift in the spiritual and moral connotation of screen images of Russian animation towards humanization and reaching traditional values.

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Modern Media Text in the Context of Ethical and Linguistic Parameters (Based on Media Advertisement in Sphere of Medicine)

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Abstract

The article deals with modern media space in the context of ethical and linguistic aspects. The purpose of the article is to analyze the ethical component of media texts in modern advertisement of medicines and medical services, to study the conditions for compliance of such media advertising with the principles of ecological thinking and ethical and linguistic standards. The study is based on the popular media, such as *Arguments and Facts, Komsomol Truth, Arguments of the Week,* etc. The article used a discursive cognitive-pragmatic analysis. It is necessary to adapt professional information to the collective addressee understanding level. The creation of high-quality advertising of goods and services in the field of medicine is determined by the interest of both the producer and consumer. Such advertising should be based as much as possible on ethical and linguistic standards, because their violation (connected with information content and the way and means of presenting information, in particular, the intentional use of manipulative techniques) is destructive. Manipulative medical advertising using incorrect methods, understood as a violation of ethical and linguistic standards, is the most destructive one. The authors identified a correlation between the destructiveness of manipulative techniques and the violation of ethical and linguistic standards mandatory for the analyzed type of advertising media texts. Conditions necessary for the effectiveness of advertising goods and services in the medical field determine the research novelty. The article will be useful in media education sphere: in training media specialists, forming media content and creating media products, media literacy dissemination and as a result media space cultivation are extremely important.

Keywords: media text, medical media advertising, media linguistics, marketing linguistics, speech manipulation, ethical and linguistic standards.

1. Introduction

An advertising media text is involved into the life of society (Kulikova, 2025), and therefore the multifactorial study of specialized, health-oriented product advertising has social significance. Media advertising of medicines and medical equipment in non-medical printed media such as *Komsomol Truth, Arguments and facts, Arguments of the Week,* etc. is harmful.

It is still not defined at the legislative level in spite of the State Duma initiatives aimed at banning goods, and drugs for medicine and the health sector in non-medical media, as well as the need to describe the methods of medical measures and reflect this process in media space in

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professionally oriented media, oriented only for people with medical training, which should ensure conflict-free interaction between advertisers and consumers. However, this has not been implemented at the legislative level yet. A lot of scholarly works are devoted to ethical issues in the field of media advertising (Altsiel, Grow, 2017; Besley et al., 2021; Davis, 2011; Elste, 2014; Kara-Murza, 2007; Mazikova, 2023; Ovrutsky, 2005; Quesenberry, 2015; Rapaille, 2006; Shapovalov, 2017; Tikhomirova, 2016; Tkachev, 2017; Vituzhnikova, Oleshko, 2013, etc).

Also marketing issues in the field of medical advertising have long attracted attention (Berdibekova, 2019; Borisova, Frolova, 2017; Catoiu et al., 2013; Gaudilliere, 2015; Haas, 2016, Stellefson et al., 2020; Kozharnovich, 2021; Pervukhina, 2019; Sakaeva, Mayerkhali, 2022; Tayupova, Polyakova, 2022; Yang et al., 2023, etc.).

This demonstrates the growing interest of society and researchers in the problems of creating and functioning advertising texts in the field of medicine, however, the specifics of ethical and linguistic normativity in medical advertising are not outlined with the necessary completeness, which determines the relevance and scientific novelty of the research. The purpose of the article is to present advertising in media space and to analyze texts of media advertising, specifics of advertising medical products and devices, marketing strategies and tactics used in this sphere in the contex of compliance with ecological thinking, ethical and linguistic normativity.

2. Materials and methods

Media advertising of medical products and devices has been studied on the basis of popular media (*Komsomol Truth, Arguments and facts, Arguments of the Week*, etc.). To identify violations of ethical and linguistic norms in medical advertising a discursive cognitive-pragmatic analysis has been applied.

3. Discussion

Advertisement of medical devices does not differ much from the usual commercial advertising of goods in media. However, in addition to the general "Law on Advertisement" (Federal'nyi Zakon..., 2006), there are additional legislative acts prohibiting, for example, the advertising of strictly prescription drugs. In whole, according to our research (and this will be demonstrated in the examples below), the most frequent advertising in media is not the advertising of drugs themselves, but the advertising of medical devices such as "Nadezhda" (in English – Hope), "Aurora", "Scenar", "Almag", etc.) treating everything. Medical advertising can be embodied in different media forms (Fedorov et al., 2014; Lane, 2020; Macgilchrist et al., 2020; Stoumpos et al., 2023; Yang et al., 2023).

Models of generating advertisement text having structural, semantic, and pragmatic obligatory parameters have developed and are regularly used (Langer, Gruber, 2021; Li et al., 2023). The structure is determined by the question-and–answer model, semantics and pragmatics are determined by the choice of a model in which either the tactics of appealing to an authority/specialist or the consumer's reception are actualized.

Advertising media texts related to medical sphere (Fedorov, 2001; Fedorov, 2009; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2015; Kayal, Saha, 2023; Kirchhoff, 2022; Kulikova, 2022; Ozbek et al., 2023; Shin et al., 2022) are often based on standard templates. The first and typical microgenre is so-called "puzzling". The quality of this media texts in this generally template part varies (Fedorov, 2010; Fedorov, Chelysheva, 2002; Fedorov et al., 2019), sometimes they don't stand up to any criticism. For example, the beginning of the advertisement of the medical device "Nadezhda" (Hope):

"Have you ever seen heads of state or prime ministers walking around with a stick?" (Vy kogda-nibud'..., 2023: 9).

The authors of the advertisement seem to think that they have found convincing facts, but in reality it is an obvious substitution of concepts and a discrepancy between the premise and conclusions: the fact that none of the listed leaders "walks with a stick" does not mean that their joints do not hurt.

"It turns out that joints are treated perfectly with modern medical devices! And the most effective treatment method is high–tone electrotherapy...." (Ibid).

In this media advertising the typical element "puzzling", which is supposed to perform a perlocative function, is rather puzzling. Advertisers are grossly manipulating, manipulation is easily recognizable, and therefore advertising does not attract potential consumers of products (users of the advertised device), but repels them.

Another typical structural component in medical media advertising is "intimidation". For example:

"If a person elder 40 looked inside him/herself, he/she would be horrified by what he saw: ... And as for the vessels, imagine water pipes clogged with rust and harsh salts. A third of the cells have aged, they do not carry their function, but only poison the body" (Esli..., 2023: 40); *"Traumatology. An ordinary day. Fracture of the femoral neck. One more. One more. And all these patients are people over 60. And only 5 % of people will be able to get back on their feet after such an injury. And many even face a fatal outcome. Can you imagine how scary that is?"* (Travmatologiya, 2023: 13).

"Intimidations" often involves statistics, or more precisely, false statistics, without specifying the source of the information:

"One in four people aged 30 has joint problems now! And 90 % of people over 50 have arthritis and osteoarthritis" (Problemy..., 2023: 19); *"Every third person in the world dies from parasitic diseases"* (Kazhdyi tretii, 2023: 7).

The third component is the promotion of a medical product (device), which will help to get rid of all these problems overnight. The formation of an attractive image of the advertised product is often achieved in incorrect ways, for example:

"The device of high-tone electrotherapy "Nadezhda" (Hope) made a splash. The real perfection of medicine... Happy owners of "Nadezhda" (Hope) are no longer afraid of a heart attack and are quite right. Join the lucky ones! ... "Nadezhda" (Hope) is a real diamond of modern medicine. So let your hands become his frame! ... And the main thing is that you will literally turn back time. You will stop the aging. Do you understand? ... Here they are, modern technologies!" (Furor proizvel..., 2022: 7).

Advertisers in media often appeal to the authority of the manufacturing country: *"Israeli scientists have confirmed that prostatitis is curable in 97 % of men – advertising the drug Salutem-pro"* (Izrail'skie uchenye..., 2023: 4); *"Traditional German quality"* – advertising of the Gelenk narung dietary supplement (Traditsionnoe nemetskoe..., 2023: 13).

In the media advertisement of medicines and medical equipment (Kulikova et al., 2024), the arguments to the logos are replaced by arguments to pathos, emotional exclamations, intimidation, puzzling and praise of the miraculous remedy, the promise of a speedy cure for all the possible diseases.

4. Results

Restrictions for advertisers are fixed in the "Law on Advertisement" (Federal'nyi Zakon..., 2006). The "Law on Advertisement" prohibits the mixing of medicines and dietary supplements. This is implemented in special instructions such as "Dietary supplement". For example in the media advertisement of bioformula cardio: "*It is not a medicine*" (Bioformula..., 2023: 23).

In media medical advertising may relate to those functions of a human body which were not talked about out loud until recently. In modern media, remedies for constipation, diarrhea, or urinary incontinence are advertised on the same page with serious analytical materials. In "Arguments of the Week", on the same page with the interview given to the newspaper's correspondent by the President of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Academician G. Krasnikov, we read: "*Restore bowel movements after years of constipation with the effective remedy Piloris!*" (Vosstanovite stul, 2023: 7).

And in the newspaper *Arguments and Facts*, immediately after analytical article by V. Kostikov on the situation of the Russian language in the modern world, it is written with capital letters: "*Urinary incontinence is curable!*". And then there is an advertisement for the device "Nanoprost" (Nanoprost, 2023: 4).

The very existence of advertisement in media, which used to be famous for political analytics (*Arguments and Facts, Arguments of the Week*) is puzzling.

If advertising books may be acceptable to some extent, because it corresponds to the type of edition, then advertising thermal socks "Alyaska" (Termonoski "Alyaska", 2023: 12), trousers with elastic band "Arrow" (Bryuki..., 2023: 12), knee pads "Move easily" (Knee..., 2023: 12) and hairpieces "Intrigue" (Shin'ony "Intriga", 2023: 12) evoke memories about the satires by M. Zoshchenko, I. Ilf and E. Petrov.

Although the Federal Law on Advertisment (Federal'nyi Zakon..., 2006) clearly defines unacceptable advertising techniques, they are often used in modern media.

These are:

– indications on the limited time during which it is possible to purchase the product. For example: "*Call right now, today, do not delay. And if you hurry up, you will also have time to*

order the device at the old price!" (Zvonite pryamo..., 2023: 19); "*Do not delay your order! A total of 720 devices Glaznik*" (in Russian the word formation of this lexeme is connected with "eye socket") *at a special price!* (Ne otkladyvaite..., 2023: 9);

– the involvement of media persons for advertising (despite the fact that the advertising legislation explicitly states: the reputation of a person should not be used in advertising information). For example, singer O. Gazmanov is actively involved in advertising medical products.

For example, a creolized advertisement for the device "Almag", including Oleg Gazmanov holding the advertised device in his hands (Almag, 2023: 7);

– unconfirmed data about efficacy based on an incorrect comparison. For example: "*Scientific approach to prostate health. A major study on the benefits of herbs and extracts for prostate health has been completed in* Russia. It involved 38 clinical centers and 820 men. *The results are encouraging – in some cases, the positive effect was 2 times faster and 2 times more clear*" (Nauchnyi podkhod, 2023: 9). As we can see, advertisers make a logical mistake: the second component is not named in comparison – 2 times faster than what? Twice the clear effect compared to what? Comparison as a kind of trope, regardless of its semantic complexity or accuracy of correlation with the object of reality, ensures the actualization of the specifics of the advertised product, first of all on the basis of uniqueness. The topos of comparison (in other terminology, the trope of similarity) can be both a powerful persuasive tool and a typical manipulative technique. Thus, the manipulative method of comparing the advertised product "with conventional drugs" is typical:

"*The important advantages of this mineral complex, in comparison with conventional drugs, are that they remove excess tissue fluid from the body*" (Vazhnye preimushchestva, 2023: 40).

Then advertisers list the numerous useful properties of the advertised complex, so it seems: this is a revolution in pharmacology, however, advertisers report that the complex is not a medicine and is not a dietary supplement. This technique is well known from commercial advertising of goods ("*this is an ordinary detergent, and this is Ariel, Tide*", etc.). "It is well known that such a technique is used when it is not possible to indicate the real advantages. Such comparisons can misinform consumers and give them an idea of a drug that is at odds with reality, which translates the problem into the field of ethical and linguistic normativity and law" (Brusenskaya, Belyaeva, 2022: 595).

Some fragments of medical advertising in media give the impression of unprofessionalism. Is it possible to take seriously an advertisement that starts like this?: "*The mystery is solved. Scientists have found the answer to our diseases*" – the advertisement of the medical device "Scenar" (Taina raskryta, 2023: 40).

Many media texts of medical advertisement demonstrate the lack of linguistic flair, linguistic taste: "*A diamond of modern medicine*" (about the device: ultrasound physiotherapy "Aurora") (Brilliant..., 2023: 19); "*A discovery worthy of the Nobel Prize*" (about the device "Glaznik" – in Russian the word formation of this lexeme is connected with "eye socket") (Otkrytie..., 2023: 37); "*Incredible high-precision therapy, amazing medical device "Nadezhda" (Hope)*" (Neveroyatnaya vysokotonovaya, 2023: 33). In our view this is elementary illiteracy and not only advertising but also media in a whole will lose readers' trust: "*The fact that the device "Aurora" is special became clear from the moment of its appearance*" (Pro to..., 2023: 7); "*To see the effect of Chinch, you do not need to spend 2-3 thousand rubles and wait 6 months*" (Chtoby ubedit'sya, 2023: 9).

In many media texts of medical advertising, manipulative "two-dimensional communication behavior is easily detected: on the one hand, there is a demonstrated intention to benefit recipients, and on the other hand, there is a hidden but easily readable intention to get benefits" (Karasik, 2015: 232). Media advertising in sphere of medicine "should be formed on a detailed evidence base, convey the maximum amount of basic marketing information, and at the same time be accurate, significant, and reasoned" (Baranov, 2024: 644). In advertising, it has become common to condemn the technique when not a product with its specific characteristics is being sold, but a certain image ("*with this dishwasher, you are the queen of the kitchen*"). Moreover, products for health should be protected from such speculations. Since the promotion of medical products is directly related to human health, the responsibility of advertisers is especially high. Manipulations, such as gross violations of ethical and speech standards, are destructive to the maximum extent here.

A well-known and described in detail manipulative technique of adjustment (in TV advertising: *Alexander Sergeevich Pushkin. May tea. We have much to be proud of*) is also used by the creators of medical advertising:

"On April 12, 1961, the first space flight of a human being took place. It was a real breakthrough! An event that left a mark not only in world history, but also in the soul of every Soviet citizen. People were overwhelmed with pride for their country. After all, we were the first to succeed! A real miracle! What seemed impossible just 100 years ago (and in the context of the history of the whole country, believe us, it's not so much) has at last happened! Similar feelings (delight, amazement, excitement, shock) were experienced by our contemporaries when they first tried a new super development by Russian scientists from St. Petersburg – the medical magnetic applicator Ladium" (12 aprelya..., 2023: 28).

This adjustment in which the Gagarin's flight into cosmos is compared with some (even having useful properties magnetic applicator) device can only make a comical impression.

5. Conclusion

It is necessary in medical advertising to avoid promises and emotional exclamations, such as *a cosmic discovery*, *a miracle of medicine*, etc. in advertising medical products, which should be as informative and reasoned as possible. The advertisement using manipulative techniques such as "adjustment" and incorrect comparisons (where the objects being compared and the comparison parameters are not directly named) is unethical.

We believe that the study of advertising in the context of the ideas of ethical and linguistic normativity and ecological thinking can really contribute to the cultivation of the advertising media space. Creating media products and media content formation for media space cultivation and media literacy dissemination should be in accordance with ecological thinking. Ecological thinking should be emphasized in media literacy education, because for media literacy education it is important to study not only specialized disciplines and professional standards, but also to form a person with a deep sense of personal responsibility for the spoken (written) word to another person. In the curriculum for the training of media specialists, not only the disciplines of the special part, but also the disciplines included into the basic part, should consider the ethical problems of advertising. It must be admitted that a special course on advertising medical products and equipment should be introduced in the curriculum as well as fundamentals of medical knowledge.

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Investigating Celebritism Among TikTok Users as a Result of Media Reliance

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Abstract

This research aims to understand the phenomenon of celebrity in the use of TikTok as a media platform with a critical understanding of celebrity in the modern world. Celebrity has an impact on how people view themselves in the contemporary world. The authors conducted an in analysis with these TikTok users to understand their approach to celebritism on social media and the effects they have implemented. According to the findings of this research, celebrity culture is a well-known media phenomenon that has an impact on the formation of the entire media system. The research method uses descriptive qualitative research by using a library research approach to investigate celebritism on TikTok. The data is obtained by seeing videos critically on TikTok, observations, documentation, and combined, keeping in mind how celebrity presents on digital platforms, with concentrating on the TikTok users. The authors attempt to apply a social structural approach and operate within the theory of media dependency by Sandra Ball Rokeach and Melvin Defleur in order to explore, analyze, and comprehend this social practice. The results of this research contribute to understanding celebritism and identifying the factors of social media reliance among TikTok users who make content create and share content on the social media platform TikTok, which highlights the social system, media system, and personality system.

Keywords: celebritism, media dependency, media reliance, social media, TikTok.

1. Introduction

TikTok's rapid growth has revolutionized the world of online celebrity, giving rise to a new generation of highly visible and influential "TikTok celebrities." This condition, referred to as "celebrityism," is largely a consequence of users' widespread dependence on media, as they increasingly use platforms like TikTok for social contact, entertainment, and information. This dependence, if left untreated, without critical media literacy, can lead to uncritical consumption, distorted perceptions of reality, and vulnerability to manipulative content, despite offering a space for creative expression and community building. Therefore, understanding and applying media literacy instruction is crucial to analyzing the challenges associated with TikTok celebrity (Sitanggang et al., 2024).

TikTok's algorithmic content creation system, combined with its emphasis on high-quality, engaging content, has the potential to create a world where "influencers" can be quickly selected. Consumers who then consume optimized, often aspirational content have the potential to forge increasingly strong parasocial bonds with these figures, as well as bonds between actual connections and constructed individuals (Kurtin et al., 2018; Rubin, McHugh, 1987). This extreme reliance on media can skew public opinion about trains, product advertisements, and even the ideologies espoused by selected individuals, based on their personal beliefs or preferences. Without

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the ability to determine the validity of the material, users may struggle to distinguish between posts and accounts that are presented practically and created for impact or business purposes.

Therefore, media literacy education is seen as an indispensable educational tool. As a means of analyzing, evaluating, producing, and interacting with all forms of communication (Aufderheide, 1997), media literacy provides users with the cognitive tools necessary to build informed mechanisms. By integrating media literacy, consumers can learn to critically analyze selected realities, identify sponsored content, understand the economic motivations within influencer networks, and harness the potential of algorithmic manipulation (Livingstone, 2004). For example, educational research would encourage TikTok users to answer the following questions: "Who created this content and why?" "What values, lifestyles, and landscapes are included in the content?" and "How might different people perceive this message?"

Furthermore, media literacy education helps users understand the negative impacts of their actions. Reflection on the number of songs available on TikTok, emotional responses to certain content, and the potential for harm to body image and self-esteem (Sargent, Berson, 2007; Shukr et al., 2023) is also promoted. By analyzing media impacts, users can build safer platforms and critically evaluate the content they and selected participants interact with. This suggests that users are aware of the reality of the constructed internet lifestyle, that whatever they see is always the best version, and that they are more cautious and receptive to platforms like TikTok.

Due to the increasing media dependency, the celebrity trend that is popular among TikTok users highlights the importance of integrating media literacy. We can create a generation of brave, resilient, intelligent, and conscious citizens by introducing users to critical thinking skills to evaluate, deconstruct, and understand the complexities of celebrity online (Sarwar et al., 2025). This is not about highlighting offensive content; it's about learning more about media and the role of people within it, and ultimately creating healthier and more dignified content using platforms like TikTok.

In addition to various kinds of widely used social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc., TikTok is also a social media that can compete with the number of users. The existence of social media makes it easier for many people to access information that is old, new, or information that is being discussed a lot. In addition, social media has also become a tool for learning and teaching because of its function to share knowledge and communicate virtually (Hosen et al., 2021). The TikTok app in 2020 developed rapidly and became a new culture in Indonesia. Although the application has already been there since 2016 but lately the application is much loved by people of different ages. Social media such as TikTok has a video posting feature that makes it easy for fellow users to find information without having to read it, like reading news. Users of TikTok become addicted to scrolling for hours because it is so simple to learn things by just watching short videos. In actuality, TikTok is indeed a platform that provides 15-second entertainment-focused video streaming (Basch et al., 2020).

All the various information and entertainment can be found on TikTok. It can be known as a short video application that contains any genre, such as food, love, education, arts, etc. Also presents services engagingly and entertainingly (Barta et al., 2023). The search feature could search for videos according to what users want to watch, similar to other social media such as Instagram and YouTube. However, this application still has several differences, in that it always shows viral videos on the TikTok homepage.

With the increasing number of users who are addicted to the TikTok application, various users appear who create certain content or are known as social media influencers or TikTok celebrities who marketers use to promote multiple products, services, and ideas so that they are shown as brand ambassadors (Roy et al., 2021). With the existence of TikTok, celebrity makes other TikTok users follow suit to be a part of them. The fast factor in spreading information from the TikTok application through FYP (For You Page) allows users to gain a lot of followers quickly. From the large number of followers, users are quite famous like celebrities who often get various offers to advertise multiple products to increase their income.

Of the many platforms available to serve advertisements, such as broadcast, print, or on the internet, advertisements on the internet or online have increased dramatically so that ads are paid more attention (Kim, Moon, 2020). The number of TikTok celebrities that exist, so many people join in to become TikTok celebrities, is the impact of dependence on TikTok as a social media. This has resulted in the increasingly widespread use of TikTok, which is easily accessible to all ages. Easy access to TikTok for all social circles brings out new celebrities with all the work and skills they show.

Due to the success of the TikTok platform in influencing its users, many other social media applications are competing to follow the TikTok concept as a short-duration vertical video presenter, such as Instagram with its 'Instagram Reels' or YouTube with its 'Shorts' for users for enjoying the videos while presenting or promoting content user-generated like a TikTok celebrity. Even though it has the same concept, using TikTok doesn't need to install other applications like Instagram Reels, where, when you want to use it, users have to install the Instagram application (Menon, 2022)

Celebritism is a term that is still rare in the study of communication and culture today (Sadapotto et al., 2021). Though it's still unusual, it might be a research subject because studies on topics related to celebritism are still uncommon. It can be seen as a valid argument in favor of conducting a study on celebritism. This phenomenon could be an intriguing investigation into modern celebrity culture on social media. Celebrity culture is a well-known media phenomenon that has an impact on the formation of the entire media system.

Whether we like it or not, celebrity culture is a part of our lives and has even invaded some areas. It influences the way we think, act, and behave. It impacts and is affected by entire populations, not just die-hard admirers (Driessens, 2013). Self-promotion on social media also contributes to the creation of celebrity images. Their popularity stems from their collaborative way of life, not from their professional activities. The expansion of mass media as a very intensive process of spreading the globalization of communication and world culture is the major cause of this case study. So that it can be used as both the object and the subject of research on new social media platforms. As a result, it is uncommon for the topic of celebritism to be expressly investigated in connection with TikTok as a new social media platform.

TikTok rewards brief, humorous films that are shared on users' for you pages (Soto-Vásquez, 2022). In actuality, TikTok is a little video that can be found on the foreign version of the Chinese social media platform Douyin. TikTok was launched in September 2016 by Beijing in the company ByteDance for the Chinese domestic market (Abidin, 2020). Since its launch, TikTok has been one of the most visited sites on the internet, and it's known as a short video platform. Videos on TikTok range from 15 s (default length) to 5 min (extended length) with music or sound effects (Yang, 2022). In 2017, TikTok, which is accessible in 150 countries, had more than 2 billion downloads and 800 million monthly active users worldwide (Yachao, 2021).

TikTok allows people to create, share, and consume short-video content (Schellewald, 2021). It has a significant social impact since users are able to freely express their perspectives by using the app as a sharing platform. The content of virality is also an important factor in the success of one's lifestyle. The fundamental idea behind TikTok is that it encourages displays and remakes through a social component, where each video that is made has the potential to make others dependent on it. While TikTok's features will be carefully addressed in the part that follows, researchers want to emphasize that a number of variables have combined to make this app a free area for a variety of people.

Although celebrity information is not the primary reason users visit TikTok, TikTok is used by users to exchange and seek lifestyle-related details, with information available to help users stay informed and promote themselves. As a result, TikTok has teamed up with public lifestyle experts to create an information center that provides users with engaging content. TikTok offers a wide range of ways to share content, including creativity, video challenges, lip sync, songs, dancing, singing, and others. Everyone may make engaging films and have the chance to reshare them with others by using a variety of effects straight through the TikTok program (Sasmita, Achmadi, 2022).

People's celebritism strategies on the TikTok platform include using hashtags (#) as a sign that has the intention of a point, discussion, or event, in order to make the thing you create an interesting trend that other users can see and find relevant information (Sasmita, Achmadi, 2022). Keep an eye out for the following trends: TikTok's celebrity strategy is based on videos that describe a trending topic. Influencers and celebrities must be able to find the right moment for things that will catch the attention of many other TikTok users in order to meet this condition. Frequently post a video that may be interrupted by advertising. This strategy is carried out by regularly uploading/posting videos so that more people see or visit our account video.

2. Materials and methods

This research uses a descriptive qualitative research method using a library research approach, such as articles or journals, to investigate celebritism on TikTok. The data is gathered by

seeing the video critically with additional data such as documents and others, keeping in mind how the celebrity presents itself on digital platforms, and concentrating on the TikTok users. The data collection was obtained by seeing videos on TikTok, observations, documentation, and categorizing them. The authors attempt to apply a social structural approach and operate within the theory of media dependency by Sandra Ball Rokeach and Melvin Defleur in order to explore, analyze, and comprehend this social practice more deeply, which highlights the social system, media system, and personality system for investigating social media reliance.

The media dependency emphasizes the society, media, audience, and effects to understand the meaning of social practices and to represent an in-depth analysis of social media effects, including a reciprocal relationship on the larger social system, mass media, and society (Ball-Rokeach, DeFleur, 1975). The media of reliance then comprehends social structure within social media to investigate celebritism in video content on TikTok. This research discussion begins with society, then moves on to the media, audience, and effects as an interconnected component in media dependency theory. This theory reveals an integral relationship between the audience, the media, and the wider social system (Rafiq, 2012).

3. Discussion

By applying the theory of media dependency, this research investigates how celebrity culture affects interpersonal relationships and self-esteem, which is social media contact defined as a two-way interaction between communities and TikTok users or between society and their consumers' behavior. Celebrity has an impact on how people view themselves in the contemporary world. It is possible to see how celebrity culture has influenced contemporary media and how people view themselves in society. In other words, using media effectively to promote advertising or products and services is crucial for building a company's sustainable image (Zhao et al., 2022).

In relation to that, we have observed media reliance on TikTok demonstrates how the monitoring apps created to assist "the quantification of self," as well as highlights that the market and surveillance values are ingrained for self-branding in the digital environment. These norms and values, held by designers and programmers who are situated in terms of space, race, and gender, offer guidance on what constitutes suitable or positive social media use (MacAulay, 2015). The primary source for this study is presented as statements from TikTok vloggers, hashtag findings, and trending topics. The answer's explanation will analyze the current trending subject to determine how Indonesians use TikTok.

Further, TikTok was created as a result of diverse social constructionist perspectives, which implies that it was established through the interpretation of social interactions among users and viewers who were fascinated by the TikTok platform. The reason TikTok is becoming more and more popular is that anyone may create content on this entertainment platform, regardless of class, position, or popularity; all it takes is the ability to express ideas creatively. While TikTok is an avenue for (momentary) popularity (Petrovic, 2022). Consequently, TikTok admirers are growing as a result of its simple, useful, and distinctive qualities. These issues may lead TikTok users to become more dependent on the media.

Investigating the celebritism of media reliance on TikTok, discussing the celebritism phenomenon falls into three categories: social system, media system, and personality system.

Social System: Celebritism as a Media Reliance on TikTok

The presence of technology and the internet has resulted in the emergence of a new definition of celebrity, which is a product of the media. The ability to share content that draws a large audience has made it possible for anyone to become famous. However, anyone can now become a celebrity by sharing public-interesting content. Since the TikTok boom in 2019, it might be remembered as the year that adults scrambled to understand what "TikTok" was and why millions of teenagers were so obsessed with it (Kaye et al., 2021). All generations have flocked to create interesting content presented in short-form videos. Some share content about well-known brand products such as bags, makeup, or skincare, and there are also online celebrities (celebgrams/celebrity Endorser Instagram) who are famous for uploading content about their luxury lives, traveling abroad, and other topics. This phenomenon is known as the practice of micro-celebrity.

Micro-celebrity is a mindset and a set of behaviors that draw attention through peeks into the private lives of its practitioners and a sense of authenticity that makes their storytelling and branding both approachable and personal (Khamis, Welling, 2017). In response to this, TikTok users who were

broadcasting their lives over the internet use still videos, images, vlogging, and their strategies to market themselves to their online audience as a complete brand package through media reliance.

Media reliance is a related concept to this. In the case of TikTok, what kind of internet celebrity look-alike, and what does it have to do with vloggers as content creators who express their ideas on a digital platform? As is well known, there are certain parallels and distinctions between TikTok and YouTube. Both applications provide space for content creators, such as uploading video content or promoting a product. Teen users engage in micro-celebrity and influencer behavior that thrives and evolves outside of TikTok in order to maintain some brand coherence and maintain a steady flow of attention to their existing digital media by extrapolating, contextualizing, and updating these influencer visibility and logic practices (Abidin, 2020).

On previous social media platforms like Instagram and YouTube, a constant online presence or personality, or building an online brand that people would remember and want, was the basis for sustained and long-lasting fame. Because of the close communication they have, their followers are able to follow, like, and share these influencers, follow their updates on a regular basis, be influenced by the sponsored interior messages they share, and take some curiosity in understanding their private life, both online and offline. Most of the time, the content producers are motivated by a desire for fame (Ang, 2011). This basically means that TikTok users and people who want to become internet celebrities don't always carefully maintain one coherent persona or style, but instead actively and quickly adapt from the most well-liked viral trends and practices on TikTok to try different styles around the world, including trending topics, hashtags, and filters. Therefore, social media is abused as a forum for celebrities rather than being used for videos that are educational or useful.

Media System: TikTok Videos Gain Popularity through Viewer Engagement

Popularity and virality are now frequently determined by how well individuals, especially teenagers, post on platforms like TikTok, where the definitions of these terms have shifted. Users may "like," "share," and comment on TikTok videos after they are posted, which helps the platform's recommendation algorithm distribute them ("How TikTok Recommends Videos #ForYou," 2020) (Hautea et al., 2021). This explanation shows that the majority of users want to have unique postings that receive "engagement" in the form of views, comments, and shares because TikTok users are motivated by the desire to be famous. Their videos can be shown on the For You Page (FYP) on your TikTok platform.

The For You Page (FYP) TikTok homepage is designed like a video feed generated and driven by the TikTok algorithm. This algorithm-based design allows users with a low number of followers to find audiences quickly. It's easy to attract audiences for users. Also, the emergence of interesting videos makes TikTok seem unproductive to users because it is addictive, where the amount of time spent on TikTok is more than what is expected (Falgoust et al., 2022).

The easy design of TikTok's algorithm coming to FYP makes getting "viral" easy. Because it's so easy, TikTok users who get a large number of views are motivated by the possibility of becoming famous so that they can take advantage of the number of views and followers they have obtained in a short time (Falgoust et al., 2022).

Eventually, influencers frequently utilize hashtags like the ones mentioned above to drive a large number of TikTok users to their videos, causing them to become popular. The (#) symbol, or hashtags, are becoming more and more popular among social media users (Rauschnabel et al., 2019). It suggests that users perceive hashtags as driving virality. However, this tendency has brought about the rise of celebrity behavior due to the effects of social media dependency.

Celebritism in TikTok, which was created by an account owner @siscakohl, is one of the objects studied in this study. Sisca Kohl's account with 12.8 million followers is an Indonesian celebrity known for her TikTok content, which she has uploaded since 2020. Sisca took the public by storm with content showing her consuming unique and expensive foods, such as adding gold and caviar to the food, and others. This, of course, shocked the public with the uniqueness of her content. One video she uploaded about catfish pecel ice cream received a lot of attention, with 20 million views, 973.1K likes, and 83.2K comments. Sisca's videos are frequently the videos of choice that appear in FYP (For You Page), which means the most popular uploaded video on TikTok that is included in the homepage of other TikTok users.

Sisca Kohl has become one of the content creators who are increasingly well-known and continue to spark discussion due to the uniqueness of the videos she uploads via her TikTok account. This is evidence of TikTok media, which has a large influence on a person's fame through the TikTok application, and is an illustration of social media dependence by a large audience, both

in terms of audience and content creators, who are increasingly moved to present unique content even beyond reason for the sake of social fame. Sisca Kohl's content makes the audience more interested in the uniqueness of the food produced for the next content. This is undoubtedly one of the major triggers for social media reliance in both children and adults. Something that many people thought was unique and unthinkable before it was successfully presented through Sisca Kohl's TikTok content and became the beginning of her public fame.

Another TikTok account, @adelinemargaret, is one of the famous accounts that has a tremendous impact on TikTok viewers. An account with the name Adeline Margaret has followers totaling 6.2 M, with the total number of likes she has for all the videos she uploads amounting to 195.2M. TikTok account Adeline Margaret often posts videos showing the wealth she has and consuming items or food at a very fantastic price. The influence given in Adeline Margaret's video on viewers' interest can be seen through her content, consuming expensive and unique items that make the public curious about what Adeline will present every time. It also shows the media dependence experienced by Adeline Margaret on everything she does and consumes. Adeline Margaret always shows her consumption activities to the public through a video. She uploads it through the TikTok application, which shows the dependence she has on media and celebrities who happened to her after many of her TikTok videos went viral among social audiences.

It is evident from the two TikTok accounts above that more people are inspired to develop their creativity and create unique content for TikTok. Some people are even more motivated to make odd and unusual uploads for the audience in order to catch their attention and garner a lot of attention, and are famous since the uploads may become popular and a trend in the media. This is undoubtedly one of the reasons for people's dependency on social media, particularly the TikTok application, which is highly used by the general public.

Personality System: Online Consumer

Audiences as online consumers through TikTok often see content presented by influencers, so influencers continue to display the same content so that it becomes personal branding, which is a unique personal identity for developing brand relationships with certain target markets (Shafiee et al., 2020). Influencers take advantage of what they have to make videos consistently through the TikTok algorithm, the number of views, and the number of followers which these become interactions that support the appearance of their posted content which in turn may boost the numbers of 'likes', 'forwards', and 'share' (Scherr, Wang, 2021).

One of the TikTok content creators named Sisca Kohl often makes videos about large quantities of food and luxurious food at fantastic prices. With video content like that, it makes a characteristic that is different from other influencers who both create content with food. From the characteristics of her content, she gets a lot of endorsements from various food businesses. This also makes her audience consistently like her content because of the uniqueness of the videos presented on her TikTok account.

TikTok is a well-known social media platform; therefore, brands begin using it for business. The TikTok algorithm is then utilized to provide recommendations for videos based on the audience (Indrawati et al., 2022). Audiences who usually view videos frequently and it is more likely they see the same content on the platform if they enjoy the TikTok video (Indrawati et al., 2022). Thus, increasing the number of users on TikTok helps and makes it easier for businesses to find their target users. This is also supported by audience loyalty as online consumers who consistently like influencers' content.

Interesting examples of comments by audiences can be seen in the TikTok account @siscakohl, which shares their thoughts and something that cannot relate to people who are not as rich as the influencer. Viewers and followers write various comments, which have been translated into English as follows:

@muneleo: just buy one, I'm still thinking about it
@daisysun_04: why not "today I bought the factory"
@hendraoktavia: 1 caviar could build my kitchen
@jopnnnn: 2 cans of caviar, it's my allowance for a year sis
@madakatasa: no, we can't try it

The comments above show different points of view of TikTok audiences, yet mostly thinking about why to buy that much food, and it's better to buy the same type of food but at a more affordable price.

In this case, the relationship between the influencer who conveys the content and the audience who commented above shows the TikTok platform as a media reliance that influences its users.

4. Results

Findings of this study suggest that the media dependency of the TikTok platform falls into three categories: social system, media system, and personality system. First, the result of *"Social System: Celebritism as a media reliance on TikTok"* indicates that the availability of technology and the internet has led to the birth of a new definition of fame, in which a celebrity is a product of the media. The capacity to publish content that has a large audience has made it feasible for anyone to become famous. Indeed, people of all ages have hurried to create fascinating content for short-form videos. For instance, hashtags appeared that became popular topics on TikTok to find out how people use TikTok. The TikTok hashtags that users frequently use are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The most hashtag searches on TikTok

No.	Hashtag	Views
1.	#fyp	31548.6 B
2.	#viral	11535.2 B
3.	#trending	2731.4 B
4.	#trend	1481.8 B
6.	#challenge	252.7 B

By utilizing the mentioned hashtags, they might share a variety of fascinating contents which can immediately attract to TikTok users, such as popular brand products; bags, makeup, or skincare, and those who share content about online celebrities (celebgrams/celebrity endorser Instagram) who are famous for releasing content about their luxury lives, travel overseas, and other subjects. TikTok users, on the other hand, were sharing their lives on the internet through still videos, images, vlogging, and their strategies to market themselves to their online audience as a complete brand package through media dependency.

As a result, instead of being used for instructional or beneficial information, social media is being used to become famous as well as a celebrity. Second, the result of "*Media System: TikTok Videos Gain Popularity Through Viewer Engagement"* reveals that on sites like TikTok, where the definitions of these terms have changed, people's popularity and virality are now commonly judged by how well, especially teens, they post. To put it simply, instead of maintaining a single consistent personality or style, TikTok users and those aspiring to be internet celebrities actively and quickly adapt from the most popular viral trends and practices on TikTok to try different styles all over the world, including trending topics, hashtags, and filters.

However, influencers who use TikTok often employ hashtags like those listed above to attract a lot of TikTok users to their videos, making them popular, regarding @SiscaKohl and @AdelineMargareth, two well-known TikTok content creators. They publish a lot of videos demonstrating their wealth and consumption of goods purchased at incredibly high prices. Third, "Personality System: Online Consumer" shows that through TikTok, the audiences and the creators are online consumers. Audiences frequently view content offered by influencers. As a result, influencers continue to share the same content, building personal branding—a distinctive personal identity—that helps them build relationships with specific target markets. The TikTok algorithm, the number of views, and the number of followers enable influencers to take advantage of their resources and produce films often. These interactions encourage the appearance of their posted material and may increase the number of "likes," "forwards," and "shares."

5. Conclusion

Various social media applications frequently have an impact in the form of the most popular media reliance on the TikTok application. TikTok is currently popular among a wide range of people. It can be a medium for people competing to have personal branding through videos uploaded containing works, jokes, and even unique things that someone does. Some people became famous and as public figures through the TikTok application. That fame is coming from their branding through the TikTok application with an account that has thousands of followers and uploads that can be counted regularly every day. That thing caused someone to become the focus of the public in their uploads.

The study concludes that social media, particularly the TikTok application, has had a huge dependence impact on its users. In short, the TikTok application has a significant impact as a medium for personal branding on social media, as well as several effects that show the media's reliance on TikTok.

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The Role of Media Education in Training Personnel for Creative Industries

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Abstract

The research is aimed at describing and defining the prospects of media education in the formation of significant qualities of future specialists for the creative sector of the economy. The article presents the results of a study of the applied orientation of media education in the process of training personnel with secondary vocational education for creative industries. The formation of competitive media professionals is fraught with unique challenges and difficulties due to both the structure of media education and the global digital transformation of the economy.

The development of creative thinking among college students, the formation of an author's identity and the development of advanced technologies, supported by psychological adaptation, help to effectively solve complex problems that arise in the context of widespread digitalization of the labor market. It is important for everyone involved in the process of media education to understand that currently the most in demand are specialists with a creative approach, possessing a wide range of digital skills and erudition that allows them to form an up-to-date information picture of society. The article presents the economic characteristics of the Russian creative sector. New trends in the training of personnel with secondary vocational education for creative industries are outlined.

The study was carried out in accordance with the state task of the RANEPA for 2025 within the framework of research work "A study of the transformation of the training structure in the vocational education system in the context of meeting the human resources needs of regional economies".

Keywords: media education, creative industries, creative economy, secondary vocational education, competencies

1. Introduction

The creative economy is not just a fashion trend, but a fundamental change in the global economic model. It is an economy based on ideas, innovation and human genius. For Russia, the active development of creative industries is a strategically important task that can ensure not only economic growth, but also cultural development of the country.

John Hawkins, one of the pioneers of the concept of the creative economy, noted that: "We are moving from a world of lowering the rate of return based on scarcity of natural resources and material goods to a world of increasing the rate of profit based on the infinity of ideas and human genius" (Hawkins, 2011). This phrase accurately reflects the paradigm shift in the global

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economy. Gone are the days when wealth was determined primarily by access to natural resources. Today, creativity, embodied in creative products and services, is becoming the driving force of progress. This is not just a change of focus, but a fundamental change in the principles of economic development, the transition from the "commodity — money — commodity" model to a model where creativity is the primary source of wealth.

The roots of the creative economy lie in the concept of cultural industries, which originated after the Second World War. In the post-war period, there was an urgent need to balance countries' access to cultural resources, which became the impetus for the development of this concept as a political idea. In the early 1980s, UNESCO, taking on a global initiative, used the policy of cultural industries to counter the expansion of large entertainment corporations and, at the same time, to attract private investment in the cultural sector.

However, the concept of cultural industries, in its original form, did not fully reflect the dynamics of changes taking place in the economy. By the mid-90s of the 20th century, experts and business consultants had formed a broader and more flexible concept – creative industries. The key difference was the identification of creativity as the main resource for innovation" (Alade et al., 2020; Gehrau et al., 2016). Within the framework of this new concept, creativity has ceased to be just an element of cultural life, becoming a powerful economic factor.

Creative industries today are not just about art and entertainment. This is an extensive field of activity that includes design, architecture, advertising, film production, publishing, video games, fashion, music, theater, event management, and many other industries. All of them are united by one thing – the creative product is their foundation, and its commercialization is their goal.

The contribution of the creative industries to the global economy is enormous, "they provide more than 30 million jobs worldwide, and in Europe this figure is more than 8 million, accounting for almost 4 % of employment" (EdExpert, 2024). Russia is also actively developing this sector, albeit lagging behind developed countries.

However, for the successful development of the creative economy in Russia, it is necessary to overcome a number of obstacles. These include: lack of funding, a complex intellectual property registration system, an undeveloped infrastructure for supporting creative projects, as well as a lack of qualified specialists. including those with secondary vocational education who have the necessary skills and competencies in this field.

2. Materials and methods

The research is based on the use of a methodology of systemic and structural analysis, an evolutionary and institutional approach, and an analysis of the literature of stakeholders in the creative industries sector. An additional research method was the analysis of the requirements for the competencies of graduates of the secondary vocational education system for the creative sector of the economy of our country. Data from sociological surveys conducted at the Presidential Academy from 2022 to 2024 among final-year college students in various regions of the Russian Federation were used as an empirical base.

3. Discussion

Global competition in the innovation economy is inexorably increasing, and countries that recognize the potential of creative industries are actively investing in their development. As part of the International Year of the Creative Economy, UNCTAD conducted a survey in 33 countries around the world (United Nations, 2022). The main conclusion of which was the recognition of the increasing role of the creative economy and its impact on the social, political and economic development of the country. In all the countries surveyed, there are agencies responsible for promoting creative industries. However, there were no two countries with identical governance structures among the respondents, and there was a diversity in approaches to the institutional structure, which was reflected in the distribution of responsibility for the creative industries among several departments. The result was a complex management system with weak interaction and division of functions between ministries (culture, sports, tourism, education, etc.). This makes it very difficult to regulate the creative industries. The exceptions are a few countries where one ministry is responsible for the creative economy (e.g. Germany, Canada, UAE, Slovenia, Turkey, Central African Republic). Even in these cases, complete centralization of functions is rare in practice. Often, one department coordinates common strategic directions, while other ministries are engaged in the implementation of projects within their respective competencies. Since 2015,

there has been a significant increase in the number of national strategies, programmes and regulations aimed at supporting creative industries in developing countries. Most of the countries participating in the survey have developed their own national plans or strategies for the development of the creative economy, "there is no single definition of the creative economy used by all countries. This leads to disagreements in understanding the priorities and ways of support. For example, one country may focus on the development of digital art and video games, while another focuses on traditional crafts and folk crafts" (Anderson et al., 2020; Artemova et al., 2022; Bissonnette, 2014; Whitton, 2015). The difference in approaches is due to both the specifics of national culture and economy, as well as the different levels of digitalization and innovative development.

The global creative industry is currently experiencing rapid growth, becoming a powerful engine of the global economy. Statistics eloquently show this: over a 10-year period, starting in 2010, exports of creative goods and services increased by $105 million and $613 billion, respectively. First of all, it is the growth of exported software and services in the field of research and development. It can be said that digitalization plays a major role in the "demonetization" of creative products. Many products that previously existed in physical form (for example, music, books, design) are being converted into digital format, transforming into creative services such as streaming services, e-books, and online design courses. This is not just a change in form, but a change in the business model, leading to new monetization opportunities and market expansion. In addition, improved statistical accounting of creative services subcategories also contributed to the growth of indicators. More accurate and detailed information allows us to get a more complete picture of the situation and reflect the real scale of the creative economy (Florida, 2003; Higgs, Cunningham, 2008; Landry, 2011).

An interesting shift is observed in the geography of exports. Since 2011, developing countries have overtaken developed countries in the export of creative goods. This indicates the growing influence of new players on the world stage and the distribution of creative potential beyond traditional centers.

The creative economy is showing steady and impressive growth, and the geography of this growth is constantly changing. Digitalization and globalization play a key role in shaping the new landscape of the creative industry, presenting both new opportunities and new challenges for countries and companies. The main export category in the world is design, followed by new media, followed by decorative, applied and visual arts, publishing, audiovisual and performing arts (Figure 1).
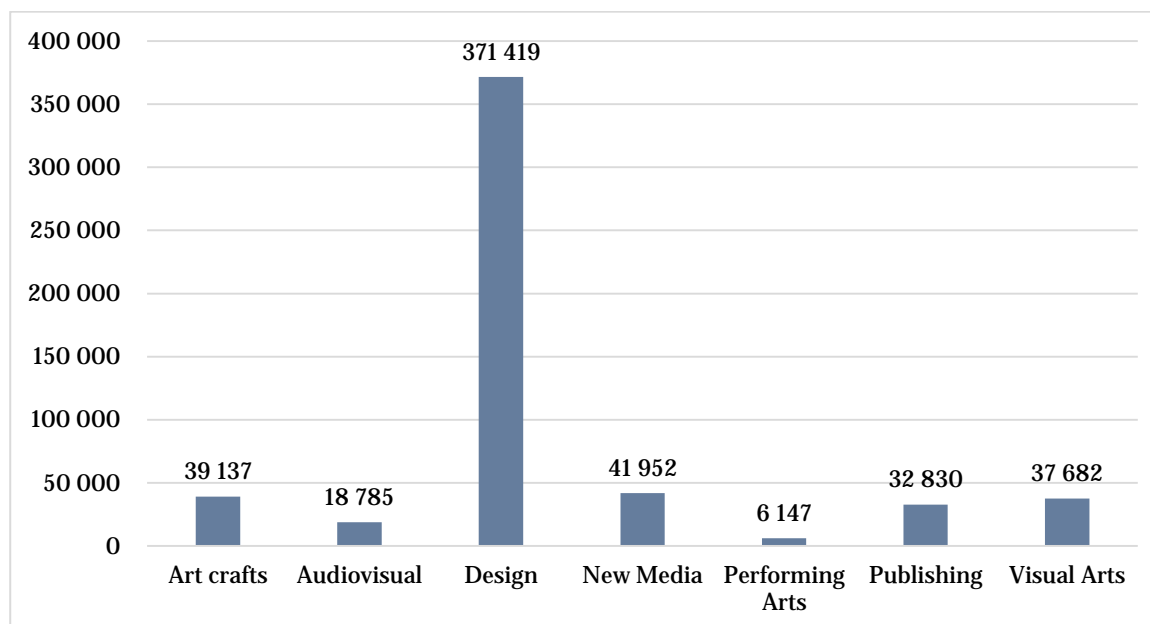

Fig. 1. Exports of creative products by product category, across all countries, billiondollars (2021)

At the same time, export concentration remains high: more than two thirds of the global creative goods market is concentrated in the hands of a small group of countries. The leaders in the export of creative goods are: China. China's dominant position is due to its huge domestic market

and the development of sectors such as video game production, animation, textile design and manufacturing. In second place is the United States, which remains a strong player due to its powerful cinema, music, design, and technology innovation sectors. Next are Italy, where the traditionally strong fashion, design and architecture sector continues to generate significant profits, and Germany, with a developed automotive industry, engineering design and the production of high-tech goods, contributing to high exports. Hong Kong plays the role of an important transit point and financial center for the creative industry in Asia.

Russia, despite its obvious potential, is still at the initial stage of forming a systemic strategy in this area. However, the dynamics of development and the challenges of the time dictate the need to rethink approaches to supporting the creative industry and training highly qualified specialists (Abankina et al., 2021; Boos et al., 2021; Fedorov et al., 2016; Fedorov et al., 2020; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2015; Imaeva et al., 2021; Juror, 2020; Juror, 2020; Lavrinenko, 2015). The economic indicators of the sector demonstrate heterogeneity. On the one hand, creative industries generate significant GDP and provide jobs, especially in large cities such as Moscow and St. Petersburg. On the other hand, there is no unified statistical system, which makes it difficult to accurately assess its contribution to the national economy. Many creative enterprises are micro and small enterprises, often operating in a "gray" zone, which makes it difficult to get an objective picture. The main problems hindering the development of the creative sector in Russia include:

– Lack of funding, as access to government grants for creative enterprises is limited. Many projects are forced to develop at their own expense or seek financing from private investors, which is not always effective.

– Undeveloped infrastructure. The lack of specialized incubators, coworking spaces, and clusters focused on creative industries hinders the development of startups and contributes to brain drain.

– Low legal protection of intellectual property. Piracy and imperfect legislation in the field of copyright limit the possibilities of monetization of a creative product.

– Shortage of qualified personnel. The lack of specialists with the necessary knowledge and skills is one of the main obstacles to the development of the creative sector.

Today, traditional professions are being replaced by hybrid specialties that require a deep understanding of both technology and the humanities. Secondary vocational education plays a key role in these conditions, acting as a forge of personnel for the rapidly developing digital economy. Media education is becoming particularly relevant, forming specialists who are able not only to use digital tools, but also to create high-quality content in converged media. Modern media is not just about television and radio. It is a complex symbiosis of online platforms, social networks, mobile applications and virtual reality. The requirements for professionals in this field have changed dramatically. Convergent media needs multimedia specialists who know not only the basics of journalism, but also the skills of video editing, web design, SMM promotion, 3D modeling and many others. They should be able to create engaging content, adapting it to different platforms and audiences, analyze data, use data-driven journalism tools, and understand the ethical aspects of working in a digital environment.

The issues of introducing media education into the educational process have been considered by many authors (Kislov et al., 2016; Ostrivnaya, Sokurenko, 2020; Zubko et al., 2023). As follows from the analysis of these works, most of them are devoted to the issues of media education in the higher education system, while the development of media companies in the vocational education system remains outside the interests of researchers. That is why the work of A. Fedorov and A. Levitskaya's article, presented in the monograph "Media education of students of pedagogical universities and faculties as a tool to resist media manipulative influences," is becoming particularly relevant. The modern world is saturated with information. We are constantly faced with a flood of news, advertisements, and political statements – and this information is not always objective and reliable. Media manipulation has become a reality, and the ability to recognize it is a key skill for everyone, especially for future teachers. Developing critical thinking and analytical skills is a key component of successful educational activities (Gálik, Gáliková Tolnaiová, 2022; Gáliková Tolnaiová, Gálik, 2022; Levitskaya, Fedorov, 2022).

This monograph, created with the support of the Russian Foundation for Basic Research, is not just a theoretical study, but a practical guide to action. The authors do not limit themselves to analyzing modern media manipulation and its methods – they offer specific tools to counteract it and develop media competence. The work is based on the results of a large-scale study that made it possible to

identify the most common methods of manipulating public opinion and identify effective ways to recognize them. The choice of the target audience – students of pedagogical universities and colleges – is not accidental. Future teachers are a key figure in the formation of critical thinking among the younger generation. They not only impart knowledge, but also form value orientations and foster a civic attitude. By teaching students to recognize and resist media manipulation, we are making a significant contribution to the formation of an information-literate society. The authors of the monograph consider students not only as future teachers, but also as potential media volunteers – active participants in the process of countering the spread of disinformation.

The monograph "Media education of students of pedagogical universities and faculties as a tool to resist media manipulative influences" offers a comprehensive approach to media education. It examines: types of media manipulation; methods of recognizing manipulation; development of critical thinking; formation of media literacy. By teaching future teachers critical thinking and media literacy, the foundation is being laid for more conscious and responsible behavior of citizens in the digital environment. This is an investment in the future, a guarantee that the next generation will be able to critically evaluate information and not become a victim of media manipulation.

Therefore, a logical question arises – how to train such specialists in colleges when the Federal State Educational Standard for Vocational Education and Public policy aimed at developing a digital society require the introduction of innovative approaches to media education.

4. Results

According to the 2023 data, "Russia ranks second in the world in terms of the number of employees employed in the creative economy and fifth in terms of the share of those employed in the creative sector of all those employed in the economy of the Russian Federation" (ACAR, 2023) (Figure 2).
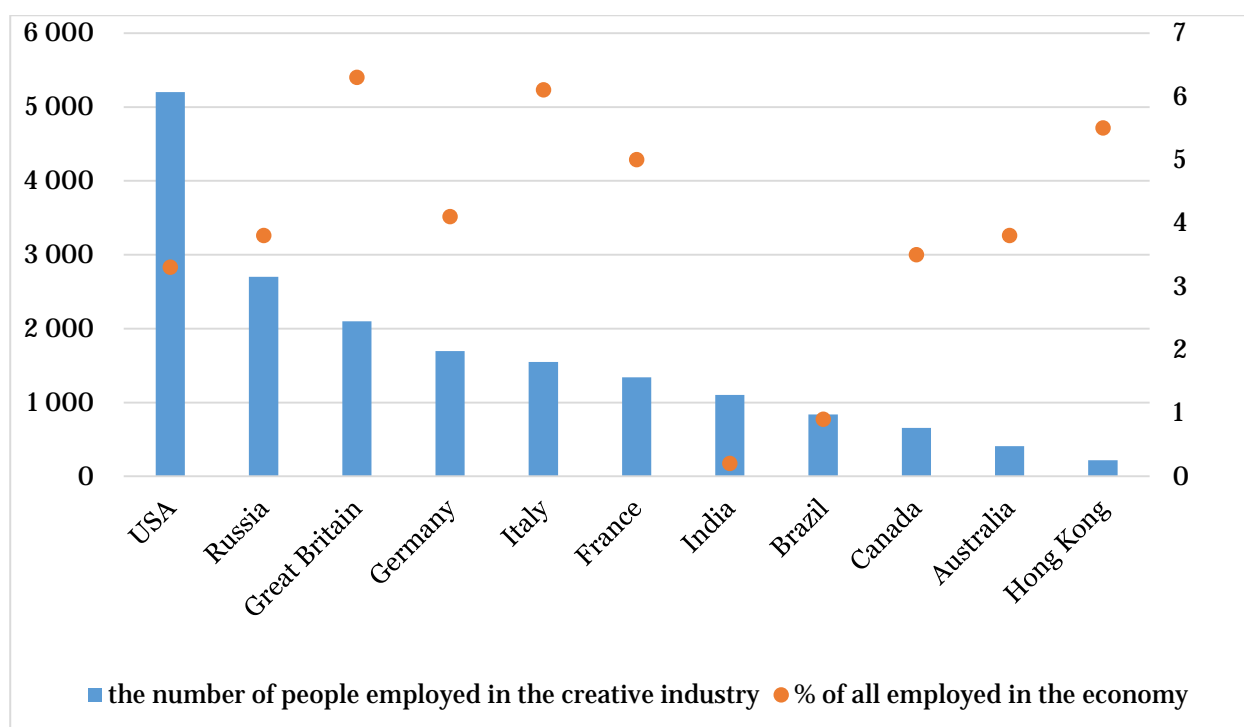
Fig. 2. Top countries in terms of the number of creative class workers, % of all employed, thousand people (2023)

In the Russian Federation, the National Agency for the Development of Qualifications (NARK), which includes Professional Qualifications Councils (SEC), is responsible for coordinating cooperation between the labor sector and educational institutions. Their role is to create professional standards. These standards, in turn, must comply with the requirements of the Federal State Educational Standards (FGOS) of Secondary Vocational and Higher Education. The problem is that there is no separate SEC for the creative industries. Several councils are

engaged in the development of professional standards for this area, for example, "SEC in the field of culture; SEC in the field of engineering, urban planning, architectural and construction design; SEC in the field of publishing, printing and distribution of printed products" (Sovety..., 2025). This reflects the fragmented and interdisciplinary nature of the creative industries.

This situation is not unique to Russia. The global heterogeneity of the labor market in the creative industries makes it difficult to create a unified system of requirements for specialists, which creates difficulties in building effective interaction between colleges and employers. Foreign studies on employers' expectations confirm this difficulty. As an example, the Creative Trident methodology provides a way to assess the scale of the labor market in the creative sector, classifying jobs into three groups: employees directly employed in the creative industries, creative specialists operating in other sectors of the economy, and employees of "supportive" professions (such as accountants, lawyers, administrators, and others), ensuring the operational activities of creative enterprises" (Higgs, Cunningham, 2008).

Speaking about the creative sector of the economy in Russia, it can be noted that the majority of employees have higher education – 70.2 %, the share of creative professions with secondary vocational education is 24.8 % and only 5 % have secondary general education (Kreativnyj..., 2024).

For a long time, it was believed that the way to this area lies exclusively through universities. However, the last six years have shown a noticeable shift: secondary vocational education is gaining momentum, becoming more and more in demand among young people seeking to realize themselves in design, media, advertising and other creative fields.

Currently, there are 4 groups of creative industries in the secondary vocational education system, which train middle-level specialists and skilled workers for the creative economy: "industries based on the use of historical and artistic heritage; industries based on art; modern media and digital content production and applied industries" (Klindukhov, 2024). According to the group of creative industries "Modern Media, digital content production and applied industries", the largest share in admission to training programs belongs to the programs 42.02.01 Advertising and 09.02.07 Information Systems and Programming (Figure 3).
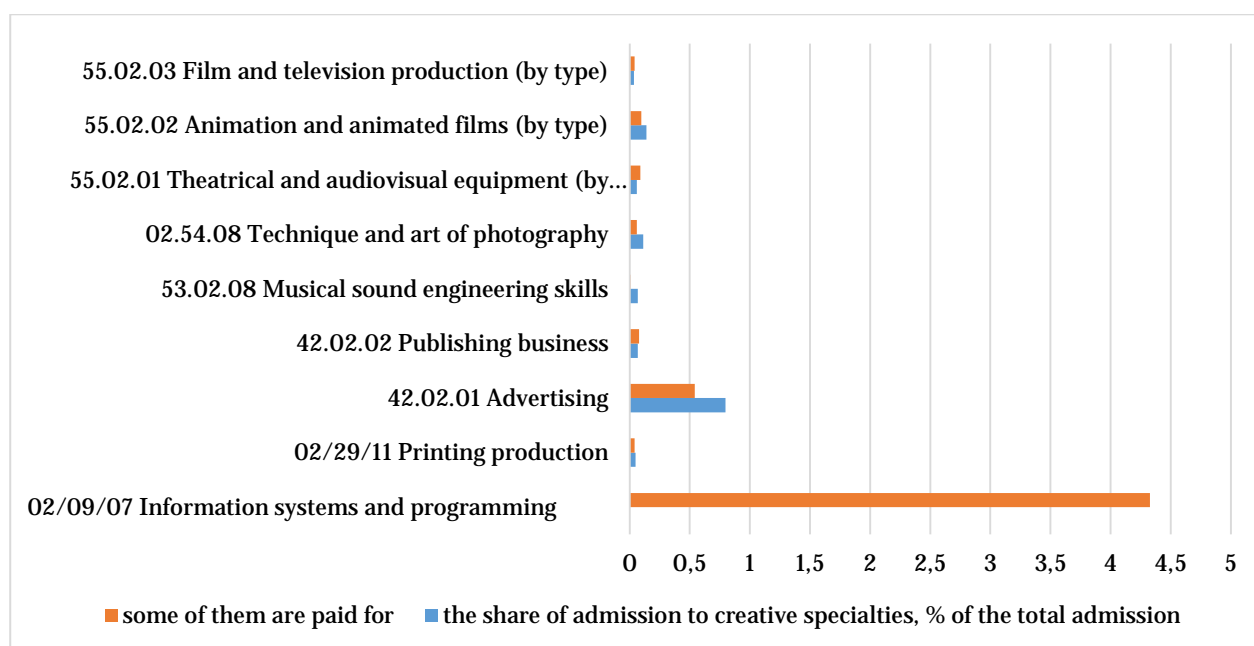
Fig. 3. The share of admission to training programs for creative industries in total college admissions, 2024/25 academic year

Let's look at how admission to mid-level and skilled workers has changed using the example of several training programs. Graduates of the 9th grades prefer the profession of a designer, but there is a growing interest in specialties in the field of advertising and animation production, as well as the profession of graphic designer is steadily growing (Figure 4).

In recent years, there has been a steady trend towards creative professions, and the design profession certainly occupies a leading position in this trend. The numbers speak for themselves:

the competition for admission to public colleges for the specialty "Designer" in the 2024/25 academic year after the 9th grade was 5.5 people per place for full-time education on a budgetary basis. This indicates high competition and a great interest of applicants in this profession. The comparison with non-government colleges is even more revealing. The competition on a paid basis in similar institutions amounted to only 1.3 people per place. The difference is impressive and clearly demonstrates how attractive the prospect of obtaining a sought-after specialty is for free (SPO-1, 2024).
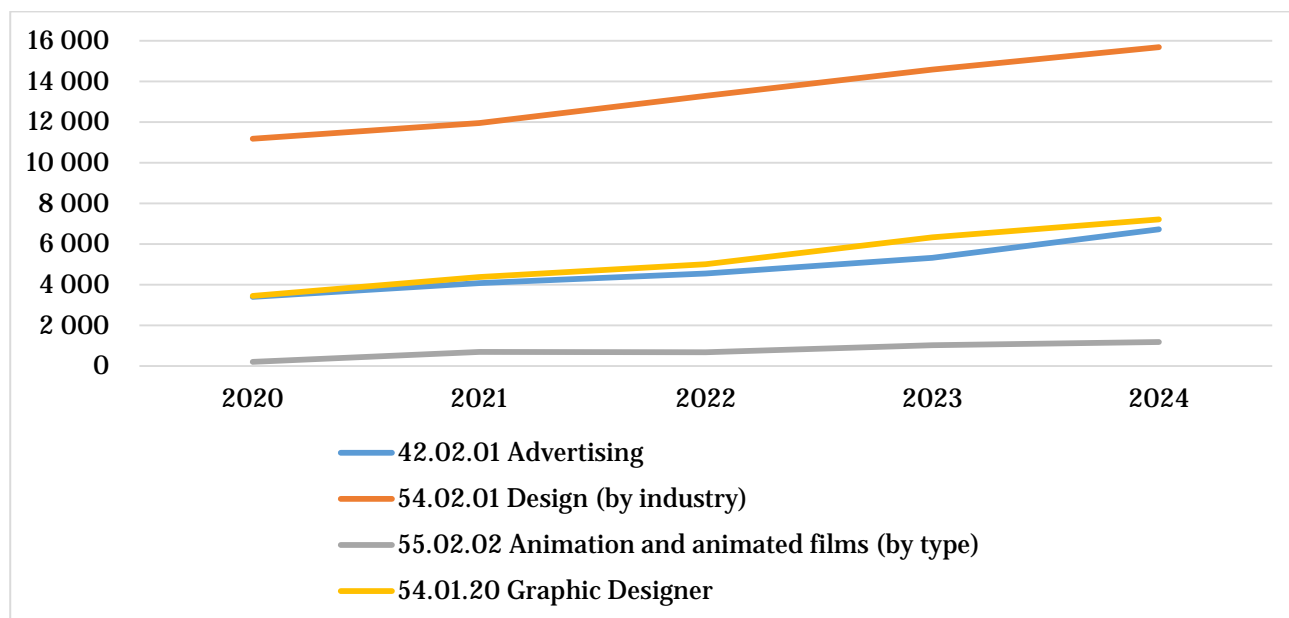
Fig. 4. The dynamics of admission to creative professions after the 9th grade in total, %

After 11th grade, the dynamics of admission to the reviewed programs is somewhat different. Over the past two years, young people have somewhat decreased their interest in becoming a designer, while their interest in advertising has grown (Figure 5).
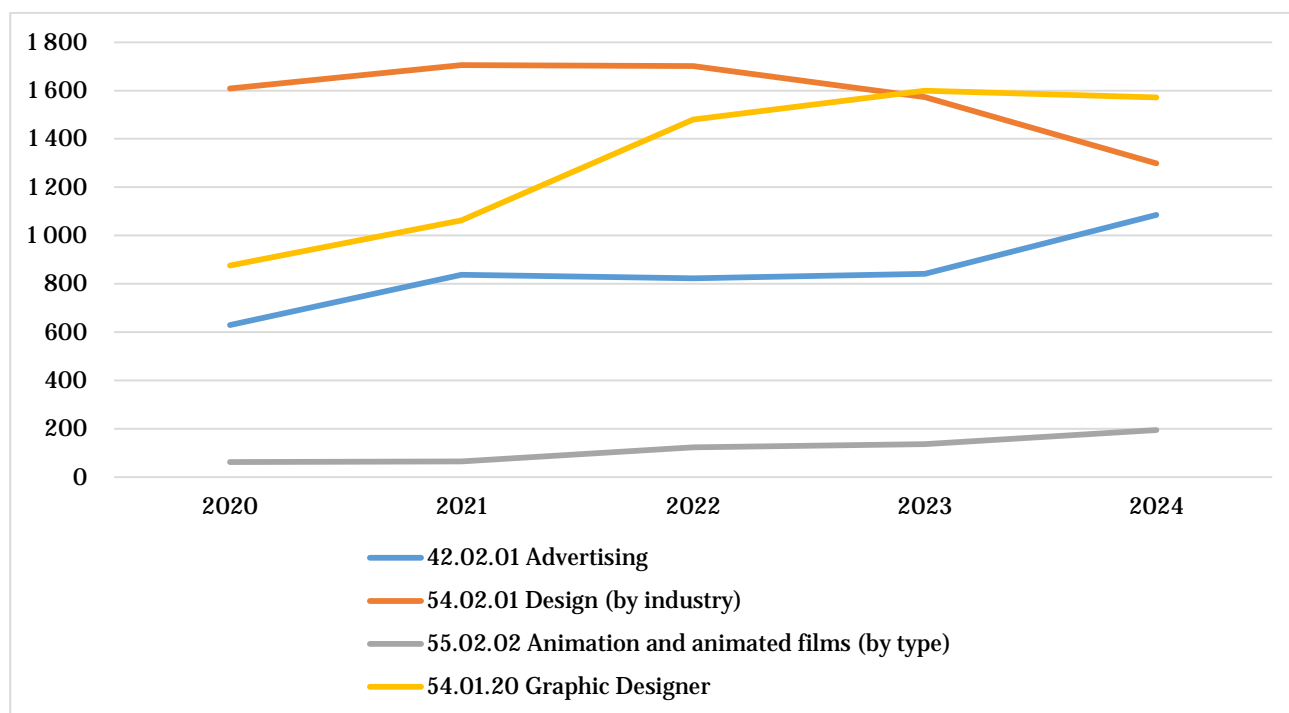
Fig. 5. The dynamics of admission to creative professions after the 11th grade in total, %

The demand of school graduates after receiving secondary general education in state professional educational organizations for full–time budget places is quite high – 8.5 people per place for advertising, 7.7 people per place for design, 4.2 people per place for animation production and 6.6 people per place for graphic designer. In private colleges, these training programs are not so popular, so for the specialty 42.02.01 Advertising, 54.02.01 Design (by industry) and the profession 54.01.20 Graphic Designer, the competition is only 1.5 people per place, slightly higher for the training program 55.02.02 Animation and animated films (by type) – 1.7 people per place. This can be explained primarily by the limited financial capabilities of families – with an increasing interest in obtaining a specialty in the creative field, not all families can afford to pay for education or move a child to another city or region in order to obtain a specific specialty. An analysis of admission by profession and specialty for the creative industries showed that for most programs, the share of paid admission is about 80 % for training programs in the field of advertising, and for most other specialties it exceeds the mark of 50 % (Figure 6).
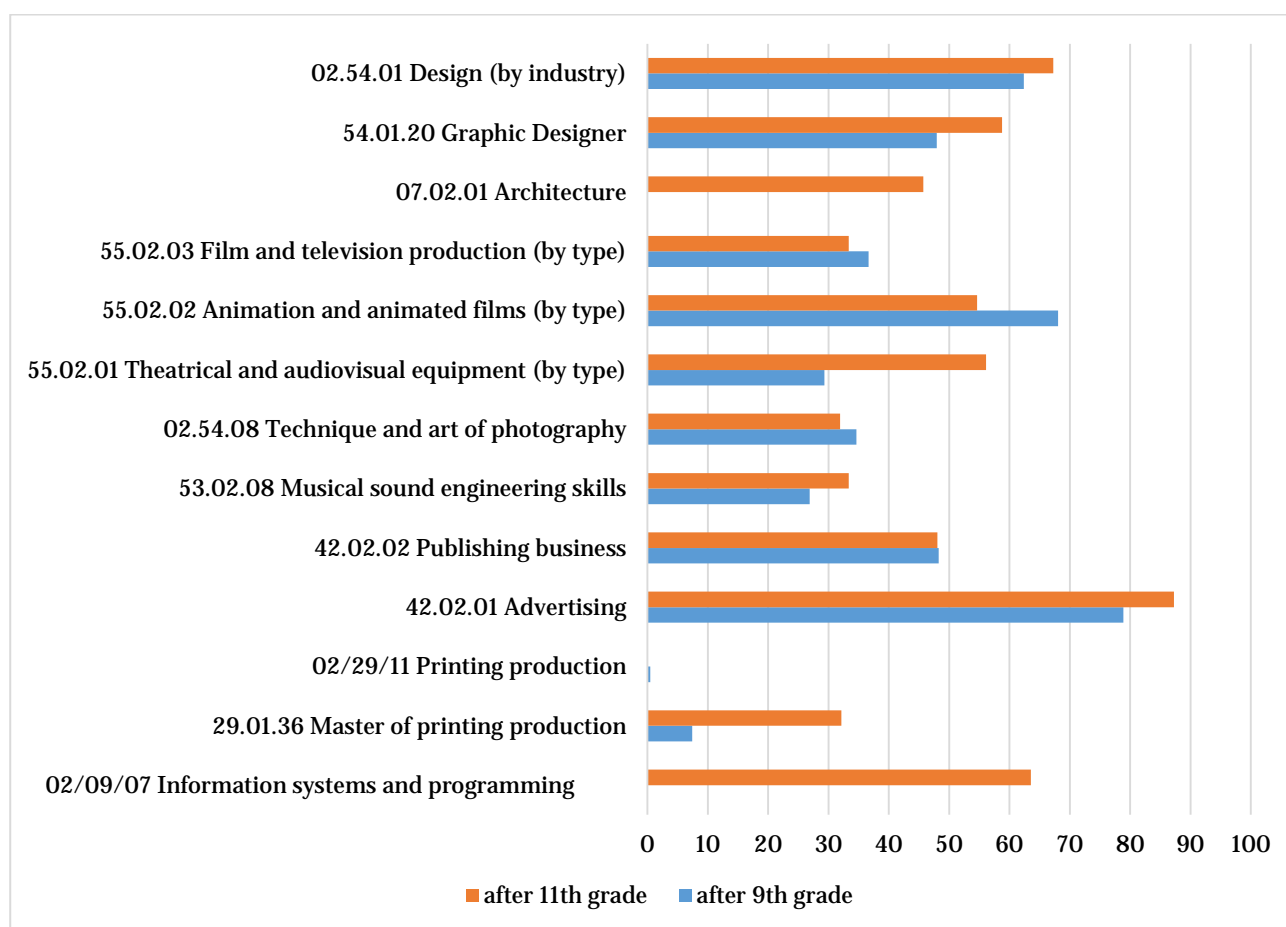
Fig. 6. The share of paid admission, 2024/25 academic year

According to RANEPA research, young people are increasingly choosing creative professions related to the creation and distribution of content. Which areas are most in demand and why? Three leaders of the creative industry:

1. Cinema, photo, video and audio products (64 %). The absolute leader of the ratings, this segment attracts tremendous interest. The high demand for high-quality visual and audio content is fueled by the rapid development of social networks, streaming platforms and online cinemas. Young people see this as a real opportunity for self-realization and earnings. Independent film studios, bloggers, videographers, photographers, sound engineers, and musicians gain unprecedented access to a huge audience by using social media, YouTube, Patreon, and other platforms to promote and monetize their work. Moreover, the growing popularity of podcasts, audio guides, and sound effects for video games is creating new niches and opportunities for professionals in the field of sound engineering and musical accompaniment.

2. Literature and board games (45 %). This segment is showing steady growth in popularity. E-books, audiobooks, and the boom in online board game stores are opening up broad prospects for authors, illustrators, game designers, and publishers. Digitalization greatly simplifies the process of publishing and interacting with an audience, bypassing traditional, often complex and costly distribution channels. Authors get the opportunity to sell their work directly, collect feedback, and form a loyal community. The proliferation of indie games and the growing interest in role-playing games are also contributing to the development of this field.

3. Video games (39 %). The development and promotion of video games is an intensively developing field that requires significant investments and high professional skills. Success in this area depends on the ability to create an exciting and high-quality gaming experience, as well as competently use digital marketing tools to attract an audience. However, high risks are justified by potentially high profitability. The growing number of mobile gamers and the development of esports are only increasing the popularity of this profession.

In addition to the top three, entertainment and holidays are of significant interest (31 %). Online events, virtual concerts and festivals are becoming the new norm, responding to the growing demand for virtual communication and entertainment. The organizers of such events must have not only creativity, but also the skills to work with online platforms. 24 % of the respondents chose performing arts. Online broadcasts of concerts, performances and performances make it possible to overcome geographical limitations and significantly expand the audience. This opens up new opportunities for musicians, actors, dancers and other creative personalities. 19% of students are interested in folk crafts. Online shops and workshops provide an opportunity to promote and sell traditional handmade products. This contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage and the creation of new sources of income for artisans. There is a growing interest in specialties capable of presenting complex scientific information in an accessible and fascinating way (18 % of respondents answered this way). Popular science content, educational videos, and interactive applications are becoming increasingly popular. In conclusion, we can say that creative professions are becoming more and more in demand. The younger generation strives for self-realization and the choice of a profession that allows them to creatively realize their abilities. Digitalization opens up incredible opportunities for them, but it also requires constant training and adaptation to rapidly changing market conditions.

However, the high proportion of paid admission is a deterrent that negatively affects the provision of the creative sector of our country with savings in mid-level specialists and the implementation of the "Concept of personnel training for creative industries in the vocational education system" (Klindukhov, 2024). The concept is a strategic document designed not only to adapt the open source system to the rapidly developing creative industries, but also to lay the foundation for their long–term prosperity in Russia. It sets itself five key tasks that are closely interrelated:

1. Promotion of Russian culture. The concept aims to promote Russian culture on a global level. This is achieved through the training of specialists capable of working with international markets and the use of modern technologies to distribute Russian cultural content.

2. Filling the market with domestic products. The concept is aimed at creating competitive domestic products in the creative industries. This means training specialists who are able to create products that are in demand on the market, from unique designs to innovative digital solutions. Support for startups and small businesses, graduates of colleges and technical schools, is becoming one of the key areas.

3. Development of creative potential. The concept is designed to reveal the talents of young people, creating conditions for their self-realization and development.

4. Training of competitive specialists with not only theoretical knowledge, but also practical skills necessary for successful work in the creative industries.

Thus, the relevance of this document is justified by the "request to train new generations of professionals capable of competently producing competitive products, technologies, solutions and services through the effective application of intellectual activity results in the field of traditional, creative and creative industries" (Klindukhov, 2024).

The Federal State Educational Standards (FGOS) for institutions of secondary vocational education in the creative field define the basic competencies of graduates. However, a diploma is just a starting point. The real labor market places much higher demands. The Federal State Educational Standard focuses on the formation of general and professional competencies, but a modern employer expects more. He needs a specialist who can:

1. Adapt quickly to new technologies. The creative industries market is incredibly dynamic. New tools and platforms are constantly appearing. Media education teaches you not only to use existing means of communication, but also to critically evaluate them and quickly learn new ones.

2. Present yourself and your work effectively. The ability to voice your ideas, create a convincing portfolio, and successfully complete interviews are key skills for any creative specialist. Media education provides tools for self-presentation in online and offline environments.

3. Work in a team and solve complex tasks under deadline conditions, since most projects in the creative industries are carried out in a team. Media education promotes the development of teamwork, communication skills and the ability to effectively manage time.

4. Think critically and analyze information: in the flow of information, it is important to be able to separate the wheat from the chaff. Media education develops critical thinking, the ability to analyze various sources of information and recognize manipulation.

5. Understand marketing mechanics and target audience. A creative product should not only be of high quality, but also in demand. Media education provides an understanding of the basics of marketing, helps to identify the target audience and develop an effective promotion strategy.

Media education in vocational education and training today goes beyond the simple development of educational standards. It is a multifaceted process that includes several important aspects:

– Development of information management skills. A modern creative industry specialist should be able not only to create content, but also to analyze huge amounts of information, critically evaluate sources, interpret data, and form their own informed opinion. Media education teaches these skills, helping future animators, programmers, and designers to work effectively with different types of data and choose optimal communication channels.

– Formation of skills in working with digital technologies. Creative industries are a field that is constantly developing technologically. Media education should prepare specialists to work with advanced media technologies, including virtual and augmented reality, 3D modeling, artificial intelligence, and other end-to-end digital technologies. It is necessary not only to learn how to work with specific software, but also to develop an understanding of how these technologies work and the ability to quickly adapt to the emergence of new tools.

– Creating conditions for proactive work and teamwork. The creative process is rarely complete without teamwork. Media education should stimulate initiative, develop project thinking skills, the ability to work in a team, effectively assign roles and resolve conflicts. The creation of creative editorial offices and the development of author's products as part of the educational process is an important element of training future specialists.

– Psychological readiness to work in conditions of uncertainty. "The creative industries market is dynamic and unpredictable. New trends, technologies, and content formats are constantly emerging. Media education should prepare specialists to work in conditions of uncertainty, develop stress tolerance, adaptability and the ability to respond quickly to changes" (Artemova et al., 2022). The participation of colleges in the development of creative industries is critical. The inclusion of open source in cluster construction models, as proposed by A. Demidov and I. Komarova (Demidov, Komarova, 2014), allows the creation of regional competence centers that unite educational institutions, creative economy enterprises and research organizations. This approach promotes close interaction between education and production, allowing the creation of training programs focused on the real needs of the labor market. Partnering with leading companies in the fields of animation, film, computer graphics, and game development allows students to access modern hardware, software, and practical experience necessary for a successful career in these fields.

The inclusion of media education in the educational process of vocational education can be carried out through various forms:

– practical classes on creating videos, infographics, websites and other digital products;
– project activities focused on solving the real problems of customers;
– master classes from creative industry professionals;
– learning the basics of marketing and SMM;
– case analysis of successful and unsuccessful campaigns;
– development and implementation of their own media projects.

The traditional system of secondary vocational education must undergo significant changes to meet the requirements of a dynamically developing market. New trends include:

– integration of digital technologies, training should be based on the use of modern digital tools and software necessary in specific creative specialties (for example, 3D modeling, visualization, video editing, game development);

– project-based approach: training should be focused on practical work on real projects, which allows students to gain the necessary experience and develop teamwork skills. Interaction with industrial partners is becoming an integral part of the educational process;

– interdisciplinarity. Creative industries require multidisciplinary professionals who are able to combine skills from different fields. Therefore, it is important to develop interdisciplinary programs that combine elements of design, technology, marketing and management;

– focus on soft skills. In addition to technical skills, it is important to develop "soft" supra-professional skills such as creative thinking, communication, teamwork, and the ability to adapt to changes;

– online education and blended learning. The use of online platforms and hybrid learning formats makes it possible to expand access to education and increase its effectiveness.

One of the promising solutions is the creation of media centers based on secondary vocational educational institutions, which can become a powerful tool for the development of both cognitive and socio-behavioral competencies of students. In March 2022, we conducted a study on the impact of the media center on the development of general competencies of college students. The study involved 2,321 students of 1-4 courses at the K.D. Ushinsky Institute of Special and Inclusive Education at Moscow State Pedagogical University.

The purpose of the study was to determine the willingness of young people to participate in the creation of media content and to assess the potential of the media center as a tool for developing the general competencies necessary for successful work in modern conditions, including in the "professions of the future". The methodological basis of the research was based on a set of methods: classification and generalization of the data obtained, an interdisciplinary review of the literature on the development of general competencies and the role of media education, the method of sociological survey (questionnaire) and the method of expert assessments.

The questionnaire developed for the survey covered various aspects: students' proficiency in working with media technologies, their interest in creating media content, assessment of the importance of various general competencies for their future careers, as well as ideas about the possibilities of the media center in the development of these competencies. The results of the study showed an ambiguous picture. A significant part of the students demonstrated a high interest in participating in the activities of the media center and realized the importance of developing general competencies for successful professional implementation.

However, the level of proficiency in some necessary skills, such as video editing, graphic design, or creating text content, turned out to be quite low. This indicates the need for targeted training and education of students within the framework of the media center. The analysis of expert assessments made it possible to identify the most effective forms of work of the media center, contributing to the development of general competencies. For example, project activities, participation in the creation of real media products for the college and external customers, as well as the organization of master classes and workshops with the involvement of experienced specialists. Thus, the results of the study confirm the high potential of vocational education media centers in developing the general competencies of students necessary for successful adaptation to the labor market.

Thus, media education is not just an addition to the Federal State Educational Standard, but a necessary tool that prepares graduates of vocational schools in the creative field for successful work in today's dynamic labor market. The integration of media education elements will allow graduates not only to possess professional skills, but also to possess interdisciplinary competencies necessary for building a successful career.

5. Conclusion

Due to the entry into force on February 5, 2025 of the Federal Law "On the Development of Creative Industries" and amendments to the regulation "On the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation", the Ministry became the authorized FOI responsible for developing state policy and regulatory regulation in the field of the creative economy. With the

adoption of the "Strategy of State Cultural Policy for the period up to 2030" (Decree, 2016) and the publication of the draft order of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation "On approval of the list of economic activities in the field of creative industries based on the All-Russian Classifier of Economic Activities" (Prikaz..., 2025), it became necessary to revise towards strengthening and redesigning the entire system of activities educational structures, starting with preschool and additional education for children, through general secondary education (music, ballet, choreography, and others), secondary professional, higher, additional professional, and other postgraduate education, including in the format of postgraduate and doctoral studies, up to the institutes of the "third age".

Today, it should be assumed that creative industries should combine cultural practices and business skills necessary to facilitate the implementation of all 15 types of economic activities in the field of creative industries, but also those bordering on them, as part of the implementation of the entire range of educational activities with the decoding of the OKVED code for 51 positions and as much as possible in the context of the integrated development of creative clusters in the context of digital transformation, the knowledge economy and the new cultural policy. A separate issue is the creation of a modern, qualitatively new educational model of the cultural management system in the creative sphere with in-depth knowledge of economics, legal and environmental aspects, which is really necessary for the development of almost all branches of creative industries, but primarily for the tourism vector, on the one hand, as a very economically capacious and promising, and on the other – penetrating to the level of local government closest to the ground. This raises the question of the expediency, if not unification, then strengthening the coordination of educational activities in the fields of tourism and culture in the format of interdepartmental and intersectoral cooperation.

The topic of the integrated development of the cultural education segment in the creative industries system can and should develop logically with the development of socio-cultural design within the framework of strengthening the development of informal and informative media education as a universal model of cooperation between budget structures of cultural education with specialized business and civil society institutions. A striking example of such cooperation, implemented at the IPCC site since 2022, is the Animation in Your Smartphone project (localized in the ASI SMART LIBRARY) (Animation..., 2025), focused on the development of such an up-to-date and internationally recognized area of creative industries as animation, but in logical connection with the library vector.

This ensures, on the one hand, its sustainable development, but also the network development and promotion of project activities almost to the level of villages, villages and villages, and even to a specific family., This is very important both from the point of view of developing the earliest possible career guidance for future Russians, and reducing the intergenerational gap, when a child, starting from preschool age, learns to create animation and multimedia creative entities with the participation of parents, grandparents, kindergarten teachers, art school teachers and librarians of the children's library, activists of a specialized NGO and animation studio. using digital technologies and the educational and methodical complex "Animation in your smartphone".

One of the results of the implementation of the "Animation in your Smartphone" model was the 2nd Yalta-Yakutsk project (2 Yalta..., 2025), implemented in the northernmost and southernmost territories of Russia. Already today, the server space of the Yakut National Library hosts more than 40 cartoons created as part of the 2nd project. The development of Russia's creative economy requires an integrated approach, including both government support and reform of the personnel training system.

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**Media Education
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Media Studies with University Students Based on Soviet and Russian Drama Films about Family and Family Education

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Abstract

The study is devoted to media education of university students based on Soviet and Russian drama films about family and family education. The theme of family drama is prominent in Russian cinematography, reflecting our country's deep cultural, historical, and social complexities. This theme is often explored through the lenses of generational conflict, personal versus societal expectations, emotional repression, and the tension between tradition and change. Media education based on critical analysis of Russian family drama films is rather productive as they often explore universal themes, so for students such films provide a foundation for analysing how storytelling conveys human psychology and social transformations. The article contains a list of classroom activities which may help students develop skills in critical analysis, aesthetic interpretation, and cultural contextualization. These activities focus on key media education concepts: media language, media technology, media audience, media category, media representation and media agency. Students should also be involved in creative media production after completing analytical and critical activities. The portrayal of family in Soviet and Russian cinema serves as a mirror to the nation's evolving identity and values. By examining drama films about family, students gain a deep psychological insight into how family, as a fundamental social unit, has been constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed in the sociocultural context.

Keywords: family, family education, media text, media education, drama film, genre, Russia, drama.

1. Introduction

The theme of family drama is a central and enduring element in Russian cinematography, reflecting the nation's complex social history, philosophical depth, and emotional intensity. Across both Soviet and post-Soviet periods, family dramas have served as a cinematic microcosm of broader cultural, political, and moral tensions. Through evolving styles – from socialist realism to modernist minimalism – Russian directors have used the family to explore what it means to live, love, and suffer in a society constantly in transition. It is not surprising since Russian cinema's dominance of drama is the result of a unique interplay between historical heritage and cultural traditions. Russian film production has always been influenced by Russia's literary tradition – L. Tolstoy, F. Dostoevsky, A. Chekhov – which is deeply rooted in psychological depth, moral conflict, and tragedy. This influence carries over into cinema, where filmmakers often aim to explore profound existential themes. Moreover, Russian culture values introspection and

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seriousness in art. That is why drama is seen as a more serious genre capable of exploring deep human truths.

Thus, analysing family drama films hones students' abilities to compare literary and cinematic narratives (e.g., A. Chekhov adaptations), interpret symbolism and subtext, often abundant in intimate Russian narratives, draw connections to psychology, sociology, gender studies, and history. Family dramas offer a lens into social values and historical change, so the cultural and historical contexts can enable rich discussions around ideology, generational identity, feminism, patriarchy, and social policy in class.

In our opinion, media education based on critical insight into Russian family drama films is rather productive as family dramas often explore universal themes – love, conflict, generation gap, identity, sacrifice – which resonate across cultures and time periods, so for students these themes offer accessible emotional entry points into complex narratives. They provide a foundation for analysing how storytelling conveys human psychology and social transformations.

2. Materials and methods

The material of our research is audiovisual media texts on the topic of family and family education of the drama genre. The main method is a comparative-hermeneutic analysis of Soviet and Russian drama films (1920–2020) devoted to family issues. We also referred to C. Bazalgette's key media concepts theory (Bazalgette, 2009) when analysing practical media literacy activities for university students. In addition, the following research methods were used: analysis and synthesis of articles and monographs on the topic of the study, generalization and classification.

3. Discussion

In our study, we analysed some scientific findings (Allen, 1999; Antunes, 2017; Basaslan, 2022; Bitney, 2022; Brown, 2013; Callister et al., 2007; Chopra-Gant, 2006; Douglas, Olson, 1995; Edmondson, King, 2016; Fulmer, 2017; Garlen, Sandlin, 2017; Garrison, 2022; Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2013; Levy, 1991; Lloyd, 2014; Norton, 2021; Tanner et al., 2003; Zurcher et al., 2018, 2020) devoted to family and family education in the mirror of Soviet and Russian dramas.

The analysis of the Russian family image in mass media was carried out by V. Mishchenko: "In the crisis of family values, the most important tool for building an effective institution aimed at solving demographic problems is the technology of forming and providing information support for a positive image of the Russian family" (Mishchenko, 2013: 79).

V. Tyulyunova analysed some film images of young families in contemporary Russian drama films and identified a number of social problems such as deviant motherhood and fatherhood, problems of orphanhood, problems of single-parent families (Tyulyunova, 2020). She also concludes that modern present-day Russian film family is often shown in a negative or dramatic way.

Media representations of acute and urgent social problems reflected in Russian social dramas were researched by G. Mikhaleva in the context of developing university students' civic culture on the material of Russian social drama films: "difficult" teenagers and teenage cruelty, problems of growing up and relationships of teenagers; homelessness, child orphanhood and problems of children in orphanages; problems of dysfunctional or single-parent families; the generation gap; support and care for the elderly and disabled; homeless and socially vulnerable categories of citizens, risk groups; drug addiction, alcoholism and other socially dangerous phenomena; socialization of people with disabilities (Mikhaleva, 2021: 184).

Media education opportunities of feature films about family and family education were described by I. Chelysheva: "Feature films have a rich educational potential that must be used and implemented in work with the younger generation and the parent community. Therefore, among the urgent tasks at the present stage is the use of the best traditions of media education and the introduction of innovative methods and forms of work with feature films to form family values of the younger generation" (Chelysheva, 2024: 59).

The importance of fostering media competence is also emphasized by I. Kairova: "The new image of the family, broadcast through the media, becomes a transformation factor of conventional values inherent in the patriarchal type of family, reducing the importance of the reproduction function, transforming the form of the family; children and adolescents, whose value ideas undergo strong changes under the influence of the media, become suggestible. A way out of this situation may be media literacy, which is a necessary condition for a communicative culture of society" (Kairova, 1093).

Practical basis for film analysis was laid by some Russian scholars such as Ju. Usov (Usov, 1995), S. Penzin (Penzin, 2005), A. Fedorov (Fedorov, 2007; Fedorov et al., 2018; Fedorov et al., 2019), and G. Polichko (Polichko, 2006).

4. Results

Here are some engaging and academically appliable media studies activities for analysing family drama films, suitable for university-level film or media studies courses. These activities help students develop skills in critical analysis, aesthetic interpretation, and cultural contextualization.

1) *Scene Dissection*. Media concepts: media language and media technology.

Objective: Teach students to analyse mise-en-scène, performance, and narrative tension in a single scene.

Instructions: Choose a pivotal family drama scene (e.g., dinner table confrontation, a farewell, a family secret revealed).

Students are supposed to analyse camera angles and movement, use of space and blocking, sound (diegetic/non-diegetic), lighting and colour, symbolism. Group presentations with freeze-frames and analysis slides are also possible.

2) *Character Psychology Profile*. Media concepts: media language and media representation.

Objective: Deepen students' understanding of character motivation and narrative structure.

Instructions: Assign students to create psychological profiles of key family members in a drama film. Use tools like: backstory construction, A. Maslow's hierarchy of needs, conflict mapping (internal versus external).

3) *Film versus Literature Comparison*. Media concepts: language representation and media technology.

Objective: Explore a screen adaptation and intertextuality.

Instructions: Use a feature film adapted from a literary source (e.g., *The Cherry Orchard, Anna Karenina*). Students are supposed to analyse the following aspects:

– What are the key similarities and differences between the book and the film? Which scenes, characters, or themes were changed or omitted? Why do you think the filmmakers made these choices? Are any parts of the story rearranged, shortened, or modernised?

– How does the film director interpret the original text's themes, tone, or characters? Is the adaptation traditional (faithful) or radical (modernised or reimagined)?

– How do the actors' performances align with your reading of the characters in the original text?

– Are any characters portrayed differently in the film than in the book (e.g., more sympathetic, more dramatic)? What might these choices say about the director's perspective or the intended audience?

– Are there particular stylistic choices (e.g. cinematography, colour, music) that highlight or alter certain themes?

– Has the setting (time or place) been changed in the film? How do these changes affect the story's impact, themes, or message? What does the film gain or lose by being set in a different context?

– Does the film reference other texts (literary, historical, cinematic)? Are there any visual or verbal allusions to other works of art, culture, or politics? How do these references add meaning or change the way we interpret the story?

– Are the core themes (e.g., love, loss, class, identity) consistent between the film and the text?

– Are any themes emphasized more or less in the film? Why might that be?

– Who was the original text written for, and how does that differ from the film's audience?

– Do you think the film successfully captures the essence of the original text? What does the film offer that the text cannot, and vice versa?

– Would someone unfamiliar with the original understand and appreciate the story fully from the film alone?

– What is lost/gained through visual storytelling? How does the medium influence the emotional tone?

4) *Thematic Roundtable: The Family as Microcosm*. Media concepts: media representation and media language.

Objective: Encourage philosophical and sociological thinking.

Instructions: Students choose a theme from a family drama film (e.g., duty, betrayal, sacrifice, generational trauma). In roundtable or seminar form, they analyse the following aspects:

– How does the film present the family theme?

– How is the theme introduced and developed across the storyline? Does the theme evolve or shift throughout the film? Which characters are most affected by or connected to this theme?

– How do family relationships (e.g., parent-child, siblings, spouses) reflect or complicate this theme?

– Are there characters who challenge or resist the theme?

– How is it reflected in cinematography, dialogue, or conflict?

– What conflicts arise in relation to the theme (e.g., internal versus external)? How are these conflicts resolved – or left unresolved – by the end of the film?

– Are there symbolic objects, settings, or recurring images that reflect this theme? How do visual or cinematic techniques (lighting, camera angles, music, colour) reinforce the theme?

– Are there specific scenes where the visuals speak more loudly than the dialogue?

– What message or emotional impact does this resolution convey?

– What is its cultural relevance in the Soviet, post-Soviet, or global contexts? Does the film reflect a particular time, place, or cultural background that shapes how the theme is portrayed?

– How might different audiences interpret the theme differently?

– Have you encountered this theme in other family dramas or literary works? How is it treated: similarly, or differently? Do you relate to this theme personally or see it reflected in real-life situations?

5) *Timeline of Family Representation in Russian Cinematography.*

Media concepts: media language, media representation and media agency.

Objective: Track how family has been depicted over time in different historical periods in Russian drama films.

Instructions: Students are to research and create a visual timeline (digital or physical) showing key feature films about family and family education, shifts in dominant tone or theme (e.g., from idealism to realism), external influences or factors (e.g., war, economic crisis, political regime change, etc.). Students present the results of their research in classroom.

6) *Genre Hybrid Analysis.* Media concepts: media category and media language.

Objective: Challenge genre assumptions.

Instructions: Choose a family drama that incorporates elements of thriller, horror, comedy, or romance (e.g., *Loveless* as a social thriller). Ask your students to analyse the following aspects:

– How does genre influence the emotional tone of the film?

– How are family issues heightened or subverted by other genres?

– What secondary genre (thriller, horror, comedy, romance) is combined with the family drama? How clearly is this genre visible in the narrative, tone, or visual style? Does the combination feel balanced, or does one genre dominate?

– How does the cross-genre approach deepen the emotional or social themes of the family drama?

– What family issues (e.g., divorce, grief, betrayal, infidelity, trauma, parenting) are addressed, and how are they amplified by the added genre? Are these themes explored in a more subtle or heightened way because of the genre elements?

– How does the added genre affect the tone (e.g., tension from thriller, absurdity from comedy, dread from horror)? Are there tonal shifts throughout the film? How do these impact the viewing experience?

– How are family relationships shaped or distorted by the genre elements? Are there any moments where characters act in unexpected or exaggerated ways due to genre conventions? Do genre elements (like fear, suspense, romance, humour) bring out hidden aspects of the characters?

– What visual or sound elements reflect the genre blend (e.g., eerie lighting for horror, fast pacing for thriller, bright colours for comedy)? Are there specific scenes that showcase genre conventions – such as chase sequences, awkward family dinners, romantic tension, or moments of terror?

– How might the mixed genre affect the way audiences respond emotionally to the story? Does it create discomfort, surprise, empathy, or detachment? Are expectations subverted or fulfilled?

– Does the blending of genres help the film comment on broader social, political, or cultural issues (e.g., class, gender roles, parenting, state institutions)?

– How does the genre-blending version feel different in tone, structure, or message compared to a more traditional family drama?

7) *Analysis of a Film Poster*. Media concepts: media category, technology, representation.

Objective: Develop students' critical skills.

Instructions: Students are asked to analyse a poster of a family drama film they are not likely to have seen. It should be a whole-group discussion. Ask your students to analyse the following aspects:

– What is the title of the film? What does it suggest about the story or genre?

– Is there a tagline (a short phrase or sentence)? What does it tell us about the tone or message of the film?

– Who or what is shown in the poster? What can you infer about the main characters or relationships based on their expressions, poses, or placement?

– What colours are used most? Do the colours create a particular mood (e.g. bright and fun, dark and mysterious)? Is the lighting warm, cool, dramatic, etc.?

– Where does the action seem to take place? What clues are in the background?

– What do you notice about the style of the text (title, tagline, credits)?

– Who do you think the film is aimed at (e.g. young children, whole family, teens)?

– What genre do you think the film belongs to (comedy, drama, melodrama, adventure, children's film, etc.)?

– What techniques are used to make the poster eye-catching?

8) *A Movie Poster/Film Poster Redesign.* Media concepts: media technology and media representation.

Objective: Encourage students' creative production tied to analytical insight.

Instructions: Students are to create a film poster of a famous Russian drama film about family or design a new poster that visually represents a deeper or overlooked theme in the film. Include symbolism, colour theory, and layout design choices.

Reflection: Students prepare a short paper linking their creative choices and preferences to the presented film.

9) *Director's Intent Essay.* Media concepts: media language, and media representation.

Objective: Encourage students' creative production based on critical analysis.

Instructions: Students are supposed to write a short essay or presentation exploring what the filmmaker might be saying about family, society, or generational conflict. They should also take into account the social or cultural setting of the story and how it influences family roles, values, or conflicts.

10) *Microfilm Project: Family in 3 Minutes.* Media concepts: media technology and media representation.

Objective: Encourage students' creative production tied to analytical insight.

Instructions: Students are supposed to write, direct, and shoot a 3-minute short film centered on a family conflict or theme. They must apply the techniques observed in class: framing, natural lighting, tension-building.

Reflection: Students prepare a short paper linking their creative choices to the films studied.

This list of creative and critical activities for studying a family drama film provide for a balance of analytical depth with imaginative expression, helping students engage with the film's narrative, characters, themes, and cinematic techniques.

5. Conclusion

The portrayal of family in Soviet and Russian cinema serves as a mirror to the nation's evolving identity and values. From the idealized, state-sanctioned family models of the Soviet era to the multifaceted and often troubled families depicted in post-Soviet films, these cinematic narratives offer a window into the complexities of familial relationships and their role in shaping and reflecting societal norms. By examining these feature films, students gain a deep psychological insight into how family, as a fundamental social unit, has been constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed in the cultural context, providing a rich tapestry of stories that continue to resonate with audiences today.

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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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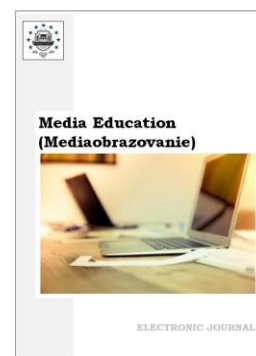
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Users' Educational Engagement in Social Media Clipper Cycle Content

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Abstract

The rise of clipper content – short video segments extracted from longer sources and redistributed on social media – while transforming digital expression and user engagement, demonstrates an educational effect as well. However, despite its popularity, research on how users interact with such content remains limited. This study investigates user sentiment and engagement patterns toward clipper content using a multimodal approach that combines visual analysis (videos and design features) with textual analysis (comments, captions, and hashtags). Leveraging multimodal AI tools, such as CLIP (Contrastive Language-Image Pretraining) and natural language processing (NLP), we investigate how semantic mismatches between visual content and user responses impact emotional reactions and interaction levels. The study introduces a conceptual model of the clipper content cycle – from production and distribution to user feedback– to map its viral pathways within platform-driven ecosystems. Our findings reveal that semantic dissonance often leads to polarized sentiment and influences engagement behavior as a part of educational process. Thus, in addition to improving theoretical knowledge of multimodal digital communication, these discoveries have applications in media literacy instruction, content regulation, and strategic digital marketing. The research emphasizes the importance of analyzing content beyond surface metrics, offering a framework to better understand how fragmented media influences user perception and interaction in algorithmic environments.

Keywords: Media skills, Contrastive Language-Image Pretraining (CLIP), natural language processing (NLP), users' educational engagement, multimodal approach.

1. Introduction

In recent years, social media has significantly transformed how content is consumed and produced (Bur et al., 2023; Muqsith et al., 2024). One of the most prominent manifestations of this change is the phenomenon of clipped content – short-form content excerpted from original, long-form material and redistributed through platforms like TikTok, YouTube Shorts, etc. This content typically includes informative, entertaining, or controversial excerpts from podcasts, live broadcasts, films, or series, repackaged to suit digital users' algorithmic expectations and attention spans (Zulli, 2020). This phenomenon reflects new dynamics in content consumption patterns, which are becoming a part of the holistic media education process. It raises questions about how these fragmented forms of digital expression impact audience experiences and the structure of social interactions in online spaces as well (Muzzamil et al., 2024).

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Understanding this dynamic is crucial because clipped content has the advantage of generating high engagement in a short time, making it a highly effective tool for content creators, buzzers, and influencers to reach a wide audience (Huynh et al., 2022). Various studies have shown that short-form content can increase engagement because it aligns with fast consumption habits (snackable content), which are becoming media educational skills in an era of information overload (Abidin, 2020; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2015; Lee, Abidin, 2023). However, most existing research is still limited to quantitative aspects such as the number of views or likes. These studies have not yet explored the dynamics of multimodal user interactions, which include a combination of visual (design elements, facial expressions) and textual (comments, captions, hashtags) responses. However, widely shared videos frequently contain a variety of interpretations, ambiguities, or even false information that cannot be fully captured by a text-based analysis method (Kaye et al., 2020).

Consequently, a multimodal approach in digital media studies is essential for understanding the complexity of communication that involves more than one channel of meaning. Models such as CLIP (Contrastive Language-Image Pretraining) have demonstrated the ability to simultaneously connect visual and linguistic representations, allowing them to analyze semantic inconsistencies between the visual content of clips and users' textual responses (Radford et al., 2021). This is particularly relevant, considering that many clips go viral precisely because they are "extracted" from their original context and reinterpreted by audiences, often eliciting reactions that are inconsistent with their original meaning. Therefore, integrating visual and textual analysis enriches understanding of the content itself and opens the possibility of measuring sentiment more precisely.

Therefore, it is essential to analyze the content itself and its impact on media educational skills, the social interactions it elicits, and the strategic motives behind its dissemination. A multimodal framework provides a tool to understand this phenomenon more comprehensively than traditional methods. Building on this foundation, this article aims to systematically investigate how clipper content fosters user interactions and influences sentiment on social media.

This study investigates the effect of semantic mismatches between clip content and comments on user engagement and sentiment, employing a multimodal approach that integrates visual and textual analysis with artificial intelligence (AI) techniques, including CLIP and NLP. This article also introduces a clipper content cycle flowchart as a conceptual framework for understanding the production, distribution, and circulation pathways of content. Overall, this research aims to establish new theoretical and methodological foundations for understanding the dynamics of short-form content within an increasingly complex digital ecosystem.

Research Objectives:

1. Based on a conceptual flow diagram, identify the main stages of the clipper content's production and distribution cycle on social media.

2. Analyze user interactions with clipper content from the point of media educational skills, both visually and textually.

3. Measure user sentiment based on semantic inconsistencies between clip content and user responses using multimodal AI models (such as CLIP) and NLP.

4. Predict engagement levels based on interaction patterns and clip characteristics.

5. Develop an analytical framework to understand how clipper content shapes digital behavior and virality dynamics on social media.

2. Materials and methods

This article adopts a systematic literature review and in-depth observation of the clipper content phenomenon on social media, with a specific emphasis on advancing media literacy education. The literature review involved collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing a wide range of academic sources – including scientific journals, books, and research reports – related to multimodal analysis, user interaction, sentiment, and the broader social media content ecosystem (Muqsith et al., 2023). Special attention was given to works that critically assess the role of digital platforms in shaping public perception, misinformation, and content engagement, which are central to media literacy discourse.

Furthermore, non-participatory observations were conducted on platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts to explore real-world patterns in the production, distribution, and reception of clipper content. This dual-method approach not only enables the construction of a robust conceptual framework but also situates the findings within the broader objective of promoting critical media literacy – by uncovering how users navigate, interpret, and

are influenced by fast-paced, short-form digital content (Creswell, 2013). In doing so, the study contributes to empowering audiences with the analytical tools needed to evaluate digital media critically and responsibly.

3. Discussion and Results
Clipper Content Context and Cycle

The clipper content phenomenon is part of the evolution of digital culture, where short video clips are extracted from long-form sources, such as podcasts, films, live broadcasts, or YouTube vlogs, and redistributed in a more concise format. This content is typically between 15 and 60 seconds long and designed to quickly capture attention through visual elements such as dynamic text, background music, or other audiovisual effects. Clipper content is not only technical but also a form of content curation and remix culture in the era of media platformization (Jean, Green, 2009; Jenkins, 2006; Kaye et al., 2020).

This historical shift toward short-form content can be traced back to the early days of Vine (Vine, 2013), which popularized the six-second video format and paved the way for instant consumption, a dominant feature on social media today. This phenomenon continued with the emergence of TikTok and Instagram Reels, which offer a similar approach but with richer editing features and distribution algorithms (Zulli, 2020). In this context, clipper content is not simply a form of digital expression, but rather an adaptive response to changes in technological architecture and increasingly rapid and selective information consumption habits.

The primary motivations behind the production of clipper content encompass three key dimensions: virality, monetization, and visibility. First, due to their concise and shareable nature, short clips have great potential to go viral, especially when they contain humorous, dramatic, or controversial elements (Lee, Abidin, 2023). Second, many platforms now offer direct monetization mechanisms such as creator bonuses, subscription features, and brand partnerships, making clipper content a potential means of generating passive income. Third, visibility on social media no longer relies on high production quality, but rather on the ability to capture attention within seconds. This makes clipper content an effective vehicle for individuals and institutions to strategically build a digital persona or amplify a particular narrative (Abidin, 2020).

Theoretically, these motivations are deeply rooted in the concept of remix culture, as introduced by Jenkins (Jenkins, 2006), which involves reworking existing material to create new meanings. Furthermore, this phenomenon is closely related to prod usage, where users are not merely passive consumers but also act as content producers. As Burgess and Green (Burgess, Green 2018) noted in their study of YouTube, this practice of recontextualization allows for the formation of dynamic collective meanings, which in turn become part of contemporary social media culture.

Zulli and Zulli (Zulli, 2020) emphasize that platform vernaculars, such as memes, clips, and other video content, create a distinctive digital aesthetic that fundamentally shapes how we communicate and understand events in online spaces. In the realm of clipper content, this aesthetic reflects the tension between the original narrative and the re-perception created through visual selection and editing. Therefore, an analysis of clipper content cannot be separated from understanding the social media ecosystem, which structurally encourages the production of content with high click-through and share value – regardless of the original narrative's context.

Thus, clipper content manifests the dynamics of the attention economy and distribution algorithms, while also reflecting the creative culture of an increasingly fragmented digital society. To understand its social and psychological implications, analysis should go beyond the visual aspects of the clip. Examining how audiences interact through comments, emojis, and sharing is crucial. This can only be achieved comprehensively through a multimodal analysis framework.

The production and distribution of clip content are not a purely linear process, but rather part of a complex, iterative cycle heavily influenced by the technological and social dynamics of digital media platforms. This cycle begins with identifying source content, followed by clipping, visual editing, and distribution to various social media platforms. In this context, clippers act as curators and producers, strategically selecting content with high viral potential, such as emotional expressions, controversial statements, or humorous moments that are easily understood instantly (Zulli, 2020).
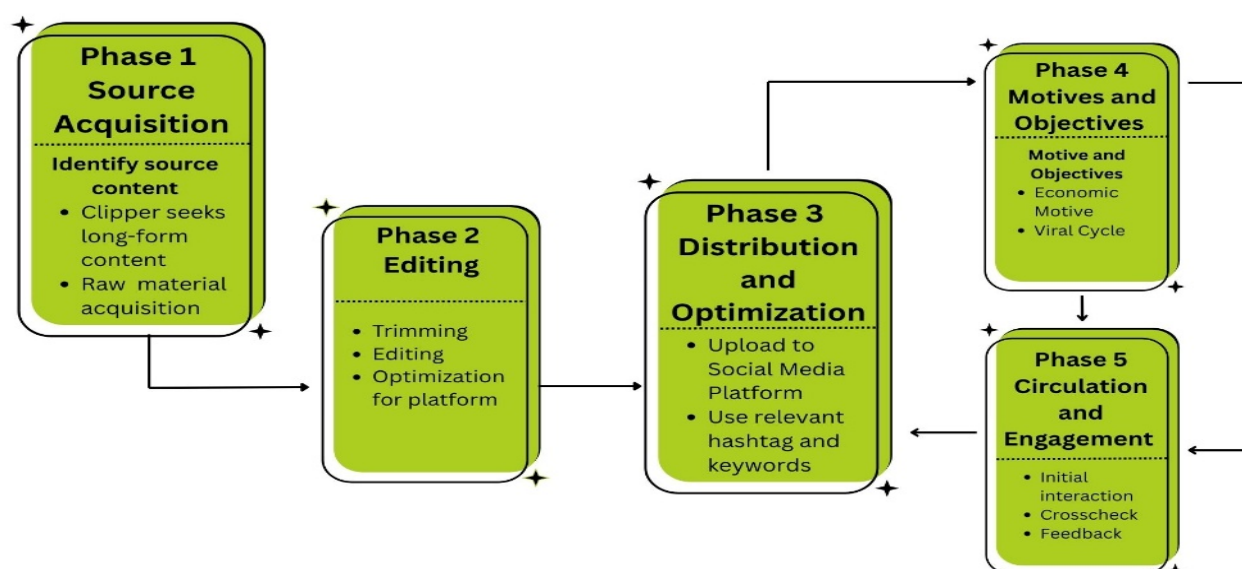
Fig 1. The Clipper Content Cycle on social media with media educational effect via users' engagement
Source: Proceed by Researcher's Analysis (2025)

The distribution of clipper content is highly dependent on the algorithm design of each platform. TikTok, for example, uses a machine learning-based recommendation system that detects engagement levels within minutes and then distributes that content to more users through the For You Page (FYP) feed. A study by Kaye, Chen and Zeng (Kaye et al., 2021) reveals that the success of short clips is primarily determined by a combination of technical factors, including optimal length (15–30 seconds), provocative captions, and the selection of popular audio. This creates a kind of informal template in the production of clipper content, where the success of previous content serves as a guide to produce subsequent content – a form of cultural feedback loop driven by the platform's architecture itself (Kaye et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the distribution cycle of clipper content is further strengthened by the presence of strategic actors such as influencers, buzzers, or aggregator accounts. They act as content disseminators and as meaning amplifiers by adding specific framing or interpretations to the clips they share. Duplicate content can reappear across multiple accounts with different packaging, creating a digital echo chamber that expands its reach and accelerates the viral cycle (Highfield, Leaver, 2016). This practice illustrates how the distribution of clipper content is a technical process that also involves political and social considerations, particularly when used to shape public opinion or amplify specific issues.

The role of algorithms in determining distribution also creates a form of algorithmic gatekeeping, where system preferences become the primary mediator in content dissemination (Mathe, 2024). This means that it's not just the quality or message of the content that determines whether a clip will be widely shared, but also its conformity to the technical parameters valued by the algorithms, such as viewer retention rates, initial engagement, or the use of specific hashtags. In this context, clipper content must be continuously optimized to be algorithm-friendly, leading content producers to experiment with format, duration, sound effects, and upload times.

This cycle ultimately returns to its initial phase, where audience response signals creators to produce the following clip. Feedback in the form of likes, comments, and shares is a key indicator of content effectiveness and serves as the "raw material" for determining subsequent content strategies. This model aligns with Jenkins' (Jenkins, 2006) theory of participatory culture, in which audiences are no longer merely consumers but also actively participate in producing meaning and disseminating content. Therefore, understanding the clipper content cycle cannot be separated from studies of user interaction, algorithmic dynamics, and digital curation practices in an increasingly platformed space.

Dynamics of User Interaction and Sentiment

User engagement is a key indicator of the effectiveness and resonance of content on social media. In the context of clipper content, this engagement not only reflects user interest but also operates as a powerful social signal that influences content visibility through platform algorithms.

However, from a media literacy education perspective, it is crucial to interrogate what such engagement signifies – beyond metrics like likes, comments, shares, and watch time (Sundar, Limperos, 2013). These forms of interaction, while often interpreted as positive indicators of relevance, may also reflect passive consumption, emotional manipulation, or algorithmic reinforcement of polarizing content.

In educational terms, media literacy demands that users move beyond surface-level engagement and develop a critical understanding of how digital content is curated to provoke rapid reactions. Clipper content is designed for high-velocity emotional impact – using dramatic captions, viral soundbites, and sharply framed opinions to capture attention within seconds. Strengthening media literacy thus involves equipping users with the skills to decode these persuasive techniques, question the intent behind them, and resist manipulation by becoming reflective and intentional digital participants.

A study by Veltri and Atanasova (Veltri, Atanasova, 2022) found that short-duration and "triggering" narratives can increase engagement rates by up to 30 % compared to longer videos. In another study, Zhang et al. (Zhang et al., 2021) found that the highest engagement on TikTok clips occurs when a combination of expressive visuals, affirmative text, and popular music works synergistically as a multimodal stimulus. This confirms that clipper content is inherently designed to create effective, rather than cognitive, engagement, meaning users are more motivated to react than reflect on the content's meaning.

Furthermore, engagement does not occur in a vacuum but is often influenced by social mediation from actors such as influencers and buzzers. Influencers act as symbolic authorities who can validate the meaning of a clip, while buzzers can expand the reach of distribution through strategic posting within their social networks (Abidin, 2020). In some cases, comments from prominent influencers can change the general perception of a particular clip or even spark new discourse independent of its original context. This suggests that user interaction with clipper content is also a result of social signaling – where users respond not only to the clip's content, but also to who shares it and how it is framed.

From a theoretical perspective, user interaction with clipper content can be analyzed through the Uses and Gratifications Theory approach (Sundar, Limperos, 2013), which explains that users actively select content based on specific needs such as entertainment, identity, information, or social integration. In the context of clip content, the need for quick entertainment and self-expression is often a primary motive, aligning with the high level of sharing and short, spontaneous comments that convey humor or emotion. Additionally, Kreijns et al. (Kreijns et al., 2022) used Social Presence Theory to explain why user engagement might be higher in short video forms. This is because the actors' facial expressions or voice tones are visualized, which strengthens the sense of presence.

However, high engagement does not always translate into deep understanding. Some users interact impulsively without understanding the original context of the clips they are watching, which can lead to misinterpretation or the dissemination of biased information. This phenomenon highlights the importance of studying user engagement within a multimodal framework to measure engagement volume and understand how visuals and text interact (or conflict) to shape meaning and public reactions.

Thus, this study positions user engagement as a vital dimension in analyzing clipper content, not only as an outcome but also as an integral part of the meaning-production cycle. Employing multimodal AI models to examine the relationship between visual elements and textual comments is essential for understanding how affective responses and public perceptions are collectively shaped in digital spaces heavily influenced by algorithms and social media.

User sentiment is a key dimension in understanding the dynamics of social interaction surrounding digital content, particularly when it comes to clipped content. Sentiment refers to users' affective expressions, as manifested in comments, reactions, or subsequent narratives, surrounding a clip. Clipped content, removed from its original context, is highly susceptible to misinterpretation due to the loss of crucial elements that constitute the narrative's overall meaning (Guo, 2024). This creates what is known as semantic dissonance, where the meaning users understand from the clip does not align with the original intent of the source content.

Several previous studies have highlighted this phenomenon in the context of remix culture and content curation. Jenkins (Jenkins, 2006) states that in digital participatory culture, users are not only recipients of messages but also producers of new meaning through reframing. However,

reframing through clipped content often results in sentiments that deviate from the original context. For example, a clip taken from a political speech can be presented satirically to provoke anger or laughter, depending on the audience and the framing used. A study by Gandini et al. (Gandini et al., 2025) demonstrates that manipulating framing within short clips is effective in emotionally polarizing public opinion.

In modern social media, platforms like TikTok amplify extreme expressions of sentiment due to algorithmic logic that prioritizes high engagement. Users who post comments with strong emotional content tend to gain more visibility (Ruckenstein et al., 2020). This creates an ecosystem where users are compelled to respond to clips with emotional intensity, even when they do not fully understand the context. A study by Maud (Maud, 2023) found that 47 % of TikTok users commented angrily or sarcastically on clipped political news clips, and only 12 % attempted to locate the source first.

Furthermore, semantic inconsistencies also have ethical and political implications. Political buzzers or digital actors with vested interests often utilize clipping techniques to steer public opinion in a particular direction, creating echo chambers that selectively amplify negative or positive sentiments (Starbird, Wilson, 2020). This demonstrates that clipper content is not just a communication artifact or a political and economic instrument that can be used strategically to shape public perception but also becomes a part of educational means in the Social Media ecosystem.

A multimodal approach is crucial in addressing this challenge. Models such as CLIP (Contrastive Language – Image Pretraining) enable the analysis of semantic relationships between visual elements and textual narratives (Radford et al., 2021). Researchers can assess how closely a clip's meaning matches user comments and reactions by integrating visual semantic mapping with sentiment analysis based on Natural Language Processing (NLP). According to Abouei et al. (Abouei et al., 2025), clip manipulation or out-of-context framing is frequently indicated by a negative association between visual content and emotional reactions.

Therefore, understanding user sentiment in the context of clipper content requires more than just text or visuals; it requires an integrative approach that considers semantic inconsistencies as part of digital communication design. This study contributes to the discourse by presenting a multimodal framework that enables a granular analysis of how collective sentiment is formed, manipulated, or even hijacked in increasingly complex digital social spaces.

Multimodal Analysis and the Role of Digital Actors

In the age of social media, digital content analysis needs a method that goes beyond just text or graphics. Methods that can comprehend cross-modal semantic linkages are required due to the phenomenon of clipper content, which dynamically blends textual and visual aspects. A more thorough comprehension of the context and meaning arising from digital content is made possible by a multimodal approach, which offers an appropriate framework for combining data from many communication channels, including text, voice, images, and metadata (Ihnaini et al., 2024).

One breakthrough in multimodal analysis is the Contrastive Language–Image Pretraining (CLIP) model developed by OpenAI. CLIP learns the relationship between text and images by simultaneously comparing large-scale data pairs, enabling the modeling of semantic relationships between text descriptions and visual content (Radford et al., 2021). In the context of clipper content, CLIP can be used to evaluate whether the narrative accompanying a clip is semantically consistent with the visual content displayed. This is particularly important when studying the manipulation of meaning, for example, in content that is tendentiously clipped or intentionally designed to trigger specific interpretations by the audience.

Apart from CLIP, methods based on Natural Language Processing (NLP) are essential for determining how users feel about clipper content. User responses to clips are mapped in comments or with accompanying narratives using methods including sentiment analysis, stance detection, and semantic similarity analysis. Feng (Feng, 2025) showed that prevailing user emotions in social media comments, especially in political and entertainment material, can be accurately identified using an NLP technique based on BERT (Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers).

The integration of CLIP and NLP enables more robust cross-modal modeling. Recent research by Rahman et al. (Rahman et al., 2024) developed a CLIP-BERT-based system that can detect semantic inconsistencies between clip content and user comments and predict the potential for such content to become viral or controversial. They found that content with high levels of

semantic inconsistency is more likely to trigger negative comments or emotional polarization, particularly when related to issues of identity and politics.

However, this approach also has limitations. Models like CLIP and BERT are trained on global English-language corpora. They may not directly capture local cultural or linguistic nuances in the social media context of Indonesia or other countries in the Global South. Therefore, adapting these models through fine-tuning or combining them with local data is crucial to improve accuracy and contextual sensitivity (Suresh, Banu, 2024). This is especially relevant when analysis focuses on buzzers, local influencers, or domestic political issues, which have their discursive complexities.

Thus, a multimodal approach based on CLIP and NLP is relevant and crucial in the study of clipper content. This framework enables researchers to unify the visual and textual dimensions in a single, integrated analysis, providing a more precise understanding of how content is perceived, interpreted, and manipulated within a social media landscape characterized by competition and algorithmic strategies. This study adopts this approach to explore the dynamics of user interactions, aiming to develop an analytical model that can be replicated and further developed in subsequent digital communication studies.

In the contemporary social media ecosystem, influencers and buzzers play a central role in producing, distributing, and amplifying clipped content (Wulandari et al., 2023). Influencers are individuals with significant influence on digital platforms who can influence the opinions and behavior of their followers through the content they upload (Abidin, 2020). Meanwhile, buzzers refer to accounts or entities – individuals or groups – that strategically spread specific narratives, often with political or economic motives (Reisach, 2021). Both utilize clipped content to reframe information, increase visibility, and create virality through deliberate and targeted content clipping.

Using clipped content by influencers and buzzers is a content distribution strategy and part of an effort to mediate public opinion. Selectively clipped content is often used to support or attack specific figures, policies, or ideologies. A study by Ong and Cabañes (Ong, Cabañes, 2019) in the Philippines showed that professional buzzers systematically work in digital campaigns, utilizing clipped content to manipulate public perception, particularly in political contexts. They create "strategic virality" by exploiting emotions, bias, and the limited attention span of audiences as the primary driving force behind message dissemination (Ong, Cabañes, 2019).

This phenomenon is further complicated by the rise of the digital attention economy, where content is curated not based on information quality but on its ability to attract clicks, comments, and shares (Lee, Abidin, 2023). In this context, clipper content has become a key tool for generating engagement, both in the form of positive reactions and controversy. Influencers and buzzers understand that short clips with high emotional content– such as anger, humor, or shock – are more likely to go viral (Berger, Milkman, 2012). They then strategically craft visual and textual narratives to exploit social media algorithms, prioritizing high engagement.

Epistemologically, the presence of influencers and buzzers as actors in the production of clipper content challenges the boundary between organic communication and opinion manipulation. Public digital literacy often fails to distinguish between authentic and fabricated content, mainly when clips are disseminated through networks of seemingly "neutral" micro-influencer accounts. A study by Arifianto, Wulandari (Arifianto, Wulandari 2023) reveals that in Indonesia, both pro-government and opposition buzzers utilize clipped content from speeches or interviews to construct competing narratives, thereby contributing to public polarization.

Against this backdrop, it becomes clear that analysis of clipped content cannot be separated from its production and distribution as well as from the users' educational engagement context. Who creates it, why they make it, and how they disseminate it are key questions in understanding the social and political effects of clipped content. A multimodal approach, combining visual content analysis and text commentary, is crucial for uncovering the educational dynamics hidden behind seemingly simple content packaging. In this context, this research analyzes user interactions and sentiments and maps the role of digital actors in mediating meaning through clipped content.

4. Conclusion

The proliferation of clipper content – short-form videos extracted from longer material – has emerged as a defining feature of digital media culture and education. While such content is often praised for its entertainment value and algorithmic virality, this study reveals a deeper structural dynamic: clipper content not only reflects evolving digital consumption patterns but also shapes public discourse through emotionally charged and contextually fragmented narratives.

By employing a multimodal strategy that combines visual-textual analysis with artificial intelligence (AI) techniques such as CLIP and NLP, this study reveals how semantic discrepancies between user answers and content promote divisive opinions and superficial engagement.

Crucially, these dynamics have significant implications for media literacy education. As short-form content increasingly dominates attention economies, users – particularly young audiences – are often exposed to decontextualized clips that elicit strong affective reactions without critical understanding. This creates an urgent need for educational interventions that cultivate multimodal literacy: the ability to interpret, deconstruct, and evaluate digital content across formats. Educators and policymakers must integrate critical viewing skills and algorithmic awareness into digital literacy curricula, empowering users not only to consume content but to question its framing, source credibility, and emotional design.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes how digital players, such buzzers and influencers, function as meaning mediators whose calculated manipulation of clipper material can change public opinion and strengthen echo chambers. Understanding these dynamics is central to preparing learners to navigate the sociopolitical dimensions of social media. Thus, this research contributes not only to digital communication studies but also to the development of a pedagogical framework that bridges algorithmic awareness, participatory culture, and ethical content engagement in contemporary media education.

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Digital Authenticity and Media Literacy Integration in Vietnam's Social Media: Influencer-Endorsed Verification and Audience Critique

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Abstract

The advent of social media has fundamentally altered the ways in which information circulates, positioning influencers as informal media educators who guide audiences in applying critical evaluation skills. This study examines how social media influencers contribute to the development of media literacy and uphold digital authenticity within Vietnam's online information ecosystem, with particular attention to periods of public health crises and national policy debates. Employing a mixed-methods design, integrating quantitative surveys with in-depth qualitative interviews, the research investigates the processes by which influencers and their followers assess content credibility, engage in fact-checking practices, and counteract misinformation. Findings indicate that influencers support media education by modelling verification techniques and prompting audiences to adopt rigorous evaluation criteria. Interactive feedback channels between influencers and followers further consolidate these verification routines, thereby strengthening public trust. Nonetheless, the persistence of unsubstantiated personal opinions and unclear source attribution continues to challenge content integrity. The study underscores the imperative for collaborative interventions among governmental agencies, social media platforms, and influencers to embed media literacy principles within content-creation guidelines and platform policies. Implications for policy and practice include recommendations for structured media education initiatives, the formulation of clear verification standards, and the adoption of platform features that encourage audience engagement in critical evaluation. These measures are essential to fostering an informed, discerning public capable of navigating the complexities of the contemporary digital communication landscape.

Keywords: digital authenticity, media literacy, digital identity, social media influencers, information accuracy, media education, fake news, digital literacy, Vietnam.

1. Introduction

In the face of an escalating "infodemic" during public health emergencies and national sovereignty debates, media literacy serves as a vital scaffold enabling Vietnamese audiences to critically appraise influencer-generated content.

This study applies these frameworks to Vietnamese social media influencers, exploring how they embed verification cues, such as explicit source attributions, interactive fact‑check prompts and hashtag‑driven information trails, into posts addressing public health, sovereignty and social

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advocacy. Through the positioning of influencers as informal media educators, the research elucidates how media education principles can enhance audience-led evaluation processes, refine content quality and mitigate the spread of misinformation in Vietnam's digital ecosystem.

Meanwhile, the rapid expansion of social media has fundamentally altered the dynamics through which information is conveyed and received, endowing social media influencers with a particular power to influence public discussion. In Vietnam, a nation with extensive social media penetration – covering more than 72 % of its population as of 2023 (Statista, 2023) – this impact is especially profound. Influencers are now at the forefront of digital communication, using their media to disseminate information, sway public opinion, and advocate for causes. However, with growing concerns about the validity of information presented by such influencers, it has led to significant discussion within popular and scholarly discourse. It is particularly relevant given the ability of misinformation to quickly proliferate in a highly connected digital sphere (Nguyen, Dang, 2020). The Vietnamese state, aware of such issues, has applied regulatory mechanisms like the Official Dispatch No. 874 and Government Decree 72/CP of the Ministry of Information and Communications that attempt to provide standards for moral social media conduct (Ministry..., 2021). These measures point to the increasing significance of creating a responsible digital environment.

The contribution of celebrity social media personalities to the construction of social norms and popular discourse has attracted considerable scholarly interest. Pioneering research, including that of Nguyen (Nguyen, 2011) and Nguyen (Nguyen, 2015), considered the expanding social roles of celebrities amidst Vietnam's fast-evolving media environment. The studies shone a light on how social media has blurred traditional boundaries of influence, enabling celebrities and influencers to reach out and engage with diverse audiences in new ways. Examining through the lens of cultural and communication theories, the research drew attention to the powerful role played by public figures in shaping societal norms, values, and behaviors, thus opening up avenues for further investigations into the far-reaching implications of influencer culture.

More recent research has explored the profound influence of online personalities on consumer behavior and societal attitudes. Dang (Dang, 2021) examined the effect of influencers on consumers' buying habits, while Le et al. (Le et al., 2023) researched the influence of Instagram celebrities on the fashion decisions of Generation Z in Ho Chi Minh City. The research highlights the dual role played by influencers, both as brand representatives and as opinion leaders in shaping consumers' decisions, particularly in the youth segment. The research also provokes interesting questions regarding the authenticity of content produced by influencers and therefore the need to scrutinize them critically against their impact on public discourse (Le, Hutchinson, 2022).

The problems posed by misinformation are by no means unique to Vietnam but instead have a universal appeal. Empirical research has consistently shown that the infectious nature of social media exponentially boosts the spread of false information, often with influencers placed at the center of these trends (Vosoughi et al., 2018). This phenomenon calls for a direct need for enhancing digital literacy among audiences as well as for making influencers accountable for the content they spread. The Vietnamese experience provides a microcosm for understanding these global forces as the country grapples with weighing the benefits of social media connectedness against the threat of disinformation.

Thus, this research tries to explore the credibility of the information provided by social media influencers in Vietnam. By conducting content analysis of the postings of ten Vietnamese popular Facebook influencers from 2019 to 2022, the research aims to identify trends in information sharing and to look for ways of supporting digital authenticity. This study adds to the vibrant discussion regarding the use of influencers in contemporary communication, providing insightful guidance on how their influence can ethically be used to build a more informed and interested audience.

1.1. Aims, Objectives and Research Questions: This study seeks to examine how Vietnamese social media influencers function as informal media-education agents, fostering audiences' digital media literacy and reinforcing authenticity and trust within the nation's online information ecosystem. Focusing on critical junctures, public health crises, national sovereignty issues and social advocacy campaigns, the research applies media-education frameworks to analyze influencers' deployment of verification cues (such as source attributions, interactive fact-check prompts and hashtag-driven information trails) and their capacity to model critical evaluation techniques for followers.

The investigation is structured around three principal questions:

1. *Verification and Validation*: In what ways do Vietnamese influencers employ

media-education strategies to embed verification and validation processes into content related to public health emergencies, sovereignty debates and social advocacy initiatives?

2. *Audience Credibility Assessment*: Which media‑literacy-informed methods do Vietnamese social media users adopt to evaluate the credibility of influencer‑generated information, and how do these methods shape their interpretation and consumption of digital content?

3. *Presentation as Pedagogy*: How do presentation formats, such as hashtags, visual elements and narrative tone, operate as pedagogical devices that influence audience reception of posts addressing sensitive topics (for example, non‑heteronormative identities, child abuse and international conflicts), and to what extent?

The specific objectives are to examine the authenticity markers present in the digital information environments curated by prominent social media figures; and develop enhanced, media‑education‑based verification protocols aimed at refining content quality and mitigating the propagation of misinformation.

1.2. A Study of the Literature – "The Concept of Information": Content shared on social media encompasses a spectrum from impartial news coverage to individual commentary and opinion. "Information" is generally understood as data or content that enhances knowledge and understanding. Information encompasses "facts, events, concepts, and judgments which are the causes of human understanding" (Phe, 2003; Phe, 2006: 45), according to Phe (Phe, 2006). Similarly, Doan Phan Tan (Doan, 2006) highlights its multi-faceted function in describing reality and facilitating informed decision-making.

Information has great significance in influencing societal knowledge, decision-making, and cultural and political discourses. With time, information has been explained from a fundamental data transmission viewpoint to a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. The Vietnamese Dictionary by Phe (Phe, 2003) and Hoang Phe's definition point out that information comprises facts, events, concepts, and judgments that contribute to human knowledge. This aligns with the Law on Access to Information, 2016, which highlights the multidimensional nature of information, especially in a constantly changing digital society where it is both a resource and a tool for empowerment. The ability to access and decipher information is crucial for active participation in society, particularly in democratic and digitally integrated systems.

In the modern information era, the quantity and velocity of information dissemination have distorted the boundary between credible and non-credible sources. Floridi (Floridi, 2018: 42) coins the phrase "infosphere" to refer to the space where information is produced, disseminated, and used, which is now filled with true and false information. The growing ecosystem has necessitated a shift in the understanding of information to encompass not just the message content but also the source, delivery method, and presentation context. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the overwhelming influx of information highlighted the critical importance of verifying the accuracy and reliability of shared data, particularly if it is supported by influential figures (Cinelli et al., 2020).

The social media implications here are extensive. Social media outlets such as Facebook and Instagram have turned into default channels for information dissemination, with influencers serving as the ultimate intermediaries. Influencers tend to bridge the gap between traditional media gatekeepers and peer communicators, thereby extending both the reach and influence of the information they disseminate (Khamis et al., 2018). Yet, their impact brings up fundamental issues regarding the accuracy of information, considering that their motivations can be shaped by commercial or personal interests. This dual function works to highlight the challenges in delineating and managing information in the context of the digital environment.

Empirical data highlights the widespread influence and contribution of social media influencers in the spread of information. Statista (Statista, 2023) indicates that the global number of social media users totaled 4.9 billion as of 2023, with more than 60 % of them depending on such media for news and information content. In Vietnam, where the rate of internet penetration was estimated at around 75 % in 2023, social media became a primary source of information (We..., 2023). The dependence on influencers for information, insight, and opinion introduces another level of complication into the notion of information, since audiences conflate popularity with credibility – a relationship that is not necessarily true.

Besides, theoretical models offer insightful understanding of the notion of information in online discourse. In McQuail's (McQuail, 2010) communication theory, information is pivotal to

societal operations, shaping public opinion and behavior. Likewise, Castells' (Castells, 2013) networked communication theory stresses the decentralization of information in today's digital age, where individuals and groups, such as influencers, possess unmatched influence in narrative construction. The evolution of social media in controlling the flow of information presents a significant challenge in maintaining the originality of content posted. This necessitates the need for enhancement of digital literacy and the instituting of strong information check processes to guarantee public trust in a progressively complicated information environment.

1.2.1. Authenticity of Information: In today's world, where social media plays such a huge role in our daily lives, being genuine and authentic has become essential for building and keeping trust in online interactions. With so much information coming at us all the time, it is more important than ever to have a way to sift through it all. Authenticity is that filter, helping people figure out which sources they can really trust and which ones spread misinformation. According to Ilicic and Webster (Ilicic, Webster, 2016), being authentic is key in influencer communication; audiences are much more likely to trust those who come across as real and relatable. Likewise, Balaban (Balaban, 2022) and Wassberg (Wassberg, 2019) examine the complex layers of authenticity, pointing out the difference between how influencers see their own authenticity and how their audience perceives it. This gap shows that influencers need to strike a balance between how they present themselves and what their audience expects from them. As noted by Moore (Moore, 2018) and Balaban (Balaban, 2019), authenticity, along with being likable and knowledgeable, creates a strong foundation for effective influencer marketing, which in turn boosts audience engagement and loyalty.

That said, determining what is authentic on social media is not always straightforward. Tandoc (Tandoc, 2018) talks about how people increasingly rely on their own judgment and various tools to verify the truthfulness of news content. This becomes especially challenging in situations where people's digital literacy varies greatly. Liu (Liu, 2020) adds that individuals with less education often place more importance on the social connections that information offers rather than its credibility, making the fight against misinformation even tougher. To tackle this issue, Pourghomi (Pourghomi, 2017) suggests innovative tools like 'Right-click Authenticate,' which let users verify the reliability of content before they share it. This mirrors the findings of Ismail (Ismail, 2013) and Chatterjee (Chatterjee, 2016), who emphasize the essential role of content quality and trustworthiness in encouraging meaningful interactions online. Chatterjee (Chatterjee, 2016) also introduces a structured approach for evaluating credibility, considering factors like how reliable the source is, its relevance, and how clearly the information is presented.

Besides, the conversation about authenticity brings up ethical concerns surrounding using social media platforms. Both Papadopoulos (Papadopoulos, 2016) and Gaden (Gaden, 2014) look into the ongoing challenges of trust and ethical behavior in digital spaces. Papadopoulos (Papadopoulos, 2016: 124) emphasizes the tension between user-generated content and the accountability of platforms, while Gaden raises questions about whether these platforms truly uphold democratic values in their algorithms and policies. Ghaisani (Ghaisani, 2017) complements this discussion by detailing various factors that impact information credibility such as providing links to trustworthy sources and the audience's genuine interest in the topic. Collectively, these findings demonstrate that securing authenticity, and thus trust, demands a holistic strategy incorporating technological safeguards, ethical guidelines, and comprehensive user education.

1.2.2. The Role of Social Media: The impact of social media on shaping how we behave and make decisions is truly major, especially in our digital world. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have changed the way we access information, connect with others, and decide on various matters. As Truong et al. (Truong et al., 2023) emphasize, social media plays an essential role in influencing travel intentions for domestic tourists in Vietnam, acting as key tools for sharing information and aiding decision-making. Similarly, H.T. Nguyen et al. (Nguyen et al., 2021) examine how social media particularly affects Generation Z in their travel planning, showing how these platforms promote interaction and improve the decision-making process. These insights underline the wider importance of social media in contemporary communication and its role in shaping behaviors across numerous fields.

Kaplan and Haenlein (Kaplan, Haenlein, 2010) define social media as internet-based platforms that allow users to create and share content, fundamentally changing how we connect and share experiences. The massive reach of these platforms is reflected in Facebook's reported user base of 2.99 billion as of May 2023 (Data Reportal, 2023). This enormous number emphasizes

how social media can sway public opinion, build communities, and drive societal trends.

What is more, the ever-changing nature of communication on social media not only promotes connections but also drives changes in behavior. Son (Son, 2011) effectively describes this process as the exchange of information, emotions, and experiences that shape awareness and influence decisions (as cited in Thieu, 2022: 84). The Vietnamese Ministry of Information and Communications' Decree No.: 72/2013/ND-CP acknowledges social media as essential for storing, providing, and sharing information in various formats (Government... 2013). This perspective is reflected globally, where social media is a platform for digital activism, community building, and cultural preservation. The complex role of social media as both a connector and a disruptor emphasizes its major influence on individual and collective behaviors, making it an important area for scholarly exploration.

1.2.3. Influencers on Social Media: Social media influencers have quickly become key players in shaping opinions, behaviors, and consumption patterns in today's online environment. As noted by Williams et al. (Williams et al., 2023), these influencers hold considerable sway over their followers by creating and sharing digital content that resonates deeply with their audience. Their impact comes from their knack for blending genuine authenticity with aspirational lifestyles, building both trust and relatability among their followers. Ao et al. (Ao et al., 2023: 4) define a social media influencer as "someone who has a major and active following on social media platforms, which one would not know unless one follows them." This definition emphasizes the relational aspect of influence the digital interactions on social media break geographical and cultural barriers to form global communities.

However, the authenticity that influencers project creates a complicated energetic. Scholars like Abidin (Abidin, 2016) and Hund (Hund, 2019) point out that when influencers commodify their authenticity, it raises important questions about the genuineness of their engagement. Hund (Hund, 2019) explains that the carefully curated personas and sponsored content of influencers often blur the lines between personal expression and commercial motives.

What is more, brands and marketers strategically select influencers based on factors like credibility, reach, and reputation. Ong (Ong, 2022) points out that influencers who align with a brand's values are more apt to build trust and encourage lasting engagement within digital communities. Francalanci et al. (Francalanci et al., 2021) further note that an influencer's credibility is often assessed through engagement rates, follower demographics, and content quality, rather than sheer follower count. This practice has sparked the rise of micro-influencers in Western contexts – individuals with smaller but highly engaged audiences who frequently outshine celebrity influencers in cultivating authentic connections. The interaction among influence, credibility, and trust reveals the detailed role of influencers within digital marketing ecosystems and underlines their growing importance in shaping consumer behavior worldwide.

A research team from the Faculty of Journalism and Communication at the University of Science, Thai Nguyen, Vietnam comprising Phuong T. Vi, Ha Hoang Ngoc and Mai Hoang Nhat conducted survey (which lasted for eight months during the 2023–2024 academic year. The survey, which involved 10 social media influencers (see Figure 1), examined the content social media influencers shared on their Facebook pages. The study employed the message content analysis method to categorize the posts into distinct thematic categories. The identified themes included the well-known corruption case referred to as "the rescue flight" in Vietnam, social insurance-related issues, maritime sovereignty disputes, cases of violence against children, gender and non-heteronormative identities' rights, and the Russia-Ukraine conflict (Vi et al., 2024).

1.2.4. Influence of Social Media in Asia: The influence of social media on the cultural, political, and economic landscapes in Asia has caught the attention of many scholars. These platforms have played a crucial role in shaping collective identities and political connections throughout the continent. Researchers like Chan (Chan, 2018) and Lei (Lei, 2020) point out how social media encourages community interactions and collective action by allowing users to share their experiences and rally around common issues. A clear example can be seen in Hong Kong, where the protests in 2019 were primarily organized through channels like Telegram and Facebook, highlighting how vital social media can be for political activism. Their studies emphasize that social media has a dual nature: it can empower people, but it can also spread misinformation, which ultimately shapes public opinion and political outcomes.

When it comes to cultural identities, especially among young people in Asia, the influence of social media is just as significant. Researchers Chung (Chung, 2014) and Khalid (Khalid, 2018)

have looked into how platforms like Instagram and TikTok serve as spaces for cultural expression and transformation. For instance, in Malaysia, Khalid's (Khalid, 2018) work shows that young individuals use social media to navigate between traditional values and modern lifestyles, often swayed by the global trends pushed by social media influencers. These influencers blend local customs with worldwide styles, reshaping cultural norms and behaviors. This trend highlights social media's role in cultural hybridization, where local and global elements come together to form new identities.
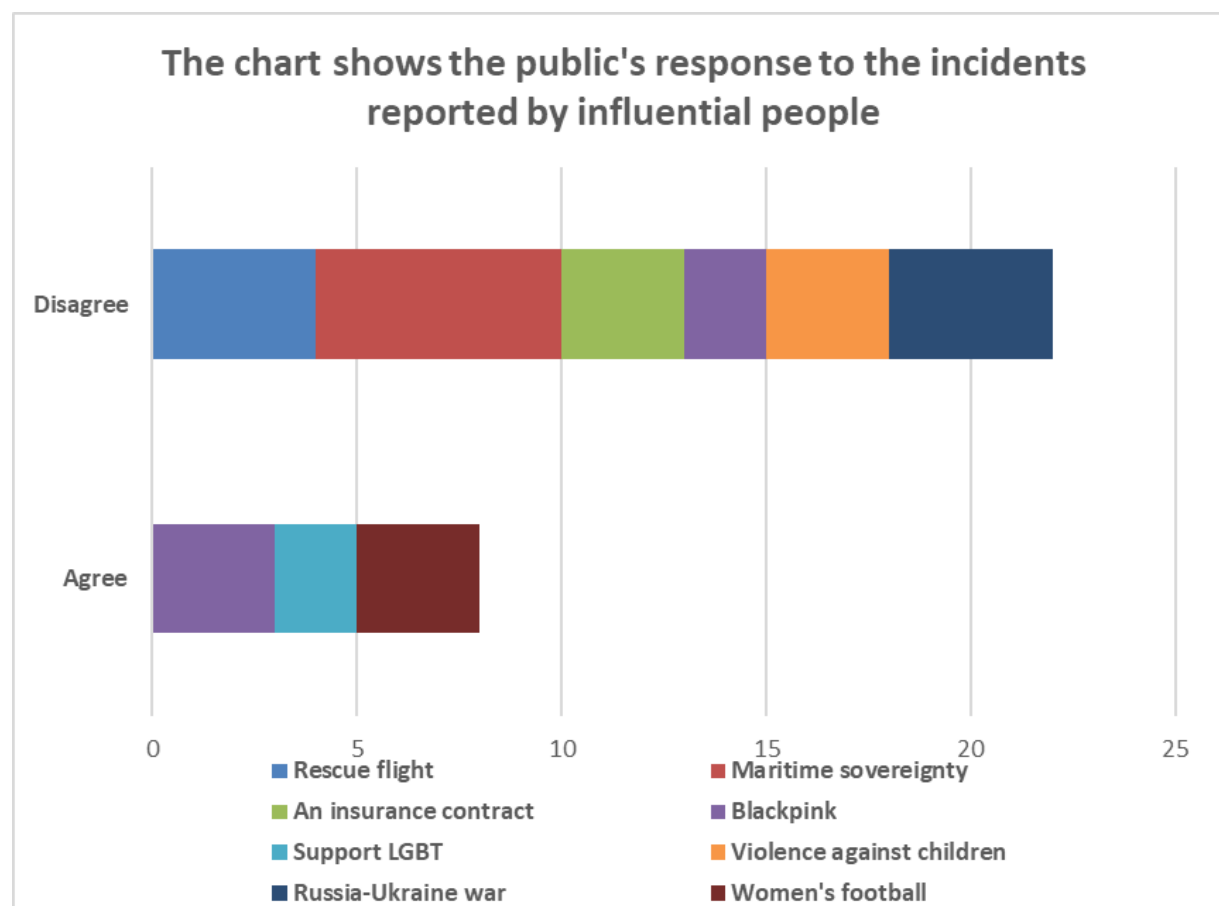
Fig. 1. Public attitudes toward information reported by social media influencers.
Source: Research results, March 2023, Vietnam

Additionally, insights into how influencers operate come from Rodprayoon (Rodprayoon, 2020) and Xu (Xu, 2024), who dive into the self-disclosure tactics used by micro-influencers and how these affect consumer behavior. By sharing personal stories, influencers can build trust and authenticity, which significantly impacts how audiences engage and make purchases. Xu's (Xu, 2024) research found that a whopping 68 % of surveyed consumers in China are more likely to trust product suggestions from influencers they see as genuine. Similarly, Mak's (Mak, 2022) exploration of social media credibility reveals how important social recommendations are in shaping public interaction with news content. Mak argues that influencers help bridge traditional media and digital audiences, making news more relatable through context. Together, these studies shed light on the intricate connections between influencer activities and audience reactions, offering a deep dive into social media's transformative potential in Asia.

1.2.5. Theoretical Framework – Framing Theory and Cultural Media Narratives: Erving Goffman's Framing Theory (Goffman, 1974) looks at how people and the media create meaning by emphasizing particular parts of reality. Framing assumes critical importance in cultural communication, given that media organisations often interpret issues such as migration, protest movements and religious identity through particular cultural perspectives (Guenther et al., 2020; Van Dijk, 2023). Additionally, framing theory is essential to political communication because it shapes public perceptions of national identity and policy choices.

1.2.6. Justification: The most pertinent theoretical framework for this study is Framing Theory. This theory, which was first put forth by Erving Goffman in 1974 (Goffman, 1974) and subsequently extended by academics such as Entman (Entman, 1993) in 1993, offers a strong framework for examining how influencers create digital authenticity, frame narratives on social media, and drive public conversation. Influencers are crucial in selecting and sharing information that appeals to their followers in Vietnam, where social media sites like Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok are the main means of communication. Framing theory describes how these influencers create compelling narratives that mold public perception by selectively emphasizing, highlighting, or omitting particular aspects of reality. The manner in which influencers curate their personas, lifestyles, endorsements and perspectives profoundly shapes audience interaction, trust levels and perceptions of authenticity. Digital authenticity, or the extent to which followers view influencers as real and reliable, is a crucial component of this research. Framing Theory is crucial to comprehending how influencers use language, visual aesthetics, and interaction tactics to preserve credibility in digital settings, where authenticity is mostly a created and performative quality. Influencers could, for example, present their material as "aspirational" by presenting an idealized lifestyle or as "relatable" by presenting uncensored parts of their lives. This deliberate framing impacts the credibility of the audience and shapes public opinion on topics like cultural values, political engagement, and consumer behavior.

Furthermore, Framing Theory aids in the explanation of how influencers manoeuvre across Vietnam's digital landscape in a media ecosystem influenced by cultural sensitivities and governmental rules. The idea makes it possible to examine how influencers present politically and socially sensitive subjects while striking a balance between audience expectations and state-imposed limitations and authenticity. The study can also investigate if influencers use counter-framing strategies to subvert prevailing narratives or if their content serves to uphold pre-existing power dynamics. The idea of digital authenticity is further complicated by the growing marketing of influencer culture. By examining how influencers balance sponsored content and personal branding, framing theory can help us understand how they make sure that promoted content fits with their perceived identity. This is especially important in Vietnam, where consumers are growing increasingly sceptical about the legitimacy of digital endorsements and influencer marketing is expanding quickly.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Research Design: This study uses a mixed-methods approach to delve into how celebrities share information on social media and whether it is genuine. The research combines two key methods: in-depth interviews and content analysis. By using both techniques, the aim is to get a well-rounded view of how information is shared and consumed, capturing both personal insights and objective trends.

2.1.1. In-Depth Interviews: The first method we used was in-depth interviews. This qualitative approach is perfect for digging into complex perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors since it allows researchers to gather rich, detailed feedback straight from participants (Creswell, 2014). In our study, we interviewed a varied group that included celebrities, their fans, and social media experts. The goal was to collect thorough information about their views, experiences, and practices regarding the credibility of the information influencers share online. Choosing in-depth interviews makes sense because they help uncover nuanced viewpoints that you cannot easily capture with just numbers. This aligns with a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, which blends qualitative insights with quantitative analysis for a fuller understanding (Bryman, 2016). We purposely selected participants from key social media categories, including singers, actors, journalists, and content creators.

2.1.2. Content Analysis: The second method we employed was content analysis. This systematic approach involves examining textual, visual, or multimedia content to spot patterns, trends, and themes. As Krippendorff (Krippendorff, 2013) noted, content analysis offers a rigorous means of examining social media discourse, clarifying the construction of meaning, relational dynamics and representational strategies. Accordingly, we systematically analysed celebrity posts to identify recurring themes and patterns indicative of authenticity. Our methodology involved "coding the digital corpus to extract principal themes and episodes of misinformation" and emerging trends. Our focus was on understanding how these trends connect to participants' perceptions of the credibility of content generated by celebrities and how they influence public

opinion. This analysis serves as an objective counterpart to the subjective insights gained from our in-depth interviews.

2.2. Participants and Sampling: Our study targeted a diverse group of 14 social media influencers in Vietnam, each with at least 10,000 followers on Facebook. We aimed for a range of professional backgrounds – including singers, actors, journalists, and content creators – to ensure that our findings were both diverse and meaningful. The selected participants are:

– *Singers:* ChiPu, Nguyen Tran Trung Quan, Amee, and Hariwon.
– *Actors:* Tran Thanh and Nguyen Xuan Bac.
– *Actresses:* Nguyen Ngoc Thuy Diem.
– *Beauty Queens:* Nguyen Thuc Thuy Tien, Miss World Peace 2021, and Nguyen Tran Khanh Van.
– *Journalists:* Truong Huy San, Hoang Nuyen Vu, Vo Duc Phuc, and Doan Bao Chau.
– *Content Creator:* Tran Chi Hieu.

By choosing these participants, we aimed to capture a broad spectrum of influence across various fields, recognizing their roles in shaping perceptions on social media. The insights gained from these participants provide significant contributions to understanding the social media landscape and its ties to credibility and information authenticity.

2.3. Some Brief Information about Some Influencers in Vietnamese Social Media: The information was obtained from the social media profiles/pages of the influencers.

1) *Chi Pu:* Chi Pu, whose real name is Nguyen Thuy Chi, was born on June 14, 1993, and she has become a leading figure in Vietnam. She is a multi-talented artiste – singer, actress, host, model, and record producer – who first gained attention by making it into the top 20 of Miss Teen Vietnam back in 2009. Chi Pu has built an impressive fanbase, with her personal Facebook page amassing 9.1 million followers. She stands out as the first Vietnamese artist to garner significant support and media attention in China. This achievement is a huge milestone in her career, solidifying her place as one of Vietnam's key influencers and cultural icons.

2) *Tran Thanh:* Tran Thanh is a beloved personality in Vietnam's entertainment scene, known for his versatility as a master of ceremonies (MC), actor, comedian, and film producer. His career is diverse, covering acting, scriptwriting, directing, and hosting, making him one of the most respected names in Vietnamese showbiz. Tran Thanh has attracted a whopping 18 million followers on his personal Facebook page, showcasing his significant influence in both entertainment and social media. On YouTube, he has nearly 5 million subscribers, further proving his wide reach across platforms.

As per Buzzmetrics' rankings from March 2021, Tran Thanh topped the list as the most influential figure in Vietnamese social media, with an impressive Buzzmetrics Social Index (BSI) score of 1,008,040. This score reflects his strong presence online, driven by regular posts and high engagement from his audience. His influence is also bolstered by his relationship with renowned singer Hari Won, whose own considerable following enhances their collective media impact. Tran Thanh's knack for engaging his audience and fostering lively discussions online cements his status in Vietnam's cultural and entertainment landscape.

3) *Nguyen Thuc Thuy Tien:* Nguyen Thuc Thuy Tien has firmly established herself as one of the most prominent figures on social media in Vietnam, especially after winning the title of Miss Grand International 2021, which is recognized as the fifth-largest beauty pageant worldwide. Her win was historic, making her the first Vietnamese woman to claim this esteemed title. Thuy Tien boasts around 2 million followers on her personal Facebook page, highlighting her broad appeal and cultural influence. Prior to this, she was a top 5 finalist in the Miss Vietnam pageant in 2018 and received the Beautiful Women for Humanity award, which further reinforced her status as a role model both in Vietnam and internationally.

The BSI (Buzzmetrics, 2023) measures social media impact using five main criteria: sentiment score, media coverage, mentions, user-generated content (UGC), and discussion volume. Thuy Tien's steady ranking in the BSI reflects her social media prowess. Impressively, she became the sole female star to reach an index of 33,197 in February 2023, showcasing her growing presence online. Her influence was reaffirmed when she made her fourth appearance in the BSI Top 10. In August 2023, Thuy Tien topped the Kompa list for influencers with high engagement, achieving a remarkable 16,615,676 interactions that month. Her emotional engagement index reached an astounding 99 % during this time, which demonstrates her widespread admiration and minimal public controversy surrounding her impact. These statistics highlight Nguyen Thuc Thuy Tien's exceptional charm and the effectiveness of her social media strategies, solidifying her position as

the leading female celebrity in Vietnam's online landscape.

4) *Nguyen Tran Trung Quan:* Born in 1992 in Hanoi, Nguyen Tran Trung Quan is a talented musician with a deep love for music. He is well-known as a versatile and appealing male artist, skilled in singing, music production, and teaching. Currently, his personal Facebook page has 1.2 million followers.
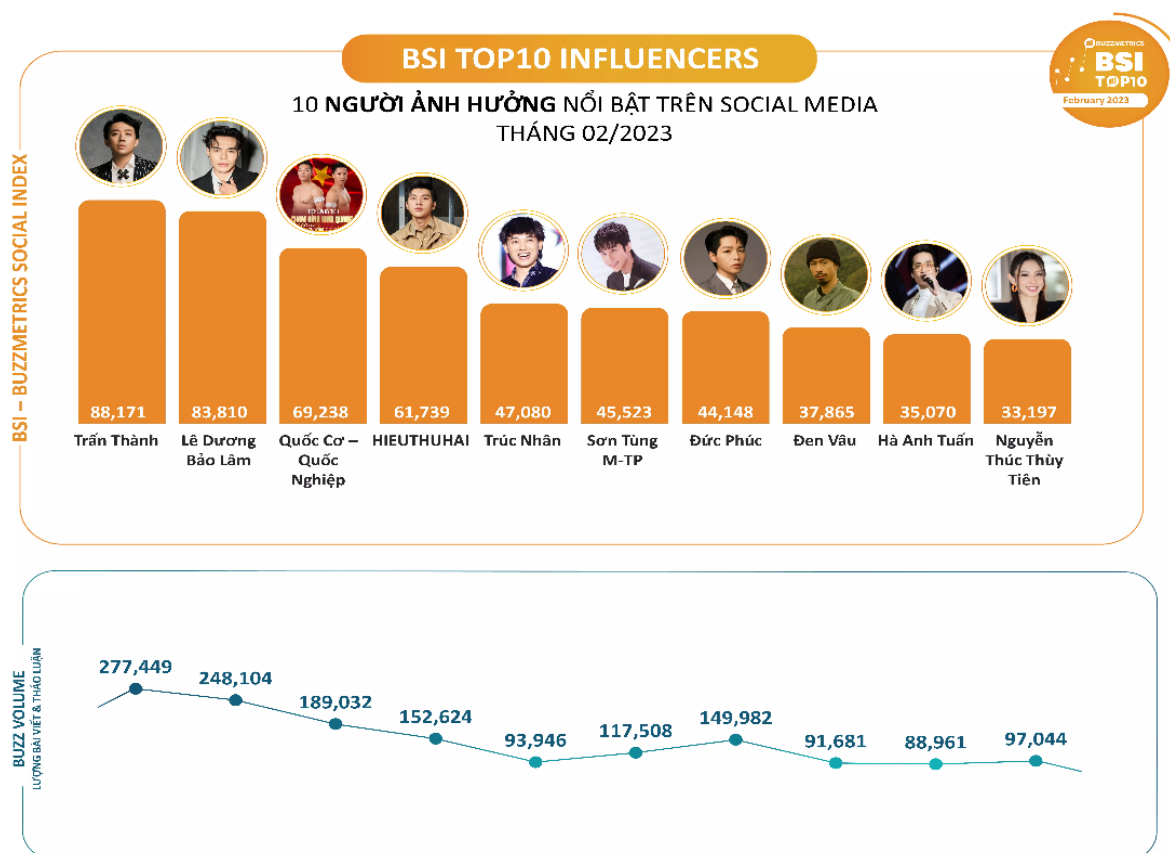
Fig. 2. BSI Top Influencers. *Note*: Thuy Tien is in the top 10 prominent influencers on social media in August 2022. Nguyen Thuc Thuy Tien is also the most influential female star on social networks. Thuy Tien is in the top 10 prominent influencers on social media in February 2023 Source: Buzzmetrics, 2021

5) *Nguyen Xuan Bac:* Nguyen Xuan Bac is a famous MC, comedian, and actor from Northern Vietnam, boasting a Facebook following of 2.4 million. He received the Outstanding Artist title in 2016 for his contributions to the entertainment field. In 2021, Nguyen Xuan Bac took on the role of director at the Vietnamese Theatre and was awarded the third-ranked Labor Medal in 2022 for his exceptional service.

6) *Nguyen Tran Khanh Van:* Nguyen Tran Khanh Van is another notable name on social media, with a sizable following. She is not only a beauty queen but also a talented model, actress, and MC, attracting 2.8 million followers on Facebook. She studied Theatre and Film Acting at the University of Theatre and Cinema in Ho Chi Minh City and gained prominence after her success in the Miss Universe Vietnam 2020 pageant.

7) *Amee (Tran Huyen My):* Amee, whose real name is Tran Huyen My, was born on March 23, 2000, in Hanoi. She studied English Language at Van Hien University and has 2.8 million followers on her personal Facebook page. In 2021, Amee appeared in the film The Guardian Angel, earning wide acclaim for her outstanding performance.

8) *Nguyen Ngoc Thuy Diem:* Nguyen Ngoc Thuy Diem is a celebrated actress and model born on July 8, 1986, in Vietnam. Her Facebook page has garnered 1.2 million followers. Thuy Diem began as a model, winning the Miss Sunplay title in 2007 before moving on to a successful acting career with numerous prominent roles in films and TV shows.

9) *Hari Won:* Born Lưu Esther on June 23, 1985 in Seoul, South Korea, Hari Won is a famous Vietnamese-Korean singer, actress, model, and television host. Her personal Facebook

page boasts an impressive 11 million followers. As a popular MC and judge on various TV shows in Vietnam, she has achieved significant fame and received multiple awards, including Favorite Pop/Rock Song and Favorite R&B/Soul Song at the Zing Music Awards in 2016.

10: *Truong Huy San:* Known by his real name Huy Duc, Truong Huy San is a respected Vietnamese journalist and writer born in 1962. He gained nationwide fame for his reporting on the Duong Son Quan case in Thu Duc, which was published in Tuoi Tre and Thanh Nien newspapers. Nowadays, he is celebrated for his political and social commentary on his blog, Osin, along with a personal Facebook following of 361,000.

2.4. Justification for the Methodological Approach: The combination of in-depth interviews and content analysis fits well with international standards for mixed-methods research (Tashakkori, Teddlie, 2010). The interviews offered valuable qualitative insights into people's experiences and views, while the content analysis provided a structured way to gather empirical data about trends and patterns in social media content and its authenticity. This blend was crucial for cross-verifying findings and ensuring the reliability and validity of the research outcomes (Patton, 2015). Furthermore, these approaches allowed the study to identify not just the personal perceptions of influencers and their followers but also to thoroughly analyze the actual trends in social media content to evaluate whether information was authentic or misleading. This methodological framework created a well-rounded basis for addressing the research questions concerning how authentic and inauthentic information spreads and is perceived on social media platforms.

2.5. Ethical Considerations: Throughout the study, ethical research practices were strictly followed to protect the rights of participants. Informed consent was secured from everyone involved before any interviews took place, and participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. Additionally, the data was handled responsibly, stored securely, and used exclusively for this research, all in accordance with established ethical standards (Creswell, 2014).

3. Discussion

Vietnam's rapid digital expansion, 67 % internet penetration and an average daily usage of seven hours per user, coupled with over 64 % social media adoption by late 2019, underscores the urgency of embedding media-education principles within the nation's online discourse. In this context, social media influencers emerge not only as framers of public opinion but also as potential informal educators, modelling verification strategies and critical evaluation techniques for their followers. Integrating media-education frameworks into the analysis of influencer practices enriches our understanding of how audiences develop digital-media literacy and negotiate authenticity.

Digital Participation and the Imperative for Media Education: High levels of digital engagement create fertile ground for both accurate information dissemination and the rapid spread of misinformation. Rojas-Estrada et al. (Rojas-Estrada et al., 2023) demonstrate, through a systematic review of Latin American curricula, that embedding media competence modules significantly enhances students' ability to critically appraise online content, reducing susceptibility to fake news. Translating such curricular interventions to Vietnam's informal digital spaces suggests that influencers who explicitly model source evaluation and fact-checking can serve as catalysts for audience learning (Rojas-Estrada et al., 2023). Complementing this, Shapalova (Shapalova, 2020) argues that targeted media-education initiatives, both formal and community-based, are effective in combating disinformation, as they equip individuals with heuristics for verifying message veracity (Shapalova, 2020).

Framing, Authenticity and Educator-Influencers: Framing theory (Entman, 1993) posits that actors shape public perception through selective emphasis and narrative construction. Our findings extend this theory by illustrating that influencers often incorporate explicit media-education cues, such as annotated infographics, clickable source lists and interactive polls, to bolster digital authenticity. Nguyen et al. (Nguyen et al., 2019) observed that contextualised updates during health crises increased civic engagement and trust; we further contend that when influencers transparently reveal their verification process, they transform framing from a persuasive tactic into a pedagogical demonstration.

Audience Agency and Critical Literacy Practices: The blurring of lines between official news and user-generated discourse demands that audiences possess robust evaluative skills. Kim et al. (Kim et al., 2020) emphasise that digital literacy underpins the capacity to distinguish well-framed facts from false narratives. Our study reveals that engaged followers frequently replicate influencers' verification methods, cross-referencing statistics, assessing source credibility and

scrutinising multimedia evidence, thereby co-constructing truth claims through communal fact-checking. T.T. Nguyen et al. (Nguyen et al., 2021) caution that an influencer's credibility hinges on consistent framing transparency; audiences rapidly penalise perceived bias or omission by withdrawing trust or publicly calling out misinformation. This dynamic reflects a participatory model of media education, where learners (audiences) and educators (influencers) engage reciprocally thereby advancing collective media literacy through social feedback loops.

Presentation Formats as Pedagogical Devices: Hashtags, visuals and narrative tone are not merely stylistic choices but function as tags (e.g., #VerifyTogether), layered infographics and conversational storytelling lower cognitive barriers to critical engagement. Through signalling the need for verification and modelling analytical pathways, influencers create affordances for audiences to practise deconstruction of complex messages. Rojas-Estrada et al. (Rojas-Estrada et al., 2023) argue that signalled learning objectives, in formal curricula, heighten students' metacognitive awareness; similarly, explicit "verification prompts" embedded within influencer narratives cultivate metacognition among followers, strengthening their media-education outcomes (Rojas-Estrada et al., 2023).

Challenges of Subjectivity and Ethical Imperatives: Despite these opportunities, the subjective nature of framing invites risks. Duffy and Tan (Duffy, Tan, 2022) report that engagement imperatives can lead influencers to prioritise sensational content over factual accuracy. Our findings corroborate this tension: when sensational framing overrides transparency, audiences report confusion and declining trust. Framing theory's emphasis on omissions underscores the ethical responsibility of influencers to maintain balanced coverage (Entman, 1993). Implementing media-education standards, such as routine disclosure of verification steps and transparent correction policies, can mitigate these risks. Shapalova (Shapalova, 2020) recommends that media-education interventions include ethics modules, ensuring that content creators internalise norms of accuracy and accountability (Shapalova, 2020).

Multi-stakeholder Collaboration and Media Education Programmes: A concerted, multi-stakeholder approach is essential. Government agencies, traditional media, social platforms and influencers each hold distinct leverage points for advancing media education. Van Aelst et al. (Van Aelst et al., 2018) demonstrate that coordinated actions, such as platform-hosted literacy toolkits and public-sector fact-checking partnerships, significantly reduce exposure to misinformation. Applying these insights, we propose the development of influencer-led "media literacy charters," co-authored by regulatory bodies and platform operators, which codify best practices for framing transparency and verification pedagogy. Such charters would institutionalise media-education benchmarks, enabling audiences to hold influencers accountable to recognized standards.

Technological and Human Centred Interventions: While algorithmic moderation tools flag potentially false content, they cannot substitute for human-centred media education. Automated solutions, though valuable for early detection, often lack contextual nuance and are prone to over-blocking legitimate discourse (Barlow, Shao, 2017). Integrating algorithmic alerts with audience-driven verification workflows, such as community-curated fact-check repositories, can combine technical efficiency with critical pedagogy. Duggan (Duggan, 2015) highlights the role of audience engagement as a corrective mechanism within social media ecosystems; fostering user proficiency in interpreting platform-generated warnings and prompts represents an extension of media literacy education. Through teaching audiences not only to question the content but also to interrogate the tools that govern content distribution, stakeholders can cultivate a digitally literate citizenry equipped to navigate automated moderation systems.

Ethical Framing and Cultural Contexts: Influencers' narrative choices around sensitive issues, non-heteronormative identities, child protection and international conflicts, carry significant ethical weight. Framing theory posits that omissions or selective emphasis can alter public sentiment (Entman, 1993). In the Vietnamese context, where cultural norms and regulatory constraints shape discourse boundaries, influencer-led media-education initiatives must carefully balance openness with cultural sensitivity. Rojas-Estrada et al. (Rojas-Estrada et al., 2024) note that context-specific media literacy programmes, tailored to local norms and values, achieve higher engagement and efficacy. Accordingly, we advocate for co-designed curricula that involve community stakeholders, ensuring that pedagogical framing respects cultural context while preserving rigorous verification standards.

Towards a Reflexive Digital Public Sphere: The cumulative impact of influencer-mediated framing practices and audience literacy efforts contributes to the emergence of a reflexive digital

public sphere – one in which content creation, critique and regulation co-evolve. This dynamic ecosystem contrasts with unidirectional broadcast models, offering richer opportunities for participatory learning. Castells (Castells, 2015) and Van Dijck (Van Dijck, 2018) emphasise the centrality of feedback loops in sustaining trustworthy information environments; our findings illustrate that when influencers transparently model verification and audiences actively engage in fact-checking, the digital public sphere functions as a living media-education laboratory, continuously refining collective competencies.

Implications for Policy and Practice: Policy interventions should prioritise the integration of media education into digital governance frameworks. Regulatory bodies might mandate minimum transparency disclosures for influencers, such as clearly documented verification processes, and incentivise platform enhancements (e.g., "verification badges" for posts that follow accredited fact-checking protocols). Simultaneously, educational institutions can incorporate casestudies of influencer frames into formal media-literacy curricula, bridging informal and formal learning environments. Shapalova (Shapalova, 2020) argues that such hybrid models, combining classroom instruction with real-world digital practices, yield sustainable improvements in critical thinking and civic resilience (Shapalova, 2020).

Limitations and Future Research: While this study elucidates the pedagogical potential of influencers, its focus on high profile personalities may overlook grassroots micro-influencers who cultivate niche communities. Future research should examine how smaller, locally embedded creators deploy media-education tactics within tight-knit follower networks. Additionally, longitudinal studies are needed to assess the durability of audience learning outcomes following exposure to influencer – led verification initiatives.

4. Results

4.1. Findings from Participant Recognition Rates: The data we gathered showed different levels of recognition among the influencers surveyed (see Figure 3). The results revealed that Miss Nguyen Thuc Thuy Tien was the most recognized influencer, boasting a recognition rate of 76 %. Close behind was actor Tran Thanh at 74.5 %, while singer Chi Pu and actor Nguyen Xuan Bac were recognized by 70.8 % and 67.4 % of the participants, respectively. Other notable names included singer Hariwon at 58.1 % and Miss Nguyen Tran Khanh Van at 53.2 %.
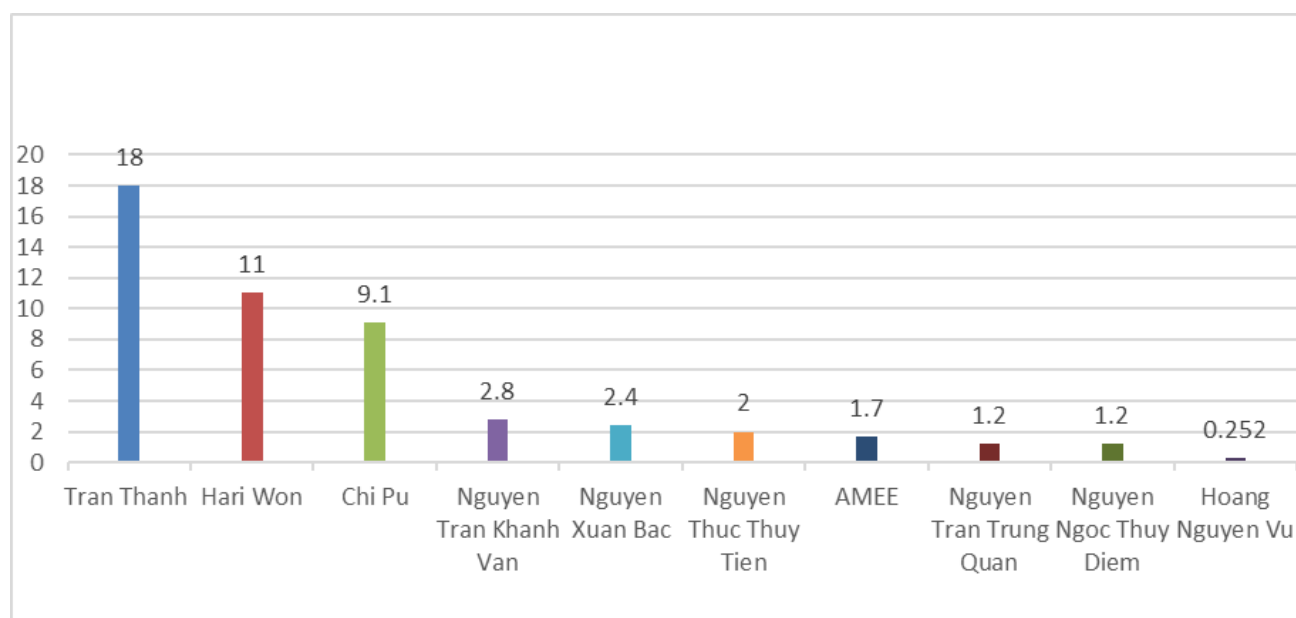
Fig. 3. Influencer Popularity Metrics. The graph depicts the number of Facebook followers of the survey subjects. *Note*: Number of people is in millions
Source: Research data

On the flip side, participants with lower recognition rates were actress and model Nguyen Ngoc Thuy Diem, as well as journalists Hoang Nuyen Vu, Vo Duc Phuc, Doan Bao Chau, Truong Huy San, and content creator Tran Chi Hieu. Their recognition rates ranged from 18 % down to

9.4 %, as illustrated in Figure 3. These numbers reflect the varying degrees of influence and public engagement among social media figures in Vietnam, showing that certain groups like singers and beauty queens, tend to resonate more with audiences, particularly the younger crowd.

The study outlines the proportions of different types of influencers, which include singers, actors, journalists, and content creators, as illustrated in Figure 4. These influencers were grouped based on their professional fields. Interestingly, celebrities make up 60 % of the respondents of the survey, with singers and actors dominating this segment, while journalists and content creators comprise the remaining 40 %.
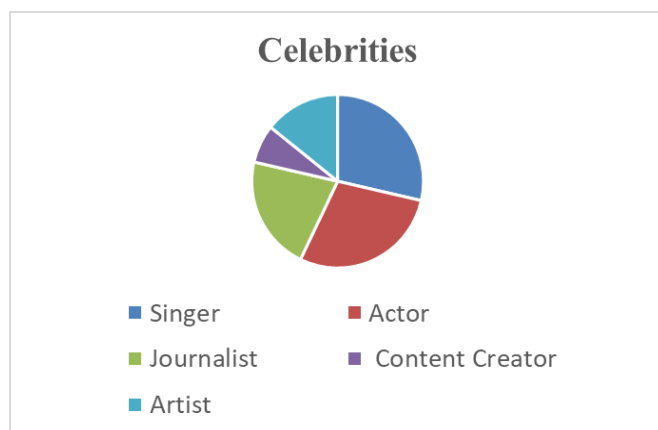
Fig. 4. Surveyed Influencer Demographics
Source: Research data

4.2. Information Regarding the Case of "Rescue Flight": The "Rescue Flight" case is a tangled web of corruption and misuse of power that has infiltrated various government sectors, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This situation has garnered a lot of public attention, especially because it is linked to the surge in costs for repatriation flights during the COVID-19 pandemic. It raises serious ethical questions about accountability and the integrity of our public officials. In April 2023, Vietnamese media shed light on the results of an investigation by the Ministry of Public Security, which put forward charges against 54 individuals involved in this scandal. A number of these people hold high-ranking positions in government, showcasing just how widespread the corruption is.

Responses from the public have been mixed. Notably, figures like Mr. Doan Chau have voiced their frustration. Chau, known for his social commentary, pointed out the decline of ethics in crucial areas like healthcare and diplomatic services. His insights, sparked by extensive media coverage, sparked a lot of engagement online, with around 2.6 thousand interactions, including many shares and comments. This response clearly shows that people are deeply yearning for transparency and justice.

On a similar note, Mr. Truong Huy San and journalist Hoang Nguyen Vu have taken active roles in discussions about the "Rescue Flight" case on social media. Huy San encouraged the public to think about the ethical standards expected of Party members, while Nguyen Vu expressed his doubts through a series of thought-provoking posts. Both of these influencers generated considerable engagement, reflecting a shared demand for accountability and a restoration of trust in governance. Their efforts highlight how social media serves as a platform for public opinion and advocacy, tackling issues of political corruption and social justice.

4.3. Information Regarding the Case of "Sovereignty of Sea and Islands": The sovereignty of the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagos remains a crucial national issue for Vietnam, deeply intertwined with the country's identity and pride in its history. The official position, outlined in directives from the Party and State, clearly upholds Vietnam's steadfast claim to these territories. Yet, the debate surrounding the "cow tongue line" continues to spark public discussions, fueled by influencers and media narratives. Platforms like Facebook have become hotspots for engagement, with journalists and public figures such as Mr. Bao Chau and Mr. Vo Duc Phuc voicing their concerns about how Vietnam's territorial claims are depicted in the media, particularly in films and stories that downplay these assertions. Their involvement has led to significant public response,

highlighting how social media can effectively mobilize opinions and strengthen national unity.

The artistic and entertainment sectors have also taken part in this dialogue, with figures like actor Nguyen Xuan Bac emerging as key advocates for the cause. Bac emphasizes the responsibility of artists, especially filmmakers, to raise awareness about territorial issues such as the disputes in the East Sea. His active support illustrates how influencers can engage the public, using their platforms to back causes that resonate with national pride and sovereignty. This case study showcases the vital role social media influencers play in addressing socio-political matters, particularly those tied to territorial claims and national identity.

4.4. Information Regarding the Case of "Contract with Social Insurance Company": The situation involving actress Ngoc Lan and her experience with Aviva Vietnam Life Insurance is a great example of how influencers can shape public discussions through their personal stories. Ngoc Lan expressed her frustration after getting misleading information about her life insurance policy, which really caught people's attention. Her livestream addressing the issue caused quite a stir, highlighting just how important influencers can be when it comes to advocating for consumers. After Ngoc Lan's issues were resolved, other influencers like Mr. Hoang Nguyen Vu kept the conversation going, bringing attention to similar problems. This shows that influencers do not just share information; they also actively support consumer rights and shine a light on corporate ethics and accountability.

Data from this case clearly shows how influencers can amplify their personal experiences to tackle larger societal issues, helping to promote transparency and ensure companies are held accountable.

4.5. Information Regarding the Case of "BLACKPINK Music Group Returns to Vietnam": The return of the internationally famous K-pop sensation BLACKPINK to Vietnam stirred up a lot of excitement across the country, especially among K-pop enthusiasts and Gen Z. The announcement sparked various reactions and ignited important discussions about cultural consumption, national pride, and youth identity.

Mr. Nguyen Vu, an influential journalist, took a deep dive into this phenomenon through a series of articles that examined the social and cultural impact of BLACKPINK's comeback. His commentary, which was published right after ticket sales kicked off, garnered 2.9 thousand interactions, along with 113 shares and 196 comments, showcasing the high public engagement surrounding the event. Vu did not just stick to the excitement; he tackled larger societal issues like the youth's connection to global pop culture and its socio-political implications.

Mr. Vo Duc Phuc also weighed in on the discussion, tying it to themes of national sovereignty and international cultural exchanges. His insights provided a critical take on how such worldwide events intersect with patriotic narratives, broadening the conversation around social and political issues. On the other hand, Mr. Tran Chi Hieu offered a more nuanced view, emphasizing the need to respect individual passions and personal circumstances within the context of these major global happenings. His balanced perspective revealed the range of opinions about how global trends interact with national identity, underscoring the diverse influence of social media figures. The case of "BLACKPINK returns to Vietnam" serves as a prime example of how social media influencers can not only reflect but also shape public opinion on cultural trends, while promoting deeper discussions about national identity, youth culture, and societal values.

4.6. Information Regarding the Case of "Supporting Non-Heteronormative Identities": Support for Non-Heteronormative Identities' community in Vietnam has gone through a remarkable change, especially during Sexual and Gender Diversity month, when there is more focus on visibility and advocacy for Non-Heteronormative Identities' rights. Key figures like Miss Grand International 2021 Nguyen Thuc Thuy Tien, Miss Universe Vietnam 2019 Nguyen Tran Khanh Van, and Miss Vietnam 2018 Tran Tieu Vy have been crucial in pushing for equality, acceptance, and love for the Non-Heteronormative Identities' community. By leveraging their platforms to share supportive messages, celebrate Sexual and Gender Diversity month, and champion Non-Heteronormative Identities' rights, these prominent personalities have greatly enhanced awareness and fostered a culture of acceptance regarding gender identity and sexual orientation in Vietnam.

For example, Nguyen Thuc Thuy Tien's post on June 3, 2022, which garnered over 54,000 likes alongside countless shares and comments, emphasized the increasing societal acceptance and support for the Non-Heteronormative Identities' community. In a similar vein,

Nguyen Tran Khanh Van's message – stressing that love knows no boundaries and includes both heterosexual and Non-Heteronormative Identities' couples – struck a chord with many people, evident from the broad engagement it received. These public acts of advocacy illustrate the essential role that influential figures have in confronting deep-seated prejudices and nurturing a more inclusive and empathetic society in Vietnam.

4.7. Information Regarding the Case of "Violence against Children": Public outrage has surged in response to recent reports of child abuse that have made headlines. A particularly disturbing case reported by Thanh Nien newspaper on January 20, 2022, drew national attention to a suspect accused of a horrifying act: driving nine nails into the skull of a three-year-old girl in Hanoi. This shocking incident sent waves of horror throughout the country, intensifying concerns about the increasing rates of child abuse and the pressing need for a stronger societal response.

In response to these unsettling events, many social media influencers have stepped up to speak out against child abuse, leveraging their platforms to advocate for justice and protection for victims. One notable figure is Nguyen Thuc Thuy Tien, Miss Grand International 2021, who shared her sorrow and frustration over such violence in a post on December 29, 2021. Her emotional message struck a chord with many, earning 34,000 likes, 606 comments, and 470 shares – demonstrating the collective heartbreak and outrage from the public. This reaction underscored the urgent call for protective measures to prevent such crimes.

Additionally, Tran Thanh, a popular MC and comedian, highlighted the critical need for child protection in a post titled "Children Need Protection: Child Abuse Is A Criminal Offense." Released shortly after media coverage of these abuses, Tran Thanh's post received an impressive 242,000 likes, 530 comments, and 912 shares, indicating strong public support for decisive action against child abuse. This level of engagement emphasizes how social media influencers play a crucial role in raising awareness, mobilizing public sentiment, and pushing for stricter measures against offenders.

The stories of child violence have not only sparked public outrage but have also motivated influencers and their followers to push for systemic reforms focused on ensuring children's safety. By harnessing their extensive platforms, these influencers are pivotal in bringing attention to the struggles of victims, unifying collective action, and advocating for robust measures to combat child abuse and protect the rights of vulnerable children.

4.8. Information Regarding the Incident of "War between Russia and Ukraine": Amid the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, prominent figures in Vietnam have stepped up to advocate for peace and denounce the violence that comes with war. Miss Grand International 2021, Nguyen Thuc Thuy Tien, took to her platform to share a powerful peace message. She expressed, "No matter the reason behind a war, it brings destruction, and the biggest victims are always innocent people." This statement resonated deeply, garnering an impressive response with 45,000 likes, 831 comments, and 399 shares, reflecting a widespread desire for peace and harmony in these turbulent times.

Hariwon, the well-known Korean-Vietnamese singer, actress, and TV host, also voiced her opposition to the war through her influential platform. Her message of advocacy was met with considerable backing, attracting about 4,500 likes, 40 comments, and three private shares. This level of engagement showcases how public figures can unite their audiences around common beliefs, especially during unstable times.

Furthermore, journalist Hoang Nguyen Vu added his voice to the anti-war discourse by analyzing public reactions to the conflict. He remarked, "This isn't a joke; the extremely dangerous idea that invading another country should be seen as 'brother Russia - brother Ukraine' is alarming." His reflection on the serious ramifications of the conflict sparked considerable attention, with 4,800 likes, 187 shares, and 812 comments, highlighting strong public dissent against the war and a collective longing for peace. These influential individuals and their statements highlight the significant role that public figures play in shaping public opinion and influencing societal attitudes. Through their advocacy, they are nurturing a collective movement towards peace and stability, urging the international community to focus on non-violence and peaceful solutions. Their unified messages of solidarity and rejection of violence demonstrate how public figures can take the lead in tackling global conflicts and championing universal peace.

4.9. Information Regarding the Case of "Women's Soccer Champion SeaGames 31": The victory of the Vietnamese women's soccer team at the SEA Games 31 marked a historic moment that resonated throughout the country, showcasing the shared spirit and pride of Vietnam.

This incredible achievement highlighted the team's skill and determination while also serving as a significant step forward in raising the visibility of Vietnamese women's football on the world stage. The team's success – celebrated for securing their fourth straight SEA Games gold medal, winning two AFF Cups, and reaching the semi-finals at ASIAD – sparked a wave of nationwide celebration and inspired countless people. In light of this landmark event, various public figures and social media influencers took to their platforms to express their pride and congratulate the team on their remarkable success. One notable voice was Nguyen Tran Khanh Van, Miss Universe Vietnam 2019, who joyfully celebrated the women's achievements. Her post resonated with the wider Vietnamese public, amassing 27,000 likes, 310 comments, and 43 shares, showcasing the significant admiration and support the team garnered after their victory.

The impact of figures like Khanh Van in promoting the SEA Games 31 win is undeniable. Their vibrant presence on social media helped boost the celebration, creating a strong sense of national pride and unity. These influencers used their platforms to reach a large audience, sharing congratulatory messages while also emphasizing the importance of sports as a way to support gender equality, perseverance, and national identity. The SEA Games 31 women's soccer championship serves as a perfect example of how sports can unite people and the crucial role social media influencers play in amplifying these moments of success. These platforms not only help foster national pride but also widen the conversation around gender equality and sportsmanship in today's society.

4.10. Mechanisms of Information Dissemination and Verification on Social Media: In the fast-paced world of social media, influencers have a wide variety of strategies at their disposal to connect with their followers. They often use hashtags, compelling stories, and striking images to craft messages that really hit home. Widely adopted hashtags such as those marking "Non-Heteronormative Identities' Sexual and Gender Diversity Month" or campaigning against violence, serve as powerful catalysts for mobilisation, drawing attention and support toward key social causes. The use of visuals like the iconic white dove symbolizing peace or the vibrant colors of the Non-Heteronormative Identities' flag, adds an extra layer of engagement, making these messages stick in the minds of their audiences.

The emotional resonance woven into these posts is evident in the heartfelt appeals made by public figures like Nguyen Thuc Thuy Tien, as well as personal stories shared by Tran Thanh and Hari Won. This genuine emotional connection not only deepens their relationship with followers but also invites conversation and meaningful interactions. Similarly, stories that Nguyen Ngoc Thuy Diem shares about family themes tap into relatability, effectively bridging the gap between celebrities and their fans.

Platforms like Facebook are crucial in this context, assisting influencers with the verification of the information they share. Tools like the blue checkmark serve as visible signs of credibility, signaling to audiences that the content is coming from trustworthy and verified sources. This kind of verification helps build trust among users, pointing them toward reliable information. However, the verification process is not just on the influencers; the audience also plays a vital role. By actively engaging – through feedback, sharing insights, and participating in discussions – social media users help create a network that aims to identify misinformation and confirm what is authentic. This interconnected approach, blending influencers' communication tactics with audience participation, underscores the shared responsibility in creating informed and credible online communities. Every share, comment, and post contributes to a bigger picture, impacting public opinion and shaping the digital landscape.

Moving from an examination of these mechanisms to addressing the study's core research questions, our findings show the ways in which Vietnamese social media influencers contribute to the verification of information during pivotal events, including health emergencies and national discussions. Our research suggests that influencers play a crucial role in sharing verified, trustworthy information, thereby enhancing levels of trust and credibility in the digital realm. We also looked into how users in Vietnam evaluate the authenticity of information from influencers. This exploration revealed that they engage in careful evaluation practices, considering the reliability of sources, the way content is presented, and the feedback from the wider community to navigate the complex online information landscape. This finding highlights the importance of digital literacy as an essential skill in today's information-driven age. Finally, we examined how different communication methods – like hashtags, emotional visuals, and storytelling techniques – affect the public's perception and understanding of crucial issues such as Non-Heteronormative

Identities' rights and child welfare. These findings offer valuable insights into how influencers strategically customize their communication styles to enhance engagement, establish connections with audiences, and create meaningful social change.

5. Conclusion

This study confirms that social media influencers occupy a dual position in Vietnam's digital ecosystem, acting both as framers of public discourse and as informal media-education agents. Viewed through the lens of Framing Theory (Entman, 1993), influencers do more than transmit content: they actively construct narratives that shape audiences' perceptions of social, political and economic issues. During crises, such as public health emergencies and national sovereignty debates, this narrative construction can bolster or undermine public trust, depending on the transparency of the verification processes modelled by influencers. Our findings underscore that when influencers explicitly demonstrate fact-checking techniques, cite source material and invite interactive dialogue, they help cultivate followers' critical evaluation skills and enhance digital authenticity (Nguyen et al., 2019).

Nevertheless, the study also highlights the intrinsic subjectivity of influencer-mediated framing. Individual biases, commercial interests and ideological leanings may skew narratives away from objective fact. Framing Theory posits that selective emphasis and omission can distort truth (Entman, 1993), and our data reveal instances where engagement-driven sensationalism eclipsed rigorous verification (Duffy, Tan, 2022). In this respect, influencers' pedagogical potential is contingent upon their adherence to media-education principles that prioritise transparency, accountability and ethical framing.

A key contribution of this research is the illustration of a dynamic feedback loop between influencers and audiences. Through comments, reposts and collaborative fact-checking, followers engage in communal verification, effectively co-constructing the veracity of narratives (Chong, Druckman, 2007; Duggan, 2015). This participatory model aligns with contemporary media-education frameworks, which posit that active learner engagement, rather than passive reception, is essential to developing durable media literacy competencies. In Vietnam, where the boundary between professionally verified news and user-generated content is increasingly porous, fostering such collaborative verification routines is imperative.

The pedagogical efficacy of framing formats also emerged as a critical insight. Hashtags signalling fact-checks (e.g., #VerifyTogether), layered infographics and conversational narrative tones function as learning scaffolds, lowering cognitive barriers to critical engagement and modelling deconstruction of complex messages (Chong, Druckman, 2007; Rojas-Estrada et al., 2024). Through embedding explicit verification cues within posts, clickable source links, visual annotations and step-by-step analysis, educator-influencers create micro-learning experiences that strengthen followers' metacognitive awareness and foster autonomous evaluation skills.

Despite these advances, challenges remain. Automated content-moderation tools can flag potentially false frames but lack the nuanced context that human-centred media education provides (Barlow, Shao, 2017). Moreover, the ethical responsibility of influencers to maintain balanced coverage is not uniformly observed, leading at times to audience confusion and trust erosion (Kim et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2021). Addressing these gaps demands a holistic approach that combines technological safeguards with robust media-education initiatives.

Policy and Practice Implications: To capitalise on influencers' pedagogical capacities and mitigate disinformation, we recommend:

1. *Structured Media Education Programmes for Influencers*: Develop accredited training modules, co-designed by academic institutions, media regulators and platform operators, which cover ethical framing, fact-checking methodologies and pedagogical design. Such programmes can draw on models like the All-Russian Open Media School, which effectively integrates theory and practice.

2. *Platform-Level Verification Incentives*: Introduce "Verified Media-Education" badges for posts that adhere to documented fact-checking protocols. Algorithmic prioritisation of such posts will encourage influencers to incorporate transparent verification routines and signal to audiences which content has met established pedagogical standards.

3. *Multi-Stakeholder Media-Education Charters*: Establish formal "Media-Education Charters" co-authored by government agencies, social media platforms, traditional media and

influencer associations. These charters should codify best practices for framing transparency, correction policies and audience engagement, thereby institutionalising media-education benchmarks (Van Aelst et al., 2018).

4. *Community-Centred Literacy Campaigns*: Launch nationwide digital literacy campaigns that teach citizens how to interrogate the framing of online information, evaluate source credibility and navigate automated moderation prompts. Such campaigns should be culturally tailored and leverage influencer partnerships to extend reach and reinforce media-education messages.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research: While this study illuminates the pedagogical promise of influencers, it focuses primarily on high-profile personalities in urban centres. Future research should:

– Examine grassroots micro-influencers operating in rural and niche communities, to assess differential effects on media literacy practices.

– Conduct longitudinal studies measuring the durability of audience learning outcomes following exposure to influencer – led verification initiatives.

– Explore the interplay between algorithmic curation mechanisms and audience critical literacy, investigating how platform design influences the uptake of media education cues.

Final Reflections: Ultimately, the legitimacy and resilience of Vietnam's digital public sphere hinge upon the integration of media education and media literacy principles within all facets of content creation, distribution and reception. Social media influencers, when equipped with ethical framing tools and supported by collaborative governance frameworks, can transcend their role as mere opinion leaders to become effective educators. Through modelling of transparent verification processes, fostering interactive feedback loops and championing media-education standards, influencers and audiences together can cultivate a discerning citizenry – capable of separating fact from fiction and sustaining a trustworthy, accountable digital information environment.

6. Acknowledgements

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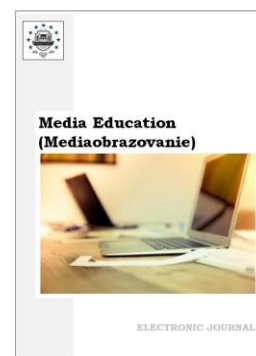
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The Portrayal of Education in Hindi Cinema: Media Literacy, Motivation, Ability, Hardship and Conspiracy

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Abstract

The present study examines the representation of the Indian educational system in Bollywood. Through a qualitative approach using textual analysis, 17 films are analysed to explore a nuanced portrayal of themes such as political influence, social inequality, the monopolisation of education by the elite, poverty, teacher exploitation, and systemic corruption. Major parameters such as motivation, hardship, ability, tendency, and conspiracy form the basis of the research. The research highlights how Bollywood uses the medium of storytelling not only to entertain but also to raise awareness within the Indian education system. These films often challenge the dominance of private educational institutions, shedding light on exorbitant tuition fees, discriminatory practices, and the unethical collusion between policymakers and education brokers. At the same time, the narrative emphasises the transformative power of education when coupled with personal virtues like motivation, resilience, hard work, and determination. The findings suggest that Bollywood is an important force that shapes public perception by fostering critical thinking and encouraging viewers to question social norms surrounding education. Ultimately, the study demonstrates that these films reflect both the struggles and hopes embedded in the pursuit of academic success in India, portraying education as a tool not only for personal empowerment but also for social change.

Keywords: education system, Bollywood, movies, exploitation of teachers, cinema studies.

1. Introduction

The notion of "education" in cinema most likely comes from the Latin root "educare" or "educere", which means "to lead out" or "to bring forth". In the wider sense of cinema, education is the process of reflecting, instructing, or informing viewers through the art form of a movie (Bass, Good, 2004). It encompasses not just traditional education through documentaries or educational films but also the more general concept of acquiring knowledge through storytelling, character development, and the topic inquiry found in fictional films. Cinema provides viewers with insights into various traditions, historical events, social challenges, and experiences among people, making it an effective medium for education and exchange between cultures (Kumar, Sarkar, 2022).

There is hope for breakthroughs in educational growth because of the film's tremendous effect and instructional worth. Jawahar Lal Nehru, the country's first prime minister, once emphasised the unrivalled power of Indian cinema to impact social values. With an eye toward a cinema that provides both amusement and enlightenment, he advised filmmakers to give priority to high-calibre projects with social and educational value. Nehru's demand for movies that uphold

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social and educational ideals highlights how movies have the power to influence positive change and advance society (Rahul, Singh, 2022).

The concept of employing film for educational purposes originates from scientific findings indicating that memories infused with emotion endure longer and are more easily retrieved (Knight, Mather, 2009). Films have already become an integral component of conventional teaching methods (Gallagher et al., 2014). Cinema can be seen as a 'global language' that breaks down barriers to textual knowledge for people of all cultures. Movies do not have the same limitations as books do. They periodically deviate from the subject matter and discuss issues that are not covered in the course but are nonetheless essential, such as the class and gender problems depicted in the film *Gandhi* (Sameer, Gupta, 2017). Cinema has greatly influenced our academic and professional development in addition to providing us with entertainment. People have used it as a tool to learn, grow, and be inspired (Yellowbrick, 2023). Katariya indicates that films are more successful than standard teaching tools. Movies in higher-level management classes improve engagement, accommodate different learning styles, and promote cultural sensitivity (Kataria, 2025). Bedjaoui posited that Algerian cinema is far more diversified than has usually been portrayed. It also highlights undervalued films with artistic and social significance (Bedjaoui, 2025). Torres focusses on the educational value of films while simultaneously emphasising the importance of structured educational support from instructors and carers in helping kids acquire critical, correct, and deeper viewpoints (Torres, 2025).

Waterman examined the socio-political influences and the ways in which the early 1900s shaped the stories and characters in silent comedies in American cinema. The author's thorough textual examination of silent comedy films indicate that these pictures provided both escapism and subtly critical social commentary, reflecting and challenging social conventions (Waterman, 2025).

White examines Captain America's code of ethics, demonstrating how moral principles like bravery, humility, and honesty are still applicable in the face of contemporary ethical dilemmas. The findings demonstrate the timeless worth of traditional values and provide moral character insights through popular culture (White, 2024). Cinema has a significant impact on people. Although there aren't many movies about education, a few Bollywood productions have openly criticised and discussed the shortcomings of the Indian educational system (Kumar, 2020). Forgacs posited that film served as a highly visible and regulated platform where artistic originality and political control regularly collided throughout Italy's modern history (Forgacs, 2006). Chennault identify that the films frequently portray urban educational settings as undesirable, associating them with criminality and social deterioration. Stereotypes often portray minority pupils as disruptive or in need of assistance (Chennault, 2006).

Media literacy, film education and social empowerment: Media literacy denotes the capacity to access, understand, evaluate, and produce messages across diverse mediums (Kumar, Sharma, 2023). Media-literate people can create better career opportunities for themselves and others. Media literacy significantly affects children. They possess the capability to analyse media content. They may meet online resources that provide digital knowledge and skills, including information retrieval and social standards around online conduct (Swart et al., 2024). These days, media has become a complex and multifaceted tool. Its correct use brings positive results, while its negative use can pose a threat to society. In such a situation, society can be made aware of the correct use of media through media training.

On the other hand, a great film is not just a means of entertainment. It conveys serious messages and timeless wisdom to society. A film can be one of the most useful tools for effective teaching. It imparts meaningful experiences to the learner. Films enhance the critical thinking, contemplation, conversation, or analytical abilities of viewers. In India, films are no less than an educational institution for the general public (Pandey et al., 2023). Common people learn about lifestyle, attire, cuisine, and the distinctions between right and wrong from films. However, in the diverse landscape of India, a single film cannot equally represent the ideological knowledge of all social classes. This is why regional cinema has emerged alongside Hindi cinema in India.

Review of literature

Cindric did a comparative study of *Tomboy* (2011) and *Ma vie en Rose* (1997) to investigate why *Tomboy* caused political uproar in France. Through comparative analysis, findings suggest that *Tomboy's* inclusion in school program*s, such as École et Cinéma,* sparked petitions and protests, highlighting worries about its ideological influence and altering gender norms in education (Cindric, 2025). While, Zhou investigated film productivity, value, and impact.

The researcher uses computational textual analysis and visualisation methods to investigate global market performance. The survey found that BRI films performed poorly abroad because of political issues and inadequate plots. They aren't connecting with their audience. The study recommends developing better films and advertising them more (Zhou, 2025).

Film *Mean Girls* (2004) highlights the societal changes in America following the 9/11 attacks. The study adopts a qualitative descriptive methodology based on literary sociology. Mean Girls promotes talks about how school environments can mirror broader social issues, as well as how students navigate their identities in these contexts (Khairani et al., 2025).

Mazierska conducted a study with the aim of exploring how Polish cinema is canonised both in Poland and outside the world. The researcher takes a qualitative approach and investigates the role of history, prominent directors, and selection criteria. The study finds that despite some global recognition, Polish films are frequently neglected in international canons due to cultural differences (Mazierska, 2025). Nguyen investigates how the PBS documentary series *Asian Americans* builds anti-essentialist critiques that function as rhetorical weapons for building coalitions across Asian American communities. The researcher conducted a critical discourse analysis. The study found that the series promotes critical thinking and can help instructors begin topics about race, identity, and representation, strengthening the multicultural education curriculum (Nguyen, 2025).

Omran et al. study the use of cinematic descriptions in auditing education to improve immersive education. Using a quantitative approach, the study finds that films significantly enhance students' understanding of complex audit concepts, auditor skills, and ethical challenges while promoting critical thinking and professional scepticism (Omran et al., 2025). Fedorov and his research colleagues conduct a study to explore the representation of Western films on the Soviet screen during the Cold War phase of the USSR. The study conducts a qualitative content analysis on articles released from 1969 to 1985. The result of the study indicates that evaluations were strongly ideological, focusing on criticism of bourgeois film and its alleged detrimental effects on Soviet consumers (Fedorov et al., 2024). Hage combines theoretical ideas from Bourdieu, Lacan, and Foucault with a qualitative analysis. Findings of the study demonstrate that societal and psychological processes actively sustain apathy towards violence rather than it being passive (Hage, 2024).

Fitria conducted research to explore how Indian cinema presents the educational system. The researcher uses a qualitative descriptive technique to analyse numerous Indian films. Findings indicate that Indian cinema largely overlooks marginalised communities' educational experiences, with a few films accurately representing their obstacles. Some films promote inclusive education (Fitria, 2024). Jones investigates 49 European arthouse films released between 2005 and 2015 that received well over one million non-domestic admissions. Findings from qualitative research of box office data and film content show that films like The Lives of Others, Volver, Amour, and The Hunt provide important insights into European societal challenges (Jones, 2024). Matthew and his colleagues employed textual analysis as their methodology. The book has 49 chapters written by authors from five continents and covers subjects such as substance addiction, chronic illness, mental health, and medical professionalism. The findings indicate that using films can effectively build empathy, critical thinking, and a deeper understanding of difficult medical and ethical issues in students, expanding the teaching experience beyond typical didactic methods (Matthew et al., 2024).

Gopinath examines how modern *Hindi* biopics shape national identity narratives in India's neoliberal and Hindutva political setting. The study uses a qualitative examination of selected biopics, and the results indicate that these biopics successfully translate personal success stories into nationalistic tales. By showcasing ordinary people who overcome hurdles to achieve greatness, the films encourage audiences to internalise specific nationalistic ideas, thereby influencing the overall consciousness and identity of Indian nationals (Gopinath, 2024). Bhattacharya's conducts a study on Hindi cinema and investigates the changing image of nationalism. Using a qualitative methodology based on textual analysis, the findings indicate a shift from previous hyper-nationalistic depictions. This transition represents a shift in Hindi cinema towards more inclusive and global depictions of national identity (Bhattacharya, 2024). Gürkan and Gezmen investigate the portrayal of young protagonists in Turkish cinema during the Yeşilçam period (1950–1980), with an emphasis on the legendary figure Sezercik. The researchers used qualitative textual analysis to examine nine Sezercik films. The study indicates that such cinematic portrayals support and perpetuate group ideals by portraying the child as a symbol of national identity and moral rectitude (Gürkan, Gezmen, 2023).

2. Materials and methods

The broad objective of this study is to look at Bollywood contemporary movies' portrayal of the Indian educational system. The study is analytical in nature. We adopted a qualitative method to conduct this research study. We used textual analysis to meet the objective. We selected the film using the purposive sampling method. We chose 17 movies that address issues such as political power, inequality, ending the rich people's monopoly on education, combating poverty, and the exploitation of teachers. The researcher used a continuous comparative technique and concentrated on the storylines of the following movies: *12th Fail, Why Cheat India, Super30, Hindi Medium, Rough Book, Chalk n Duster, Nil Battey Sannata, Aarakshan, Paathshaala, Chichore, Raatchasi, Hichki, English vinglish*, F.A.L.T.U, *Stanley Ka Dibba, 3 idiots*, and *I Am Kalam.*

3. Discussion

Failures and obstacles present opportunities for growth and learning, rather than signifying the end of the journey. Resilience is crucial when facing setbacks, and maintaining it helps us seize new opportunities. *Vidhu Vinod Chopra's latest movie, 12th Fail* (by Vidhu Vinod Chopra, 2023)*, conveys this message. 12th Fail*, the movie based on a book by Anurag Pathak, tells the story of Manoj Kumar Sharma, an IPS officer. It is the narrative of a lad from Chambal who, after failing in 12th grade, comes to Delhi, passes the UPSC exam, and becomes an officer (Kumar, 2023). This film also examines the shortcomings of the Indian educational system, including instances where schools openly collude with pupils to cheat on tests so that the children pass and the school management may present their institution's achievements to higher authorities (Gupta, 2024). One day, Manoj decides which career path to take when DSP Dushyant Singh (Priyanshu Chatterjee) comes to the school and stops the children from cheating (Roy, 2023). Thereafter, the protagonist starts preparing for the UPSC with confidence and dedication. During the UPSC interview, he confidently stated that if he is not selected for IPS, he will return to his village and meticulously educate the youngsters so they do not have to copy (Kukreja, 2023). The protagonist's bravery serves as a powerful motivator for leading a life that endures over time. Viewers can gain insight into the significance of self-awareness, reflection, and discovering one's genuine passion through the protagonist's experiences. The film also underscores the significance of mentorship and encouraging relationships in overcoming failure.

Super 30 (by Vikas Bahal, 2019) is another captivating and inspirational biographical drama about mathematician Anand Kumar. The film depicts Kumar's rise from humble beginnings to the establishment of the Super 30 programme, through which he prepares poor children for the highly competitive Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) entrance exam (Sengupta, 2019). It highlights gaps in the educational system and argues for reforms to guarantee that all students, regardless of socioeconomic status, have access to a high-quality education (Sen, 2020). The film effectively shows the socioeconomic obstacles that disadvantaged pupils confront and focuses on the need for equal educational opportunity (Ghosh, 2019; Joshi, 2019b). This film helps kids break the cycle of poverty by building their confidence and ambition. The film provides guidance and motivation to people who are confronting life's problems. Anand Kumar's journey from humble beginnings to triumph against all obstacles inspires people to pursue their aspirations with tenacity and resilience.

Raatchasi (by Sy Gowthamraj, 2019) centres around the challenges faced by a dedicated teacher Geetha Rani (Menon, 2019). The movie underscores, particularly in the face of hardship, the value of commitment, empathy, and willpower in bringing about positive change through the main character Geetha Rani (Ramanujam, 2019; Subhakeerthana, 2019). Recently the University Grants Commission (UGC) found that some colleges were awarding degrees in violation of the UGC Act. This situation jeopardises the future of thousands of students. According to a report in the Hindustan Times, the UGC recently announced its annual list of "fake institutions," which includes 20 colleges listed state-wide (Desk, 2023).

Why Cheat India (by Soumik Sen, 2019) is a thought-provoking film that explores the complex network of corruption in India's educational system. The film illuminates the pervasive academic malpractices that afflict the nation, including exam cheating, the fabrication of credentials, and admission exam manipulation (Banerjee, 2019). Protagonist (played by Emraan Hashmi) gives an impressive performance as Rakesh Singh, a clever businessman who takes advantage of the system's weaknesses for his benefit. His portrayal gives the character more nuance and highlights the moral difficulty of an ambitious man operating in a corrupt system. The film does a good job of capturing the harsh realities that face students as well as the social pressures

that push them to turn to unethical measures to ensure their future (Gupta, 2019; Joshi, 2019). The film serves as a catalyst for addressing structural issues and underscores the importance of fostering a culture of integrity and meritocracy in education.

This is especially true as many young Indian students suffer from stress and extreme anxiety as they sit for the extremely difficult engineering and medical entrance exams. And when they do not get successful results, they find themselves trapped in the whirlpool of uncertainty and sadness. Unable to accept rejection in the face of family and social pressure, they often resort to suicidal or such activities that cause irreparable harm to themselves and their families. This bitter truth lies at the heart of *Chhichhore's* story (Sengupta, 2019). *Chhichhore* (by Nitesh Tiwari, 2019), starring Sushant Singh Rajput and Shraddha Kapoor, is an impressive film. This narrative is about children in schools and universities who, under pressure to study, make decisions like suicide without thinking (Rosario, 2019). The movie promotes accepting failure as a necessary component of learning and highlights the value of friendship in enduring life's ups and downs. The movie examines the importance of the expectations of scholastic success (Mitra, 2019).

A film that covers the concept of overcoming hurdles with tenacity and determination, *Hichki* (by Siddharth P Malhotra) is a heartwarming and inspirational production. The role of Rani in this movie is modelled after that of American teacher and motivational speaker Brad Cohen, who overcame several obstacles related to his Tourette syndrome to become a successful teacher. Brad Cohen's book about his experiences served as the basis for the 2008 release of the American film *Front of the Class*. *Hichki'* is also based on this film. The tale focuses on Naina's students' improvement rather than on how Tourette's affects her (Havis, 2018; Unnikrishnan, 2018). The film follows the journey of Naina Mathur, a lady with Tourette syndrome who wants to teach despite encountering discrimination from society and hardships in her personal life (Vats, 2024). The story focuses on the actress's unique teaching strategies and the significant transformations she brings about in her students. The film demonstrated how to turn one's weaknesses into strengths.

Currently, English-medium education has entangled middle-class society so deeply that breaking its clutches is impossible. *Hindi Medium* (by Saket Chaudhary) is a thought-provoking and socially important film that provides a devastating critique of the Indian educational system and social biases. The film recounts the path of a modest couple, played by Irrfan Khan and Saba Qamar, as they navigate the complications of getting their daughter enrolled in a top English-medium school. The movie explores India's profound fascination with English education and society's status symbols (Gupta, 2017; Vats, 2017). The film shines a light on the difficulties that non-English-speaking parents confront in delivering good education for their children, as well as the depths they will go to ensure their ward's success in the future. The narrative of the film serves as an alarming call to action about the disparities in the education system and encourages viewers to reflect on the true meaning of success and the value of inclusivity and empathy. It highlights how crucial humility, understanding, and compassion are for bridging the divide between various socioeconomic classes.

Chalk n Duster (by Jayant Gilatar) represents a positive advancement over schools. Teachers at *Chalk n Duster* spearheaded a moral movement advocating for teachers' rights and self-respect. They lead the fight against those who exploit education for their gain (Iyer, Vats, 2016). The movie highlights how important educators are in forming the next generation. It draws attention to the commitment, diligence, and enthusiasm that many educators have for their work despite obstacles. The movie raises concerns about the quality and accessibility of education, especially for pupils from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, in light of India's growing commercialisation of education. It explores the conflict between private interests and education's real goal. The film depicts the exploitation of teachers by unethical management, exposing topics such as low pay, job insecurity, and miserable conditions at work (Gupta, 2016). It encourages viewers to consider the need for more respect and backing for teachers. The film's realistic depiction of the difficulties experienced by educators in modern-day India is among its strongest points (Bhatnagar, 2016).

Fresh, young actors largely comprise *Rough Book's* cast, portraying a diverse range of learners. The film's depiction of today's kids is ludicrous. For instance, the film refers to the main character as Google Baba, asserting that a smartphone surpasses human intelligence (Sankhayan Ghosh, 2016). The movie provides an insightful analysis of the educational system. *Rough Book* is an admirable endeavour that poses significant questions about learning and the hunt for understanding (Yadav, 2016). The film beautifully depicted the topic of 'teacher poaching' and the schemes that are endemic in the Indian educational system. *Rough Book* is an unconventional

recipe with professional components reminiscent of past films like *Aarakshan, Faltu,* and *Paathshaala* (Bhatnagar, 2016). The movie emphasises the idea that learning should go beyond memorising and grading; it should include stimulating kids' minds, encouraging curiosity, and preparing them for the complexities of the real world.

Nil Battey Sannata (by Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari) conveys the challenges and dreams of a mother-daughter combo. This film about girls' education is incredibly intriguing. The plot follows Chanda (Swara Bhaskar), a maid with giant ambitions for her child, who has only one dream in life: to see her daughter Apu (Ria Shukla) thrive. However, Apu is an irresponsible girl who cannot understand her mother's struggles. To motivate Apu, Chanda enrols herself in her daughter's school in 10th grade, and she challenges her daughter to defeat her (Basu, 2016). The film's title, *Zero Divided by Zero Equals Infinity*, represents the idea that regardless of where you start in life, there is always room for unlimited progress. The film's ability to balance humour with earnestness while addressing weighty subjects like education and poverty is one of its strongest points (Arora, 2016; Bhaskaran, 2016). *Nil Battey Sannata* teaches many insightful concepts that connect with its audience. The film emphasises the transformative potential of education in shaping one's future. It highlights how education may end the poverty cycle and provide access to opportunities that were previously unthinkable. The film effectively depicts parents' sacrifices for the prosperity of their kids and their success (Jhunjhunwala, 2016).

When we talk about language acquisition and self-improvement, the movie *English Vinglish* (by Gauri Shinde) has a lot to teach us. The main character of the movie is Shashi, a middle-aged woman who has trouble speaking English. Her quest to become fluent in English provides motivation and emphasises how crucial language learning is in the modern, interconnected world (Bhatia, 2013). By presenting Shashi's travels in a foreign nation and her contacts with people from various backgrounds, the film promotes cultural understanding and empathy in viewers (Tsering, Chopra, 2012). Shashi's character highlights the transformational potential of knowledge and self-improvement. As Shashi grows confident in her English skills, she experiences personal growth and recognises her worth beyond conventional norms. The film also challenges prejudices about language proficiency and gender roles, particularly in the context of Indian culture.

The film *Aarakshan* shows that politics and politicians' mindsets shape a nation's education system. In this film, politics plays a key role in the education system, affecting the plot and driving the debate around the topic of caste-based reservations in India. The Supreme Court's 2008 decision to allow extra reservations for other underprivileged classes serves as the focal point of the film (Malani, 2011a). The movie shows how political agendas shape decisions made at academic institutions. The principled college administrator, Dr Prabhakar Anand, is under political pressure to impose caste-based reservation quotas. Manipulation and opportunism result from different political factions and interest groups advocating for their ambitions concerning reservations (Saltz, 2011). Meritocracy and academic excellence are frequently sacrificed in the struggle for power and supremacy because political concerns are often given precedence over sound educational ideals when making judgements. The film also looks at the clash between political utility and social fairness. Reflecting larger discussions in Indian society, some of the protagonist's support caste-based reservations as a way to right historical wrongs, while others support equal opportunity and merit-based hiring (Thomas, 2011). People portray the political system of reservation as corrupt and full of nepotism, in which powerful people abuse their connections to gain benefits and favours. This culture of favouritism maintains inequality and further erodes the legitimacy of the educational system (Gupta, 2011b). The movie emphasises how complex political forces are and how they affect students, educational establishments, pupils, and society as a whole.

I Am Kalam (by Nila Madhab Panda) is a touching and inspiring film about resilience, tenacity, and the transformational power of education. Set in rural India, the film depicts the narrative of Chhotu, a young kid from an underprivileged home who aspires to a better life (Malani, Kamath, 2011). The film emphasises the significance of education as a vehicle for social and economic development. It highlights the fact that education is a key component of one's rights and a means of achieving better things in life.

Stanley Ka Dabba (by Amole Gupte) is also a moving film about a little kid named Stanley who, unlike his classmates, is unable to bring lunch to school. The movie's core theme is about the necessity of empathy, kindness, and every child's right to an education (Guha, 2013). The film raises awareness about issues such as child labour, poverty, and the difficulties that disadvantaged children experience in obtaining education and basic necessities (Bamzai, 2011). The film

emphasises educators' responsibility for shaping students' lives, as well as the need to foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment. This film parallels the message of *I Am Kalam*.

The comedy film *F.A.L.T.U.* (by Remo D'Souza) exposes the shortcomings of the educational system. A crew of struggling undergraduates planned to establish a fictitious institution in response to pressure from society and their parents (Kabra, 2011). The narrative with its absurd concept and energetic performances not only offers profound knowledge about the educational system, but it certainly makes entertaining (Gupta, Nahta, 2011). The film's message centres around questioning conventional ideas of education and achievement. Through its humorous storyline, *F.A.L.T.U.* implies that following one's interests and abilities is just as important to proficiency as achieving scholastic success.

Paathshaala (by Milind Ukey) addresses challenges prevalent in the Indian educational system. The film is based on the insatiable expectations of the contemporary educational system. The plot focusses on a team of teachers and students at an evaluation school, emphasising the difficulties they experience as academic pressure rises. The film discusses various topics, notably the commercialised nature of education, the influence of competitiveness on students' psychological well-being, and the value of holistic learning (Gupta, 2010). The rivalry between the principal of Saraswati Vidya Mandir, played by Nana Patekar, and profit-driven management, who want to turn education into a profitable company, is central to the plot (Sharma; PTI, 2010). The film is a thought-provoking reflection on the inadequacies in the Indian educational system. It also succeeds in stimulating discussions about the demand for reforming the education system and the significance of putting kids' well-being ahead of academic accomplishment.

Three Idiots (by Rajkumar Hirani) is masterfully blends humour, emotion, and social satire. The film tells the tale of three engineering students who negotiate the demands and expectations of the Indian educational system. The film discusses the defects and pressures of the educational system while emphasising the value of creativity, critical thinking, and pursuing one's objectives (Malani, 2009). The film delicately and wryly tackles significant topics such as mental health, family expectations, and academic stress, thereby deeply connecting with its audience (Tsering, 2009). The film demonstrates that one should never lose the desire to live. Three Idiots is more than a film: it's a dedication to life, friendship, and the quest for joy (Shekhar, 2010). The lesson of Three Idiots is that real education entails critical thinking, innovative thinking, and the application of knowledge in real-world situations; it transcends rote memorisation and academic success.

During this flow, we never avoid the film *Taare Zameen Par* (by Aamir Khan). The story of the film follows Ishaan, a young boy struggling academically. He finds support and understanding from a compassionate and talented art teacher who recognises his dyslexia (Holillah et al., 2021). Through their special bond, the film highlights the importance of acknowledging individual differences in learning styles and talents, shedding light on dyslexia, and challenging societal perceptions of academic success. Indian cinema can be a potent tool for tackling societal concerns, such as the problems in the educational system (Kaur, Mazzarella, 2009).

Indian films frequently disregard the perspectives of rural and oppressed groups in favour of metropolitan, middle-class storyline (Yengde, 2018). Films skilfully handle themes of love, rebellion, and social conventions against the backdrop of rural Maharashtra, providing an emotionally charged and profound cinematic experience. The film celebrates the everlasting force of perseverance while pushing viewers to face the brutal realities of discrimination based on caste (Majumdar, 2016). In the movie *Imtihan* (by Madan Sinha), an idealistic professor attempts to reform a number of disruptive college pupils. *Naya Kadam* (by Kovelamudi Raghavendra Rao) discusses the role of literature in empowering and developing women in Indian communities, emphasising its significance for national advancement. *Bairavaa* (by Bharathan) tells that leading a college requires honesty and sincerity to ensure students' safety and quality education. Ujjwal Singh (2008) attributes a student's tragic suicide to societal and parental pressures for academic success in *Chal Chalein.* His friends opt for legal action against his parents, the government, and the educational establishment, advocating for an educational system that nurtures rather than burdens. The film poignantly illustrates the struggles of students, like an aspiring writer forced into physics and math or a talented artist sidelined by academic demands, urging a revaluation of educational priorities (Tuteja, 2009).

Joel Piqué-Buisan and their colleagues reviewed 17 studies from 1983 to 2023 to evaluate their pedagogical uses and analyse their medical expertise. With the use of a systematic review, their findings suggest that films are valuable additions to traditional medical education, enhancing student

engagement with complex topics, promoting critical skill development, and providing an innovative teaching method (Piqué-Buisan et al., 2024). Walton-Fisette and his colleagues scrutinise the portrayal of physical education (PE) in American films, contrasting it with optimal practices and cultural perspectives. Through the systematic analysis of the movie scenes, researchers find that prejudice and male dominance constructs are revealed as recurrent motifs in physical education. These film portrayals influence public attitudes and views about physical education, which may impact policy and the delivery of such programs (Walton-Fisette et al., 2017).

The documentary *Waiting for 'Superman* (2010) analyses the shortcomings of the American public education system, revealing the challenges faced by students nationwide and highlighting the policies that have contributed to these issues. Through interviews with educators, it addresses concerns such as the impact of the *No Child Left Behind program*, the role of teachers' unions, and the high dropout rates. Despite increased funding, the film notes a decline in educational quality, with a significant portion of students failing to meet grade-level standards in reading and math. It points to teachers' unions as a major factor in these challenges (Journell, Buchanan, 2013).

The aim is to elucidate a yearly action-research project, where students actively participate in the production of their edits and engage with audiovisual language, cinema, and image analysis within a higher education course on art and technology. Anabela Moura carried out a study with her research colleagues. The results show how important visual culture analysis is for improving students' comprehension of art and film and how an interdisciplinary approach, along with adaptable and intriguing teaching strategies, can help students develop a more critical perspective on society (Moura et al., 2021). The film Dasvi focuses on the importance of education in social life and making people behave socially (Kumar, Sharma, 2023).

Shoaib Mansoor's film *Bol* (2011) serves as a critique of how Pakistani patriarchy manipulates religious texts to maintain control over women. It introduces the concept of Islamic feminism, which challenges traditional interpretations and exposes gender injustices perpetuated through religious doctrines. By advocating for the convergence of Islam and feminism, *Bol* suggests that women's rights movements can make meaningful strides in Islamic societies (Sarwar, Zeng, 2021). Mansoor's other films, *Khuda Kay Liye* and *Varna*, encourage viewers to examine the media's role in perpetuating stereotypical images of women and explore avenues for empowerment, action, and global feminist discourse (Gershon, 2021).

In today's world, digital technology is critical for producing compelling cultural content for language education. Films are very effective for teachers with varied cultural backgrounds. Tjahjani and his fellow researchers' study looks at the cultural context of the French film *Intouchables* and the Canadian francophone film Monsieur *Lazhar*. Analysing the cultural characteristics of these films can help us design digital tools for teaching French. This study produces two main results: a structural analysis of the films to discover cultural content and a practical categorisation of this content for use in language training materials (Tjahjani, Jinanto, 2021).

Hasan Gürkan and Başak Gezmenc focus on films in which kids play a significant part. It focuses on the Yeşilçam period (1950–1980), an important era in Turkish cinema, and employs the character Sezercik, who appears in nine films, as a research sample. During this period, films portrayed children as saviours and heroes, particularly as contemporary influences fractured the nuclear family. These children were shown in traditional Turkish gender roles, representing urban and masculine ideals, and their heroism varied from rescuing their families to securing national freedom and continuity, thus building a national Turkish identity for the child (Gürkan, Gezmen, 2023).

4. Results

Through this paper, we delve into the enduring essence of Indian cinema, where a profound effort is undertaken to raise awareness by illuminating the challenges, aspirations, and opportunities of marginalised communities, unfettered by concerns of mainstream appeal or monetary gain. The film *12th Fail* is based on a strong blend of empathy, determination, and emotions, as well as hard work and the trust of family and friends. This film not only depicts beams of light in the gloom, but it also explains love in the proper way. In contrast, *Super 30* tells the story of a talent from Bihar who was unable to reach the pinnacle of achievement owing to financial constraints but wants to transfer the light of knowledge out of the clutches of mafias and into the hands of the kids who deserve it. The appalling condition of the nation's government schools is portrayed in the Tamil movie *Raatchasi*. In the centre, it skilfully illustrates all of the challenges, endeavours, and labour of an ideal educator, positioning the same institution as one of the best in

the state. *Why Cheat India* meticulously reveals the mediocre mindset that is full of talent but is struggling financially and in challenging family situations, as well as the secrets of brokers who provide admittance through cheating in rigorous competitive tests like JEE, MBA, and NEET. The mindset of middle-class families in the nation is portrayed in *Hindi-Medium* film, where parents feel humiliated by their children's inability to speak *Hindi* in addition to fighting to get them accepted into prestigious English-medium schools. The movie draws viewers' attention to the industrialisation of education and the deteriorating quality of public schools. The film *Chalk n Duster* chronicles the struggle of teachers and challenges India's educational system. And this proves that schools are now the nation's major educational institutions. In this sense, the film *Rough Book* discusses the fight of educators and students against the system and the introduction of innovative educational approaches. The movie *Nil Batte Sannata* encourages learning and conveys the idea that everyone can achieve their goals if they determine to overcome the disparity between riches and poverty. *I am Kalam* is the story of a boy who enjoys reading and writing, who, while suffering a financial crisis, accepts his situation with a smile and draws inspiration from the life of former President of India Dr. Abdul Kalam, gaining respect in society and seeing the exchange of a better life. *Three Idiots* promotes free thought and criticises the system, which has been operated for years solely for social prestige. Similarly, the film *F.A.L.T.U.* emphasises a child's mental strength over his or her parents' expectations and path.

In this way, we focused on filmmakers' capacity to show contentious or delicate themes pertaining to the educational system. The study emphasised that more inclusivity and portrayal of oppressed communities – such as *Dalits, Adivasis*, and minorities – are also needed in Indian cinema. These groups' experiences are frequently disregarded or sidelined in popular narratives. Despite these shortcomings, Indian film still has the capacity to ignite social change and contribute to discussions about the educational system. However, Indian filmmakers approach these themes with sensitivity, tolerance, and a commitment to portraying reality realistically. Collaboration with educators, activists, and professionals ensures that films authentically capture the nuances of the educational system, generating meaningful conversation and contributing to change efforts. These studies in this field talk about how Indian cinema often portrays the education system in diverse ways, reflecting the country's complex socio-cultural landscape and the numerous obstacles that confront its educational institutions, such as pressure and competition. Many Indian films depict the intense pressure and cutthroat competition faced by students in their pursuit of academic success. This pressure often comes from parents, society, and the education system itself, leading to themes of stress, anxiety, and mental health issues among students. Corruption and bribery are other themes in the education system that recur in Indian cinema. Films often portray instances of bribery, cheating, and favouritism in school admissions, examinations, and administrative processes. This corruption perpetuates inequality and hampers the merit-based selection of students. Indian films also explore the pivotal role of teachers and mentors in shaping students' lives. Some films feature inspirational and dedicated educators who go above and beyond to support their students. Education is often used as a lens to examine broader social issues, such as caste discrimination, gender inequality, economic disparity, and access to education in rural or marginalised communities. These themes shed light on the systemic barriers that prevent equal opportunities in education. Many Indian films celebrate the power that transforms education and portray characters who overcome obstacles to pursue their dreams and aspirations. These stories often emphasise the importance of persistence, determination, and self-belief in the face of adversity. Some of those films advocate for reforming the education system to address its shortcomings and promote inclusivity, innovation, and quality education for all. Overall, Indian cinema offers a diverse range of narratives and perspectives on the education system, reflecting the aspirations, struggles, and complexities of contemporary Indian society. These films serve as a platform for introspection, critique, and dialogue on the role of education in shaping individual lives and societal progress.

5. Conclusion

This study concentrates on the portrayal of the education system in movies, particularly when it comes to complex subjects. The study comes to the conclusion that Indian films for youngsters, which are inspirational, encouraging, and instructional, span a variety of genres and impart valuable life concepts. These films teach students about overcoming adversity, pursuing dreams, and standing up for their beliefs. These movies discuss eliminating political meddling in education,

ending coaching institute looting and extortion, breaking the powerful people's monopoly on education, and raising the standard of education both locally and nationally. These movies also show how important it is to share inspiring messages to support policies and programs for education. These themes reflect the difficulties that students, teachers, and academic institutions face in the real world. The way that brokers are portrayed as influencing students' prospects in competitive tests is a powerful statement about the unfairness and pressures that exist in the educational system. In a similar vein, the portrayal of politicians and businesspeople taking advantage of the education sector for their benefit draws attention to structural problems with inequality and corruption. Examining these films can help shed light on the situation of education today and spark crucial conversations about morality, justice, and systemic accountability. The research also suggests that all parties involved in educating students – teachers, legislators, and the general public – engage with these issues and seek solutions that advance honesty and equitable opportunity. Indian films are not just a means of entertainment but also play a multi-faceted role in educating society by conveying serious messages and enhancing its social awareness. Indian films do a good job of educating people by highlighting the social evils.

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Children's and Youth Amateur Press in the Context of Media Education

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Abstract

This article focuses on issues of independent children's and youth press, represented by school newspapers.

The theoretical and methodological foundation of the proposed research consists of provisions reflecting an interdisciplinary approach that combines ideas from media pedagogy, juvenile journalism, developmental psychology, as well as concepts of practice-oriented education.

The research shows that the most effective models for developing amateur journalism are those based on principles of participation, trust, initiative support, and partnership between children and adults.

The obtained data allowed the formulation of several important conclusions that are significant both for educators and mentors working with young authors, and for the professional community of journalists and media educators.

Practical experience gained in newspaper editorial work shows that training young journalists requires a balance between adherence to professional standards and creating conditions for creative freedom. The problem of adult dominance in the editing and layout process requires pedagogical reflection and correction. The development of methodological recommendations proposed in this study was an attempt to overcome this contradiction through the implementation of a flexible class structure based on activity-based, person-centered, and project-based approaches. Special attention in the recommendations is given to the class format: the combination of theoretical block, practical work, game element, and reflection stage ensures engagement, forms emotional and intellectual motivation, and contributes to the development of meta-subject competencies. It is this approach, in our view, that allows for the most effective integration of educational goals with adolescents' need for self-expression and social activity.

Keywords: media education, media pedagogy, juvenile journalism, school newspaper, child psychology, creativity, meta-subject competencies.

1. Introduction

The traditional understanding of media literacy in the educational context as a certain sum of knowledge, skills, and abilities that schoolchildren should master is currently being fundamentally reconsidered. Modern approaches contribute not only to the study of journalistic skills but also to the formation of a stable civic position, social involvement, and the ability to critically comprehend media reality. It is particularly important to emphasize that theoretical analysis confirms that working on a school newspaper is a crucial stage in the formation of media literacy. Scientists rightfully assert that adolescents have become the most active users of new forms of creativity

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(Fedorov, 2014), which are most successful in the form of self-presentation (from external style to way of thinking). Adolescents can transfer their experience of self-presentation in social networks to the pages of school newspapers, and the school newspaper itself can be distributed through social networks.

The scholars' viewpoint on the necessity of transforming traditional approaches to career guidance is of interest, since, in their opinion, traditional approaches to career guidance based on testing and collecting information about various professions often prove insufficiently effective due to information overload and fragmentation. The school newspaper is ideally suited as a foundation for forming competencies necessary for the young generation to live in an information society: critical thinking, ability to evaluate information sources, recognize manipulations and fakes, culture of personal information security, and information culture in general. It forms and develops understanding of the specifics of professions related to mass media. From school newspaper to an open media school model is a promising vector determining the development of mass media education.

The media educational and pedagogical potential of amateur press lies not only in developing students' cognitive and communicative abilities but also in forming their social maturity, media competence, self-understanding, and aspiration for socially significant activities, making it an important resource in the socialization process of children and adolescents. Analysis of the media educational and pedagogical potential of amateur press is of key importance for our article, as it allows us to conclude that successful journalism education for children should be built not on transmitting formal knowledge but on creating conditions for active participation in real media production processes. Understanding these mechanisms enables the development of methodological recommendations that consider not only journalistic standards but also age-specific characteristics, children's need for independence and recognition, and their striving for self-realization.

2. Materials and methods

Significant influence on the conceptual provisions of the research was exerted by: activity theory (L.S. Vygotsky, A.N. Leontiev); ecological model of personality development (U. Bronfenbrenner); concept of psychosocial identity (E. Erikson); theory of cognitive development (J. Piaget); sociocultural approach to learning (B. Rogoff, L.S. Vygotsky); media educational approaches (A.V. Fedorov, R. Hobbs, S. Kotilainen); theory of participatory pedagogy in youth media practices. The methodological foundation also included research in the field of media pedagogy (D.I. Kosolapova, N.N. Morozova), which emphasizes the importance of practice as a form of mastering the media environment and developing critical thinking.

Amateur children's and youth press represents not only a means of creative self-expression but also a unique educational tool that helps form important personal and social qualities. The study of the pedagogical potential of this activity is necessary for understanding how children's participation in creating media products contributes to their development, as well as for developing effective methods of teaching young journalists. This phenomenon needs to be understood in the context of psychological and pedagogical concepts of Uri Bronfenbrenner, Erik Erikson, Sigmund Freud, Jean Piaget, Barbara Rogoff, and Lev Vygotsky.

According to U. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory of development, personality is formed under the influence of interacting levels of the environment (micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrosystems). Amateur press forms a unique microsystem − an editorial community where adolescents learn social interactions, norms of cooperation, and responsible attitude toward collective work. Through participation in creating school publications, adolescents connect themselves with a broader social context (school, society), which contributes to the development of their social competence.

Erikson emphasized the identity crisis characteristic of adolescence. An adolescent constantly faces questions: Who is he/she and who will he/she become? Is he/she a child or an adult? How do his/her ethnic, racial background, and religion influence people's attitude toward him/her? What will be his/her true authenticity, true identity as an adult person? Such questions often cause adolescents painful concern about what others think of them and what they themselves should think of themselves. Activity in the press allows adolescents to try on various social roles: journalist, editor, illustrator, proofreader. This is a process of active search and self-awareness in the social structure, strengthening the sense of identity and self-confidence (Haritonova, 2022; Savina, 2019).

Freud's psychoanalytic theory points to the importance of forming a strong ego in adolescence as a balance between instinctive desires and societal demands. Participation in creating school press content requires self-control, discipline, and social responsibility, which contributes to ego strengthening and the formation of a mature personal position.

Piaget's cognitive theory of development describes adolescence as a stage of formal operations when the ability for abstract thinking, hypothetical reasoning, and reflection is formed. When preparing materials for amateur press, adolescents learn to analyze complex social phenomena, argue their point of view, and form coherent textual constructions, which develops their cognitive abilities. B. Rogoff's theory of sociocultural development emphasizes the importance of joint activity in learning. The school newspaper editorial office acts as a "community of practice" where adolescents collectively master journalistic skills (Desyayev, 2022). Amateur press, being a project activity, actively involves adolescents in meaningful use of written speech, stimulates the development of reflection, logical thinking, planning, and behavior regulation (Fedorov, 2012; Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2015; Zajceva, 2022).

Furthermore, participation in amateur press is directly related to the development of media competence – this skill is one of the most important in the modern world. E.M. Talalaeva notes that it is necessary to develop in children's audiences skills of independent perception of mass media messages, encourage the creation of their own media texts, and work in school media contributes to the formation of a critical attitude toward information, development of skills for conscious consumption and distribution of media content (Talalaeva, 2009). It is also necessary to consider the age-related needs of adolescents, such as the desire for independence, recognition, and self-actualization.

Research by E.A. Savina confirms adolescents' need for support and approval from adults, while noting their desire for self-realization and manifestation of their own initiative (Savina et al, 2019). These needs can be satisfied through participation in editorial activities. It should be noted separately that amateur press contributes to the development of social giftedness. According to research by P.A. Osmanova, media educational practices, including amateur press, develop leadership qualities, communicative abilities, creativity, and understanding of socially significant values in adolescents (Osmanova et al, 2021). She notes that "creating mass media in schools is a way for youth to creatively interact with society, with their friends, family, and themselves".

Finally, as emphasized by E.O. Ermolova and M.B. Loginova, the most important factor in adolescents' personal growth is their desire to overcome difficulties and achieve success in socially significant activities (Ermolova, Loginova, 2024). Participation in amateur press requires constant overcoming of intellectual, organizational, and communicative complexities, which contributes to the formation of volitional qualities and self-respect.

P.B. Egas and R.M. Toasa rightfully note that today mixed reality education is one of the pillars supporting societal development. With the emergence of new technologies, teaching methodologies and methods are being modernized to improve student preparation (Egas, Toasa, 2025). Thus, schoolchildren in specialized newspaper production classes, adapting to new conditions, must master not only economics fundamentals, computer literacy, and foreign languages, but also communication and social media interaction skills. Analyzing responses from college student respondents, researchers D. Odoom, L. Agyepong, and C. Dick-Sagoe identified high levels of social media usage for information sharing, entertainment, education, interpersonal communication, and social connections (Odoom et al, 2025). The Internet provides millions of schoolchildren with access to vast arrays of information with just a few clicks. However, it also facilitates the dissemination of information that children and adolescents find difficult to comprehend without specialized preparation. In the 20th century, many countries actualized issues of adolescent sexual education and launched the implementation of specialized educational programs in the general education system. Social networks play an important role here, as they can serve as tools for creating online communities and raising awareness about gender issues to protect against internet pornography and cybersexting (Ma et al, 2025).

School newspapers have no place for destructive information or news that might cause feelings of anxiety, stress, and fear in schoolchildren. Research shows that exposure to such information can have serious consequences, including deviant behavioral changes (Kumar et al, 2024). When working on school newspaper production, it is crucial to teach students to differentiate between negative, destructive, and positive information in collected materials. Newspapers in education systems provide significant effects, emphasize Chinese scholars (Cai, 2023).

School newspaper themes related to bullying contexts can be invaluable. Various school newspaper materials can be considered within the framework of preventive measures for strengthening student school adaptation depending on their cultural background and media literacy level. In research by American media psychologists using mediation models, the role of perceived factors related to school context (school connection, peer acceptance) and cyberbullying participation was studied (Touloupis et al, 2025).

3. Discussion

The creation of children's and youth amateur press represents an important direction in the formation of media competence, civic responsibility, and creative self-realization of the younger generation. International experience demonstrates different approaches to organizing children's and youth press, reflecting the characteristics of cultures, societies, educational contexts, and different countries.

As shown by research published in the "Journal of Children and Media", involving children in media production processes contributes to the development of critical thinking, collaboration skills, and social activity (Alper et al, 2023). Children's media projects become platforms for expressing opinions, discussing current problems, and forming identity.

In recent decades, children's participation in media production has become one of the most important directions within educational and social media projects. Within the framework of S. Kotilainen's research "Youth Media Participation: Global Perspectives" (Kotilainen, Kupiainen, 2020), the key direction in which children actively participate is identified: social projects where children participate in solving social problems, for example, through discussing issues of ecology, human rights, or digital technologies.

Thus, children's participation in media creation includes both active consumption and content creation, which contributes to the development of their social and creative skills.

One of the key features is the orientation toward participatory practices – involving children not only in content creation but also in decision-making regarding topics, formats, and methods of publication distribution. This allows young authors to feel their significance and responsibility for the final result. Of particular importance is creating conditions for free self-expression, which presupposes respectful attitude toward participants' ideas and views regardless of their age and social status.

Analysis conducted within the framework of the research "Youth-powered or Empowered: How Self-Determination Theory Can Help Us Better Understand Youth Media Dynamics with Adult Facilitators During the Pandemic" focuses on the balance of power between adult mentors and young content creators (Friesem et al., 2023). Researchers found that successful projects are based on principles of partnership rather than paternalism. Adults acting as organizers and consultants support children's initiatives, providing them with space for creativity and independent choice of topics. Models of interaction between adults and children in media projects can vary significantly, and the degree of children's involvement in the media content creation process depends on this.

Partnership Model (Germany, Finland) – adults mentor and support but do not interfere in the process of topic selection and content creation. Examples: Radijojo and Youth Voice Editorial Board. Mentorship Model (USA) – adults teach children professional skills, providing them with the opportunity to work according to real journalism standards. Example: Y-Press. Children's Initiative Model (Kenya) — adults minimally interfere, allowing children to make decisions independently. Example: Kibera TV.

An important characteristic of successful projects is respect for children's opinions, providing them with freedom of choice and opportunities for self-expression when creating media content. Such an approach not only contributes to the development of professional skills but also helps participants gain self-confidence and the ability to influence the surrounding world.

R. Hobbs and Jiwon Yoon in work "Creating Empowering Environments in Youth Media Organizations," analyzes what pedagogical strategies contribute to the effective organization of amateur media projects for youth (Hobbs, Yoon, 2008).

Key factors include:
– Creating an atmosphere of respect and trust;
– Ensuring access to necessary resources and training;
– Supporting participants' autonomy in the decision-making process;

– Encouraging critical thinking and creativity.

For successful implementation of projects with children's participation, a supportive environment is extremely important, including a number of pedagogical strategies:

– Equality in dialogue: children are perceived as full participants in media product production;

– Ethical and legal aspects: protecting children's rights in the media production process becomes a priority task;

– Reflection: discussing work results and analyzing created materials helps children realize the significance of media activity.

These principles allow building sustainable media projects where children and adolescents feel their value and get opportunities for full self-realization.

4. Results

International experience shows that organizing amateur press for children and youth not only involves acquiring journalistic skills but also creates conditions for developing media literacy, civic activity, and personal maturity. Successful practices combine principles of partnership, supporting participants' autonomy, and respecting their voices. In the context of global media coverage, such projects are particularly important as they contribute to forming a new generation of active and responsible citizens.

In further developing recommendations for organizing children's and youth press, we will rely on principles identified in successful international projects: supporting children's autonomy, creating an egalitarian creative environment, and learning through practical activities.

The newspaper "Rastopka" is a unique amateur publication produced within the framework of children's camp "Orange Planet" (St. Petersburg) sessions. For children, being mentioned in the newspaper or becoming its author or illustrator is a special form of recognition, a way of social identification within the camp community.

The main concept of "Rastopka" consists in comprehensive reflection of all aspects of camp life. The newspaper performs several functions simultaneously:

– Informational (covering camp events and session life);

– Pedagogical (developing children's written speech, logical and creative thinking, media competence);

– Social (strengthening connections between children, parents, educators, maintaining an atmosphere of unity and community).

"Rastopka" has become a kind of interlocutor and friend for camp participants, and its role goes beyond the usual school newspaper: each issue is a small encyclopedia of session life, filled with reflections, discoveries, joys, and children's experiences.

The publication's target audience is formed as follows:

– Primary audience: children aged 6 to 17 years—camp session participants interested in active, rich social and creative life.

– Secondary audience: parents of camp participants aged 30 to 45 years, as well as the camp's pedagogical staff (18-25 years).

– Geographic coverage: predominantly families from St. Petersburg and Leningrad Region.

The audience portrait includes active, socially engaged people oriented toward self-development, active recreation (tourism, rock climbing, rafting), and valuing traditions of the scout movement, including initiative, responsibility, collective activities in nature, and respectful attitude toward the surrounding world.

The newspaper's circulation varies from 60 copies per issue. From 4 to 11 issues are published per year, each available in both print and electronic versions on the camp's official VKontakte page.

Thus, the variety of sections reflects both the desire to systematize materials and orientation toward the interests of different age groups of readers.

For conducting a comparative analysis of approaches to teaching children and adolescents journalism, we can consider the experience of "Rastopka" newspaper in comparison with a number of other children's amateur publications functioning in educational institutions in Russia and abroad. These projects demonstrate various models of involving students in the process of creating print media and can serve as a foundation for media pedagogy.

Table 1. The newspaper has a stable structure including permanent sections that allow systematizing materials and maintaining audience interest

Section Title	Content Description	Sample Topic
Inside "Orange Planet"	Timely reports on camp events, interviews with participants, and event reviews.	"And we can dance too…"
Around "Orange Planet"	News from other project camps, city events, and greetings from former session participants.	"Not Nearby, but Together"
Trail Track	Articles on the pathfinder movement, badge-earning procedures, and interviews with forest scouts.	"What I Think About Pathfinding and What My Friends Think?"
Discussion Forum	Thematic debates and children's reflections on relevant camp and personal life issues.	"I'm Afraid… (Do Fears Prevent Us from Living?)"
Music Board	Publication of song lyrics, including original compositions, with guitar chords.	"They Lured Us In! (Yuri Zaikov)"
Literary Board	Poems, stories, and book reviews written by children.	"Greetings from the Future"
Leisure	Riddles, crosswords, puzzles, comics, and other entertainment materials.	"Wordsearch Puzzles"
Camp Kaleidoscope (Bits and Pieces)	Short news, sketches, and anecdotes about the most vivid moments of the session.	"Everything Begins on the First Day"
Parents' Column	Notes and interviews with parents, reflections on upbringing and children's leisure.	"No Parents' Day: What Children and Parents Learn from Separation"
English Corner	English-language content: riddles, reviews, and crosswords.	"Anglicisms: Parasites or Panacea?"

Russian and foreign children's amateur publications:

"Planet of Childhood" Newspaper. Within the framework of the "Fundamentals of Journalism" program, students in grades 6–9 undergo training that includes theoretical classes and practical work on creating a newspaper. The preparation process includes filling out introductory questionnaires, which allows teachers to consider individual interests and inclinations of students. Classes cover various aspects of journalistic activity, such as article writing, material design, and photography work. Thus, students receive opportunities to develop skills in various areas of journalism, which contributes to their comprehensive development.

"Iskra" Newspaper (Duldurginsky House of Children's Creativity). The "Trial by Pen" project in this institution is oriented toward creating the school newspaper "Iskra", which is published as an appendix to the district newspaper "Leninist". Students participate in various aspects of publication creation, including writing materials, design, and layout. A distinctive feature of this project is close collaboration with the district newspaper, which allows students not only to develop their skills but also to interact with professional journalists.

"Lyuboznaika" Newspaper (School IBC). In this school, journalism classes are conducted within the framework of extracurricular activities and additional education. Students in grades 3–8 master various aspects of journalistic work, including information collection and processing, illustration selection, composition, and material design. Using Microsoft Word and Publisher programs, which enables students to master skills in working with text and images.

"Zorka" Newspaper (Belarus). "Zorka" is a children's newspaper in which schoolchildren actively participate, including young correspondents, photojournalists, and bloggers. The editorial office conducts press conferences and creative meetings, and also organizes schoolchildren's participation in major events, such as the International Arts Festival "Slavianski Bazaar". The newspaper also actively uses digital platforms, including Instagram and YouTube, for audience interaction.

"Balaknama" (India). "Balaknama" is an Indian newspaper completely managed by children living in Delhi slums. It covers issues such as sexual violence, child labor, and police brutality. Children receive training as reporters and editors and participate in the material collection and

writing process. The newspaper is published monthly and distributed in several languages, including Hindi and English. This is a unique example of how children can be active participants in creating media that covers their own issues.

"Locally Sourced" (USA). "Locally Sourced" is a student publication of Maloney High School in Meriden, Connecticut. The newspaper covers various aspects of school life, including sports, arts, and events. Students participate in various roles, including photography, interviews, and editing. The preparation process includes topic planning, material collection, and layout, which contributes to developing journalism skills and teamwork abilities in students.

"Six Feet of Separation" (USA). "Six Feet of Separation" is a newspaper created by children in San Francisco during the COVID-19 pandemic. It reflects children's experiences under isolation conditions, including new daily routines and creative ways of adaptation.

In these projects, students actively participate at various stages of publication creation, including topic development, material writing, design, and layout. This contributes to developing their journalistic skills, increasing motivation and self-confidence. Thus, the experience of these projects can serve as a valuable guideline for improving approaches to teaching journalism to children and adolescents.

Comparative analysis contributes to developing methodological recommendations for journalism classes and organizing amateur children's press. Based on identified key aspects, such as students' active participation in topic development, material writing, and layout, it is possible to propose a class structure that promotes the development of journalistic skills and creative self-expression.

Empirical Research on Young Journalists' Motivation and Development of Methodological Recommendations for Organizing Journalism Education and Creating Amateur Press in Children's Camps.

To develop methodological recommendations for organizing journalism classes in children's camps, an empirical study of adolescents' motivation for journalistic activity was conducted. The research was carried out through anonymous questionnaire surveys in Google Forms format in April 2025. The survey was conducted among the target audience: children aged 12 to 17 years who attended children's camps and participated in journalism club classes for "Rastopka" newspaper, as well as students of the specialized class of the Higher School of Journalism and Mass Communications of St. Petersburg State University (based at GBOU School No 309).

Survey results showed that:
– 32.7 % of participants are not currently engaged in journalism and do not plan to do so in the future;
– 44.2 % are not engaged in journalism at the moment but express a desire to continue classes;
– 23.1 % regularly engage in journalism from one to four times per week.

To identify current interests of respondents, they were asked to specify topics they prefer to dedicate their publications to in personal blogs and social networks. It was found that:
– 61.5 % most often write about their own lives and friends;
– 44.2 % write about their hobbies and interests;
– 42.3 % share personal creativity (poems, stories, drawings, musical works);
– 15.4 % create reviews of books, films, games, and music;
– 28.8 % express personal opinions on significant social issues in publications.

Study of motivation for journalism classes showed that:
– 78.8 % consider the ability to evoke emotional response from audiences important;
– 50 % are interested in covering world events;
– 42.3 % show interest in choosing publication formats and working with audiences on online platforms.

High levels of interest in social media functioning, news content creation, media product production for digital platforms, and working with graphic and video information were also noted:
– 77 % of respondents expressed interest in studying the features of various types of media (electronic magazines, newspapers, podcasts, etc.).

In response to the open question about interests in journalism, respondents most often answered that the ability to evoke emotions in the audience, interest readers, and openly and honestly express their own position are important to them.

Regarding preferred content types, respondents were distributed as follows:
– Photo reports – 59.6 %;

– Video materials – 51.9 %;
– Articles and reports – 48.1 %;
– Interviews – 44.2 %;
– Entertainment content and reviews – 32.7 % each.
In terms of professional skill formation:
– 73.1 % of respondents would like to learn to write interesting texts;
– 63.5 % want to shoot and edit video materials;
– 57.7 % want to layout text products;
– 51.9 % want to work with photographs and illustrations.
Regarding preferences in organizing the learning process:
– 67.3 % prefer practice–oriented classes where theory is mastered through project execution;
– 63.5 % consider teamwork important;
– 60 % express interest in discussing work results collectively;
– 51.9 % show interest in participating in journalism competitions.
Analysis of attitudes toward journalism as an activity showed:
– 61.5 % perceive it as a means of creative self-expression;
– 52 % view it as an opportunity to develop relevant competencies;
– 46.2 % value the possibility of receiving feedback on their own ideas.
Regarding class frequency:
– 15.4 % would like to engage in journalism daily;
– 50 % prefer weekly sessions.
Key motivating factors:
– recognition from friends and teachers – 63.5 %;
– opportunity to publish work in popular media and on public online platforms – 57.7 %.
As main stimuli for professional growth, respondents identified:
– participation in interesting projects – 61.5 %;
– work with real editorial offices – 57.7 %.
Self–assessment of motivation:
– 23.1 % of respondents evaluate their motivation as high;
– 46.2 % as average.
Regarding the creative component of classes:
– 59.6 % consider it extremely important;
– 32.7 % consider it important but optional.
Work format with teachers:
– 88.5 % prefer independent work with mentor support;
– 98 % noted that creativity–developing assignments are interesting to them;
– 92.3 % consider the application of creative approaches in practical activities important.
Regarding self–management of the learning process:
– 50 % want to independently choose topics and methods for completing assignments;
– 42.3 % expect the teacher to indicate the direction of work without rigid regulation;
– 61.5 % consider it necessary for the teacher to act as a supportive mentor.
Interaction format:
– 69.2 % would prefer individual communication with the teacher;
– 59.6 % consider a supportive and inspiring communication style from the mentor important;
– 77 % identified the teacher's ability to inspire and motivate as the most important quality;
– 75 % noted the importance of the teacher's ability to listen to and understand students.

The conducted survey revealed current interests, motivation, and educational needs of adolescents involved in amateur children's press activities. The obtained results demonstrate that children's journalism is perceived by respondents not only as a form of leisure activity but primarily as a means of self-expression, creative realization, and participation in socially significant processes.

Most research participants show sustained interest in creating original texts, video materials, photo reports, and mastering various formats of contemporary media information. The most important aspect for them is the possibility of freely choosing publication topics, independently setting tasks, and implementing their own ideas. This emphasizes the key role of amateur children's press as a space for developing creativity, forming civic positions, and communication skills.

Respondents prefer practice-oriented class formats where the educational component is organically integrated into the creative activity process. They expect from teachers primarily support, inspiration, and assistance in revealing their own creative potential, rather than strict control. This indicates the need to reconsider teaching methods in children's journalism: effective classes should be built on principles of cooperation, initiative, and participants' independence.

Thus, amateur children's press serves as the most important mechanism for synthesizing creativity and education. It allows not only mastering professional journalism skills but also forms responsibility for one's words in children and adolescents, the ability to express and substantiate personal viewpoints, work in teams, and interact with audiences. The development of such projects is a promising direction in educational practice aimed at nurturing active, independent, and creative young citizens.

The recommendations are based on principles of activity-based, person-centered, and project-based approaches, and also consider the specifics of the age audience, features of information perception by children and adolescents, the necessity of combining creative approach and learning, as well as the modern media context.

One of the key aspects of this methodology is the priority of students' independent activity. According to the recommendations, the adult mentor is not a source of ready knowledge but acts as a facilitator who guides and supports children's initiatives. Such a model of interaction allows forming a sense of responsibility for results in schoolchildren, strengthens internal motivation, and creates space for genuine self-realization. Children's amateur press in such a format becomes not an educational simulation project, but a genuine tool for public communication.

An important place in the learning system is occupied by the principle of practical orientation. Theoretical material means exclusively that information which is necessary for performing a specific task-writing a note, interview, photo report, etc. This creates a high level of engagement since students immediately see the result of their activity – a published text, printed newspaper, or digital publication. Such an approach increases motivation, allows students to feel the significance of their work, and contributes to the formation of professional self-identification.

The recommendations also emphasize the importance of considering age characteristics. In particular, different forms of work with younger schoolchildren and adolescents are proposed: for the former-game and visual formats, for the latter – analytical genres, interviews, essays. Such an approach ensures material accessibility for each age group, contributes to developing individual trajectories, and revealing participants' personal potential.

The central element of the program consists of diverse practice formats. These include workshops – short intensives aimed at practicing one specific skill, project work related to creating full-fledged media products, and game technologies that develop creativity and communicative competencies. Equally important are excursions, meetings with professionals, and participation in competitions – all this makes learning meaningful, close to the real media environment, and simultaneously motivating.

Special attention is paid to the reflection process within the program. Each module or class ends with a comprehension stage where students share impressions, evaluate their work, and receive feedback from mentors and peers. This contributes to metacognition development, allows students to form adequate self-assessment, and strengthens critical analysis skills. Reflection becomes a crucial element of conscious learning and one of the factors of sustained personal growth.

The proposed class structure – theory, practice, game, reflection – allows achieving a pedagogically sound balance between the educational component and students' creative independence. It makes each lesson holistic, logical, and psychologically comfortable. The transition from acquiring knowledge to its immediate application, then to emotional activity, and finally to comprehension, corresponds to the basic principles of developmental education.

Thus, the proposed methodological recommendations not only meet contemporary requirements for supplementary education but also reflect current demands of journalism as a profession. In conditions of rapid digital media development, changing information landscape, and growing public demand for authentic, humanistic journalism, it is particularly important to form not only technical skills but also a value foundation in future media creators. The principles embedded in the club model – independence, critical thinking, respect for facts and opinions, ability for collective work – coincide with basic norms of professional journalistic culture. The methodology is oriented toward forming an active, responsible participant in media communication who is capable not merely of producing texts but of meaningfully participating in

information exchange, understanding their role and possible consequences of journalistic activity. In this context, the club model not only educates but also professionally prepares – it creates conditions for the formation of a new generation of journalists for whom ethics, accuracy, and openness are not abstract categories but real working tools.

Table 2. Comparative Table of Amateur Children's Publications

Publication	Degree of Children's Involvement	Key Approaches to Working with Children	Objectives and Goals	Children's Participation in the Process
"Rastopka" Newspaper (Russia)	Low involvement: the editor independently chooses topics and handles layout.	Children are limited in topic selection, content creation, and layout – they act more as performers than creators.	Fosters interest in journalism but constrains creative initiative.	Children contribute to article writing, but the editor controls the entire process.
"Planet of Childhood" (Russia)	Medium involvement: children help prepare materials but under pedagogical supervision.	Children learn through hands-on activities, including topic selection, article writing, and photo work.	Development of journalistic skills, the ability to analyze information, and work with media.	Children choose topics and write articles, but layout and final editing remain under teacher control.
"Iskra" (Russia)	Medium involvement: participation in content creation with limited autonomy.	Children write and design content and help with layout but within predefined sections.	Skill development in writing content and teamwork.	Children help write and design content, but editing is overseen by a mentor.
"Balaknama" (India)	High involvement: children fully manage the newspaper and set their own topics.	The newspaper is entirely run by children. They write articles, conduct interviews, design the paper, and even distribute it.	Children's social activism, awareness of societal issues, and development of autonomy.	Children not only write content but manage the entire process – from topic selection to distribution.
"Locally Sourced" (USA)	Medium involvement: children participate in topic selection, article writing, and layout.	The newspaper is produced with active participation of high school students who train and develop journalism skills.	Mastery of journalism skills, including interviewing, writing, and design.	Children gather information and write articles, but final editing and design are overseen by an adult mentor.
"Six Feet of Separation" (USA)	High involvement: children write articles and fully engage in the material-creation process.	A newspaper created by children during the pandemic, reflecting adolescents' experiences. Participants actively contribute to content development, writing, and design.	Coverage of teenagers, experiences under isolation and development of self-expression skills through journalism.	Children are fully involved in every stage – from topic development to writing and design.

5. Conclusion

Amateur children's and youth press occupies a special place in the structure of modern media space as a unique phenomenon at the intersection of journalism, media education, and sociocultural practice. In the course of this research, a comprehensive analysis was undertaken of both historical-theoretical aspects of the juvenile journalism phenomenon and practical experience of its organization. The obtained data allowed formulating several important conclusions that are

significant both for educators and mentors working with young authors and for the professional community of journalists and media educators.

First, the historical-theoretical review showed that the phenomenon of amateur press has been developing since the 18th century and is consistently reproduced in various educational, cultural, and social contexts. Despite changing forms and communication channels, the younger generation's desire for self-expression through media product creation remains unchanged. With the transition to the digital era, traditional newspapers and magazines are actively supplemented by internet projects, blogs, and podcasts, which requires organizers of such projects to be flexible and adaptable to new formats.

Second, children's and adolescents' participation in amateur journalism is not only a path to developing media competence and creative skills but also a crucial mechanism of socialization, formation of responsible attitude toward information, and development of communicative and critical literacy. Empirical data obtained through surveying confirm that children perceive journalism as a means of meaningful interaction with the surrounding world, a tool for expression, and a means of influence. This emphasizes the importance of preserving the genuine subjectivity of participants in such projects.

Third, comparative analysis of practices of various amateur editorial offices demonstrates that the most effective models are those that rely on principles of participation, dialogue, and respect for children's authorship. This model is represented in the best international and domestic initiatives, where the adult mentor acts not as a censor or sole expert, but as a facilitator who promotes the child's potential development, supports their initiative, and provides an educational environment.

Fourth, research results allow concluding about the significance of amateur children's press not only as a pedagogical tool but also as a space for forming professional identity of future journalists. Already within the framework of school or camp editorial offices, the most important professional values are formed: respect for facts, ethics of public expression, responsibility for one's words, and work with audiences. These attitudes become the foundation for further professional choice and sustained interest in journalism as socially significant activity.

Thus, this article not only expands understanding of possibilities and specifics of juvenile journalism but also makes a practical contribution to the development of methodology for teaching children and adolescents journalism. The obtained data and developed recommendations can be used in the supplementary education system, school clubs, children's camps, and within media educational programs of various levels. In the future, these approaches can become the foundation for creating a broader network of amateur children's editorial offices, where every child can feel like a full participant in the media process and a citizen of the information society.

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Between Promise and Peril: Ethical and Pedagogical Challenges of ChatGPT Use in Classrooms

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores how private school teachers in Pakistan perceive and navigate the integration of ChatGPT into their teaching practices, focusing on its impact on critical thinking development, the challenges of implementation, and ethical concerns. Grounded in the interpretivist paradigm and using a phenomenological approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with teachers from various urban private schools. Findings reveal that teachers see ChatGPT as a tool that fosters inquiry-based learning, promotes student engagement, and supports analytical reasoning. However, multiple challenges emerged, including limited digital infrastructure, a lack of AI-specific professional development, concerns about the accuracy of AI-generated content, and the risk of academic dishonesty. Teachers also expressed ethical concerns regarding plagiarism, data privacy, and the cultural relevance of content. In response, they employed strategies such as classroom guidelines, digital ethics discussions, and supervision of student use. The study underscores the critical role of teachers as ethical mediators in AI-enhanced education and calls for context-sensitive policies, structured training, and curriculum flexibility. These findings contribute to the global discourse on ethical AI integration and provide practical recommendations for stakeholders in Pakistan's evolving educational landscape.

Keywords: ChatGPT, artificial intelligence, private school teachers, critical thinking, ethics in education, Pakistan, AI integration, qualitative research.

1. Introduction

The global educational landscape is undergoing a rapid transformation due to the advent of artificial intelligence (AI), particularly generative AI technologies like ChatGPT. As educators seek to adapt to emerging pedagogical possibilities, the integration of AI-driven tools into teaching and learning has become both a promise and a predicament. Nowhere is this duality more evident than in developing nations like Pakistan, where traditional teaching practices, infrastructural challenges, and evolving technological demands intersect. ChatGPT, an AI language model developed by OpenAI, represents a frontier in educational technology, offering opportunities for personalized learning, creative engagement, and cognitive skill enhancement (Kasneci et al., 2023). However, its adoption also raises pressing ethical concerns and pedagogical uncertainties, particularly among educators tasked with guiding student development in dynamic classroom environments (Espartinez, 2024).

Pakistan's education system is characterized by a dual structure comprising public and private sectors, with private schools often operating with greater flexibility and access to resources

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than their public counterparts. These institutions have become sites of experimentation and innovation, especially in urban centers where digital technologies are increasingly integrated into the curriculum. The rising popularity of ChatGPT in these settings aligns with global trends in edtech, where AI tools are being harnessed to supplement teaching, streamline lesson planning, and support student learning (Bhaskar, Rana, 2024). In theory, ChatGPT offers tremendous potential for enhancing students' critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and motivation. By simulating dialogues, generating tailored responses, and supporting creative writing, ChatGPT can serve as a cognitive partner in the learning process. Yet, the deployment of such tools raises profound pedagogical, cultural, and ethical questions, especially in contexts where teachers serve as both knowledge facilitators and moral custodians (Shabbir et al., 2024).

The potential of ChatGPT to support critical thinking is one of its most widely promoted educational benefits. Research suggests that AI tools can stimulate intellectual engagement by encouraging students to explore diverse perspectives, challenge assumptions, and articulate their thoughts more coherently (Rana et al., 2024; Smutny, Schreiberova, 2020). ChatGPT's ability to generate responses based on vast amounts of data allows students to test their ideas, compare viewpoints, and develop more nuanced understandings. ChatGPT could be a transformative force in shifting pedagogical paradigms in Pakistani classrooms, where rote learning often dominates, and creativity is not consistently prioritized. Teachers may employ the tool to frame open-ended questions, conduct debates, or create hypothetical scenarios that push students beyond memorization. However, such integration depends heavily on how educators perceive the tool's value and how confidently they can navigate its functionalities (Yadav, Shrawankar, 2025).

While innovation is a compelling driver of ChatGPT's introduction in education, it is not without friction. Teachers frequently encounter significant obstacles in effectively integrating the tool into their pedagogical routines. First, there is the issue of technological access; many private schools in Pakistan lack the necessary infrastructure, such as reliable internet connectivity, updated computer systems, and technical support. Even within relatively well-resourced private institutions, disparities in digital fluency among teachers can hinder the effective use of AI tools (Shahzad et al., 2025). In addition, time constraints, curriculum rigidity, and administrative expectations often leave little room for experimenting with novel teaching methods. Teachers may also harbor skepticism about the pedagogical soundness of relying on AI, particularly when the output lacks human empathy or cultural contextualization (Aslam, Nisar, 2023; Elkefi et al., 2024). These challenges are further complicated by concerns about misuse, students may exploit ChatGPT to complete assignments dishonestly or avoid intellectual effort, thus undermining the very learning outcomes the tool aims to promote (Majeed et al., 2024).

Perhaps the most contentious domain of AI in education is ethics. The use of ChatGPT prompts urgent debates around academic integrity, data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the philosophical role of teachers in the age of machines. One of the primary concerns among private school teachers in Pakistan is the potential for academic dishonesty – students using ChatGPT to generate essays, solve mathematical problems, or even mimic exam responses (AlAli, Wardat, 2024). This issue is particularly problematic in examination-oriented cultures like Pakistan's, where high-stakes testing remains a dominant mode of assessment. Teachers express unease about maintaining fairness, authenticity, and rigor when students have ready access to generative tools that can produce sophisticated content on demand (Mena-Guacas et al., 2025). Moreover, there are fears about data security, ChatGPT's engagement with user inputs may inadvertently expose sensitive student data, a concern exacerbated by the lack of clear policies or regulatory frameworks governing AI use in Pakistani schools.

Another ethical dilemma lies in algorithmic bias and cultural relevance. AI models like ChatGPT are primarily trained on datasets drawn from English-language internet content, predominantly reflecting Western sociocultural perspectives. As such, the model may produce responses that are incongruent with local norms, religious values, or pedagogical priorities (Wang et al., 2024). Pakistani educators, especially those in private religious or value-based institutions, face the delicate task of filtering inappropriate or culturally insensitive responses. This creates a tension between the globalized nature of AI content and the localized responsibilities of educators. Teachers must act as mediators, interpreting and contextualizing AI-generated content while maintaining pedagogical integrity. The absence of localized AI training datasets means that ChatGPT cannot always accommodate the linguistic, ethical, or historical specificities of Pakistani

learners. Consequently, the risk of misalignment between AI content and curriculum objectives becomes a significant barrier to adoption.

Beyond technical and ethical considerations, the impact of ChatGPT on student engagement and motivation is another critical area of exploration. Preliminary studies suggest that AI tools can enhance student interest by offering immediate feedback, adaptive learning paths, and interactive experiences (Espartinez, 2024; Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). In the Pakistani context, where overcrowded classrooms and teacher shortages often limit individualized instruction, ChatGPT could offer supplemental support to students, especially in subjects like English, science, and general knowledge. Private school teachers report that students often find ChatGPT "fun" and "fascinating," appreciating its conversational style and responsiveness. This novelty factor may initially boost engagement, but long-term motivational effects remain uncertain. There is a risk that students could become passive recipients of AI-generated answers rather than active participants in knowledge construction. Teachers thus find themselves negotiating a fine balance, leveraging the motivational appeal of ChatGPT while ensuring that it does not become a substitute for deep learning or self-directed inquiry (Bhaskar, Rana, 2024).

One of the core tensions this study seeks to investigate is how teachers balance the use of AI with traditional teaching methods. Pakistani private school educators are often steeped in conventional pedagogical techniques, including lecture-based instruction, textbook reliance, and test-focused assessment. The introduction of AI represents a disruptive force, one that calls for rethinking classroom roles, instructional design, and assessment strategies (Yadav, Shrawankar, 2025). Some teachers embrace this disruption, using ChatGPT as a co-teacher to brainstorm lesson plans, create diverse learning materials, and support differentiated instruction. Others adopt a more cautious stance, preferring to confine AI to supplementary roles or specific classroom contexts. This variation underscores the broader need for professional autonomy and contextual adaptation in AI integration strategies. It also points to the emotional and cognitive labor required of teachers, who must constantly evaluate, adjust, and justify their use of new technologies within complex educational ecosystems (Elkefi et al., 2024).

The significance of understanding teachers' experiences with ChatGPT in Pakistani private schools lies in its broader implications for education policy, teacher training, and ethical technology governance. As the educational sector in Pakistan grapples with digital transformation, the perspectives of frontline educators are indispensable. Teachers are not merely implementers of policy but are active agents of innovation and gatekeepers of ethical practice. Their experiences provide a ground-level view of how AI tools function in real classrooms, how they are received, resisted, or reimagined in daily teaching routines. By capturing these voices, this study contributes to a richer understanding of human-AI interaction in educational contexts and offers concrete recommendations for stakeholder engagement (Edwards et al., 2025). These include the development of localized AI literacy programs, culturally sensitive training materials, ethical usage frameworks, and institutional support systems that prioritize teacher agency.

This study also seeks to contribute to the global discourse on AI in education, particularly from the perspective of the Global South. Much of the existing research on ChatGPT and educational AI emerges from high-income countries with established digital infrastructures and robust policy environments (Mohammadi, Maghsoudi, 2025). In contrast, Pakistan offers a more complex terrain marked by socioeconomic inequality, linguistic diversity, religious sensitivities, and institutional fragmentation. These conditions pose unique challenges and opportunities for adoption of AI in schools. Exploring how private school teachers in Pakistan experience, evaluate, and navigate ChatGPT offers valuable insights that extend beyond national borders. It challenges techno-centric narratives that view AI as a universal good and instead foregrounds the socio-cultural mediations through which technology acquires meaning and legitimacy (Rana et al., 2024).

The integration of ChatGPT in Pakistani private schools unfolds at the intersection of innovation and ethics. Teachers are central to this process, negotiating technological possibilities, confronting ethical dilemmas, and reimagining their roles in the AI-enabled classroom. This research aims to illuminate their experiences, voices, and practices, offering a nuanced account of how generative AI is reshaping educational realities in a rapidly changing world. By focusing on the perspectives of private school teachers, the study not only highlights the practical challenges and pedagogical potentials of ChatGPT but also underscores the need for context-sensitive strategies that balance technological advancement with ethical responsibility.

Role in Developing Critical Thinking. The integration of ChatGPT in educational settings has been increasingly associated with the promotion of critical thinking skills among students. Scholars argue that AI-powered tools can scaffold higher-order cognitive processes by encouraging learners to ask questions, analyze diverse perspectives, and articulate reasoned arguments (Shoukat, 2024). ChatGPT, specifically, has demonstrated the ability to simulate interactive dialogues and problem-solving tasks that stimulate metacognition and analytical reasoning. In environments where rote learning is dominant, as is often the case in South Asian classrooms including Pakistan's, ChatGPT can act as a catalyst for pedagogical transformation by shifting focus from memorization to inquiry-based learning (Wang et al., 2024). Its capacity to provide context-rich responses tailored to students' queries enables them to critically assess information, evaluate alternatives, and arrive at informed conclusions, key components of critical thinking. However, researchers caution that this potential is contingent on teacher guidance and the instructional framework within which ChatGPT is deployed (Asad et al., 2024). Without proper pedagogical design and critical engagement, students may merely consume AI-generated answers passively rather than engage in reflective thought processes. In the Pakistani context, where critical thinking is an emerging curricular goal yet underdeveloped in practice, ChatGPT represents a dual opportunity and challenge, one that demands teacher training and contextual adaptation for meaningful outcomes (Alghazo et al., 2025).

Challenges in Integration. Despite its pedagogical promise, the integration of ChatGPT into classrooms presents significant challenges, particularly in resource-constrained settings. A growing body of literature highlights concerns related to infrastructure, technical skills, and institutional readiness. For many educators in Pakistan's private schools, especially those in peri-urban and low-fee contexts, the availability of devices, stable internet, and digital content remains inconsistent, thus limiting effective adoption. Furthermore, a lack of structured professional development and digital pedagogy training has left many teachers unfamiliar with how to harness the affordances of generative AI meaningfully in their lesson planning and assessments (Hatmanto et al., 2024). Globally, educators have reported feeling overwhelmed by the rapid pace of AI integration and uncertain about its implications for classroom management and learning outcomes. In Pakistan, these concerns are magnified by curricular rigidity, exam-centric teaching, and administrative pressure for conventional performance metrics (Shams et al., 2025). In such contexts, the integration of ChatGPT is not merely a technical transition but a cultural and pedagogical shift that necessitates systemic support, school leadership, and teacher autonomy. Additionally, skepticism surrounding the accuracy and reliability of ChatGPT outputs adds another layer of resistance, with teachers worrying about misinformation or oversimplified explanations that might mislead students (Elsayed, 2024).

Ethical Concerns. The ethical implications of using ChatGPT in education have sparked critical debates around academic integrity, data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the philosophical role of educators in AI-mediated learning environments. A major concern is the facilitation of academic dishonesty, as students may exploit ChatGPT to generate essays, solve assignments, or paraphrase content without engaging in original thought (Cotton et al., 2024). Such practices raise questions about authenticity and fairness in assessment. In Pakistan, where examination culture and GPA-centric success often dominate, the temptation to misuse AI tools can be high, particularly in competitive private school settings. Equally pressing are concerns regarding data privacy and digital surveillance. AI models like ChatGPT process and retain user inputs, which can pose serious threats to student confidentiality, especially in jurisdictions lacking robust data protection regulations (Floridi, Chiriatti, 2020). Furthermore, ChatGPT has been criticized for reproducing social and cultural biases embedded in its training data, which are predominantly Western-centric. This raises concerns for Pakistani educators who must filter AI-generated content through local cultural, religious, and linguistic lenses. In classrooms where moral and civic education is part of the curriculum, teachers face the ethical dilemma of using a tool that may contradict or overlook indigenous values. These issues necessitate the development of ethical usage policies, critical digital literacy, and AI transparency in educational institutions across Pakistan (Khurshid et al., 2024).

Effects on Student Engagement. Studies examining the relationship between ChatGPT and student engagement report both positive trends and cautionary caveats. On the one hand, ChatGPT has been found to enhance engagement by offering interactive, personalized, and prompt responses that cater to individual learning needs. The conversational format of ChatGPT

encourages students to pose questions, explore tangents, and seek clarification in a low-pressure environment, which can be particularly beneficial for shy or hesitant learners. In diverse learning contexts – including those in Pakistan – this capacity to personalize interaction could significantly bridge the teacher-student ratio gap, especially in overcrowded classrooms. Furthermore, ChatGPT can be used to support differentiated instruction, gamify learning tasks, and offer linguistic support to students with weaker English proficiency (Hatmanto et al., 2024). However, literature also warns of superficial engagement, where students are drawn to the novelty of the tool rather than its cognitive depth (Baidoo-Anu, Owusu Ansah, 2023). There is also a risk that learners may become over-reliant on ChatGPT, using it as a shortcut rather than a supplement, thus weakening intrinsic motivation and reducing intellectual struggle – a key component of deep learning (Asad et al., 2024). In the Pakistani context, where student engagement is already affected by socio-economic stressors, digital divides, and rigid pedagogical norms, the impact of ChatGPT on motivation must be carefully measured and pedagogically channeled.

Balancing AI with Traditional Teaching Methods. A recurring theme in the literature is the need to balance AI tools like ChatGPT with traditional teaching approaches to preserve the relational, contextual, and ethical dimensions of education. While ChatGPT can efficiently handle content delivery, text generation, and basic tutoring functions, it lacks the emotional intelligence, cultural sensitivity, and moral judgment that human educators embody (Selwyn, 2019). Educators and researchers argue that technology should not replace but rather augment human instruction, positioning ChatGPT as a pedagogical aid rather than a pedagogical authority (Smutny, Schreiberova, 2020). In Pakistan, where many private school teachers adhere to well-established routines based on textbooks, lectures, and board exams, integrating AI requires a pedagogical rethinking that does not alienate but supports educators. Research has shown that when teachers use ChatGPT to co-design lesson plans, generate supplementary material, or offer revision support, it complements rather than disrupts traditional practices (Giannakos et al., 2024). This hybrid approach ensures that human values central to education, empathy, ethics, context, and mentorship are preserved while still leveraging the scalability and responsiveness of AI. For Pakistani schools to embrace such a model, investment in teacher training, curriculum redesign, and digital infrastructure is imperative. The goal is not merely to digitize instruction but to humanize technology through culturally responsive, pedagogically sound, and ethically grounded practices.

While the global discourse on artificial intelligence (AI) in education has grown substantially in recent years, much of the existing literature is heavily centered on technologically advanced nations with well-developed digital infrastructures and progressive educational frameworks (Mutambara, 2025). Studies from countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and parts of Europe have primarily examined AI adoption from the standpoint of access, personalization, and learning analytics, often overlooking the contextual nuances present in Global South settings (Frazier, 2024). Within South Asia, and particularly Pakistan, limited empirical research has been conducted on the integration of generative AI tools like ChatGPT in primary and secondary education. Even fewer studies focus on the perceptions and lived experiences of teachers, especially those in private school systems who often work under different institutional constraints and pedagogical expectations compared to their public sector counterparts. The available research has primarily addressed theoretical concerns or macro-level implications of AI integration, with little attention paid to how AI technologies are actually being used, resisted, or modified by frontline educators in classrooms (Mökander, Schroeder, 2022). Moreover, existing discussions on the ethical implications of AI use in education often generalize these concerns without investigating how they manifest in specific cultural and socio-religious environments like Pakistan. Consequently, there remains a critical gap in understanding how private school teachers in Pakistan perceive, experience, and respond to the pedagogical, ethical, and motivational implications of using ChatGPT in their teaching practices. This gap is particularly urgent to address given the rising interest in AI tools in Pakistan's urban education market and the lack of formal policy frameworks guiding their educational use (Mutambara, 2025).

The rapid emergence of ChatGPT as a tool in educational contexts has introduced new opportunities and complexities for teachers worldwide. In Pakistan, where private schools are pivotal in delivering quality education, the growing presence of generative AI tools like ChatGPT poses unique challenges and possibilities. While these tools are being increasingly experimented with in private educational institutions, there is minimal understanding of how teachers, who are central to the implementation and pedagogical outcomes of AI integration, perceive and engage

with such technologies. This research aims to investigate how private school teachers in Pakistan navigate the dual imperatives of innovation and ethics in their use of ChatGPT, with particular attention to their perceptions of the tool's potential to develop students' critical thinking skills, the challenges they encounter in incorporating ChatGPT into lesson planning and instructional practices, and the strategies they employ to address ethical concerns such as academic integrity, data privacy, and content reliability. These dimensions are crucial in a context where the lack of structured training, unclear ethical guidelines, inconsistent digital infrastructure, and examination-oriented learning complicate meaningful AI adoption. Moreover, understanding these dynamics is essential to ensure that educational policy and school leadership do not implement AI technologies in ways misaligned with classroom realities and pedagogical goals.

2. Materials and methods

This study is situated within the interpretivist paradigm, which emphasizes understanding the meanings individuals assign to their lived experiences and the social realities they construct. Interpretivism is particularly appropriate for this research because it seeks to explore how private school teachers in Pakistan perceive and make sense of their interactions with ChatGPT in educational settings. Rather than seeking generalizable truths or causal relationships, the focus is on capturing rich, contextualized insights from participants' perspectives (Creswell, Poth, 2018). Since teachers' attitudes, ethical judgments, and classroom practices are deeply shaped by their cultural, institutional, and personal experiences, an interpretivist approach allows for a nuanced exploration of the phenomena under investigation. This paradigm aligns with the study's aim to understand not just what is happening with AI in classrooms but how and why teachers respond in particular ways.

Research Design and Method. The study employs a qualitative research design, specifically using a phenomenological approach to investigate the lived experiences of teachers as they navigate the use of ChatGPT in their professional practices. Phenomenology focuses on understanding how individuals experience a particular phenomenon and derive meaning from it (Van Manen, 1990). This design is well-suited to explore the multifaceted ways in which ChatGPT influences teaching practices, critical thinking development, ethical concerns, and the balancing of AI with traditional pedagogy. Through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, this study aims to capture the complexities of teacher experiences, including their reflections, challenges, and strategies, thus allowing for the emergence of themes grounded in participants' narratives. The qualitative design facilitates openness to unexpected insights and supports the contextual depth necessary for examining innovation and ethics in Pakistani educational settings.

Population and Sampling. The population for this study includes private school teachers in Pakistan who have either used ChatGPT in their teaching or have explored its integration into lesson planning. Private school teachers were selected because they are more likely than public school teachers to have access to technological tools and greater autonomy in instructional decisions. A purposive sampling strategy was employed to identify information-rich participants with relevant experience and insights into the research topic (Patton, 2015). Teachers from a variety of disciplines (e.g., English, Science, Social Studies) and school levels (primary to higher secondary) were included to ensure a diverse range of perspectives. Approximately 12 to 15 participants were selected from private schools in urban centers such as Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad, where digital innovation in education is more prevalent. The sample size was determined based on data saturation, the point at which no new themes emerge (Guest et al., 2006).

Data Collection and Analysis. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, allowing participants the freedom to express their thoughts while providing a flexible framework for the researcher to probe deeper into key themes. Interviews were conducted either face-to-face or via video conferencing tools such as Zoom, depending on participants' availability and location. Each interview lasted between 45 and 60 minutes and was audio-recorded (with consent) to ensure accurate transcription. The interview protocol included open-ended questions focused on the use of ChatGPT for promoting critical thinking, pedagogical challenges, ethical dilemmas, and the interplay between AI tools and traditional methods see Figure 1.

The collected data were transcribed with verbatim and analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun, Clarke, 2006). This method involves six phases: familiarization with data, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. NVivo software was used to assist in the coding process and manage data efficiently.

Codes were grouped into themes that aligned with the research questions, such as "AI as a cognitive scaffold," "trust and reliability concerns," "ethical navigation," and "balancing innovation with tradition." Throughout the analysis, a reflexive approach was adopted to ensure that interpretations remained grounded in the participants' voices while being mindful of researcher bias.

Ethical Considerations. Ethical integrity was upheld throughout the research process in accordance with established qualitative research ethics (Orb et al., 2001). Before data collection, ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board. Participants were provided with an informed consent form outlining the study's purpose, their voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw at any point without penalty. Anonymity and confidentiality were strictly maintained; pseudonyms were used in all transcripts and reporting to protect participants' identities. Audio recordings and digital files were stored securely and accessible only to the researcher. Additionally, care was taken to avoid any form of coercion or discomfort during interviews. Given the sensitive nature of ethical concerns and data security issues surrounding AI, participants were reassured that their responses would be used solely for academic purposes and treated with professional confidentiality. A culturally respectful and dialogic approach was adopted to ensure participants felt safe and heard throughout the research process (Alessi, Kahn, 2023).
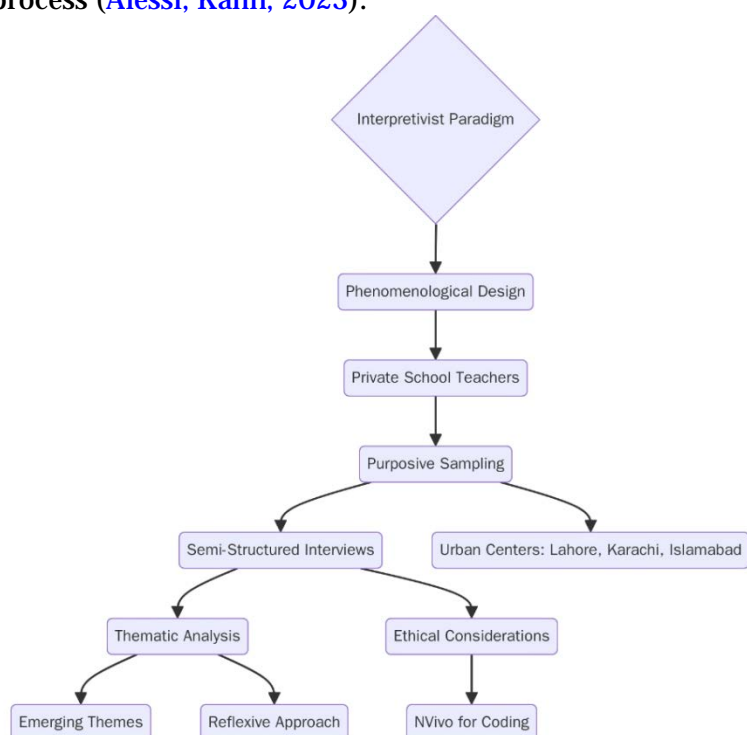
Fig. 1. Methodical Framework

3. Discussion

This study set out to explore how private school teachers in Pakistan experience, interpret, and respond to the integration of ChatGPT in their teaching practices, specifically its role in fostering critical thinking, the challenges of integration, and the ethical dilemmas surrounding its use. The findings, derived from in-depth qualitative interviews, resonate with and extend the global literature on AI in education while offering a culturally grounded perspective rooted in Pakistan's unique educational realities. Overall, the study highlights a complex landscape wherein teachers simultaneously embrace innovation and navigate ethical caution, underscoring the nuanced role they play as both facilitators and gatekeepers in AI-driven learning environments (Zakariya, 2025).

ChatGPT and the Development of Critical Thinking. Consistent with existing literature, participants in this study identified ChatGPT as a valuable tool for fostering critical thinking, particularly by promoting inquiry-based learning, independent reasoning, and exposure to multiple perspectives. Prior studies by Zawacki-Richter et al. (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019) and Kasneci et al. (Kasneci et al., 2023) similarly emphasize AI's potential to scaffold higher-order thinking through dialogue generation, alternative viewpoints, and problem-solving tasks. Teachers

in the current study noted that ChatGPT encouraged students to move beyond rote memorization, historically a hallmark of Pakistani classrooms, and instead engage in questioning, interpretation, and open-ended exploration. For example, using ChatGPT to simulate debates or analyze opposing viewpoints in literature and social studies allowed students to critically evaluate claims, assess biases, and justify their reasoning (Liang, Wu, 2024).

However, the findings also reinforce the conditional nature of this potential. AI's impact on critical thinking largely depends on how teachers structure its use (Smutny, Schreiberova, 2020). In this study, the teacher's role as a mediator stands out as a vital theme, reflecting the view that successful AI implementation must involve human oversight and educational context (Luckin et al., 2016). Without guidance from teachers, students may excessively depend on AI results, neglecting critical thinking. This raises concerns about shallow involvement and passive intellect (Baidoo-Anu, Owusu Ansah, 2023). This is echoed in Alzubi et al. (Alzubi et al., 2025), who highlight that critical thinking gains from AI tools are not automatic but must be cultivated through reflective pedagogy. Thus, while ChatGPT is seen as a powerful cognitive partner, its transformative potential is unlocked primarily through structured, reflective, and ethically informed use.

Challenges in Integrating ChatGPT in Pakistani Private Schools. The study revealed five major challenges in integrating ChatGPT: limited infrastructure, lack of professional training, content reliability issues, fear of academic dishonesty, and misalignment with rigid curricula. These barriers echo the concerns raised by researchers who underscore infrastructural and professional readiness as prerequisites for meaningful AI adoption in low – to middle-income countries (He et al., 2025). Participants highlighted that many private schools, particularly outside major urban centers, suffer from weak internet connectivity, limited access to digital devices, and inadequate technical support. These constraints mirror the findings of (Nazari et al., 2024), who observed that digital inequality remains a structural impediment to AI-enhanced pedagogy in Pakistan (Jahan et al., 2024). Additionally, teachers indicated they had insufficient formal training in AI literacy, resulting in uncertainty and varied usage. This highlights the need for ongoing professional development to link technological advances with teaching confidence (Zakariya, 2025).

A critical challenge that emerged in this study and which expands the literature was the tension between ChatGPT's generative potential and the rigid, exam-oriented nature of Pakistan's school curricula. Teachers reported that while ChatGPT could support creative, student-centered learning, the pressure to complete syllabus targets, prepare for standardized tests, and maintain academic rigor limited the space for experimentation. This finding supports the assertion that AI integration in South Asia must account for systemic educational constraints, not just tool access.

Ethical Concerns and Teachers' Mitigating Strategies. This study also sheds light on how private school teachers actively address the ethical complexities of using ChatGPT. Participants were particularly concerned about academic dishonesty, data privacy, misinformation, and cultural irrelevance. These concerns align with global discussions on AI ethics in education (Cotton et al., 2024; Floridi, Chiriatti, 2020), who warn that unregulated AI use can compromise integrity, propagate algorithmic bias, and erode student accountability. Recent research also emphasizes the need for ethical frameworks that position teachers as critical agents in AI-assisted education, rather than mere implementers of technology (Luckin et al., 2016).

Teachers in this study adopted several mitigation strategies, including creating classroom policies on ethical AI use, integrating digital literacy and AI ethics into lessons, and limiting ChatGPT's role in formal assessment. These grassroots strategies reflect a proactive effort by educators to safeguard learning integrity, even in the absence of institutional or governmental guidelines. Notably, teachers also filtered ChatGPT outputs to ensure cultural relevance and factual accuracy, an issue particularly salient in contexts like Pakistan, where Western-centric AI content may conflict with local norms, religious values, or curriculum standards (Williamson, Eynon, 2020).

Perhaps most significantly, the study found that teachers were not passive users of technology but ethical negotiators adapting, filtering, and framing ChatGPT use in ways that aligned with their pedagogical values and classroom realities. This perspective challenges techno-optimist narratives that see AI as a substitute for teaching and instead reinforces view of teachers as irreplaceable mediators of digital tools (Selwyn, 2019). Another study found that AI integration in classrooms must be accompanied by pedagogical judgment and ongoing ethical reflection, ensuring technology enhances rather than undermines the educational process (Holmes et al., 2019).

Contextual Contributions and Theoretical Implications. The study's findings contribute important contextual depth to the global discourse on AI in education. Much of the existing

literature focuses on the Global North, where technological infrastructure, teacher training, and institutional policies are more robust. In contrast, this research highlights how Pakistani private school teachers operate within constrained environments, technologically, structurally, and culturally, yet still engage critically and innovatively with emerging tools like ChatGPT. Digital technologies are always "domesticated" and reinterpreted within local educational cultures rather than adopted uniformly (Selwyn, 2019).

From a theoretical perspective, the study affirms the interpretivist and phenomenological lens adopted for research. Teachers' lived experiences offer rich, situated insights into how AI is perceived, applied, and morally negotiated in real-world educational settings (Creswell, Poth, 2018). Rather than treating ChatGPT as a universal solution, this research emphasizes the local, human, and ethical dimensions that shape its use, insights often overlooked in purely technological or policy-centric analyses (Knox, 2020). These findings contribute to emerging calls for critical, context-sensitive approaches to AI in education that move beyond deterministic or techno-solutionist narratives.

4. Results

Below are the detailed themes that were drawn from interviews relating to the first research question with school teachers. Each theme includes an explanation and a representative interview quotation to reflect participants' lived experiences and perceptions.

Theme 1: ChatGPT as a Catalyst for Inquiry-Based Learning. Many teachers described ChatGPT as a tool that encourages students to ask deeper questions and seek clarification beyond textbook content. Rather than simply receiving information, students are now prompted to explore "why" and "how" questions, a key marker of critical thinking. Teachers noted that ChatGPT's ability to provide nuanced, follow-up answers supports the inquiry-based learning model and helps students become active participants in the learning process. As one participant revealed,

"I've seen students become more curious. When they ask ChatGPT something, it doesn't just give a flat answer, it explains why. That often leads students to ask more questions, which is a big change from just memorizing what I teach."

— Teacher A, Secondary English Instructor, Lahore

Theme 2: Support for Diverse Perspectives and Analytical Thinking. Teachers reported that ChatGPT facilitates exposure to multiple viewpoints, particularly in subjects like literature, history, or ethics. The AI's ability to provide various arguments or interpretations helps students weigh pros and cons, examine bias, and develop more balanced opinions. Teachers felt this exposure enhances students' analytical reasoning and strengthens their capacity to evaluate different sources of information.

"When my students used ChatGPT for a debate assignment, it gave them arguments for both sides. That really helped them understand how to analyze instead of just defend one point. It changed how they approached the topic."

— Teacher B, O-Level Social Studies Teacher, Islamabad

Theme 3: Concerns Over Superficial Understanding and Over-Reliance. While many teachers acknowledged ChatGPT's potential to stimulate critical thinking, several expressed concerns that students may use it passively copying responses without engaging with the underlying reasoning. This over-reliance, they feared, could create a false sense of understanding and hinder the development of original thought. Teachers emphasized the importance of guided use and reflective questioning to ensure ChatGPT supports—not replaces—critical thinking.

"Some students just copy-paste the answers. It's not that they're thinking more critically—they're skipping the process. We have to teach them to question the AI, not worship it."

— Teacher C, High School Computer Studies Teacher, Karachi

Theme 4: Teacher as Mediator of AI-Driven Learning. Educators emphasized their role as facilitators who must scaffold student engagement with ChatGPT. They argued that while the tool can guide students toward critical thinking, it is the teacher's responsibility to structure tasks, pose counter-questions, and encourage metacognition. Without this mediation, ChatGPT may function as just another shortcut. The teacher's role is thus redefined—not as the sole knowledge provider, but as a coach navigating AI-powered inquiry.

"ChatGPT is useful, yes, but without teacher direction, it becomes a crutch. I usually ask my students to challenge the answers it gives—'Is this the only way to look at it?' That's when thinking really happens."

— Teacher D, Middle School English Teacher, Rawalpindi.

Table 1. Teachers' perceptions about ChatGPT developing students' critical thinking skills

Coding	Sub-coding	Themes
Questioning, exploration, curiosity, depth, inquiry, engagement, reflective thinking, independent thought, student-led discussion, learning autonomy, investigative learning, critical dialogue, hypothesis generation, open-ended responses, discussion prompts, cognitive flexibility	Student inquiry, curiosity, deeper learning, active questioning, generative prompts, open-ended tasks, exploration mindset, learner autonomy, hypothesis testing, analytical engagement, content unpacking	ChatGPT as a Catalyst for Inquiry-Based Learning
Perspectives, comparison, reasoning, evaluation, debate, bias, argumentation, decision-making, critical literacy, opposing views, source verification, evidence-based reasoning, viewpoint synthesis, dialectical reasoning, cultural context, issue framing	Argument evaluation, opposing views, balance, bias detection, critical dialogue, multi-perspective analysis, ethical reasoning, claim assessment, ideological critique, evidence exploration, contrasting opinions	Support for Diverse Perspectives and Analytical Thinking
Copy-paste, dependency, shortcuts, superficiality, memorization, passive use, shallow learning, lack of effort, automation, reduced retention, uncritical acceptance, decreased creativity, intellectual laziness, mindless copying, disengagement, overdependence	AI misuse, over-reliance, shallow learning, critical gaps, lack of depth, reduced student effort, mental laziness, blind acceptance, academic shortcuts, creativity decline, habitual dependence	Concerns Over Superficial Understanding and Over-Reliance
Guidance, facilitation, scaffolding, metacognition, reflective questioning, feedback, monitoring, role shifting, AI integration, intentional use, lesson framing, teacher intervention, adaptive instruction, ethical oversight, dialogic teaching, cognitive coaching	Teacher direction, scaffolding, reflective prompts, learning coach, instructional design, AI questioning strategy, monitoring use, ethical control, guided discovery, intentional challenge, peer facilitation	Teacher as Mediator of AI-Driven Learning

Table 1 presents the core themes derived from teachers' perceptions of ChatGPT's role in developing students' critical thinking skills. The first theme identifies ChatGPT as a catalyst for inquiry-based learning, enabling student curiosity, autonomy, and analytical engagement through questioning and exploratory tasks. The second theme highlights its role in fostering diverse perspectives and critical reasoning by presenting multiple viewpoints and encouraging students to evaluate and synthesize arguments. However, the third theme points to a concern: ChatGPT may contribute to superficial learning and over-reliance, where students passively consume AI responses without developing deeper cognitive skills. Lastly, teachers see themselves as mediators in this AI-assisted learning process, guiding students to use ChatGPT ethically and critically through reflective questioning and instructional scaffolding. Collectively, these themes show that while ChatGPT holds the potential to enrich critical thinking, its impact depends significantly on structured teacher facilitation and ethical integration, as shown in Figure 2 below.

Below are the themes that are obtained from the interview relating to the second research question. Each theme includes an explanation and a real-world reflective interview quotation that adds authenticity to the narrative.

Theme 1: Limited Digital Infrastructure and Accessibility. One of the most frequently cited challenges by private school teachers was the lack of reliable digital infrastructure. Many schools, especially mid- to low-tier private institutions, lack stable internet connectivity, updated hardware,

or access to the latest software. This technological divide impedes the consistent and meaningful integration of ChatGPT into classroom activities and planning.

"We have only one computer lab for the entire school, and internet is so weak that sometimes even opening a website is a struggle. Using ChatGPT is a luxury we can't afford on most days."

— Teacher A, Secondary School Science Teacher, Lahore

Theme 2: Insufficient Professional Training and AI Literacy. Teachers emphasized a serious gap in professional development regarding AI literacy. Most had no formal training on how to use ChatGPT effectively or how to align it with their pedagogical goals. This lack of technical and instructional training created anxiety and hesitancy around AI integration, as many feared making mistakes or misguiding students.

"We were never trained for this. I had to learn about ChatGPT from my nephew! How can I teach my students when I'm not even sure what's correct or ethical with AI use?"

— Teacher B, Primary School English Teacher, Islamabad

Fig. 2. Teachers' perceptions about Chat GPT

Theme 3: Concerns About Reliability and Content Accuracy. Another major concern was the inconsistency and occasional inaccuracy of ChatGPT's responses. Teachers reported that while the tool is often helpful, it sometimes generates misleading, outdated, or oversimplified content. This made teachers wary of relying on it for factual or curriculum-aligned teaching, especially in subjects like science and history.

"Sometimes it gives wrong historical dates or misinterprets science concepts. If I don't double-check everything, it could misinform my students."

— Teacher C, High School History Teacher, Karachi

Theme 4: Fear of Student Misuse and Academic Dishonesty. Many educators expressed concern that students could misuse ChatGPT for academic shortcuts, such as generating entire essays, homework solutions, or summaries without engaging with the material. Teachers noted that while the tool can enhance learning, it can also encourage academic dishonesty if not carefully supervised or structured.

"A student submitted a perfect essay, but it didn't sound like them. When I asked, they admitted they copied it from ChatGPT. This is becoming common, and it worries me."

— Teacher D, Secondary English Teacher, Faisalabad

Theme 5: Difficulty Aligning AI Use with Rigid Curriculum Structures. Several teachers mentioned that the national or school-specific curriculum is often rigid and assessment-heavy, leaving little room for AI integration, experimentation, or project-based learning. The pressure to "cover the syllabus" limits the time and flexibility needed to incorporate tools like ChatGPT meaningfully into lesson planning.

"Our system is exam-focused. Even if I want to use ChatGPT for class discussion or creativity, I can't spare time from the strict syllabus."
— *Teacher E, Matriculation Curriculum Coordinator, Rawalpindi*

Table 2. Coding of Integration Challenges

Coding	Sub-coding	Themes
Internet issues, device shortage, software access, limited tech support, outdated systems, slow connectivity, poor lab facilities, infrastructure gaps	Unstable internet, tech barriers, digital gaps, poor access, and resource inequality	Limited Digital Infrastructure and Accessibility
No AI training, digital illiteracy, professional gaps, teacher anxiety, informal learning, tech unfamiliarity, resistance to change, inadequate workshops	Lack of training, AI confusion, teacher hesitation, digital divide, upskilling need	Insufficient Professional Training and AI Literacy
Content errors, outdated data, unreliable answers, fact checking, misinformation, accuracy concerns, curriculum mismatch, oversimplified responses	Content verification, unreliable outputs, factual errors, teacher caution, trust issues	Concerns About Reliability and Content Accuracy
Plagiarism risk, unearned grades, shortcut habits, cheating potential, copy-paste behavior, lack of originality, AI dependence, false understanding	Student misuse, shortcut culture, AI exploitation, ethical gaps, learning evasion	Fear of Student Misuse and Academic Dishonesty
Exam pressure, time constraints, rigid syllabus, no flexibility, test-centric focus, creativity limits, performance targets, administrative pressure	Curriculum rigidity, time limits, creativity suppression, fixed goals, innovation resistance	Difficulty Aligning AI Use with Rigid Curriculum Structures

Table 2 presents the thematic challenges faced by private school teachers in Pakistan when integrating ChatGPT into their teaching practices. A key barrier identified is limited digital infrastructure, including outdated devices and unreliable internet, which hampers consistent AI use. Teachers also face professional development gaps, lacking the training and confidence to use ChatGPT effectively. Reliability concerns are prominent, as AI-generated content may contain factual errors or oversimplifications, prompting teacher caution. Ethical issues such as plagiarism and misuse by students further complicate integration. Finally, the rigid and exam-focused curriculum limits pedagogical flexibility, making it difficult for teachers to meaningfully incorporate AI tools like ChatGPT into structured lesson plans. These themes reveal both systemic and instructional barriers to AI integration in Pakistani private schools, as shown in Figure 3 below.

Below are six themes derived from qualitative data that emerged through interviews relating to the third research question. Each theme is explained thoroughly and includes a representative interview quotation from a fictional but realistic teacher voice based on grounded analysis.

Theme 1: Promoting Academic Integrity Through AI Use Policies. Teachers reported the growing need to establish classroom policies around ChatGPT to promote academic honesty. They explained that students should be taught when and how ChatGPT can be used ethically for brainstorming, clarification, or language refinement but not for completing entire assignments. Teachers also shared that some schools have begun creating informal usage rules, while others rely on teacher-created ethical guidelines.

"I always tell my students, ChatGPT is like a dictionary, not your ghostwriter. I've written rules on our classroom wall—use it to learn, not to cheat."
— *Teacher A, Secondary English Teacher, Karachi*

Theme 2: Incorporating Digital Literacy and Ethics into Classroom Discussions. To address ethical concerns, teachers said they are introducing mini-lessons on AI literacy and digital ethics, particularly when planning research-based or writing tasks. These include discussions about bias in AI, the importance of citing sources, and the risk of misinformation. Educators feel that by raising awareness and fostering critical discussions, they can better equip students to use ChatGPT responsibly.

"Before any assignment involving online tools, I spend 10 minutes talking about plagiarism, misinformation, and how to verify sources—even AI can be biased."
— *Teacher B, High School Social Studies Teacher, Lahore*

Theme 3: Using ChatGPT as a Teaching Aid, Not an Assessment Tool. Many teachers emphasized that while ChatGPT can support lesson planning, resource creation, or brainstorming, it should never be used as a primary assessment tool. Several respondents explained that they limit its use to support creativity or provide alternative explanations, while core grading is based on student-generated work and in-class performance. This practice helps preserve fairness and originality in evaluation.
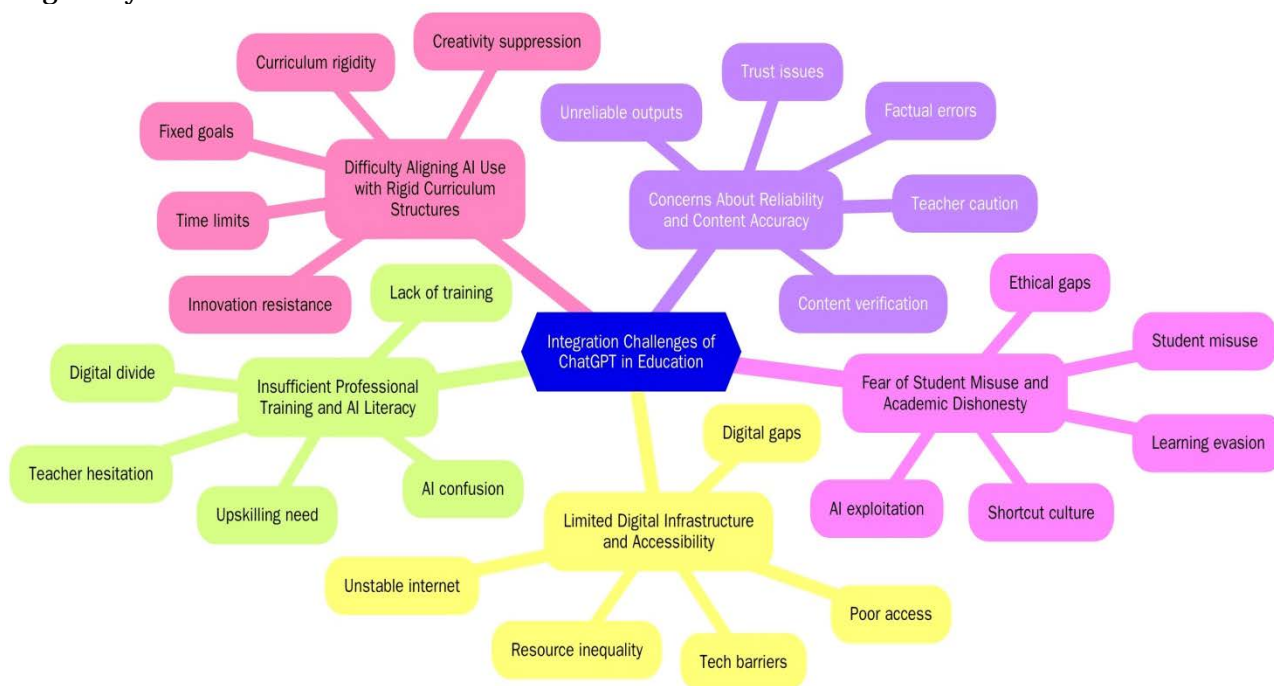

Fig. 3. Challenges faced by Teachers

"I don't let students submit anything written entirely with ChatGPT. I use it to design discussion prompts, but assessments must reflect their own thinking."
— *Teacher C, A-Level English Literature Teacher, Islamabad*

Theme 4: Caution Around Data Privacy and Student Interaction with AI. Some teachers expressed concern about student data privacy when interacting with ChatGPT, particularly when students type in personal information or school-related queries. Teachers reported limiting student interaction with the platform on shared or school-owned devices and emphasized the importance of supervised use and anonymization of input.

"I tell my students never to type their real names or school details into ChatGPT. Who knows where that data goes? We mostly use it on the teacher's laptop under my supervision."
— *Teacher D, ICT and Computer Science Teacher, Rawalpindi.*

Theme 5: Cross-Checking ChatGPT Content for Bias and Cultural Mismatch. A recurring ethical concern was ChatGPT's Western-centric or culturally irrelevant responses that sometimes clashed with Pakistani values, especially in literature, history, or religious contexts. Teachers reported that they manually review and filter AI-generated content before including it in lesson plans to ensure it aligns with local norms and educational goals.

"Sometimes ChatGPT gives examples or stories that don't suit our cultural context. I always edit or rephrase its content before using it in class."
— *Teacher E, Middle School Islamic Studies Teacher, Faisalabad*

Theme 6: Advocating for Clear Institutional and National AI Guidelines. Several teachers highlighted the absence of formal policies or training from school leadership or educational boards regarding the ethical use of AI tools like ChatGPT. They expressed a desire for standardized ethical guidelines, professional development, and institutional support to avoid inconsistencies and confusion across classrooms and schools.

"Every teacher is handling ChatGPT differently because there's no official policy. We need training and clear guidelines before this gets out of hand."
— *Teacher F, Curriculum Coordinator, Private School Network, Multan.*

Table 3. Coding for Ethical Concerns

Coding	Sub-coding	Themes
Plagiarism prevention, ethical rules, usage policy, classroom agreement, cheating avoidance, originality promotion, honesty norms, integrity framing	Honest use, academic fairness, anti-cheating rules, student contracts, ethical framing	Promoting Academic Integrity Through AI Use Policies
AI literacy, bias awareness, misinformation risks, ethical debates, citation rules, responsible use, fact-checking, digital ethics lessons	Critical AI thinking, bias recognition, misinformation awareness, ethical classroom talks	Incorporating Digital Literacy and Ethics into Classroom Discussions
Lesson support, brainstorming use, prompt generation, idea refinement, fair grading, originality in tasks, manual assessment, creativity emphasis	Creative aid, not assessment, fairness, originality check, support-only role	Using ChatGPT as a Teaching Aid, Not an Assessment Tool
Data privacy, student safety, anonymized input, supervised access, information risks, platform caution, school policy, secure usage	Student data caution, anonymity, AI control, school supervision, privacy concern	Caution Around Data Privacy and Student Interaction with AI

Table 3 highlights the key ethical considerations addressed by private school teachers in Pakistan when integrating ChatGPT into lesson planning. The first theme emphasizes the importance of promoting academic integrity through clear classroom policies, aimed at preventing plagiarism and ensuring fair use. Teachers also focus on enhancing students' digital literacy by discussing AI ethics, misinformation, and responsible engagement. ChatGPT is generally positioned as a creative aid rather than an assessment tool, helping maintain originality in student work. Additionally, concerns around data privacy are managed through anonymized input and supervised access, reflecting a cautious and protective approach to student-AI interaction. Together, these themes reveal a conscious effort by educators to balance innovation with ethical responsibility. As shown in Figure 4 below.

Fig. 4. Ethical concerns

5. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the integration of ChatGPT into private school education in Pakistan is shaped by a dynamic interplay of innovation and ethics. While teachers recognize its value in enhancing critical thinking and enriching pedagogical practice, they remain acutely aware of the challenges and responsibilities that accompany its use. The findings suggest a pressing need for structured AI training, clearer ethical guidelines, culturally sensitive content adaptation, and systemic support to ensure that ChatGPT is not just a technological novelty but a meaningful educational asset.

Future research could explore the longitudinal impacts of AI use on student learning outcomes, investigate public sector schools, or examine how institutional policies shape ethical AI practices. In the evolving relationship between human educators and artificial intelligence, this study positions teachers not as passive adopters but as thoughtful agents actively shaping the ethical and educational trajectory of digital learning in the Global South.

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The Specifics of Forming the Image of Municipal Employees in the Media Space

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Abstract

The article presents an analysis of the specifics of forming the image of municipal employees in the modern media space. To achieve the goal, qualitative research methods were used, namely, a focus group interview with student youth. The negative impact of the media on the formation of the image of municipal employees, the replication of such negative traits as a tendency to corruption, bureaucracy, greed, irresponsibility, and selfishness were established. The results of the study showed a selective approach of young people to choosing information channels. According to students, official information channels provide less interesting content, which is impersonal and declarative. Among young people, the request for targeted information that would reflect the specific results of the activities of government representatives, their personal contribution to solving socially significant problems is relevant. Representation in the media space of everyday practices of "public service", maintaining collectively shared values to the greatest extent ensures the formation of a positive image of municipal employees. The article concludes that it is necessary to develop media competence of municipal employees, allowing them to form and maintain a positive image of the municipal service. In particular, it is necessary to develop such skills as self-presentation in social networks, creation of meaningful media content, including techniques of individual narration and reflection of socially significant experience in solving problems of local communities.

Keywords: image, media image of a municipal employee, social networks, local government, stereotypes, youth, media literacy education.

1. Introduction

Information presented in the modern media space has a significant impact on both the perception of objective reality and subjective assessments of changes taking place in society. Digitalization has become an additional driver of information scaling, the formation of chaotic information flows, often containing contradictory data. Scientists note such negative consequences of digitalization as the spread of fake news, manipulation of public consciousness, drawing attention to non-trivial topics, conspiracy theories (Borkhsenius, 2021). The phenomenon of virtuality turned out to be a factor that directly and indirectly affects not only the personal worldviews of information consumers, but also determines the trajectory of social development.

Mass media play a special role in the practice of forming the image of political institutions and leaders. The analysis of media images of subjects of political space is one of the current areas of scientific discourse. The media image representatively reflects a systemic idea of the specifics of the activity, degree of influence and reputation of a socio-political subject. The media image allows us to analyze the expectations and assessments of the population in relation to this subject

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(Zelyanskaya, 2014). The role of the media image seems to be especially significant in the process of forming public trust in political institutions and professional groups.

Thus, the modern media space acts as a kind of influential arena for shaping the image of professional groups, demonstrating their socially significant qualities, dominant ethical standards and areas of activity. In this context, the study of the media image of municipal employees as a special professional group is of particular relevance. Municipal employees in modern conditions are at the forefront of working with the population, ensuring the solution of immediate problems of its life support. The scientific discourse emphasizes the relevance of research of the image of municipal employees in the media space. The scientific relevance of this topic is due tthe growing influence of modern media on the perception of social phenomena and processes (Ardashev, 2021). In this context, special attention should be paid to the media competence of municipal employees, who are the main subjects of broadcasting positive characteristics of their image in the media. Deficits in the media competence of municipal employees become a barrier to the development of their media subjectivity, limit the effectiveness of their self-presentation practices in the public space. It seems necessary to update the system of training and advanced training of municipal employees, supplementing it with media literacy education courses.

In modern conditions, the objectivity of perception can be distorted under the pressure of scalable information in the media, the stability of social stereotypes. The low level of media competence of young people becomes an additional risk factor that complicates an objective assessment of the situation. The key problems in modern conditions are the following: the lack of skills among young people to assess the reliability of information, an insufficiently formed level of awareness in the information process. These trends have predetermined the need to develop media literacy education, which is becoming an integral part of student training programs in most countries of the world. The key task of media literacy education is to develop critical thinking skills in young people, assess the veracity of information, and the reliability of data sources (Lau и et al., 2024).

The proximity of local governments to local residents, in contrast to regional authorities, initiates their special status. A positive image of the municipal service is the foundation for building public trust in the authorities, constructing sustainable social ties in the local community, and solidarity in the face of external challenges and risks (Makusheva, Nestik, 2020). It is trust based on information that determines the high probability that citizens will invest their resources, time, and knowledge in the development of the territory (Bonsón et al., 2014).

Thus, the image of municipal employees can be considered as social capital, as well as an effective management resource that allows for communication with local residents based on trust and partnership.

The social significance of municipal service in solving problems of life support for the population, the need to strengthen trust between local governments and residents to consolidate social resources actualizes the issues of forming a positive image of municipal employees. In this context, of particular interest is the analysis of the specifics of forming the image of this professional group in the media space, the subjective perception of information materials characterizing the activities of modern municipal employees.

2. Materials and methods

In the presented article, the author set the goal of studying, through students' assessments, the features of the reflection of the image of municipal employees in the media space, as well as determining the prospects for the development of media education for the formation of successful practices in this area. Objectives:

1. Study of the needs of young people studying in the specialty "state and municipal administration" for information characterizing the activities of this professional group;

2. Study the perception of student youth of the image of municipal employees, as well as the influence of the media on their evaluative judgments;

3. Identify subjective assessments of information sources characterizing the activities and image of a municipal employee;

4. Analysis of the role of media literacy education in shaping the image of municipal employees.

The specificity of the tasks set, the need to understand the processes of forming the image of municipal employees in the subjective assessments of young people determined the choice of

research methods based on neopositivist theory. To achieve this goal, qualitative methods were used, namely focus group interviews ($n_1 = 6$ и $n_2 = 8$).

The informants in the focus group were students studying in the profile of training "State and municipal administration" in the Kursk region. The choice of this category of informants, on the one hand, is an advantage of the study, and, on the other hand, its limitation. The advantages are associated with a deeper immersion in the topic of the study of informants, interest in media materials on the activities of municipal employees, their personal involvement in this professional group. In addition, the territorial affiliation of students to the Kursk region becomes an additional factor in increasing the attention of informants to the activities of government bodies, whose tasks include ensuring the safety of local residents, preventing terrorist threats. The choice of students from the Kursk region as informants excludes their superficial view of the research problem, allows representing a meaningful reflection of media content and its influence on the image of municipal employees.

3. Discussion

The specificity of the modern media space is the emphasis on negative information, shock content, which allows attracting a wide mass of readers. According to N.K. Prigarina, the actualization of media discourse illustrating criminal incidents involving teachers, cases of violations of ethical standards, strengthens negative stereotypes and ideas about this professional group in the long term (Prigarina, 2022).

A similar situation is developing around the image of state and municipal employees. Negative stereotypes of public consciousness are supported by such characteristics of the media image of a modern official as distance from the population, misunderstanding of the problems of local residents. The image of insufficiently competent and corrupt government officials is replicated in the media space (Buryak, 2023). Thus, in society, under the influence of established stereotypes and information aimed at attracting shock attention, a negative image of a municipal employee is formed. These trends reduce the efficiency of local government bodies and increase alienation between the authorities and the population.

In this context, the functional role of media literacy education is to develop the skills of the younger generation, allowing them to see interpretative shifts in the media image of socially significant professions, track the dynamics of changes in public opinion, and the influence of falsified content on the consolidation of stereotypes and false beliefs. Modern research confirms a stable relationship between the effectiveness of media literacy education and the presence of critical thinking skills. Living conditions in the era of "post-truth" actualize such elements of media literacy education as digital citizenship, reflection of ethical behavior in the media space (Gálik et al., 2024; Nguyen, 2022). According to Russian scientists, media literacy has not only a narrowly applied meaning in the education system, but should also be understood in a broad context, as a tool for reproducing the intellectual and cultural potential of social subjects and the nation as a whole (Kamenev et al., 2019)

A.S. Nikitina and V.S. Kyazimova, in their analysis of the causes of the deformation of the image of municipal employees, point to the lack of attention to the formation of the media image in social networks. In particular, modern municipal employees separate "their own status and social networks as a personal space" (Nikitina, Kyazimova, 2018), which increases the intensity of the impact of informal channels of information dissemination. In modern conditions, influencers in social networks, who have a significant number of subscribers and enjoy their trust, act as legislators of public opinion, conductors of the formation of ideas and assessments of the population (Coates et al., 2019). In this context, the interest of local residents in the municipal agenda can be converted into the formation of a positive media environment, in which representatives of local governments will act as influencers of opinions. The contradiction between the need for more active inclusion of municipal employees in digital interactions and their insufficient readiness for these practices increases the risks of forming a negative image of local authorities.

Insufficient personal contribution, unclear subjective position of municipal employees in the media space leads to the blurring of the image of this professional group, focusing the public on its negative characteristics replicated in the media. In the current conditions of dynamic development of local digital communities, it seems necessary to use these platforms to articulate the positions of local governments, establish dialogue interactions with local residents. Empirical studies in Germany confirm the effectiveness of digital interactions between politicians and the population to build trust and increase the reputational capital of the authorities (Starke et al., 2020). Information

openness of government bodies, readiness for dialogue and partnership not only forms a positive image of municipal leaders, but also contributes to the development of trust, the willingness of residents to participate in the socio-economic development of territories (Rogach, Frolova, 2023).

In this context, it seems necessary to teach students studying in the field of "State and municipal administration" the skills of creating media texts and self-presentation of professional achievements. State and municipal employees, as agents of social change, must have a high level of media literacy, allowing them to form a collective experience of media consumption, in the process of which local communities can gain access to objective, targeted information.

Foreign studies emphasize the need to use social networks to create a positive image of socially significant professions. In particular, police services have social media accounts to create and strengthen a positive image of the police, represent its effectiveness and openness to interaction with the public (O'Connor, Zaidi, 2020). It can be assumed with a high degree of probability that these practices will have a similarly positive impact on the image of local authorities. Representation of municipal leaders in digital communities, their openness in matters of budget policy and financial expenditures is the most effective tool for increasing trust and breaking stereotypes about corruption in government. However, studies conducted in Turkish municipalities have shown that officials are not fully aware of the instrumental potential of personal social media accounts and do not use platforms in digital communities to increase the level of openness and ensure transparency of their activities (Calhan et al., 2021).

4. Results

The study found that students are interested in information about the profession of a state and municipal employee. Informants said that they read and listen to the news, and are involved in the modern media agenda.

Informant A (young men): "First of all, I want to say that when you are in society, you cannot exist in some kind of bubble and somehow separate yourself from the media. One way or another, you see them on a daily basis, even if you don't specifically watch them, you somehow perceive information from there from different sources...".

This opinion of the informant most vividly characterizes the presence of media in various aspects of the life of modern youth. The scaling of information flows, the differentiation of channels for receiving it impose special demands on the media competence of the younger generation. The use of a limited range of sources in the process of searching for information, an insufficient level of reflection and criticality in assessing data, a lack of analytical skills, and the ability to work with big data serve as a risk factor for distorting the real situation characterizing the activities of a municipal employee.

The role of media literacy education in this context is seen in the formation of skills for critical assessment of disinformation, resistance to information manipulation. It seems extremely important to create a foundation for understanding the nature of the formation of stereotypes, prejudices, and expand the boundaries of open thinking among young people.

Living in a border region actualizes the involvement of informants in media analysis, searching for information about the territorial situation and the activities of government bodies.

Informant T (girl): "Yes, of course, I read the media, I especially closely follow the activities of Alexander Khinshtein, since he currently holds the position of acting governor of the Kursk region. He is a keen fighter against corruption, he is honest, he always gets in touch with people, meets with them, that is, he does not sit in his office, but communicates with people. Especially with those who need it most - these are the residents of the border area of the Kursk region, he has met with them more than once, talked and resolved issues directly..."

It is interesting that personal information characterizing the activities of a politician evokes the strongest emotional response. Representation in the media space of the everyday practices of "public service" ("*always in touch", "talks and solves residents' issues*") of municipal employees becomes the most effective tool for shaping their image. It is noteworthy that information that illustrates the specific activities of municipal officials, their everyday practices, is especially in demand.

In this context, it seems necessary to include media literacy courses in the system of professional education and advanced training of municipal employees. The specifics of media literacy education for this professional group should include the following elements:

– applied skills of positioning oneself in online communities (presentation);

– skills of creating media content that weaves positive experience of solving socially significant problems of local communities into narratives of everyday life;

– ability to reflect on the experience of public interactions in the media space, including on the basis of an analysis of the ethical principles of media communication;

– skills of broadcasting a proactive position in the media space that supports socially significant values of municipal service.

Media literacy education of municipal employees should not be limited to the formation of skills of critical assessment of information, the main tasks are related to the activation of creative potential, the ability to analyze the situation, create resonant content, replicate successful practices in the media space. In this context, it seems appropriate in the process of media literacy education of state and municipal employees to pay attention to the formation of such skills as content visualization, justification and argumentation of one's own position, focusing attention, and selection of data.

Empirical results of studies conducted in Turkey also confirm the importance of management decisions made on the basis of shared values and moral standards. For municipal leaders, the dimension of "internal moral perspective" is of particular relevance. Moreover, proactive leadership of the manager has an overall positive impact on the activities of municipal employees, their motivation for high-quality work with the population, reducing the risks of such destructive aspects as improper performance of services, rudeness, haste, conflicts (Bozaci, Gürer, 2024).

During the focus group, informants pointed out a differentiated approach to the selection of information sources. Young people are more interested in "*popular Telegram channels or VKontakte publics*". According to focus group participants, official media provide their readers with more generalized, superficial information. A similar conclusion is made based on the materials of foreign studies, which emphasize the potential of social networks for shaping the image of politicians and municipal leaders. Firstly, the audience reach expands, the accessibility of certain socio-demographic groups, especially young people, increases. Secondly, the more emotional nature of the presentation of material on social networks compared to official media, press releases, speeches ensures increased audience engagement. Thirdly, the interactive nature of interaction on social networks (the ability to exchange comments) initiates the development of sustainable interactions between the authorities and the population in the media environment (Heidenreich et al., 2022). The stability and mass character of digital interactions create conditions for the delivery of reliable, objective information about the activities of the municipality, which in the long term contributes to the formation of a positive image of municipal employees.

A mandatory condition for this is the presence of specific work results, their social significance for the population. In contrast to the positive image of the regional leader of the Kursk region, the generalized (impersonal) media image of a municipal employee in the eyes of students has very negative features.

Respondent E (girl): "Most often, of course, an image of an official is created who steals or does something only for his own benefit... But, in fact, if you dig a little deeper, you can find a lot of information about officials helping society, responding to their requests, holding receptions, and in general, many do not steal, but on the contrary, do everything to improve society."

Informant B (girl): "Yes, I read articles about officials in the media ...".

The media replicate such characteristics of representatives of this professional group as greed, dishonesty, bribery, bureaucracy, the desire to achieve their own goals as opposed to public ones. These trends are very destructive for the image of municipal employees. During the focus group, students repeatedly emphasized that objective reality often contradicts established stereotypes. However, the scale and multi-channel replication of the negative image of municipal employees in the media devalues the real achievements of their activities.

Similar conclusions were made in foreign studies. According to scientists, the role of the media in forming the image of political leaders is decisive. The plurality and ubiquity of media technologies, the influence of digital opinion leaders, and the growing trends of "filtering information consumption" (choosing sources that coincide with the user's opinion and ignoring opposing points of view) form a new media reality, where media framing is becoming a powerful tool for influencing public opinion (Uwalaka, 2024).

Given the scaling of falsified information in social networks, the tasks of media literacy education should be expanded by conceptualizing new pedagogical approaches. In particular, foreign researchers conclude that it is necessary to develop cognitive and affective abilities for

information processing (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2015; Schreuers, Vandenbosch, 2021). Reflection of emotions and feelings in the process of information consumption can become a reliable tool for counteracting the manipulation of public consciousness, a mechanism for destroying established false stereotypes.

According to young people, positively colored content in official media "does not save" the situation. The functional weakness of official media reduces the effectiveness of their activities in forming a positive image of state and municipal employees.

Respondent A (young men): "As for the presentation of the image of an official, there are two sides of the coin: there are more popular media among young people, where he is usually depicted as some kind of impersonal entity, greedy and powerful. And from the government media, we are positioned as a beautiful, sacred image..."

The results obtained during the focus group illustrate the importance of obtaining reliable information for young people. The categorical nature of the two diametrically opposed poles of the media image of municipal employees (on the one hand, the negative, expressed in corruption practices, bureaucracy, and, on the other hand, the exaggeratedly positive, "*sacred*", characterized exclusively by socially approved behavior) does not find a response among young people.

The study addressed the problem of finding tools for forming a positive image of municipal employees. Answering this question, students focused on the objective limitations of the activities of municipal employees, reducing the attractiveness of this professional trajectory. Increasing the prestige of work in municipalities (increasing wages, benefits, career growth), according to informants, can be considered as a foundation for attracting proactive employees interested in high-quality work.

Respondent E (girl): "Perhaps current school graduates would be motivated to enter and work in the municipal service in general – greater popularization, in the sense that current municipal employees would come and tell them what it is like to be such an employee, what are the advantages of working from the side of the person who does this. For us, it is probably also a good practice to communicate on a regular basis with people who are in this structure and who, like no one else, can truthfully answer our questions that arise."

The development of the personnel potential of the municipal service in this context is one of the drivers of the formation of its positive image. In addition, ideas were expressed regarding the media image of a municipal employee, the need to popularize specific achievements and results of the work of government bodies in the media space.

Respondent A (young men): "People may be put off by this image of an official that has become ingrained in the minds of most people..."

Questionnaire surveys of student youth confirm the results of our qualitative research. In particular, A.A. Bukhner, characterizing the assessments of young people, speaks of the lack of information in the media space about the activities of state and municipal employees. It seems necessary to update in the media agenda such qualities of government officials as competence, professionalism, and individual decision-making style (Bukhner, 2020).

Students are quite selective in choosing sources of information. The results of the focus group interview illustrate the contrast between official and unofficial sources of information in the assessments of young people, where priority is given to the latter. According to the focus group participants, official media provide more generalized information, which is declarative and impersonal.

In characterizing the influence of the media on the formation of the image of municipal employees, the informants expressed themselves quite unanimously. The negative connotation of media materials was emphasized, the focus in the media on such stereotypical features of the media image of a municipal employee as greed, selfishness, dishonesty, theft, corruption, bureaucracy. At the same time, according to young people, the media image of a municipal employee presented in the official media is also far from reality. Focusing on the exaggeratedly positive features of an official, socially approved behavior, the "sacredness" of the image does not find a response among student youth.

Thus, in the course of the study it was established that modern youth is interested in receiving objective reliable information about the activities of state and municipal employees. The request for targeted information illustrating the specific results of the activities of government bodies is especially relevant.

5. Conclusion

The results of the focus group interview showed that students studying in the field of "public and municipal administration" are interested in the modern political agenda, monitor information about the activities of local governments in the media space. At the same time, students are quite selective in choosing sources of information. The results of the focus group interview illustrate the opposition between official and unofficial sources of information in the assessments of young people, where priority is given to the latter. According to the focus group participants, official media provide more generalized information, which is declarative and impersonal. The greatest interest among students is caused by "*popular Telegram channels and VKontakte publics*".

Informants spoke quite unanimously when characterizing the influence of the media on the formation of the image of municipal employees. The negative connotation of media materials was emphasized, the focus in the media on such stereotypical features of the image of a municipal employee as greed, selfishness, dishonesty, theft, corruption, bureaucracy. At the same time, according to young people, the media image of a municipal employee presented in official media is also far from reality. Focusing on exaggeratedly positive features of an official, socially approved behavior, the "sacredness" of the image does not find a response among student youth. According to focus group participants, the presentation of extreme poles of the image of a municipal employee in the media space (strongly negative and exaggeratedly positive) distorts the real picture of the activities of local governments.

Based on the data obtained, it can be concluded that media literacy education should occupy an important place in the system of training and advanced training of municipal employees. In particular, media literacy education of municipal employees should include the following elements: the formation of skills of positioning oneself in online communities, skills of creating media content that weaves positive experience of solving socially significant problems of local communities into narratives of everyday life, the consolidation of ethical principles of media consumption and public interactions in the media space.

Thus, the study found that modern youth are interested in receiving objective reliable information about the activities of state and municipal employees. It has been established that student youth show significant interest in searching for address information. In essence, municipal government acquires for young people the "face" of a specific official, whose actions shape ideas about the specifics of the profession they are receiving. The integration of data found during the address search on the specific results of the municipal official's activities with the formed ideas about the municipal service as such forms the media image of the local government. Representation in the media space of everyday practices of "service", the ideological link between municipal service and the common good seems to be the most effective tool for forming the image of municipal employees.

Further areas of research may include the following: the influence of the image of the municipal service on the readiness of the local population in territorial self-government, the assessment of media and social network materials the municipal service, the determination of factors in the formation of youth trust in official sources of information.

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Existential Motifs in Russian Feature Films of the early 21st century

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Abstract

The article presents an analysis of works on the subject of the article, which showed that scholars adhere to a one-sided view regarding early 21st-century Russian cinema, considering it only from the perspective of atheistic existentialism. This circumstance served as the main reason for conducting our research. We analyzed the main ideas of religious existentialism by G. Marcel and atheistic existentialism by J.-P. Sartre; identified fundamental differences in their approaches to formulating the categories of freedom, love, hope, and alienation; and presented variations of the representation of these categories in Russian feature films of the early 21st century.

The material for this study consisted of Russian feature films made in the second half of the 2000s – early 2010s. As a philosophical toolkit for their analysis, the categories (existentials) of alienation, freedom, love, and hope, as presented in the religious (theistic) and atheistic existentialism of G. Marcel and J.-P. Sartre, were used. To identify and describe the state and worldview attitudes of characters, the artistic space, and the dramaturgy of feature films representing the concepts of religious and atheistic existentialism, axiological, semiotic, and aesthetic types of analysis were employed.

Based on the results of the conducted research, the article concludes. The impenetrable boundary between the inner and outer worlds in the consciousness of the heroes of the films *Koktebel* (Russia, 2003), *Free Floating* (Russia, 2006) and *Hearts Boomerang* (Russia, 2011) makes them closed, unable to express feelings and understand themselves. This becomes the main reason for their internal lack of freedom and alienation. Openness, sincerity and the ability to love make the heroes of the films *The Island* (Russia, 2006) and *The Priest* (Russia, 2009) truly free.

Keywords: Russian cinema, religious existentialism, Marcel, atheistic existentialism, Sartre, the beginning of the 21st century.

1. Introduction

The intensifying cultural crisis in Russia manifested itself particularly strongly at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, when fundamental socio-political changes occurred: the collapse of the Soviet Union, a severe economic downturn, the powerful influence of Western culture, and the destruction of the ideological and value-based foundation of social consciousness. At the beginning of the current century, phenomena of rationalism and technocratism, which depersonalize the world and devalue human life, gained wide prevalence in our society. All this led to serious changes in social perceptions of the meaning and value of life, the role and purpose of a person, the forgetting by part of society of the concepts of nobility, honor, dignity, and, as a result, to an existential vacuum.

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Against this background, existential issues became central for a whole generation of young filmmakers, the so-called "new quiet ones": A. Zvyagintsev, A. Popogrebsky, V. Sigarev, N. Khomeriki, V. Khlebnikov, and others. Their films, by all dramaturgical and aesthetic criteria, can quite rightly be classified as existential dramas. The characters in their films are "abandoned" in a soulless and absurd world, where an atmosphere of hopelessness, alienation, and despair prevails; there is no glimmer or illusion that anything might change for the better. If any of the heroes try to cope with the course of senseless and meaningless events, the world crashes down on them with all-encompassing cosmic injustice and cruelty.

A pessimistic view of reality is only one side of the coin of contemporary Russian cinema. On the other side, one can place the films of P. Lungin (*The Island.* Russia, 2006), V. Khotinenko (*The Priest.* Russia, 2009), which tell about the saving role of love, about hope that gives strength, about the transformation of the human soul. For their heroes, "abandonment" in a cruel and absurd world does not become a hopeless and desperate situation; on the contrary, it helps them find meaning and realize the purpose of their lives.

The films of the first and second "groups" do not reflect a deep philosophical perception of life and are not a form of authorial philosophical reflection on the problematic nature of human existence, but the dramaturgical conflict, plot motives, characters' actions, and aesthetics contained in them reflect existential experiences and are connected with the posing and solving of existential questions. They address the main range of problems of atheistic and religious existentialism, interpreted in terms of life and death, freedom and dependence, love and alienation.

2. Materials and methods

The material for this study consisted of Russian feature films made in the second half of the 2000s – early 2010s. As a philosophical toolkit for their analysis, the categories (existentials) of alienation, freedom, love, and hope were used, as presented in the religious (theistic) and atheistic existentialism of G. Marcel and J.-P. Sartre.

In order to identify and describe the states and worldview attitudes of the characters, the artistic space, and the dramaturgy of feature films representing the concepts of religious and atheistic existentialism, the following types of analysis were used:

– axiological analysis, aimed at identifying the values of the individual existence of the characters in feature films;

– semiotic analysis of the system of signs and images reflecting the existential attitudes of the author's worldview;

– aesthetic analysis, aimed at identifying the existential characteristics of the spatial-temporal dimension of artistic reality.

3. Discussion

Researchers show rather modest interest in the problem of representing existential motives in contemporary domestic cinema. Our review showed that to date, this topic has been directly or indirectly addressed by the authors of two articles in a Russian collection of an international scientific conference (Mankovskaya, 2023; Sterkina, 2023) and the author of one American monograph (DeBlasio, 2020).

N.B. Mankovskaya reveals the specifics of the verbal and visual expression of existentialist issues in contemporary art based on domestic and foreign literature, cinema, theater, art practices, and internet art. Using the example of films by A. Zvyagintsev: *The Return* (Russia, 2003), *The Banishment* (Russia, 2007), *Elena* (Russia, 2011), *Loveless* (Russia, France, Belgium, Germany, 2017)), she describes existential situations in which the absence of love appears as the dominant feature of existence. "The relationships between parents and children, husbands and wives here are marked not just by indifference, but by the chilling coldness of soullessness, insensitivity. Existentialist portraits highlight the fangs of monsters beneath the masks of outwardly ordinary people, which even the loss of a child is unable to awaken. The same pain points were addressed in the films *Melody for a Street Organ* (Ukraine, 2009) by K. Muratova, and *To Live* (Russia, 2012) by V. Sigarev" (Mankovskaya, 2023: 71).

N.B. Mankovskaya shows the transformation of existentialist concepts of man in our century compared to the previous century, concluding that the pessimistic essence of the existentialist vision of man has been exacerbated by apocalyptic moods. "If, for example, in Sartre and Camus, man was a clearly defined personality capable of stoically resisting the absurdity and chaos of the

world, then the modern existentialist hero is amorphous, often devoid of inner life, unable to resist circumstances" (Mankovskaya, 2023: 79).

N.I. Sterkina, using the example of D. Mamulia's film *Another Sky* (Russia, 2010), considers silence as the main marker of the existential crisis, which has become one of the main themes in contemporary Russian cinema. Signs of this crisis also include the vulnerability of man in a cruel world, alienation, indifference and insensitivity in close relationships, empty, gray, gloomy spaces, and a sense of timelessness.

According to N.I. Sterkina, D. Mamluia "created a serious artistic text about the problems of human consciousness in the 21st century..." (Sterkina, 2023: 204). The crisis of consciousness, manifested in the gap between the inner and outer worlds, between the personal and the social, becomes a symptom of the spiritual illnesses of society, the depiction of which is dedicated to many contemporary Russian feature films. As in the film *Another Sky* (Russia, 2010), they convey a sense of loss of authenticity in relationships, isolation, detachment, and selfishness.

American researcher A. DeBlasio, in the monograph "Philosopher for the Filmmaker: Merab Mamardashvili and Russian Cinema," analyzes and characterizes the influence of the "Georgian Socrates" on the worldview and creativity of Soviet and Russian filmmakers. She associates the possibilities of this influence with M.K. Mamardashvili's ideas about consciousness and freedom as one of the key concepts of existentialism, directly related to the idea of responsibility for one's life, for "what will happen to us." According to A. DeBlasio, the inability to cope with one's freedom leads the characters in A. Zvyagintsev's films to catastrophe.

The existential dramas of A. Zvyagintsev *The Return* (Russia, 2003); *The Banishment* (Russia. 2007), *Elena* (Russia, 2011), *Leviathan* (Russia, 2014), *Loveless* (Russia, France, Belgium, Germany, 2017), according to A. DeBlasio, are devoted to the problems of fatherlessness, the destruction of the family, serving as an "allegorical axis in all the director's works depicting the trauma and crisis of Russian society as a whole" (DeBlasio, 2020: 212). In his films we see that "'lovelessness' is the state in which a person is alienated from their consciousness and, consequently, from society" (DeBlasio, 2020, p. 218).

A. DeBlasio characterizes the aesthetics of the "new quiet" films, aimed at depicting unspoken psychological drama: a slow narrative pace, the skeletons of abandoned buildings, black tree branches, gray sky, deserted streets – a space symbolizing the collapse of human relationships, the "shadow zones of human consciousness." "Like Mamulia for *Another Sky* (Russia, 2010), Zvyagintsev chose Moscow for filming the movies *Elena* (Russia, 2011), and *Loveless* (Russia, France, Belgium, Germany, 2017)... The characters are separated from the uninhabited space by glass, fenced off by windows and doors, like animals in captivity, gazing into the expanse of lost freedom they long to regain" (DeBlasio, 2020: 213).

A. DeBlasio analyzes D. Mamulia's film from the standpoint of classical existentialism of A. Camus, J.-P. Sartre, M. Heidegger: "the collision between the general, universal language of thought and the language imposed from outside for political or ideological reasons lies at the core of the existential collapse in *Another Sky* (Russia, 2010)" (DeBlasio, 2020: 110).

Analysis of contemporary Russian cinema by N.B. Mankovskaya, N.I. Sterkina, and A. DeBlasio is presented from the perspective of atheistic existentialism, which is determined by the authors' choice – film directors associated with the group of "new quiet ones," characterized by common stylistic features, primarily a space of loneliness and isolation, where the character's desire to hide under the cover of their private life from a senseless, hostile world is felt. Everyday phenomena in their films include lies, betrayal, death, and characters who have lost one of the soul's main qualities – the ability to empathize and sympathize. There is evident spiritual damage and paralysis. Therefore, N.B. Mankovskaya's conclusion that the heroes of modern feature films are "deprived of that existential outlet, which the first existentialists saw as the justification of their life through art" (Mankovskaya, 2023: 79).

As the main trends in 21st-century Russian cinema, N.B. Mankovskaya, N.I. Sterkina, and A. DeBlasio identified the depiction of absurdity, melancholy, loneliness, alienation, and the especially poignant theme of lovelessness. Meanwhile, films with Christian themes were not considered by them, and therefore other tendencies were not noted – ideas of freedom, love, hope, which make consciousness whole and fill a person with the desire to live. One of the key components of the worldview of the Russian person, the Russian soul – Christian virtues – which are connected with spiritual quests in the works of the most influential writers (F.M. Dostoevsky, I.S. Shmelev, etc.), philosophers (N.A. Berdyaev, I.A. Ilyin, etc.), and film directors

(A.A. Tarkovsky, L.E. Shepitko, V.M. Shukshin, etc.) in Russian and world culture, has remained outside their attention.

From the above analysis, it is evident that scholars hold a one-sided view regarding early 21st-century Russian cinema, considering it only from the standpoint of atheistic existentialism. This circumstance served as the main reason for conducting our research. We performed an analysis of the main ideas of religious existentialism by G. Marcel and atheistic existentialism by J.-P. Sartre; identified fundamental differences in their approaches to formulating the categories of freedom, love, hope, and alienation; and presented variants of the representation of these categories in Russian feature films of the early current century.

In existential philosophy, a person is described as being in a constant state of becoming. Their authentic essence manifests in moments of being on the boundary between existence and non-existence, in "borderline situations," in which they gain a vision and awareness of the futility of everyday reality, the illusory nature of social values and ideals. In this state, a person experiences the need to search for meanings and goals of life, the necessity to "go beyond" ordinary reality in order to move toward authentic being, toward oneself. In atheistic existentialism, this intentionality is defined as a movement toward one's essence from "nothing". In religious existentialism, it is realized in the person's participation in being as a whole and all-encompassing (K. Jaspers).

In the 20th century, two currents of existentialism were formed: religious and atheistic, whose major representatives are considered to be G. Marcel and J.-P. Sartre. G. Marcel developed his philosophy of existentialism based on "positive" existentials (faith, hope, love, freedom) and the idea of a universally spiritual core of personality, incarnated in a person by God. He considered the basis for distinguishing inauthentic and authentic life to be the vertical of the universal, set by the relationship between the temporal and the eternal, the empirical and the metaphysical. This vertical axis predetermines the direction of a person's movement and the ultimate goal of their transcendence – the realization of oneself as a spiritual being.

J.-P. Sartre built his existential philosophy on the basis of "negative" existentials (absurdity, loneliness, fear, death) and the idea of an individual-existential consciousness, within which "resides" a universal essence that serves as the foundation for distinguishing between inauthentic and authentic life. The ultimate goal of transcendence is absent in his existentialism. For Sartre, a person goes beyond themselves in order to constitute themselves, but the final point of their movement from past to future is not defined.

G. Marcel, in his works, started from the position that the abstract scientific approach cannot serve as the basis for the philosophical analysis of the phenomena of being. He believed that the result of the functioning of objectifying thinking, which reifies the surrounding reality, others, and oneself, becomes a situation of alienation, the fading of the ontological need to be. In his existentialism, a clear boundary is drawn between the objective world, comprehended by rational thinking, and the world of "mystery," revealed to the individual in intimate-personal immersion, the involvement of their being, "participation in being." G. Marcel considered the "mystery" as a part of human life, one that cannot be objectified and that spiritualizes life. He associated its experience with the feeling of the sacredness of the inexplicable sense of contact with the world as a whole. The disclosure of the ontological meaning of the "mystery" is possible through revealing the content of existential experiences caused by faith, hope, and love.

According to G. Marcel, objectifying thinking is actualized in objectifying actions that realize a selfish attitude – the need for ownership, possession of things or other people. The satisfaction of the need to "have" consumes the person themselves and ultimately leads them to alienation. "In reality," reflected G. Marcel, "at the very heart of unfriendliness we always find a kind of alienation. ... I understand everything, I acknowledge it, abstractly...; I even sympathize, if you will but only abstractly: for I still have to admit to myself that I feel nothing" (Marcel, 1995: 100). By alienation, he meant "the fact that a person becomes increasingly estranged from themselves, from their own essence..." (Marcel, 1995: 108). The only way, in his opinion, to overcome the selfish attitude can be self-denial as a genuine act of freedom manifestation.

G. Marcel connected religious faith and freedom, pointing out that in his contemporary reality, dechristianization and the growing spirit of abstraction, embodied in the achievements of technological progress, lead to the captivity of the free human spirit. Modern civilization "dehumanizes" and blinds man. Losing freedom, he becomes dependent on pleasures and material

values, dissolves in social processes, which prevents him from realizing himself and revealing his essence (existence).

G. Marcel saw the source of existential freedom in the Divine Presence. Freedom, in his view, allows a person, thrown into a meaningless world, to find the possibility to turn to higher values, to God. The impulse beyond empirical reality, transcendence, which connects man with eternity, with God, is hope. Hope, according to G. Marcel, "consists in the affirmation that there is in being – beyond the given, beyond all that can be counted, that can serve as the basis for any calculations – a certain secret principle that is at one with me..." (Marcel, 1995: 88-89). He considered the only true hope to be that "which is directed toward what does not depend on us, which is driven by humility, not pride" (Marcel, 1995: 92). Therefore, it can be attained only by overcoming one's own self-love and vanity.

According to G. Marcel, love for God is the foundation of love for people. It has an active nature and is connected with the will, not desire. Love overcomes egoism, which leads a person to despair arising from distrust of the world and others. The lover and the beloved do not distinguish themselves; there is no distance between them. Love is a mystery in which there is no opposition between subject and object, Self and Other. G. Marcel believed that "in love, it is most noticeable how the boundary between the concepts 'within me' and 'before me' is erased" (Marcel, 1995: 82). The value of love cannot be rationally explained, but it can be felt through the full involvement of one's entire being in the "mystery" of the Other's existence. To love means to desire eternal life for the Other. In such an attitude toward the Other, a person can find their true Self.

The problem of the relationship between subject and object, the opposition of Self and Other, is resolved in the act of communication. "From the moment," wrote G. Marcel, "when communication is established between me and the other, we move from one world to another, entering that zone where one of us is not merely among others and where transcendence takes the form of the bliss of love" (Marcel, 2004: 57). Communication is open and profound interaction leading to self-knowledge within the space of intersubjectivity. In communication, the light of authentic being and eternity arises, actualizing the ideal space of intersubjectivity, where the individual, sincerely experiencing feelings of love, loyalty, and brotherhood, transcends their own limits.

The work of another French existentialist, J.-P. Sartre, is filled with a tragic worldview caused by loneliness, alienation, fear of death, and confrontation with "nothingness." Existing in an uncertain, absurd, and meaningless world, his characters experience melancholy, boredom, despair, and horror. Nothing brings them joy or happiness. They feel "nausea" and powerlessness in relation to a fleeting and lifeless reality, at times resembling a hallucination. Despite this, J.-P. Sartre's characters retain the ability to resist the absurdity and chaos of existence, finding within themselves the strength to continue living.

According to J.-P. Sartre, the relationship between man and the world is conflictual; harmony between them is not the norm but an illusion. Constant struggle with the environment, society, and oneself is necessary for the formation of human essence. Man faces trials and suffering, through which he must maintain his dignity. In this case, he can realize his own freedom and overcome his limitations. According to Jean-Paul Sartre, the justification of one's existence can only be found in creativity and art, in which the depersonalizing objectivity of the world is overcome.

The concept of freedom holds a significant place in Jean-Paul Sartre's philosophy, who asserted that "man is condemned to be free." He believed that for some people, the thought of their own freedom is unbearable, and to avoid the suffering and anxiety caused by this thought, they hide behind a mask, betraying themselves. By denying themselves the possibility of preserving their inner freedom, a person acts immorally in difficult situations, justifying themselves by saying that they "could do nothing about it." In this sense, a person is responsible for remaining faithful to themselves. "Whatever our existence may be," Jean-Paul Sartre wrote, "it is a choice; it depends on us– to choose ourselves as 'great' and 'noble' or 'low' and 'humble'" (Sartre, 2000: 481).

J.-P. Sartre contrasted freedom with love. Love, in his view, "implies... a certain way of appropriation: it is precisely the freedom of the other as such that we want to capture... Therefore, the lover does not wish to possess the beloved as a thing; he demands a special kind of possession. He wants to possess freedom as freedom" (Sartre, 2000: 382). In such a case, the beloved, according to Jean-Paul Sartre, voluntarily gives their freedom to the lover. The absence of the prospect of absolute reality, God, in these relationships creates a situation in which the Self and the Other exist in a space of impenetrable infinite mirror reflections. Love in J.-P. Sartre's view is possible in solitude as a necessary condition for maintaining distance and not enslaving the beloved.

In J.-P. Sartre's philosophy, the concept of freedom is linked to the notion of alienation. Independence, the autonomy of a person from society as a form of expressing freedom, becomes one of the causes of alienation. Alienation is a characteristic of a person's state in a situation of social relations that evoke feelings of burden and oppression. A person becomes merely a means for another to satisfy desires, making genuine unity between people impossible. J.-P. Sartre believed that communication gives a person the joy of superficial existence among indifferent people. Meanwhile, delving within oneself, one discovers that they are truly alone, as at the core of their own Self lies the abyss of "Nothingness."

In the understanding of J.-P. Sartre, everyday human existence appears as a world filled with artificial things, while the natural world can only evoke an illusion of beauty and meaning. The external world is alien to man, and alienation is insurmountable. The boundary between "being-in-itself" and the external world is insurmountable.

Hope, like love, is considered by J.-P. Sartre as a kind of self-deception, an illusion. Hope is connected with the possibility of creating meaning in one's life for oneself, projecting, anticipating one's own future. However, by projecting oneself into the future, a person cannot achieve something stable because the moment they attain some embodiment of themselves, it immediately ceases to be what it just was. Meanwhile, existentialism, according to J.-P. Sartre, "is not an attempt to discourage a person from action, for it tells a person that hope lies only in their actions, and the only thing that allows a person to live is action" (Sartre, 1990: 335). Having no other world apart from the world of human subjectivity, a person is left with only one hope – to find themselves.

Significant differences in the semantic content of the categories (existentials) of alienation, freedom, love, and hope in the existentialism of French philosophers are primarily related to the religiosity of G. Marcel and the atheism of J.-P. Sartre.

According to G. Marcel, alienation is caused by the action of objectifying thinking and the satisfaction of the need to "have." Its overcoming is possible through open and profound communication with others, in the space of intersubjectivity, where sincere feelings of love, loyalty, and brotherhood arise. For J.-P. Sartre, the cause of a person's alienation from their essence and from others lies in material (productive) and social relations. Trying to escape loneliness, a person goes beyond themselves but encounters the absurdity of the external world.

Freedom for G. Marcel is the possibility to turn to higher values, to God. It is this intention that allows a person to overcome the pressure of social relations and rational forms of thinking and to enter the space of authentic being in intersubjectivity. J.-P. Sartre saw freedom as the reason why a person feels alien in this world and therefore strives to attain their uniqueness, their Self.

In G. Marcel, love manifests itself in action aimed at overcoming one's own selfishness, participating in the life of another, and involvement in the "mystery" of their being. Love is considered by J.-P. Sartre in the painful and conflictual relationships between the Self and the Other. Genuine love is impossible for J.-P. Sartre, as he understands it only as the fullness of possessing the other, but not as self-renunciation for the sake of the other.

Hope, for G. Marcel, is placed in something greater than ourselves, in God, who brings us salvation, gives the possibility to overcome misfortune, and to unite with eternity through overcoming one's pride and vanity. In the alien world, J.-P. Sartre leaves no hope for humans to discover a higher meaning, as it does not exist. Humans are left to rely on the possibility of finding the meaning of their existence, to acquire their essence, which they experience as an ontological lack.

4. Results

Existential categories (existentials) of alienation, freedom, love, and hope in their religious and atheistic versions are represented in the dramaturgical and aesthetic content of Russian films *Koktebel* (Russia, 2003), *Free Floating* (Russia, 2006), *Boomerang Hearts* (Russia, 2011), *The Island* (Russia, 2006), and *The Priest* (Russia, 2009).

The film *Koktebel* (Russia, 2003) is based on the developing conflict between a father and his eleven-year-old son. Nothing held them in Moscow, from which they hitchhike to Koktebel – a town where rising air currents carry gliders into the sky, where the endless blue sea washes sandy beaches. There, they hope for a new happy life. They do not know where they will end up tomorrow or where they will find shelter for the night. The flow of life carries them into an unknown future. They walk through fields and forests, spend the night in a culvert under the railway, travel in a freight train car from which a railway worker removes them, stop in a half-abandoned summer

house where the father is wounded by a gunshot, and end up in the house of a nurse who takes in the travelers.

The father is unemployed, the son does not attend school – they have no social obligations. They also do not have close relationships. More often, they simply remain silent or communicate through gestures. According to J.-P. Sartre, they are truly free. However, while the father feels comfortable in this false freedom, the boy clearly suffers. And it is probably only he who prevents the father from completely falling to the social bottom.

The father is running away from his past. He has lost his sense of responsibility and self-worth, so he does not strive to find meaning or achieve any vital life goals. He behaves selfishly and weak-willed, succumbs to temptations, stops paying attention to his son when he makes acquaintances with people he happens to meet, and ultimately betrays him. The events of their lives take place against a backdrop of a depressive environment that intensifies the feeling of alienation. Long static shots of desolate and gloomy autumn landscapes symbolize the rupture of interpersonal connections and the boy's loneliness.

In one of the early episodes of the film, the boy tells his accidental travel companion: "I can see everything from above... Look." Then he covers his eyes with his hand, and about ten seconds later, aerial shots of forest strips, fields, and a road appear on screen, followed in the next shot by a schematic plan of the area drawn by him in the sand. The boy has a supernatural ability – he can see the earth from a bird's-eye view. This symbolically shows the boy's unconscious existential need – the need to rise above the soulless world.

He asks his father questions about the albatross, examines its image, and reads about it in a book. The albatross can soar for a long time high above the sea. Thoughts about it embody the desires and dreams living deep in the boy's soul, where he is free and where hope for a happy childhood life is founded.

The father spends more and more time with his new acquaintances. The boy is left alone more often. Eventually, he runs away from his father and continues the journey to the "dream" city on his own. By chance, he ends up with a truck driver in a truck, traveling to Koktebel. In the truck cabin, the song *Solo noi* by Toto Cutugno plays. The expressive and rising intonation of the Italian singer's voice in the choruses– sounds of freedom that will prove deceptive.

The boy's dream collapses. Updrafts do not lift gliders into the sky, and the wind prosaically carries and throws a piece of paper it has tossed onto the ground. Koktebel turns out to be as gloomy a place as those he had encountered during his travels. In the final scene, he sits on the edge of a pier washed by the dark waters of the Black Sea, looking into the distance, apparently hoping for nothing anymore. His father approaches and sits beside him. Both remain silent. The journey is over.

A shattered dream, an age too young to choose one's life path, and dependence on a weak-willed father leave the boy with no hope. Ahead of him lies uncertainty once again. Having lost trust in the world and faith in goodness, he becomes even more withdrawn and lonely.

The hero of the film *Free Floating* (Russia, 2006), like the characters in *Koktebel* (Russia, 2003), drifts in the current of life toward an unknown direction. His name is Lenya, he is twenty years old, and he hopes to find a job in a small provincial town with half-abandoned and half-ruined buildings that have become symbols of post-Soviet decay. The factory in the town is closing, and the local men are trying to find any kind of temporary work.

Lenya lives in a world where bosses look at the entire surrounding world and other people "predatorily" (G. Marcel), while ordinary workers obediently and passively follow their orders. They have lost their life energy, aspire to nothing, realizing the hopelessness of their situation. In this indifferent world, Lenya feels the full weight of Sartre's freedom upon himself. It seems he is the only one here trying to be honest, kind, and striving to preserve his humanity.

The film creates the effect of frozen time and space, recreating a state of inertia. The characters do not know what love or happiness are, cannot rejoice, and do not strive to achieve any goals. They have no past and no future, no fate, no life. In the endlessly gray space, the tragic helplessness of the characters is frozen in the face of prevailing hopelessness. Lyonya and his acquaintance, a girl nicknamed "Piglet," want to be closer to each other but are incapable of it. They cannot hold a normal conversation, cannot express feelings or affection, cannot even call each other by name, but use humiliating terms or insults.

Lyonya's attempts to find a proper job are futile. He takes a job as a shoe salesman but leaves after the first day, goes to work as a plasterer in another city, but gets off the bus at one of the stops

and returns home because he sees absurdity and deception everywhere. After unsuccessful attempts, Lyonya got a job at the road repair and construction department, where there are only two workers who fill potholes with broken bricks. Lyonya immediately sensed the absurdity of the situation. The head of the department greeted him with the words: "We repair roads, that is, we heal the surface. So we are woodpeckers of the road... to make sure it doesn't hurt, so as not to offend it, you have to do it all with soul..." He was able to work here for a little over a month and resigned after being beaten by the boss for exposing him as a liar.

Lyonya accidentally meets a group of his colleagues with whom he worked at the factory. He goes with them to apply for a job at a wood processing plant. They are refused there, and they happily head to the riverbank, where by nightfall they get drunk. Lyonya once again immerses himself in an atmosphere of foolishness and recklessness. While his drunken colleagues make plans for a carefree and peaceful future, he stands with his back to them, looking toward the river. In the next scene, a depiction of a miserable and wretched world is recreated, from which Lyonya tries to escape: he swims in the black river water and says, "I'll break the whole river now." When he becomes exhausted, he remembers his mother: "And mom is sleeping. Mom. Well, mom. Mom. Sleep, come on." Love for his mother is the only thing that supports him, gives him strength, and makes him seek his own life path.

The spirit of freedom, nurtured in Lyonya by his mother's love, calls for finding a way out of the world of emptiness and alienation. It seems that he manages to do this, but only partially.

In the final episode of the film, Lyonya comes to the river. An old, small barge, used for transporting cargo along the Volga, docks at the shore. Two men get off it, repair the drive chain, and return back. He stands for a long time watching them leave. Then he slowly starts to follow them and climbs onto the barge. In the final scene, Lyonya is sailing down the river on the barge, and for the first time, a genuine, spontaneous smile appears on his face; he openly expresses his emotions. Light music from Toto Cutugno's song *Il treno va* plays. Lyonya has set off on a free journey, but it is obvious that it will take place within the confines of the same miserable and indifferent world.

Kostya, the main character of the film *Boomerang Hearts* (Russia, 2011), lives with his mother and works as an assistant train driver in the Moscow metro. He is 23 years old.

At the beginning of the film, a "borderline situation" is set: a person "facing death." Kostya learns about a rare heart pathology. The doctor tells him the diagnosis: "You are a perfectly healthy person... It's just that you can die at any moment." After visiting the doctor, he walks through a long, dimly lit tunnel. The oppressive black walls and the noise of shuffling boot covers create a sense of the tragedy of existence.

The authors set the film's intonation as a state of alienation. Kostya's emotions are hidden deep inside him. The external expression of his feelings is only a hint: slightly raised corners of the lips, a faintly perceptible detached yet empathetic gaze. Every day he descends the escalator in the metro, where mechanical sounds are constantly heard. The camera follows the impersonal flow of people, capturing their tired and sullen faces.

Having learned his fatal diagnosis, Kostya changes nothing in his life, does not begin searching for answers to questions like "why did this happen to me?" or "how to live on?" Instead, he only goes to a fortune teller who resembles a crazy businesswoman and visits his father, who turns out to be completely indifferent to him and his personal life.

There are only two people in the film whose interaction brings a genuine smile to Kostya's face. These are the metro attendant and his mother. The scenes of interaction with his mother are touching. The mother takes off the boots from her sleeping son, covers him with a blanket, and adjusts his sock. She inquires about her son's personal affairs, asks if he has been to the dentist, and when he and Anya will get married.

The film constantly conveys Kostya's inner loneliness. His partner talks about his family life, shopping trips, cooking, and how they spend weekends. Kostya listens to him detachedly. The partner asks Kostya to say something: "Come on, open your mouth. Say something." Kostya says: "Mom." It feels like there is an impenetrable barrier between the characters. Kostya resembles an outside observer of a life in which he feels emptiness. He meets a girl (Anya) in winter on the street. They walk together through snowy, deserted streets, sit on a bench, swing on swings. Kissing her, he touches her lips and immediately pulls away.

Kostya hides his diagnosis and his feelings from everyone, apparently feeling that everyone is a stranger to him. He quietly leaves this world, sitting in his place as an assistant machinist, looking into the dark, dimly lit tunnel. His heart stops.

Long shots of black-and-white urban deserted landscapes, which begin and end the film, evoke the thought that tomorrow will be just like yesterday, that in this snowy, deserted, and motionless world filled with mechanical sounds, there is no place for sincere human feelings and relationships, no hope. Indifference reigns in it.

The film *The Island* (Russia, 2006) begins with events from the Great Patriotic War. An enemy ship captures a Soviet barge carrying a skipper and a stoker. A German officer offers the stoker, who is hysterically pleading for mercy, to shoot the skipper and save his own life, placing a pistol with one bullet in his hand. The stoker fires the shot, and the skipper falls overboard. By choosing life, he commits a mortal sin that will "strangle" him for more than thirty years.

After committing the killing, the stoker enters a monastery and over the years becomes a monk, Father Anatoly, then an elder, ascetic, and spiritual struggler with the gift of clairvoyance and healing people from illnesses. His life becomes an example of self-denial and self-sacrifice. For many years, suffering and tormented by memories of the committed crime, he prays sincerely and diligently, which leads to the resurrection of his soul.

The embodiment of his inner world became the harsh northern nature, the hard monastic life. The feeling of slow passage of time, stillness, sounds penetrating the space: the clatter of the coal cart wheels, the creak of wooden oars, the cries of seagulls, the noise of black sea waves and cold wind, convey the state of deep immersion of Father Anatoly into himself.

Father Anatoly occupies the lowest position in the monastery – the place of the stoker. He lives in the boiler room, sleeps on a pile of coal, his face and clothes smeared with coal dust. He has overcome the mindset of "having," and now his being is illuminated by the light of "divine truth" (G. Marcel), despite the feeling of oppressive sins.

Complete trust in God is what Father Anatoly tries to convince the pilgrims who come to him of. Even the abbot of the monastery is grateful to him for showing him his sins – attachment to things (avarice). Father Anatoly urges people to surrender to God's will, reproaching them for their lack of faith. He demands that the mother of a sick boy stay in the monastery for his communion, addressing her strictly: "And what about you, is your own son dearer or your work?!" "Did you love your husband?" Father Anatoly asks a widow who came to him, hinting that she values household chores more than her husband, who went missing during the war. He tries to show them how worldly affairs and material goods enslave them.

Because of their lack of faith, the people who come to Father Anatoly are afraid to trust God's will and therefore despair, losing hope. Hope, according to G. Marcel, is born from humility, faith, and love, because it is through them that individual existence is "penetrated" by the "Divine Light," which dispels melancholy and despair.

Feeling the approach of his death, standing "before the face of death," Father Anatoly selectively quotes lines from the Psalter: "The waves of death have washed over me, and the deadly nets have surrounded me." He prepared a coffin for himself, resembling an ordinary wooden box, and is preparing for repose. Before dying, he meets the skipper whom he shot during the war, who was wounded in the shoulder at that time and survived. Father Anatoly asks for his forgiveness. He also asks forgiveness from Father Job, whom he tried to expose for vanity with his daring jokes and hints. Lying in the coffin, Father Anatoly utters his last words: "Lord, receive my sinful soul."

The film *The Priest* (Russia, 2009) tells about the work of the Pskov Orthodox mission during the Great Patriotic War. The main character of the film is Father Alexander, one of those who revive church life in the territory occupied by the Germans. In the USSR, he is considered a traitor to his homeland. Meanwhile, he does not collaborate with either the fascist invaders or the Soviet authorities. He does not betray his homeland – the heavenly fatherland. Father Alexander believes that all this godless government in the world is temporary: "Neither the Germans nor the Bolsheviks are eternal. Only Jesus Christ is eternal. Before Him, we shall give an account."

Father Alexander is guided by moral duty and sincere feeling, uncompromisingly and selflessly fulfilling the duties of his pastoral ministry, bringing love to people. He serves the Truth, balancing on the edge: he could be killed by partisans or arrested by the Germans. He is open to all who come to him: orphans rescued from the hands of the fascists, concentration camp prisoners, those weakened by hunger, a partisan who intends to carry out a reprisal against him. Only hope in God directs him. Father Alexander is in a situation about which Jesus Christ speaks in the Gospel:

"Behold, I send you forth as sheep among wolves: therefore be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16).

In the conditions of occupation, aware of the threat from German soldiers, Father Alexander does not refuse help to anyone in need. He supports the civilians, stands up for them, and delivers clothes and food to the prisoners in the concentration camp. On his way, the priest meets various people, showing responsiveness, sympathy, and compassion toward them.

"Every genuine life is an encounter," wrote M. Buber (Buber, 1993: 41). "Encounter" is one of the most important concepts of G. Marcel. In an encounter, as the French philosopher believed, the light of true being and eternity arises, the space of intersubjectivity is actualized, where a person experiences sincere feelings of love, loyalty, brotherhood, makes an "exit" beyond their own limits, and feels their freedom.

The film contains "encounters" that change people's destinies and their attitude toward life. At the very beginning, Father Alexander "meets" a Jewish girl named Eva, baptizes her, and then adopts her. Then he "meets" three children, refugees from Leningrad, and brings six children rescued from a concentration camp. He baptizes them, adopts, and takes them in. Eva becomes the eldest daughter in his large family, raising and educating the younger foster children.

One late evening, Father Alexander "meets" in the church with a young partisan, Alexey Lugotintsev, who has decided to kill the priest, whom he believes serves the fascists. "Before you carry out your plan, at least allow me to forgive all your sins," Father Alexander tells him and hears his confession. Alexey changes his attitude towards him and later tries to protect him from attempts by partisans and Soviet soldiers to exact revenge on him.

One of the key elements in the film is the "meetings" between Father Alexander and the Orthodox German officer Ivan Fedorovich Freigauzen, who oversees the work of the Pskov mission. At the film's conclusion, they have a conversation in the church, during which the German officer talks about Germany's failed military campaign of 1943 and the danger of remaining on Soviet territory. He offers to evacuate Father Alexander's family to Germany, to which he refuses. At Freigauzen's request, Father Alexander hears his confession before they part.

Father Alexander's freedom is revealed in his simplicity and sincere Christian love, which is higher and stronger than fear. It unites people and instills hope in them.

5. Conclusion

The films *Koktebel* (Russia, 2003), *Free Floating* (Russia, 2006), *Boomerang Hearts* (Russia, 2011) capture a pessimistic, bleak view of the world resulting from the destructive tendencies of the 20th century: the desacralization and dehumanization of the world. Freedom in them is presented in the Sartrean form of alienation in a world where nothing is stable, but everything is carried away into the unknown by the flow of life. The slow passage of time and empty space form a unified stylistic poetic dimension of artistic reality. In static long shots of gray and gloomy landscapes, a sense of loneliness and "abandonment" (M. Heidegger) is recreated.

Silence and insensitivity have become the main traits of the psyche of characters in the films of directors A. Popogrebsky, V. Khlebnikov, and N. Khomeriki in the 2000s – early 2010s. The lack of sincerity in their relationships and inability to express feelings testify to the destruction of the sphere of interpersonal relationships. According to G. Marcel, this state is the result of forgetting the religious and moral foundations of human existence, indifference to higher values. That is why the absence of hope is so strongly felt in them.

Perhaps the only hint that the characters in the films "Koktebel" and "Free Floating" possess any degree of inner freedom is their feeling of emptiness and alienation in the world around them, their unconscious desire to go beyond it, and their ability to dream. They do not rebel, which in the existentialism of A. Camus and J.-P. Sartre would be a genuine expression of freedom, but deep down they have a need to fight for their existence. At the same time, the hopelessness of the situation in which the characters find themselves is a complete embodiment of hope as an illusion (J.-P. Sartre).

The impenetrable boundary between the inner and outer worlds in the consciousness of the heroes of the films *Koktebel* (Russia, 2003), *Free Floating* (Russia, 2006) and *Boomerang Hearts* (Russia, 2011) makes them closed, unable to express feelings and understand themselves. This becomes the main reason for their internal lack of freedom and alienation.

The existential nature of the films by P. Lungin (*The Island.* Russia, 2006) and V. Khotinenko (*The Priest.* Russia, 2009) is not obvious. They lack a dramatically and aesthetically expressed

philosophical foundation, but a predisposition to an existential worldview is revealed in the psychological dominant – religious feelings. The characters reflect on eternal life, undergo trials that contribute to their spiritual development. Their striving to search for authentic being arises not from the "fear of nothingness" (J.-P. Sartre), but due to the experience of sincere love for another person, the feeling and awareness of the existence of higher ideals, absolute, metaphysical reality.

Existential experiences are shown in episodes where, with poignancy and utmost sincerity, Father Anatoly (*The Island*. Russia, 2006) prays to God asking for help for a sick boy, asks for forgiveness from Father Job; where Father Alexander (*The Priest*. Russia, 2009) tells a Jewish girl about the Orthodox faith, confesses the Soviet partisan Alexey and the German officer Fairhausen, and with a strained cry appeals to the Germans asking for forgiveness for the underground fighters standing on the gallows. In these episodes, their essential openness to the "other," their "participation in being," realized in love "given to the other" (G. Marcel) is revealed. Their love for people is based on love for God and the attitude toward others as "children of God" (G. Marcel). According to G. Marcel, this love is connected with the will that implements the stance of being, rather than desire, which implements the stance of having.

Openness, sincerity and the ability to love make the heroes of the films *The Island* (Russia, 2006) and *The Priest* (Russia, 2009) truly free.
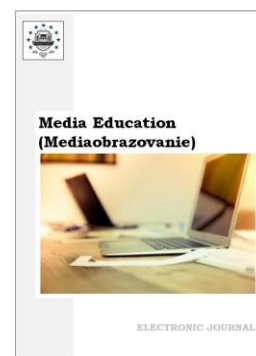
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Media Literacy and the Communication of Spiritual Values for Climate Action: A Youth-Centered Perspective

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Abstract

With this research paper, the author explores the critical intersection between media literacy and spiritually framed media narratives in inspiring youth engagement with climate action. This study emphasizes the essential role of media literacy in enhancing the impact of narratives, such as the media's role in transmitting spiritual values such as stewardship, interconnectedness, and moral responsibility. Media literacy, as defined by the capacity to access, critically evaluate, and create media content, enables the young audience not only to interpret complex spiritual ecological messages but also to internalize and act upon them. Through an inductive thematic analysis of 50 peer-reviewed papers from the period between (2010–2025), the research explored that the messages that are spiritually embedded and inclined are most useful when youth use media with critical insights. It has also been found out that youth who are aware of media literacy engage themselves more with emotional usage, greater resistance to eco-anxiety, and increased participation in pro-environmental behaviours advocacy. Media literacy transforms spiritual storytelling from passive consumption to participatory action, fostering a generation of climate-conscious and ethically grounded youth leaders. The study concludes with practical recommendations for educators, policymakers, and media creators to integrate media literacy training into environmental and values-based communication strategies to cultivate sustainable climate leadership.

Keywords: media literacy, spiritual values, youth climate action, environmental communication, sustainability education, pro-environmental behaviour, climate media narratives, digital engagement, moral responsibility, ecological identity.

1. Introduction

The global climate crisis is no longer a global threat; it's a personal threat now, to every individual. While policy interventions and technological upgradations remain essential, but to look into the deep sustainable future climate action also demands a transformation in values, ethics, and worldview. Spiritually powerful values such as interconnectedness, moral responsibility, and reverence for nature offer a powerful framework for nurturing such as transformation. Media, as a dominant cultural force, plays a vital role in transmitting these values to youth (National Institutes of health, 2019). However, the success of spiritually framed environmental narratives depends significantly on one overlooked factor: media literacy. Media literacy allows youth to critically access, interpret, and engage with media content. In the context of climate communication, it serves as a cognitive and ethical filter that helps youth to distinguish between authentic spiritual

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messages from performative or commercialized content. It transforms passive media consumers into informed interpreters and active participants in environmental advocacy. Through a systematic review of 50 scholarly papers, this study evaluates and explores the effectiveness of spiritually framed holistic media narratives in influencing youth attitudes and actions toward sustainability, providing actionable recommendations for media practitioners, policymakers, and educators (Pathak, 2013). Media serves as an influential channel for transmitting the spiritual values that emphasize interconnectedness, ethical responsibility, and environmental stewardship. Previous conducted studies highlighted the impact of media on shaping moral frameworks and fostering a sense of collective responsibility (Sachs, 20o5). Media tools like Documentaries, social media campaigns, and digital storytelling have emerged as effective mediums for embedding spiritual principles into sustainability discourse. Young and adult people play a crucial role in advancing sustainability goals.

Kanozia (Kanozia, 2018) suggested and talked about how media-driven spiritual narratives can enhance youth motivation to participate in climate action and sustainability initiatives. The extensive literature review of 50 research papers studied the effect and impact of the media, spiritual values, and youth engagement in order to build an empirical and theoretical foundation. Review is organized into two aspects 1) How media communicates spiritual values in communicating spiritual values and (2) the relationship between spiritual values, youth engagement, and sustainability (Syamsiah et al., 2024). Media has been recognized as a powerful and influential, and changing tool for shaping societal values and behaviours. Scholarly research articles highlight their capacity to transmit spiritual values such as interconnectedness, stewardship, and moral responsibility, which are increasingly relevant in today's context of environmental sustainability (Tripathi, 2024) emphasizes and explores that media narratives can foster a sense of collective responsibility by framing environmental issues as moral and ethical duties imperatives. Media like Documentaries, films, and digital storytelling have emerged as particularly effective and influential mediums for embedding and combining spiritual principles into sustainability discourse. For example, campaigns such as '*Nature Is Speaking*' and documentaries like '*The Great Green Wall*' use the new way of compelling narratives and visuals to communicate within the connection between humanity and nature, inspiring viewers and the audience to reflect on their role in environmental preservation. Social media platforms like YouTube and Instagram have also become critical spaces for promoting spiritual activism and eco-conscious lifestyles (Dhiman, 2023) suggests and explains that platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok promote influencers and spiritual leaders to share their personal stories and ethical reflections, creating a moral sense of community and collective purpose among youth. These platforms boast messages of hope, resilience, and interconnectedness, aligning with the spiritual values with practical steps toward sustainability. Research conducted by (Johnstone, 2012) further supports and suggests the idea that media-driven spiritual narratives can inspire hope, peace, and urgency, particularly among young audiences who are often unaware of traditional systems of governance and economic models. The (Capgemini Research Institute, 2025) indicates that youth are more likely to adopt pro-environmental behaviours when their values align with the spiritual principles, such as stewardship and moral responsibility (Thunberg, 2019) highlights the need for importance of moral and ethical framing in youth climate activism, noting that young activists are often motivated by a deep sense of justice and responsibility for future generations. It also focuses on both psychological and behavioural impacts of spiritually framed content on youth and adults.

2. Materials and methods

50 Scholarly papers were reviewed and analysed to study the impact of media narratives that are spiritually framed in creating youth behaviours towards sustainability in the future. Thematic analysis identified recurring narrative strategies that integrated spiritual values into sustainability communication. The theoretical analysis assessed the behavioural and psychological impacts of these narratives on youth engagement and media literacy. Data sources included peer-reviewed articles, media case studies, and reports on environmental issues, communication, and youth development. Media literacy criteria were applied to assess whether spiritually embedded messages included components such as message deconstruction, source credibility, participatory expression, and emotional framing. Media literacy frameworks from Hobbs (2010) and Buckingham (2003) were integrated into the review.

This study used secondary sources, articles, books, and empirical research published between 2010 and 2025 to have proper coverage and to inculcate recent new research innovations and designs in this particular area. This period from 2010–2025 was selected to achieve current developments in internet activism, social advocacy, media communication, and changing young behaviour and patterns in relation to climate action. The literature encompassed not just academic literature but also policy papers and organizational publications, especially from organizations such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and other literature.

Table 1. Summary of papers and the area

S.No	Source	Area of Study	Topic	Total No of papers
1	Google Scholar	Spiritual Communication	Spiritual and Inner Development	10
2	Google Scholar	Environmental Studies	Youth Climate Action	15
3	JSTOR	Spiritual Communication	Spiritual Advocacy	15
4	JSTOR	Youth Climate Action	Intrapersonal Communication	5
5	UNDP Reports	Youth Climate Action	Policy and Youth Engagement	3
6	Books	Environment, Nature and Soul	Ecology and Inner Actions	2
	Total			50

Systematic Review Process

A total of 50 scholarly papers were reviewed, including peer-reviewed articles, media case studies, and reports on environmental communication and youth development. The selection criteria focused on studies that explored the role of media in promoting spiritual values, youth engagement in sustainability, and the psychological impacts of spiritually framed narratives. The review process involved the following steps:

1. Identification: Relevant studies that were identified through databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and Scopus.

2. Reviewing: Research papers were reviewed and studied in according to the importance on those that addressed the intersection of media, spirituality, and youth behaviour.

3. Inclusion and exclusion criteria: Only studies published in English and those that provided empirical or theoretical insights into the research questions were included; others were excluded.

Phase-wise Review Process has been explained in detail with the flowchart, with each phase explaining the procedure from how the titles were reviewed at the time of screening to phase 4, where final stage has been explained with how 50 studies were taken into consideration, keeping in mind the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Phase 1
• 78 studies were retained after reviewing the titles.

Phase 2
• 55 studies were retained after reviewing abstracts and 23 excluded which did not meet the set inclusion criteria.

Phase 3
• 5 studies were excluded due to unavailability of full text.

Phase 4
• 50 studies and 2 books were considered to develop the framework for literature Review
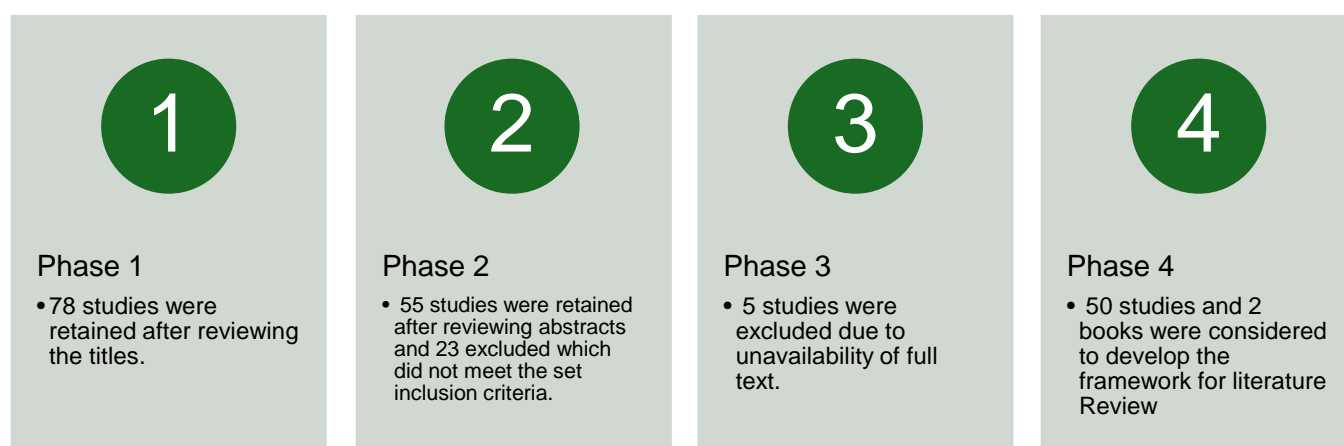
Fig. 1. The Area of study

4. Analysis: The selected studies were analysed using thematic and theoretical approaches to identify patterns and evaluate impacts.

Coding Process

Below in the diagram, the coding process is explained in inductive thematic analysis, which starts without a pre-existing framework, enabling the topics to form straight from the data. The first step is to read the data several times to become comfortable and aware of it. After that, the first codes are created by locating and finding them within significant data segments or patterns. The participants' own phrases, statements, or keywords created by the researcher are used to label these codes. Once all of the data has been coded, related and specific codes are combined to create sub-themes, which are then further subdivided into more general themes. To make sure they appropriately reflect the facts and characteristics, these themes are examined and clarified. To create a conceptual framework that clarifies the underlying patterns, frames, and meanings in the data, forming the links between the themes, which are examined at last.
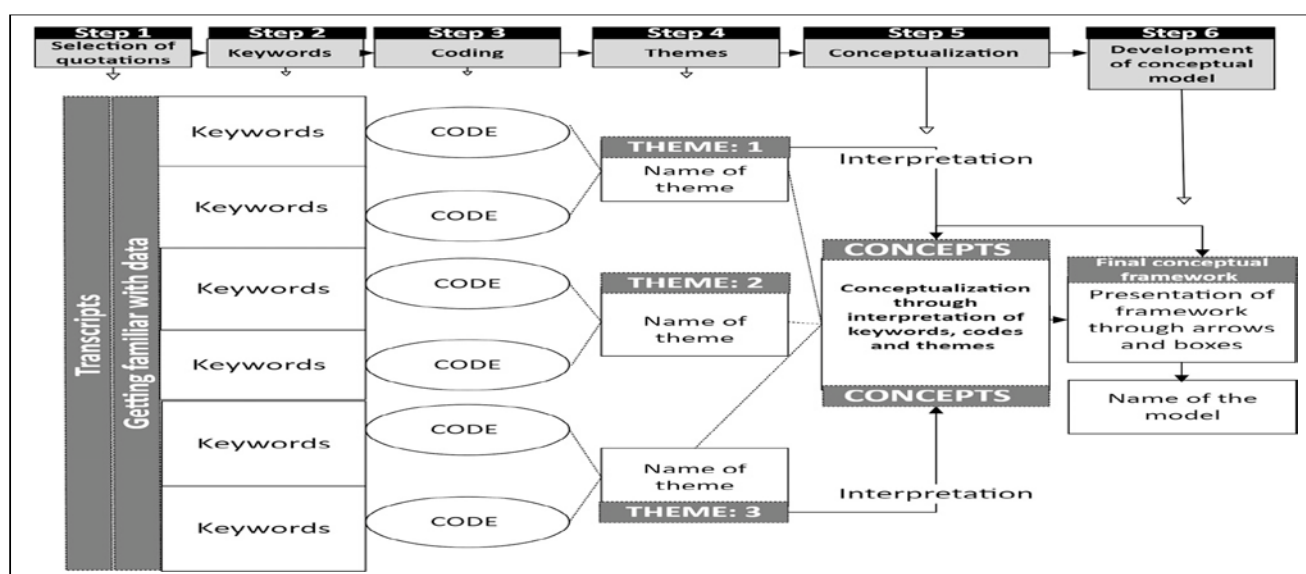

Fig. 2. A systematic thematic analysis process: A novel six-step process for conceptual model development in qualitative research. (Source – Research image)

The diagram below illustrates the understanding of the patterns created by the inductive thematic analysis, which provides a thorough breakdown of the main themes and their sub-codes. The frequency and significance of each subject within the literature and research papers are further highlighted by the number of research articles in which it was discovered and created. The Inductive Thematic Analysis Process systematically creates themes from qualitative data. For example, the phrase which was mentioned in the article was "My faith teaches me to protect all of creation — it's not just activism, it's worship," creating keywords like faith, peace, creation, and worship. These keywords were then grouped into the code and sub-codes Faith as Environmental Duty, and eventually contributed to the more general topic of Stewardship

Detailed Coding Process with Sub-Codes

Figure 2: Explains how, when the papers, reports, and books are selected with the inclusion and exclusion criteria, how the first steps go into familiarization of the data, how the transcripts are studied and analysed, and then the specific quotes and statements are taken into consideration for creating codes and sub-codes. Repetition of the words can also make the process easy for analysis. With the formation of sub-codes, the main themes are created. Sub-codes are created with the same characteristics, principles, and nature. With those themes, concepts are created that help in forming the conceptual framework.
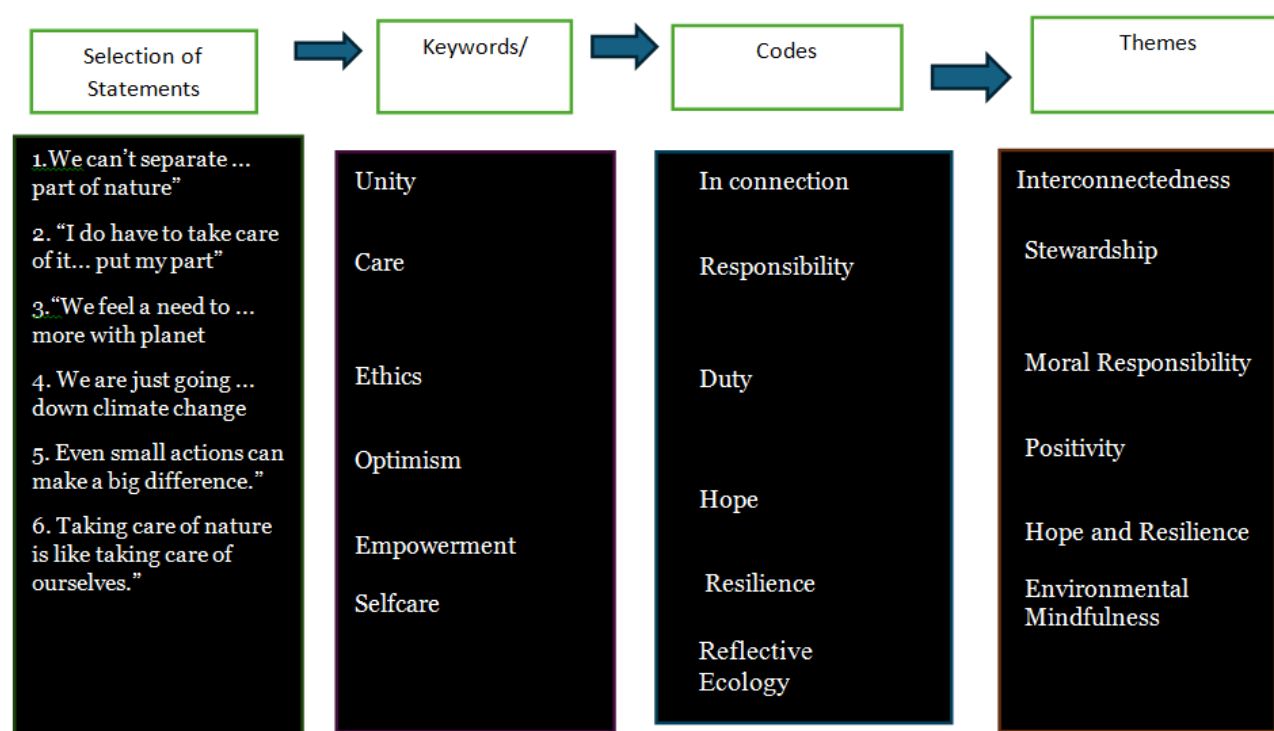
Fig. 3. Formation of keywords, codes and themes from the Data

Table 2. Number of papers Mentioning Codes and Sub – Codes

Source	No. of Papers	Codes
Interconnectedness	18	Sacred Oneness, Unity, Earth Family, Ecological Identity, Wholeness, Divine Web, Global Kinship, Holistic Living, Universal Bond, Planetary Harmony
Stewardship	21	Responsibility, Eco-Care, Earth-Keeping, Faithful Action, Divine Trust, Sacred Duty, Guardian Role, Service to Creation, Moral Ecology, Creation Care
Hope and Resilience	23	Hope, Transformation, Positive Vision, Faith in Action, Future Orientation, Media Inspiration, Resilient Youth, Redemptive Change, Upliftment
Sacredness of Nature	14	Divine Earth, Holy Creation, Reverence for Nature, Natural Sanctuary, God in Nature, Sacred Earth, Spiritual Presence, Earth Altar, Blessed Land, Nature as Temple
Faith-Driven Activism	17	Worship in Action, Faith-Based Ethics, Religious Calling, Spiritual Duty, Mission for Climate, Prophetic Voice, Ethical Ministry, Religion and Action, Devotion to Earth, Mobilized Faith
Moral Responsibility	19	Ethical Duty, Climate Justice, Sacred Obligation, Virtuous Action, Accountability, Conscience, Righteous Living, Value-Based Action, Civic Faith, Ethical Conviction

The diagram below shows a more comprehensive view of the structure of the data is explained which explains the detected themes in detail, along with the sub-codes that are related to them. The details and subcodes that were recorded during the coding process are reflected in the distinct subcodes that are created from each major subject. Through the mapping of these connections and codes, and themes, the diagram facilitates the formation of a thorough conceptual framework and improves understanding of the interactions between different aspects.

Codebook

A codebook is created, which is a structured document that lists all the codes used during thematic analysis, along with their definitions and examples for explanation. It ensures the consistency in coding and helps track how themes are developed from raw data. This study involves a comprehensive inductive thematic analysis of 50 academic sources (N = 50) that produced and created a total of more than 100 initial codes. After carefully studying going over each document, these codes and sub-codes were created by looking for recurrent and repetitive terms, ideas, characteristics, metaphors, and spiritual expressions about media, adolescent behaviour, attitudes, and climate engagement. Some of the codes that were commonly used were "legacy thinking," "sacred oneness," "eco-hope," "faith in action," and "spiritual role models. "These were then categorized into ten main themes based on the conceptual similarity and frequency of the phrases and words. The overall concept and theme of Stewardship, for instance, is connected to codes like "divine trust," "caretaker of the Earth," and "creation care." Codes such as "spiritual strength," "resilient youth," and "empowered by faith" were also included under the umbrella theme of Hope and Resilience. Moral responsibility was one of the other themes that came out from codes such as "obligation to act," "ethical duty," and "climate justice." Several themes like Sacredness of Nature and Interconnectedness, shared overlapping codes like "all life is connected," "nature as divine," and "unity with Earth," explaining how thematic categories of sub-codes, codes are related in both meaning and content with each other.

Table 3. Number of papers Mentioning Codes and Sub – Codes

Code	Definition	Example Quote	Linked Theme
Sacred Oneness	Feeling of connection between self, nature, and the Environment.	"We are all in one with the connection of the earth and each other."	Interconnectedness towards nature and self
Divine Trust	Belief that the Earth and the Universe is a gift entrusted by a higher power	"God bestowed us the beautiful planet; it's our duty to care for it."	Stewardship
Moral Urge	Perception of a powerful ethical compulsion to take climate action	"It feels wrong to ignore the suffering of nature."	Moral Responsibility towards the Environment
Spiritual Strength	Drawing powerful resilience and courage from core spiritual values in the face of the climate crisis.	"Even when things around me seem bad, my faith in god keeps me going."	Hope and Resilience within us and taking care of nature.
Faith in Action	Taking climate action as a form of religious or spiritual practice	"Planting trees is my way of praying."	Faith-Driven Activism
Eco-Gratitude	Expressing thankfulness and gratitude towards the Earth and its resources	"I wake up thankful for trees and air—this inspires care."	Stewardship
Future Generations	Sense of responsibility towards the infant, unborn children, framed spiritually	"We must act now only so our children can live with dignity."	Legacy Thinking with sustainability
Inner Awakening	Self–Realization	Earth is a sacred place.	Changes through self-reflection.
Spiritual Influencers	Changes and advocacy are promoted through spiritual leaders regarding climate change	"That planting trees inspired me so much."	Hope and Resilience
Spiritual Refuge in Nature	Nature is perceived as a place of calm, peace, healing, and sacred experience	"Being in the forest feels like being in a temple."	Environmental Mindfulness

Integration of Thematic and Theoretical Analysis

The integration of both thematic and theoretical analysis provides a holistic understanding of how media communicate and promote spiritual values and influence youth behaviour.

The thematic analysis identifies the main key narratives and strategies used in media, while the theoretical analysis evaluates their psychological and behavioural impacts. For example, the theme of interconnectedness (thematic analysis) aligns with theories of social identity and collective action (theoretical analysis), demonstrating how media narratives can strengthen group cohesion and motivate youth to participate in sustainability initiatives. Similarly, the theme of hope and resilience (thematic analysis) resonates with positive psychology theories (theoretical analysis), highlighting the role of media in addressing climate anxiety and fostering emotional well-being. Theoretical analysis was performed and conducted to evaluate the parameters of the behavioural and psychological impacts and impressions of spiritually framed media narratives and areas on youth engagement. This approach combined established theories from environmental psychology, media studies, mass communication studies, and spirituality research and reports to interpret the analysis and the findings. Below are a few of the themes that emerged from the theoretical analysis:1.Pro-Environmental Identities- Spiritually constructed media narratives helped and promoted youth with the development of pro-environmental identities by aligning and combining their personal and social values with sustainability goals. Theory of identity formation (Erikson) suggested that such narratives and messages foster a sense of purpose, need, and belonging, motivating and inspiring youth to take action. 2. Behavioural Change – Media content that focuses on spiritual values can drive behavioural change by appealing and focusing to the youth's ethical and emotional circle. Theories of behaviour change, such as the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Icek Ajzen and Martin Fishbein 1991), highlight the role of moral, social, and spiritual motivations in adopting sustainable practices for the future. 3. Collective Action – Spiritually framed and constructed media narratives often promote collective and sustainable action by fostering an impactful sense of interconnectedness and shared responsibility. Social identity theory (Mancur Olson,1965) suggests that these moral and sustainable narratives strengthen group cohesion and inspire youth to participate in community initiatives towards the environment. 4. Long-Term Engagement-Media narratives that include spiritual values encourage long-term engagement with sustainability by aligning with climate action with notions.

3. Discussion

The role of media literacy emerged as a critical factor in shaping how spiritual values were received, evaluated, and acted upon. Media-literate youth easily understood the spiritual meaning and messages advocated by the media. Media strategies that integrate spiritual principles into sustainability communication, like media Storytelling with Moral Lessons, where Documentaries and films were narrated and addressed environmental issues through spiritual and ethical perspectives. Severe narrated campaigns that were active on platforms like YouTube and Instagram promote spiritual activism and eco-conscious lifestyles. Influencer Advocacy promotes Spiritual leaders and climate activists to use media to inspire youth engagement. According to the study's findings, media content with a spiritual theme has a profound and powerful impact on how young and adult people view and behave concerning environmental sustainability.

The development of pro-environmental identities was one of the main results, which turned out to be effective, stating that young people who viewed and consumed media that supported their moral or spiritual opinion were more likely to create a feeling of environmental responsibility as a strong component of who they were. The study also found that young engagement in climate action was seen as a result of media narratives with a spiritual foundation, encouraging and promoting advocacy, activism, and the adoption of more and more sustainable lifestyle choices. By portraying climate action as a significant, goal-oriented undertaking, these concern not only educated but also inspired to take the call for action. Lastly, the study revealed and expressed a significant change in ethical frameworks where exposure to the spiritually based information affected the long-term sustainable decision-making as well the as short-term attitudes and behaviours.

The systematic review of 50 scholarly papers revealed significant insights into the role of media in embedding spiritual values into sustainability communication and its impact on youth engagement in climate action. Second, social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok have become vital spaces for promoting spiritual activism and eco-conscious lifestyles. Influencers, spiritual leaders, and climate activists leverage these platforms to share personal stories, ethical reflections, and calls to action, creating a sense of community and collective purpose among youth. These campaigns often emphasize hope, resilience, and the transformative power of individual and collective action, aligning spiritual values with practical steps toward sustainability.

Third, influencer advocacy plays a critical role in amplifying spiritually framed messages. Spiritual leaders and climate activists use their platforms to bridge the gap between inner growth and global impact, encouraging youth to view environmental stewardship as a moral and spiritual imperative. This approach not only enhances the credibility of sustainability messages but also fosters a sense of trust and connection with young audiences.

The study also highlights the psychological benefits of spiritually framed media content, such as increased hope, resilience, and a sense of purpose. In a world often characterized by climate anxiety and disillusionment, these narratives provide youth with a sense of agency and optimism, motivating them to take meaningful action. In conclusion, the findings demonstrate that media narratives embedding spiritual values are highly effective in shaping youth attitudes and behaviours toward sustainability. By leveraging storytelling, social media, and influencer advocacy, media can inspire a generation of environmentally conscious and ethically grounded leaders. These insights offer valuable guidance for media practitioners, educators, and policymakers seeking to design impactful communication strategies that resonate with youth and address the urgent need for climate action.

4. Results

There was strong evidence and conclusion that all three study objectives were addressed by the thematic analysis of 50 peer-reviewed papers (N = 50). First, to assess how the media contributes to the promotion of spiritual values for climate action, the study explored and discovered that important spiritual themes like stewardship, interconnectivity, and moral obligation are commonly communicated in the media. Media tools like Digital storytelling, faith-based initiatives, and movies that present and communicate environmental preservation as a moral or sacred duty have included these parameters. There was strong evidence that media literacy functioned as a catalyst for deeper interpretation and action. Youth with media literacy exposure engaged more deeply with messages of stewardship and interconnectedness. They were more likely to create and share reflective media content. It also reported lower climate anxiety and higher hopefulness. Three critical patterns were identified

1. Critical Reception: Youth filtered spiritual narratives through ethical and narrative analysis.

2. Participatory Media: Media–literate youth used digital tools to express Eco-spiritual values.

3. Identity formation: Spiritual media, when critically engaged, led to pro – pro-environmental self-identity.

The duty and responsibility of the media as a moral and spiritual educator was confirmed when themes like the sacredness of nature and faith-driven action were communicated from media that directly linked religious teachings or spiritual practices to environmental conservation. Second, themes like hope and resilience (n = 23) and transformation through reflection (n = 16) are important in formation of the youth psychology, according to the results of an analysis of show how spiritually framed media narratives affect adolescent attitudes and actions. These themes are illustrated in a way that shows how media with a spiritual undertone not only lessens climate fear but also fosters and promotes a feeling of purpose and moral clarity and responsibility. There is a definite correlation and connection between spiritual media and behavioural involvement, as youth who are exposed to such content frequently indicate a change in self-identity from passive spectators to an engaged nature towards of the mother earth which link spiritual behaviour and spiritual engagement. Third and lastly the study identified and focused three essential approaches, which were personal narrative, spiritual role models, interfaith messaging, and visual metaphors of Earth as an successful media techniques for promoting pro-environmental identities and collective action. These strategies worked particularly well on tools like YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok, where young people's mind sparked peer pressure, group movements, and lifestyle changes. Furthermore, the rise of the planetary brotherhood/sisterhood and legacy thinking as a motif implied that spiritually framed media narratives assist young people in coordinating their climate action with long-term moral duty and global consciousness.

5. Conclusion

This study explored and followed a proper method to conduct an inductive thematic analysis of the searched 50 peer-reviewed academic sources, UNDP reports, and books (N = 50), which focused on the convergence and integration of the media, media literacy, spirituality, environment, and youth climate action and engagement. A few of the secondary sources included were specific

journal articles, UNDP reports, empirical studies, and conceptual papers, which were published between the year 2010 and 2025. To maximize spiritual media potential, it is essential that educators, media creators, and policymakers prioritize media literacy education in environmental and value-based curriculum. Integrating these frameworks ensures that youth not only consume meaningful content but also contribute to a spiritual consciousness. Ecologically grounded movement toward climate resilience. After the procedural Data collection analysis, the findings and the results of this study highlight the changing and transformative potential of the media in bridging and addressing the gap between spiritual growth, environmental sustainability, and climate action, particularly among adults and youth.

By incorporating and embedding the spiritual values such as interconnectedness with self and nature, stewardship of the planet, moral responsibility towards the earth, and hope and resilience into sustainability communication and development, media exposure and narratives can motivate and inspire a shift in youth behaviours. It also inspires and motivates young individuals and adults to engage and participate in climate action, influential advocacy, and communicate sustainable lifestyle choices and needs. The combination and integration of the spiritual principles into the media narratives and context provides and promotes a compelling framework and layout for addressing the climate crisis, offering and promoting youth with a sense of purpose, need, and moral grounding that combines traditional approaches to environmental communication.

The study focuses on and reveals that media (social media and Television) strategies and methods, such as storytelling with constructive moral lessons, social media campaigns and events, and influencer advocacy, which is prevalent nowadays on social media, are particularly and specifically effective in resonating and connecting with youth audiences. These approaches and practices connect with the emotional stage and ethical and critical dimensions of climate action, making sustainability consideration with a deeply personal, social, and meaningful endeavour. By aligning and connecting environmental stewardship with spiritual values, media can promote and cultivate pro-environmental identities and encourage long-term commitment to sustainable development.

The study highlights and emphasizes on the importance and need of visual and digital media (Social) in shaping youth perceptions, notions, and behaviours, highlighting and focusing on the need and want for innovative and inclusive communication methods and strategies that can combine the power of technology and storytelling. The implications and results of this research contribute beyond the academic discourse, offering actionable and developmental insights for media practitioners, youth, educators, and policymakers. To inspire and motivate a generation of environmentally conscious, awareness, and ethically grounded leaders and policymakers, media campaigns and events must prioritize narratives and context that emphasize the themes of interconnectedness, compassion, and collective responsibility towards nature.

Educational initiatives should integrate and promote spiritual and environmentally sustainable ethics into academics, fostering a collective, holistic understanding of sustainability. Policymakers and PR actioners, on the other hand, can support media-driven efforts and principles by promoting platforms that focus on youth voices and encourage participatory approaches to sustainable climate action. In conclusion, the climate crisis demands and needs of a multifaceted response that integrates scientific, social, ethical, and spiritual dimensions.

Media, as a powerful tool for mass communication and transformation, has the power and potential to catalyze a global and personal movement towards sustainability by inspiring the inner growth towards collective action. By fostering a sense of interconnectedness and principles of moral responsibility, the media can enhance and empower youth to become the agents of change, driving the change and transition towards a more sustainable future. This study is not only limited to the critical role of media in addressing the challenges of the climate crisis but also provides a holistic foundation and segment for future research and practice in the fields of environmental communication, inner development, youth development, and spiritual activism. As with the world grapples with unprecedented times of environmental challenges, the integration and combination of spiritual values and ethics into media narratives can offer a pathway to hope, peace, into transformative, sustainable action.

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The Development of Media Education in the Context of Traditional and Distance Learning

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Abstract

The study is devoted to the introduction of massive open online courses (MOOCs) into the educational process. Currently, MOOC is considered an important tool for media education, opening new opportunities for students. The topic is relevant since the study identifies the key differences and advantages of traditional and distance learning models using the example of teaching *Russian as a Foreign Language* (RFL). The results of the study enhance the educational process, identify the best practices, including the application of interactive learning tools and multimedia, adaptation of content for students with different levels of language proficiency, as well as the introduction of active learning methods. It allows adapting the RFL course for the online model in the context of media education technologies, identifying its key differences and advantages. The authors suggest that the integration of both modes of study enhance the effectiveness of the RFL course, considering the individual needs and preferences of students. The conducted study is based on the methodology of data collection and analysis using questionnaires and a survey. As a result of the study, data have obtained that contribute to the development of more effective teaching strategies and optimization of the educational process using media education tools.

Keywords: traditional teaching technologies, distance learning, massive open online course, media education tools, continuous education.

1. Introduction

Modern education system is undergoing significant changes due to both socio-cultural and technological transformations. One of the key ones is the development of media education as an integral part of educational programs, given the rapid growth of digital technologies and changes in the media environment. In this context, it is important to analyze traditional and distance learning models, as well as their role in the development of media education.

Current trends of the global educational environment require universities to be flexible and ready to integrate into the international community. This is especially relevant for universities in Kazakhstan and Russia, which are traditionally focused on the development of national educational systems.

The leading trend of the current stage of development of global open education is to provide the most accessible environment for anyone to receive a quality education. Due to globalization, internationalization and informatization of education there is a need to organize the educational process to meet modern requirements for integration of traditional and distance learning.

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In the digital century the learning with technology paradigm is introduced (Marshall, 2002) and as a results multimedia and multimodal modes has come into our life.

Current studies have shown that integration of media into the university syllabus significantly increases the motivation and efficiency of learning. In this regard, media education is relevant (Fedorov, 2015). Media education is considered as "… a process of training and education aimed at developing students' skills of conscious and critical perception, analysis and creation of media content" (Chernov, 2007).

There is no doubt that the educational paradigm at the present stage presupposes the training and development of the personality, integrating into the media space Amidst the rapid transformations of the modern world and the continuous advancement of digital technologies, the significance of media education as a fundamental element of lifelong learning is steadily growing. It allows students to constantly update their knowledge, acquire new professional skills and qualifications (Gálik et al., 2024; Mikheeva, 2016).

Traditional and distance learning models play an important role in the development of media education, and their integration can significantly improve the quality of education (Makarova, 2018). Integrating these models allows the most effective use of their advantages, developing a flexible and dynamic educational environment ready for the challenges of the digital age.

In the context of media education, the traditional teaching model plays a key role in developing students' critical perception of media content, as well as in teaching them how to use traditional media formats. Distance learning in media education provides students the access to modern digital tools and the opportunity to master these technologies through online courses and practical assignments, which helps them develop the necessary competencies to work in modern media environment. Thus, massive open online courses are becoming an integral part of the modern educational environment for training future engineers.

Despite the widespread integration of digital tools into the educational process, traditional forms of instruction continue to play an essential role. Traditional education is typically understood as a format involving direct face-to-face interaction between educators and learners within institutional settings – such as classrooms or laboratories – through regular lectures, seminars, practical sessions, and assessment activities that support the achievement of learning outcomes (Laurillard, 2002). Furthermore, it is often conceptualized as a structured, hierarchical model of knowledge and skills transmission, grounded in standardized curricula and teaching methodologies (Siemens, 2005). Evidently, conventional education remains a relevant and effective pedagogical approach, offering students a coherent and holistic pathway toward educational attainment in contemporary academic environments.

2. Materials and methods

The study uses a set of general research methods, including theoretical analysis of the basic notions of the study, analysis of psychological, pedagogical and methodological papers on the issue of digital and traditional education including the theory of dialogue interaction (Fedorov, 2015).

To solve the research tasks, questionnaires and surveys have been used. These methods allow collecting data on the perception, preferences and experience of students, as well as assessing the effectiveness of each form of training.

The aim of the study is a comprehensive analysis of two approaches to teaching RFL with an emphasis on their effectiveness, features, advantages and disadvantages.

The type of study is a comparative analysis that allows us to identify the effectiveness of traditional and distance learning (using MOOCs) in the process of studying Russian as a foreign language. The study analyzes such aspects of learning as the level of material acquisition, students' motivation, satisfaction with learning, as well as technical and organizational features of each form of learning.

The research process includes several stages:

1. The preparation stage clarifies the key goals of the research, and specific tasks that need to be solved; selection of participants; development of teaching materials.

2. The stage of conducting the experiment includes the choice of the training formats).

3. The stage of collecting data using a survey and questionnaire.

4. The stage of data analysis includes a comparison of the results of the survey and questionnaire of both groups to assess the level of acquisition of the material, analyzing students' feedback, preferences and problems they encountered during the course of training.

5. The stage of conclusions based on data analysis allows us to draw conclusions about which of the teaching methods is more effective for teaching Russian as a foreign language.

3. Discussion

The modern education system, along with traditional technologies, uses digital ones as an integral component of media education. The concept of media education goes back to the ideas of Canadian philosopher and communication theorist Marshall McLuhan, who laid the foundations of understanding media as extensions of human faculties.

Many national and foreign researchers have addressed the problem of defining, developing, implementing, and evaluating massive open online courses. Canadian scholar G. Siemens (Siemens, 2005), known for his connectivist theory, and S. Downes (Downes, 2011) introduced the first MOOC, combining media literacy and technology-enhanced learning. American researcher M.J. Israel (Israel, 2015) analyzed the effectiveness of integrating MOOCs into traditional learning for undergraduate students.

In recent years, Anglo-American literature has paid increasing attention to the role of MOOCs and media education in cultivating critical thinking, digital literacy, and equitable access. For example, Veletsianos (Veletsianos et al., 2021) emphasized how MOOCs shape public perceptions of education during crises. Jordan (Jordan, 2020) explored learner engagement in MOOCs, while Kovanović (Kovanović et al., 2020) focused on media analytics and predictive models to enhance online learning.

Studies by Clark, Luckin, and Selwyn (Clark et al., 2020) stress the pedagogical design of digital education and its implications for reflective learning. Buckingham (Buckingham, 2022), one of the leading British scholars in media education, highlighted the challenges of commercial platforms and the need for critical media pedagogy. Similarly, Jones and Sefton-Green (Similarly et al., 2023) address the integration of media literacy into digital curriculum design. American researcher Hobbs (Hobbs, 2021) underlines the importance of media literacy in democratic education, especially when using open access media content.

The study of organizational and pedagogical characteristics of open educational resources and MOOCs justifies their priority status in the development of modern education. As Grinshkun (Grinshkun, 2018) argues, MOOCs significantly increase students' motivation to acquire digital skills necessary for professional activity and contribute to engagement with theoretical and practical material.

Moreover, the principle of "maximum information immersion in a narrow subject area" fosters the development of critical thinking and independent knowledge systematization (Loginova et al., 2015). Students are granted autonomy in choosing the mode and intensity of their engagement with media educational resources.

However, traditional education methods remain essential. Hattie (Hattie, 2009) systematically reviewed evidence on teaching effectiveness and emphasized the value of teacher-student interaction. Darling-Hammond and Berliner (Darling-Hammond et al., 2015) showed how traditional learning environments contribute to student achievement, especially through personalized instruction. Empirical evidence supports the view that traditional methods promote stable learning trajectories.

New forms of digital assessment and media tools, as discussed by Collison (Collison, 2021) and Langenfeld et al. (Langenfeld et al., 2022), expand the possibilities for evaluating students' competencies. MOOCs offer flexible access to diverse content and international expertise, yet they also present challenges such as reduced motivation, lack of personal contact, and low self-discipline among learners (Alhazzani, 2020; Liu, 2016).

Therefore, integrating MOOCs within traditional media education frameworks enriches instructional design, fosters digital and media literacy, and addresses the diverse learning needs of students in a global context. The combination of both models – traditional and digital – appears to be the most pedagogically sound strategy, ensuring balanced acquisition of knowledge, critical engagement with media, and continuous educational development.

One of the notable strengths of online learning lies in the diversity of instructional resources available. Engaging independently with textual content, video materials, audio recordings, and visual presentations enhances students' cognitive engagement and facilitates more efficient processing and assimilation of information into structured knowledge.

Although massive online courses have many advantages, they also have some disadvantages. We believe that these include: lack of motivation and self-discipline, limited contact with teachers, insufficient personalization, some technical problems.

4. Results

A comprehensive review of contemporary pedagogical studies has made it possible to identify a structured algorithm for MOOC development, as outlined by Blinov (Blinov et al., 2021). The process is divided into distinct stages, each implemented by a specialized team and oriented toward solving specific tasks in a sequential manner. The initial, preparatory phase focuses on defining the course objectives, outlining the instructional design, and selecting appropriate tools. The production stage involves the creation of educational content and accompanying methodological guidelines. During this phase, digital resources are integrated, the course undergoes testing, and technical inconsistencies are addressed. The concluding stage entails expert evaluation of the course's pedagogical and substantive integrity, with subsequent refinement of components based on the assessment results, where required.

An online course *Russian as a Foreign Language* has been developed. The structure includes modules with various components: a text page, a link to a file or web sheet, a lecture, a video presentation, exercises, a glossary, tests, etc.

The main elements of the MOOC are the following:

– The introduction includes the title, an overview of the course, its goals, and expected results.

– The course content has educational theoretical resources, video lectures, texts, presentations.

– The practical part includes assignments, tests, and exercises that help students consolidate the learned material and demonstrate their knowledge.

– Assessment and feedback involve both automatic assessment methods (for example, automatic test checks) and assessment conducted by teachers based on the results of completed assignments. Feedback helps students understand their strengths and weaknesses and improve their performance.

– The additional resources section contains supporting education material, recommended literature, links to external resources, etc.

This course is intended for students who have mastered the elementary level of Russian language learning (A1-A2) and continue to study the language at level B1.

The MOOC for *Russian as a Foreign Language* contains ten main sections: "Russian Language in the Modern World", "Problems of the Modern Family", "Lifestyle", "Recreation, Interests, Hobbies", "The role of Art in Human Life", "State and Religious Holidays in the Republic of Kazakhstan", "Geographical Position of the City of Karaganda, "History of the City of Karaganda", "At the Airport, at the Railway station", "Healthcare".

The innovative nature of the MOOC is proved by, firstly, step-by-step explanation of lexical and grammatical units of the Russian language, which helps to eliminate the language barrier and facilitate the study of the Russian language; secondly, the presentation allows students to get acquainted with the traditions and customs of the country in which they are studying, to learn the national identity and culture of the people.

Sixty first-year students at the Abylkas Saginov Karaganda Technical University took part in the experiment. They were studying *RFL* both in online courses and in traditional classes. To reduce the influence of factors not related to the form of study, thirty participants were assigned randomly to each group. The experimental group studied Russian using MOOC and the control group studied Russian using traditional teaching methods (textbooks, practical classes and exercises). The participants of the control group had the traditional face-to-face format classes, did homework and interacted with teachers.

The participants of the experimental group studied in a remote mode and used resources and assignments posted on the online platform. Throughout the entire training period, both groups are monitored to complete assignments, and receive regular feedback (surveys, discussions) to assess students' engagement and motivation.

The participants were divided into two groups depending on their initial level of Russian language proficiency. A minimum level of language proficiency was set for each group (B1). This

allowed us to exclude the influence of initial language proficiency on the results of the study and ensure that all participants had a similar level of initial knowledge.

The study sample consisted of students aged 17-18, which allowed for the formation of a relatively homogeneous group in terms of their perception of educational technologies. To ensure balanced grouping, a preliminary survey was conducted in which participants indicated their preferred mode of learning-traditional or distance-based. This approach made it possible to account for individual learning preferences and reduce potential bias or resistance from students unfamiliar with MOOCs or inclined toward conventional formats.

Participants with previous MOOC-based learning experience were excluded from the study to avoid possible distortion of the results due to bias or habits of distance learning. All participants were informed about the ethical aspects of the study and gave written consent to participate, including consent to the processing of personal data as part of the scientific study. These criteria allowed us to form two groups homogeneous in characteristics and expectations of the participants, which contributes to a more objective comparative analysis of traditional and distance learning methods.

The main criteria to assess the effectiveness of learning the material were the analysis of the results of tests in the Russian language. To assess knowledge, a scale from 1 to 10 has been used, where 1 is very poor and 10 is excellent.

The study was conducted during the academic year. The knowledge of participants was assessed at the initial stage, at certain time intervals (after 3 and 6 months) and upon completion of the study.

The results of placement test have shown that the students have almost the same level of language proficiency. The intermediate knowledge test has showed a slight advantage of the group studying using the MOOC. Knowledge testing at the final stage, on the contrary, has showed the superiority of the traditional form of education over the MOOC. Figure 1 shows the results of testing the respondent's knowledge.
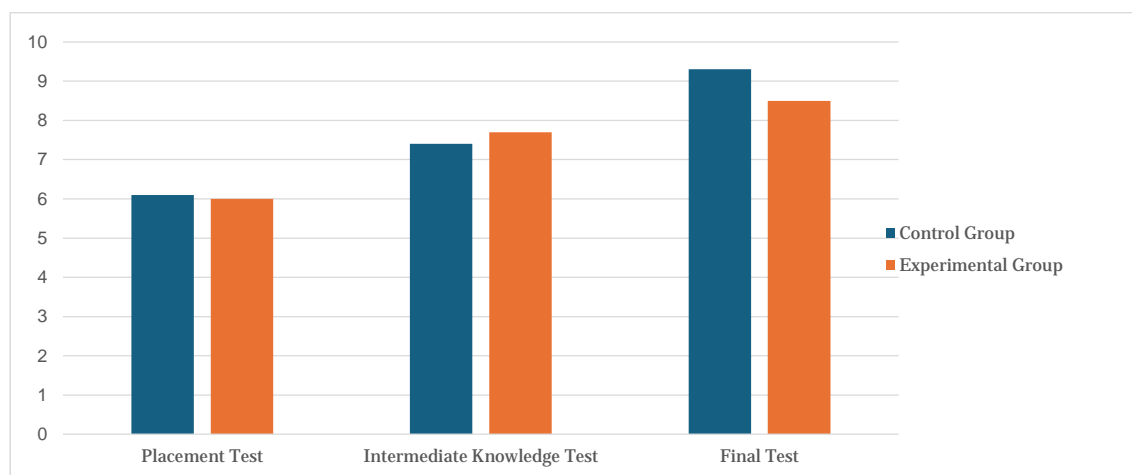

Fig. 1. Test results to determine the level of knowledge of respondents

To assess the effectiveness of traditional learning and MOOCs, a survey method was used. Respondents were asked to rate the criteria that they consider most important when choosing a learning method on a 10-point scale (Table 1).

Table 1. The importance index of criteria when choosing a teaching method

Criteria	Traditional method	MOOC
Learning effectiveness	9	7
Differentiation of task levels	7	9
Availability of resources	8	8
Application of digital technologies	6	10
Self-organization and independence	6	9

Criteria	Traditional method	MOOC
Motivation to learn the language	9	6
Interaction of participants of the educational process	10	5
Feedback of the teacher	10	6
Method effectiveness (average score)	8,1	7,5

The analysis of the survey data (Figure 2) indicates that massive open online courses (MOOCs), as an alternative approach to language education, were rated highly by participants across several key parameters:

– differentiation of task complexity, which reflects the adaptation of instructional materials to varying levels of students' language proficiency;

– use of digital technologies (use of modern digital technologies including interactive tasks, video lessons, audio materials, online testing, discussion forums);

– self-organization and independence (independent management and planning of learning process: pace, time of study, topics).
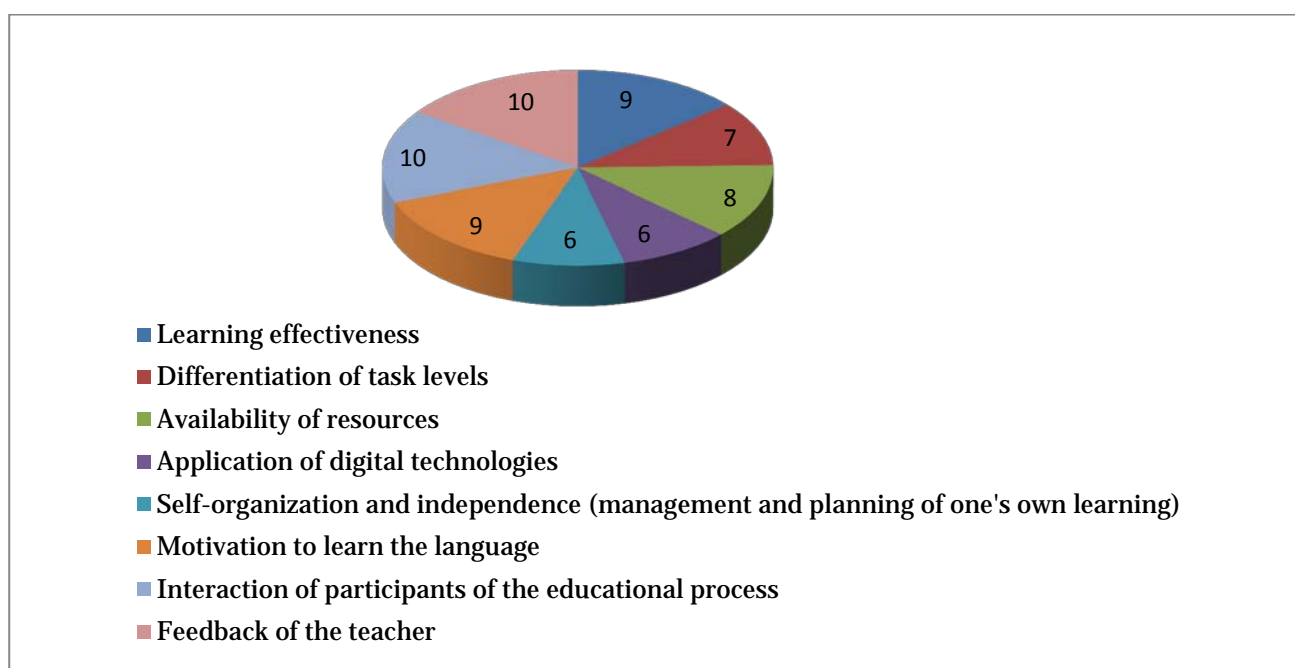

Fig. 2. Performance indicator of MOOC criteria

At the same time, the traditional format of language instruction continues to be perceived by students as the most favorable option, based on the following criteria (Figure 3):

– effectiveness of learning – structured and systematic acquisition of language skills under the supervision of an experienced educator, personalized adaptation of content, and real-time support with error correction;

– learning motivation – collaborative activities, peer interaction, and social dynamics that encourage goal-oriented engagement;

– participant interaction – the establishment of a supportive environment for dialogue, opinion exchange, and discussion of relevant topics;

– teacher feedback – the availability of immediate, individualized responses to learner errors, implemented through a learner-centered instructional approach.
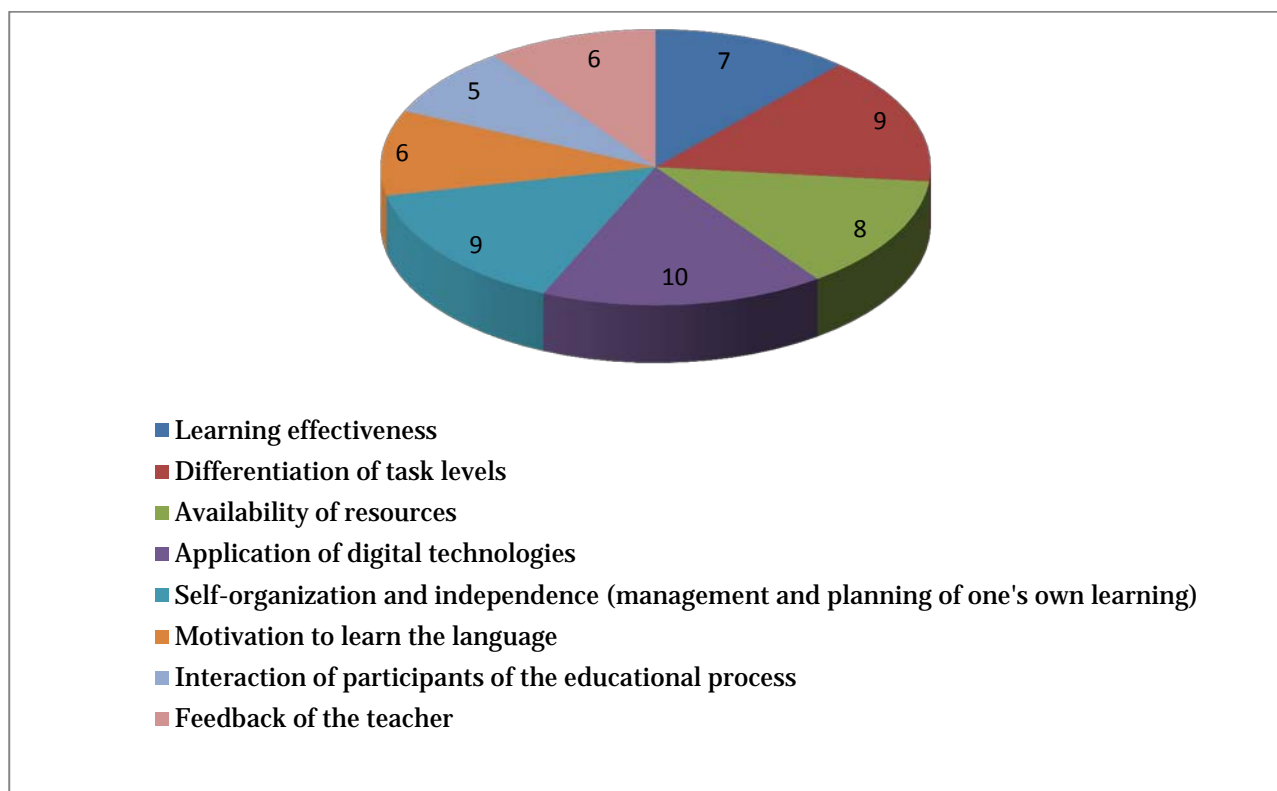
Fig. 3. Performance indicator of the criteria of the traditional learning form

Empirical results demonstrate that the use of MOOCs provides accessibility and flexibility, the ability to choose learning materials, self-organization and independence. It was found that such skills as language, communication, information and technological literacy are being developed. However, most students prefer the traditional learning mode, noting the following difficulties in learning through MOOCs: limited interaction and feedback, low motivation and self-discipline, limited access to technology and the Internet, lack of an individual approach and personalization, lack of special skills in using the digital platform.

The use of MOOCs in the context of higher education allows us to present the educational process on a global scale, adapting the learning process to modern requirements. In addition, it provides opportunities for professional development in various fields and creates a platform for exchanging experiences and collaborating with students from different regions and countries.

Thus, the integration of MOOCs within the modern education environment expands the opportunities of traditional learning, promoting the development of critical thinking and technological literacy, which is a necessary component of the development of a high-skilled specialist.

To present more detailed results to determine the effectiveness of the model of training used, an experimental research method – a focus group – has been used. The number of focus group participants was 12 students.

To implement this research method, a series of questions were developed to cover the issues of technologies under consideration:

1. What did you like about this method?
2. What did you find difficult?
3. How do you rate the quality and relevance of the teaching materials?
4. Do you receive sufficient support and feedback from teachers?
5. What changes or additions to the use of these methods would you like to make?

During the study the authors have maintained group dynamics, which encouraged participants to discuss issues on the topic being studied. Some of the participants studying the MOOC positively assessed the quality of the video lessons and the convenience of independent time management. For instance, students commented on the clarity and accessibility of the video materials, as well as the opportunity to organize their learning process individually:

– "The video lessons were well-structured and easy to follow. I appreciated the flexibility to study Russian whenever it was convenient for me."

– "I felt at ease because I could manage my own learning pace-revisiting complex topics and skipping those I had already mastered."

However, there were also those who noted the disadvantages:

– "I encountered some difficulties when studying the MOOC. This is primarily due to the lack of direct contact with the teacher and other students."

– "Independent learning requires a high degree of self-organization and discipline, which was very difficult for me."

Respondents who studied in the traditional mode highly valued the opportunity to interact with the teacher and group members. For example, most focus group participants emphasized the importance of the teacher's role:

– "As for me, face-to-face communication with the teacher and classmates helps develop communication skills and teamwork skills."

– "I believe that in the traditional format, teachers can better control the learning process, ensuring a high level of teaching quality and assessing student progress based on their interactions."

– "In my opinion, attending classes in person requires compliance with certain rules and regulations, which contributes to the development of discipline and responsibility."

Some participants noted the disadvantages of traditional mode of studying:

– "For me, as a student with disabilities, the need to be physically present at classes is a significant obstacle."

– "For me, group classes cause psychological discomfort associated with a feeling of uncertainty about the "correctness" or "incorrectness" of the answer."

Based on the results of the experiments, we came to the following conclusion. Firstly, the traditional method of studying Russian as a foreign language remains a priority according to the following criteria: learning outcomes; motivation to study the language; interaction of participants in the educational process; feedback from the teacher.

Secondly, MOOCs are an important element of modern language education as an additional resource integrated into the traditional teaching format, according to the following criteria: differentiation of the level of assignments; use of digital technologies; self-organization and independence. The integration of MOOCs into the educational process makes education process more accessible, flexible and diverse for students around the world, and contributes to the development of new approaches to learning and teaching.

Thirdly, the authors note the undeniable role of the teacher in the education system as a moderator who directs the educational process, promotes active participation of students, ensures high-quality acquisition of material, knowledge monitoring and supports educational motivation.

Thus, the traditional form and massive open online courses have their own specific features. For the traditional model the role of the teacher is important to manage the educational process: planning classes, conducting classes and ensuring high-quality acquisition of the material studied by students. And this, in turn, ensures deeper and more personally oriented learning, since the teacher can individually approach each student, evaluate their progress and adjust the educational process depending on the needs of the group or a specific student.

The authors of the study integrate MOOC into the traditional model of education, using the advantages of each approach:

– combining online courses with face-to-face classes, which allows students to gain theoretical knowledge online and develop practical skills in the classroom;

– using MOOCs as an additional resource for in-depth study of material for discussion in traditional classes environment.

– recommending MOOCs as an optional course for students wishing to expand their knowledge of the language;

– recommending MOOC elements as homework.

Thus, the integration of approaches to teach *Russian as a Foreign Language* enriches educational practice and contributes to improve the quality of education in general.

5. Conclusion

Analysis of the effectiveness of using traditional and models of teaching *Russian as a Foreign Language* based on a study has shown that each of these forms has its advantages and disadvantages. The traditional form of education remains an important and effective method of transferring knowledge and skills, providing structured and disciplined learning. It provides more intensive and direct interaction between the teacher and students, which contributes to better assimilation of the material, development of communication skills, a structured and consistent approach to learning, maintaining high motivation and discipline of students.

On the other hand, distance learning, including MOOCs as a media education tool provides greater flexibility, accessibility and the ability to learn at an individual pace. However, students of distance courses often face technical problems, insufficient motivation, low self-organization and lack of personal interaction with the teacher.

Consequently, the selection of either traditional or distance learning formats for teaching Russian as a foreign language should be guided by clearly defined educational objectives, learner preferences, and the availability of institutional and technological resources. A blended model that integrates elements of both approaches appears to be the most effective strategy, as it aligns with contemporary educational demands while preserving the core pedagogical principles and values of language instruction. This learning mode will combine the best practices of both models, providing students with a variety of opportunities for effective language acquisition, independent learning, deep understanding of the material, and a successful career in future professional activity.

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Image-Building and Educational Policy of a University in the Context of Broadcasting of Core Values: Media Education Aspect

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Abstract

The authors of the article examine the image policy of three Russian universities in the context of the values broadcast in their video content. The selected videos are those that the universities themselves create and post on their official pages, as well as news videos of local TV channels created with the direct participation of the universities. It is necessary to highlight that the authors of all of the videos are being created by the students or alumni of these universities and have received professional media education. Thusly, the correlation between the value-based representation of narratives about a university with the results of educational and conditioning practices of said university.

To avoid fragmentation and excessive complexity, all values included in regulatory Russian documents are divided into five groups according to their semantic content (patriotic service, spiritual and moral development, humanitarian ideals, social responsibility and historical heritage). The values are presented in the video content both explicitly (at the level of the voice-over text) and implicitly (by demonstrating various symbols, artifacts, collective actions and tangible scientific results). Thematically, the content is tied to events, but the display of these events has its own peculiarities in each university.

Analyzing the video and audio sequence of the selected material (a total of 269 videos), the authors come to the conclusion that the beyond-eventful, value-based content of the videos is directly related to the image tasks of the university. If the capital's Lomonosov Moscow State University positions itself as a spiritual, moral and scientific benchmark for the entire country, then the other two regional universities, comparable in size, strive to emphasize their patriotic service to the region and their role as drivers of regional development. It is noted that the video content of the regional universities is thematically related to regional features (the richness of the historical past or modern industrial development). At the same time, all three universities have in common in their positioning insufficient attention to the *social responsibility* value: the content related to the rights, opportunities and successes of students and scientists prevails over demonstrating their responsibilities to society.

Keywords: image policy, university image, values, media space, video content.

1. Introduction

The importance of research approach analysis is related to the fact that today, in the face of competition for applicants and education funding, the representation of the university in the media

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space is not only one of the most important tasks of the university's media management, but also its rating indicator. This fact is confirmed by the inclusion of the university media activity indicator in all leading educational ratings of the country, and this indicator takes into account both the amount of digital content of the university and its relevance to the audience.

The audience interest factor is directly related to those beyond-event meanings that are embedded in the university media content. The values that this information conveys play an important role in presenting information about the university to the audience. In a situation of the illusion of accessibility of any kind of knowledge and any information, it is important to pay attention to those aspects of media practice that are aimed at correcting the situation and using the potential of the media themselves to popularize education and self-education in our country. Audiovisual media can play a significant role in this aspect.

The present study includes an analysis of the results of the image of the educational policy of three Russian universities in a comparative aspect: the leading Lomonosov Moscow State University and two universities comparable in scale and objectives and located in different federal districts – Derzhavin Tambov State University and Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University. Studying video content about university life, the authors of the article focus on obtaining a picture of the general image of universities in the context of the values they broadcast and identify gaps in university media management.

The significance of the study is on the practical level of scaling its results for all actors in the educational process.

2. Materials and methods

The main literature sources for the article are scientific papers with the keywords *university image*, *university brand*, values (more than 100) and the results of discourse analysis of digital resources pursuant to search queries on the names of the universities.

The purpose of this work is to study approaches to forming the image of the university in new audiovisual media. The material of the study is the audiovisual content of university websites, from the RUTUBE video hosting platform and the VKontakte social network, which are retrieved by algorithms for search queries in Russian such as *MGU* (MSU), *Moskovsky gosudarstvennyy universitet* (Moscow State University), *MGU imeni M.V. Lomonosova* (Lomonosov Moscow State University) (87 videos on the official pages of the university); *TGU Derzhavina* (Derzhavin TSU), *Derzhavinsky universitet* (Derzhavin University), *TGU imeni Derzhavina* (Derzhavin Tambov State University) (68 videos on the official pages of the university) and *NovGU* (NovSU), Novgorodsky universitet imeni Yaroslava Mudrogo (Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod University) (114 videos). The study period is from January 2024 to February 2025.

Video content is considered in the aspect of representing the basic values, which are established in the Executive Order of the President of the Russian Federation No. 809 of November 9, 2022 "On approving the Fundamentals of State Policy to Preserve and Strengthen Traditional Russian Spiritual and Moral Values." According to the Executive Order of the President of the Russian Federation "On approving the Fundamentals of State Policy to Preserve and Strengthen Traditional Russian Spiritual and Moral Values", "traditional Russian spiritual and moral values include, first of all, life, dignity, human rights and freedoms, patriotism, civic consciousness, service to the Fatherland and responsibility for its destiny, high moral ideals, strong families, productive labour, the primacy of the spiritual over corporeal, humanism, charity, justice, collectivism, mutual assistance and mutual respect, historical memory and the continuity of generations, as well as the unity of Russia's peoples" (Executive Order of the President of the Russian Federation No. 809).

To obtain a holistic picture of the images of the universities in new audiovisual media, this study uses discourse analysis of aggregated groups of values. The methodology of the analysis is based on the system of value groups presented earlier in our works, which lay the foundation for the spiritual and moral development of society and the individual (Zvereva, Khvorova, 2022: 13-16). We also rely on an approach to the analysis of the representation of audiovisual values, based on multimodal discourse analysis (Sterlikov, Shesterina, 2024: 50). We use this method as the most effective in studies aimed at resemiotization of video content (Baykova, 2022: 230-234) and analysis of a work not only at the verbal level, but also at the level of a video sequence (Kress, 2006).

The methodology of aggregating groups of values allows avoiding excessive complexity and obtaining more structured generalized results that meet analytical standards. Reducing the number

of categories for analysis is especially important when processing and interpreting a large volume of content, when conducting a comparative analysis of the approaches of the three universities to forming the image of the university in new audiovisual media. Aggregation based on common characteristics allows identifying key trends, ensures focusing on key aspects of video content, allows identifying central themes, which contributes to a deeper understanding of the impact of content on the audience.

The above-mentioned values are divided into 5 groups.

The first group – *patriotic service* – includes such values as patriotism, civic consciousness, service to the Fatherland and responsibility for its destiny, the unity of the peoples of Russia.

The second group – *spiritual and moral development* – includes such values as the primacy of the spiritual over corporeal, high moral ideals and strong families.

The third group – *humanitarian ideals* – includes such values as humanism, charity, justice.

The fourth group – *social responsibility* – includes such values as collectivism, mutual assistance and mutual respect, productive labour, human rights and responsibilities, dignity.

The fifth group – *historical heritage* – includes such values as life, historical memory and the continuity of generations.

These value groups make the basis for the multimodal discourse analysis of video publications included in the empirical data of the study. The analysis units are fragments of content correlated with the analyzed categories. At the verbal level, the mention of values or categories correlated with them is recorded in oral form (captions and narrations) and in written form (titles). At the visual level, the presence of images in the video sequence associated with or directly correlated with any value is noted. Alongside that, we record the reflection of events, processes, situations, actions correlated with any value, taking into account the presence of implicit meanings and context in the video.

The comparative method allows the authors of the article to compare the results of the multimodal analysis of the video content of the three universities, revealing differences in the media image of the country's top university and the regional federal universities.

3. Discussion

Today "universities face the difficult task of adapting to the requirements that "digital citizens" make for the quality of communication when choosing a university, studying or working there" (Brodovskaya et al., 2021: 17), and "the weight of the social media flow about a university is a significant indicator of the quality of brand management, indicating the ability of university management to keep the "university agenda" at the top of media content" (Brodovskaya et al., 2021: 20). The university media agenda with the inclusion of value meanings is important in the context of the devaluation of education, which is shown by the Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VCIOM, 2018, «Higher education: path to success or waste of time and money?») research: 72 % of young people aged 18–24 believe that education is not mandatory for a successful career. As for the university's image policy in the context of the values of modern youth, it is necessary to emphasize the attention of scientists to the fact that education today is in a vulnerable position. At the same time, it is the media that has formed, as researchers point out, the myth of the accessibility of any knowledge, and therefore its insignificance in life (Abrosimova, 2021; Gálik et al., 2024).

The formulation of current values has been the concern of the Russian authorities at the highest level, having "designated among the traditional values important for university education the values of patriotism, service to the Fatherland and responsibility for its destiny, high moral ideals, the primacy of the spiritual over corporeal, humanism, historical memory and the continuity of generations" (Executive Order of the President of the Russian Federation No. 809). Attention to the promotion of value meanings is important for the university audience, the generation that a number of researchers are inclined to call *devaluing*, i.e. one that does not see the value in the accumulation of knowledge and does not want to spend efforts on the educational process (Amzin, 2016).

According to V.A. Vinichenko, "not coincidentally, in recent years, there have been many scientific studies on the creation of university brands in the country's media space in the context of university management; dissertations are written on this topic, which, however, concern individual aspects or actors of the image: the consideration of individual cases on the promotion of a specific university in the media of various levels prevails" (Vinichenko, 2019). At the same time, the importance of the university's presence in digital communication channels, which allow it to

compete in the all-Russian field, is noted. Thus, Elena A. Kakotkina, considering the structure of the image of a regional university, notes that the priority of image building should be efforts in the Internet environment (Kakotkina, 2016). The role of corporate university media in solving personnel problems in the regions and the need for their reloading in the new communication conditions are pointed out (Argylov, 2016).

Taking all of this into account, it is hard to overstate the importance of the role of mediaeducation. Elaborating on the thoughts of A. Fedorov (Fedorov, Levitskaya, 2017) on the compound analysis of the potential of mediaeducation, I. Chelysheva in colaboration with G. Mikhaleva and Yu. Sapozhnikova conduct a scrupulous analysis of the process of developing family-oriented core values in the works of russian cinema and emphasize the creative potential of the practices of mediaeducation (Chelysheva et al., 2024). The authors of the creative video-projects, presented in the empirical section of this text – are students and alumni that have received professional media training, with a focus on broadcasting of core values that lay the groundwork for the formation of moral, ideological and patriotic values.

Of undoubted interest for the topic of the article are the aspects of the digital image of a university teacher as an expert, previously considered by the authors (Shesterina, Kopylova, 2024; Kaminskaya, Erohina, 2023).

It is important to emphasize that the audience's interest in thematic media discourse and its lively feedback in the form of comments is determined not least by the values that this media discourse conveys, which was shown by the authors in their study of the media discourse on the arrest of Pavel Durov (Zvereva et al., 2024).

According to E.A. Zvereva, T.L. Kaminskaya, A.M. Shesterina, "Today, media largely determine the audience's attitude to significant events, which, in turn, shapes the interpretation of basic socio-cultural values». Earlier in the work of the authors of this article (Zvereva et al., 2024), "Today, the media is essentially a social navigator. This fact is confirmed by the increase in media consumption during periods of crisis (such as pandemics and sanctions), when the bulk of media messages circulates around key topics of modern society, touching on the most relevant and contradictory agenda in terms of values".

According to V.A. Sidorov, "mass-media discourses postulate certain values that are supported or not supported by their target audiences, namely the scale of discourses, their distribution and influence on society are connected with discussions on values and phenomenon assessments. The fact that the formation of society's values occurs with the direct participation of the mass media is today an indisputable fact, which has stimulated discussions in the academic environment and among practicing journalists about the mission of the journalist in this process and even the emergence in the 21st century of a new research branch in the theory of journalism", i.e. journalism axiology, which considers "journalism as a source and retransmitter of society's values in all their subject and semantic diversity, as well as journalism itself as a social value" (Sidorov, 2016: 14).

According to V.V. Antropova, "the material for identifying the values broadcast by mass-media discourses is, first of all, journalistic texts". Thus, Vera V. Antropova, through concept analysis, "identifies three value models reflected in the leading media of the last decade, which are associated with a certain type of media addressee" (Antropova, 2021). Most often, it is the quality press that comes into the field of view of researchers of the values broadcast by the media, often in parallel with the foreign-language press (Kaminskaya, 2017).

According to A.V. Baychik, "outside the scope of research attention is the material of social media, although it is through network technologies that media discourses have a great influence on society". Thus, Anna V. Baychik, developing the ideas of the St. Petersburg axiological school of media studies, in her dissertation presents the mass media space as a space of value conflict (Baychik, 2022).

Scientific research on values has different disciplinary perspectives, as demonstrated by Irina N. Demina in her large-scale scientometric review. The author notes that "The fewest publications with *values* in their titles are in the section "Mass Communication. Journalism. Media" (Demina, 2022: 665). Irina N. Demina reasonably concludes "about the importance of further scientific discussion on the problems of values and the need to update this topic in all areas of social and humanitarian knowledge and in journalism and media studies" (Demina, 2022: 671).

4. Results

The analysis of the representation of values in the video content of the Lomonosov Moscow State University shows that their actualization is associated, first of all, with the educational process (Table 1).

Table 1. Representation of values in video content of Lomonosov Moscow State University

№	Value group	Number of videos displaying value group
1	patriotic service	74
2	spiritual and moral development	85
3	humanitarian ideals	61
4	social responsibility	39
5	historical heritage	82

Consider the features of the value representation in the aspect of multimodality.

The *patriotic service* value is presented in the videos as follows:

– at the text level in such phrases as *"Soviet genius"* (*Quantum Biography of Lev Landau*), *"devoted most of his life to the main university of the country"* (*Victor of Science. Episode 1*);

– at the video level, the actualization of this value is found in the demonstration of state symbols (*Three Centuries, Three Geniuses, Three Stories, Opening Ceremony of the Mendeleev Olympiad*), national symbols (*Who made Gagarin's flight possible? We tell you in 20 minutes*);

– at the audio level, in the narrative about the university, there is an intonation demonstrating pride (*270 years of Moscow State University in 20 minutes*), folk music is played (*Maslenitsa*).

Implicitly, this value is shown in the positive demonstration of the university, its students and staff, in the narrative about the university's achievements. Contextually, the value is related to the celebration of the anniversary of the Great Victory, actions aimed at developing patriotism.

The *spiritual and moral development* value is actualized by the following markers:

– at the text level, in such phrases as "like any self-respecting universe, Moscow State University is expanding due to knowledge and scientific discoveries" (*Victor of Science. Episode 1*), *"conduct fundamental research that, perhaps, will help people ..."* (*Victor of Science. Episode 2*);

– at the video level, the actualization of this value is found in the demonstration of education, scientific activity, creativity scenes (*Victor of Science. Episode 1,2*), symbols associated with spirituality (*Lomonosov in 20 minutes*);

– at the audio level, the actualization of imagination-spiritualization is noted in the narrative about the university (*Three centuries, three geniuses, three stories*), in the narrative about discoveries and other achievements, an elevated intonation sounds.

Implicitly, this value is shown in the positive demonstration of the results of the university's activities, in the narrative about the people of the university. Contextually, the value is related to state and professional holidays, festivals, concerts and similar events.

The *humanitarian ideals* value is actualized as follows:

– at the text level in such phrases as "gathered the best scientists" (*Quantum Biography of Lev Landau*), "here they are inventing our tomorrow" (*Victor of Science. Episode 1*);

– at the video level, the actualization of this value is found in the demonstration of scenes of mutual assistance (*Open Doors Days*), symbols associated with help and support;

– at the audio level, the value is intonationally demonstrated in the intimacy of the narrative, aimed at forming empathy (*Opening of a coworking space*).

Implicitly, this value is shown in the positive demonstration of the results of assistance, in the narrative about various events. Contextually, the value is related to such events as Donor Day and the *Divide* environmental campaign.

The *social responsibility* value is manifested in the following way:

– at the text level in such phrases as *"punished the plagiarist"* (*Quantum Biography of Lev Landau*), *"I would like our deeds, what we do together. To remain in history"* (*Victor of Science. Episode 1*);

– at the video level, the actualization of this value is found in the demonstration of selfless labor, actions that go beyond the university and are aimed at broad sections of the population (*270 years of Moscow State University in 20 minutes*);

– at the audio level, the value is demonstrated in a firm and sometimes didactic intonation aimed at forming the corresponding attitudes (*Victor of Science. Episode 1*).

Implicitly, this value is shown in the positive demonstration of scenes of service to society. Contextually, the value is related to such events as *Scientists to Schools, Science 0+*.

The *historical heritage* value is manifested in the following markers:

– at the text level, in the titles of the videos (*Quantum Biography of Lev Landau*; *Three Centuries, Three Geniuses, Three Stories*; *Physics of the 20th Century in 20 Minutes*; *History of Space Exploration in 20 Minutes*);

– at the video level, the actualization of this value is found in the demonstration of the historical past of the university, the symbols associated with historical memory (*270 years of Moscow State University in 20 minutes*);

– at the audio level in the videos, there is music related to the historical past of Russia and works by foreign authors (*Victor of Science. Episode 1*);

Implicitly, this value is shown in the narrative about people who contributed to the development of the university (*Quantum Biography of Lev Landau*), about how students lived and studied in the past. Contextually, the value is related to the 270th anniversary of Moscow State University.

It is important to emphasize that along with the actualization of values in the videos, we also see the devaluation. For example, in the Quantum Biography of Lev Landau video, the following phrase is heard: "Instead of telling you the history of quantum physics, we can rummage through Lev Landau's private matters, discuss his philosophy of free love and his suffering wife," "Have you heard about his mistresses?" Such phrases are supported by the video sequence, ironic intonation and implicitly hint at the unflattering facts of the physicist's biography, which is hardly contextually appropriate in relation to the celebration of the scientist's anniversary and partly leads to the devaluation of the *strong families* value.

The analysis of the representation of values in the video content of Derzhavin Tambov State University shows serious attention to the transmission of value guidelines (Table 2).

Table 2. Representation of values in video content of Derzhavin Tambov State University

№	*Value group*	*Number of videos displaying value group*
1	patriotic service	55
2	spiritual and moral development	61
3	humanitarian ideals	38
4	social responsibility	31
5	historical heritage	58

The *patriotic service* value is presented in the videos as follows:

– this value is implicitly shown in the positive demonstration of the university, its students and staff (*Rector Pavel Moiseyev congratulates on Science Day; Rector's congratulations on Higher Education Teacher's Day*), in the positive openness of the university management represented by the rector to dialogue with students (*Rector of Derzhavinsky* (masculine adjective from *Derzhavin*) *Pavel Sergeevich Moiseyev met with the university student body*);

– at the text level – in phrases that express pride in the country, in the university – "68 people from Derzhavin University participate in the Special Military Operation" (*Derzhavinsky – for participants of Special Military Operation*), "Derzhava Hockey Club – last home matches of the season"; "IT hackathon in Derzhavin University"; titles of streams of the events *Derzhavinskaya* (feminine adjective from *Derzhavin*) *Ski Track*, *Derzhavinskaya Regatta*, *Derzhavinsky Ball*, the podcast series *Back to Derzhavinsky*;

– at the video level, the actualization of this value is found in the demonstration of state symbols – the presentation of the "Derzhavinskaya Glory" medals for achievements in the sphere of patriotism (*Derzhavinsky – for participants of Special Military Operation*), national symbols (*St. George's Glory of the Tambov Land, Young Army Shift*);

– at the audio level, in the narrative about the university's achievements, an intonation demonstrating pride is noted – *"the university is moving towards a model of a socially responsible corporation"*; *"the university's successes in implementing the Priority 2030 program (the largest national university development support program in Russia)"* (*Strategic Session*); in the stream of the International Performing Arts Competition, patriotic songs are emphasized;

– contextually, the meaning correlates with events aimed at fostering patriotism: for example, broadcasts from celebrations on the occasion of laying flowers on the eve of Defender of the Fatherland Day (specifically at Derzhavinsky University – this event is for participants in the Special Military Operation), and events related to the celebration of the anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War. Such videos are aimed at promoting patriotism.

The value of *spiritual and moral development* is actualized through the following markers:

– at the video level, the updating of this value is discovered in the demonstration of scientific activity scenes – the Science Day video, creativity scenes – the stream of International Performing Art Competition, the video of the "Galdym – Art Territory" youth forum, the purpose of which is to support young talents, the creation of conditions for their professional and creative growth; the inspired looks of participants and guests of the exhibition of teachers of Russian State University of Design and Applied Arts (Stroganov University) "Communication of Times. Art. Fate. People...";

– at the audio level, in the university's narrative, the actualization of imagination and self-enrichment is noted ("Rector: The most important is people. We invest in the development of people"). The need to attract young people to science through the participation of researchers in the All-Russian project "Derzhavinsky Science Slam" and the video "Start in Science";

– as a rule, there are lofty notes in the dubbing of such videos;

– at the text level, in the narrative of discoveries and other achievements, an elevated intonation sounds – "Scientists will come to their laboratories to dream and doubt, search and find" (*Science Day*);

– this value is implicitly shown in a positive demonstration of the university's results – "Annually Derzhavin University with special warmth and excitement meets this holiday", in the video about the university's people – "The basis of the whole is the personality of a scientist, filled with a thirst for scientific discoveries" (*Science Day*).

Contextually, there is a correlation with national holidays, professional anniversaries, festivals, and all celebrations attended by a large number of people. For example, this includes the *Miss University 2024* contest, *Great Theatre Fresh*, and the university league of science battles *Science Slam*.

The most frequently mentioned value in this group is the family one. So, in the rector's dialogue with students, his relationship to the family is mentioned (*Rector of Derzhavinsky Pavel Sergeevich Moiseyev met with the university student body*); in the narrative on *Derzhavinskaya Ski Track*, it is about a family race in the Year of the Family (2024 has been declared the Year of the Family in Russia); that is why a social media campaign is being carried out in a number of publications by Derzhavin University, emphasizing the leading role of the family (in the presentation of the national project "Family", "Mother's Day in Derzhavin University", "Problems of the modern family", etc.

The *humanitarian ideals* value is actualized as follows:

– at the text level, in phrases such as "beauty, grace, talent contest" (Miss University), emphasizing the status of the winner of the contest – "participants in the Medical Volunteers movement";

– at the video level, the actualization of this value is found in the demonstration of scenes of mutual assistance (*Open Doors Days, Career Guidance Tests*) and symbols related to help and support;

– *The Story of Dima* is especially heartfelt – it is a first-person story of a four-year-old boy who has the most cherished desire to walk, run and jump; the narrative is built using photos from their family album and touching captions, simply and without excessive tragedy telling about the support of his family and doctors;

– at the audio level, intonationally, the value is demonstrated in the intimacy of the narrative, aimed at forming empathy – stories about the project on socialization, development of scientific and creative potential of children of Donbass, Belgorod region and children of participants of *Special Military Operation* (*University Sessions, "The sixth University Session is taking place in*

Derzhavin University); and in the continuation of the University Sessions project – a story about organizing recreation at the health base of Derzhavinsky University for students from Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics, Kherson and Zaporozhye regions (*Opening of the first session of the Stud.putevka* (a subsidized student pass) *project in Derzhavinsky*).

Implicitly, this value is shown in the positive demonstration of the results of volunteerism, humanitarian initiatives (*We have summed up the work of the Tambov regional branch of the All-Russian public movement "Volunteers-doctors"*), in the narrative on various events (*School of Activists – 2024*).

The *social responsibility* value is manifested in the following way:

– at the text level, in phrases such as "popularization and promotion of student sports in two countries", "joint tournaments", "formats of interaction in the field of sports" (*Discussed cooperation on joint projects with Chengdu Sport University (China)*);

– at the video level, the actualization of this value is found in the demonstration of events that go beyond the university and are aimed at the general population in Russia (*The winners of the Interregional Multidisciplinary School Olympiad receive awards* – about schoolchildren from different regions of Russia) and beyond (*Graduation of foreign students*); it is especially worth noting the *Derzhavinskaya Grove* video project, in which students from different cities and countries talk about their small homeland and their Derzhavinsky;

– at the audio level, the value is intonationally demonstrated in the didactic intonation aimed at forming the corresponding attitudes (*How to get to the dormitory of Derzhavin University*); this intonation sounds especially firmly in the series of *Fraudulent Scheme* videos (*Playing on the stock exchange*; *A call from a law enforcement officer*; *A call from the bank's security service*; *Emails, messages and calls on behalf of various funds*).

Implicitly, this value is shown in the positive demonstration of scenes of service to society. Contextually, the value is related to such actions as "Service Learning" (*Opening of the Service-Learning 2024 module*), "Russian Language Volunteers" (*Russian Language School in Derzhavin University*).

The *historical heritage* value is manifested in the following markers:

– at the text level, in such phrases like "as our ancestors used to say, Maslenitsa bids farewell to winter and allows spring to take its place" (*Maslenitsa*), "the university alley of glory in honor of the participants of the Great Patriotic War" (*Derzhavinsky – for participants of Special Military Operation*), in the titles of the videos ("Archbishop Luka's Day in Tambov") and the *Back to Derzhavinsky* video project dedicated to the stories of university graduates of different years;

– at the video level, the actualization of this value is found in the demonstration of the historical past, symbols associated with the historical memory of Russia, as in the *Maslenitsa* narrative about the spring holiday – a video sequence with a round dance, skomorokhs (wandering actors and minstrels), pancakes and the traditional burning of the Maslenitsa Scarecrow;

– at the audio level, the videos feature music that is related to the historical past of Russia, as in the *Matveyevna* story about a dance group, in the name of which its leader includes a tribute to the memory of their grandfather Matvey and their mother, Matveyevna, while simultaneously emphasizing the direction of the choreography – folk dance.

This value is reflected in those stories that tell about people who have contributed to the development of the university (*30 years of legal education*). Contextually, the value is related to the demonstration of the importance of continuity in teaching (*Voice of Generation. Teachers*).

In 2024, Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University implements the *city-university* project, through which the entire life of a non-industrial city should be built around the university, which is to become the driver of the territory's development. A special TV program of the same name presents the university and the project: *City-University Diaries.* 12 TV episodes of the 2024–2025 season of the program have been reviewed (the episodes were released twice a month, from September 3, 2024, to February 18, 2025), there is a total of 12 10-minutes episodes of the season. Each episode contains 2–3 stories, mainly in the genre of interviews with scientists, managers and students of the university. Thus, 40 video stories of the program have been reviewed.

Table 3. Representation of values in video content of Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University

№	Value group	Number of videos displaying value group
1	patriotic service	60
2	spiritual and moral development	47
3	humanitarian ideals	15
4	social responsibility	20
5	historical heritage	70

Through identification codes, the University is presented as a technological and innovative driver of the city's development. It is somewhat less common, but still in demand, to present the university as a source of student initiatives and student-led events, including conferences, exhibitions, and schools.

In addition, the university is featured in regional TV news narratives, of which there are 74 for the period under study. The total material volume is 114 videos.

All the videos are in the *city-university* section on the Novgorod television website (https://novgorod-tv.ru/speczproekty/gorod-universitet/).

The *patriotic service* value is presented in the videos verbally with words of pride for the city, for the country and for the university: *"Andrey admits that he is proud of the products created under his supervision <...> and this is only one of hundreds of scientists in the region, each of whom has helped the region become the capital of invention in Russia"*;

– at the video level, the value is presented by general plans of new city blocks, showing Russian, city and university symbols. It is often presented in the video sequence and verbally in the videos about search activities: *"Young people – students – can most accurately learn what the Great Patriotic War is, at what price the Victory was achieved, through search activities."*

This group of values correlates in the videos with the values of the *spiritual and moral development* group, which is actualized through the demonstration of creative and scientific competitions of the university, events associated with significant dates: *New tradition of Novgorod State University: 200 students take part in the creative festival "Russia and the World".*

The *humanitarian ideals* value is actualized through the demonstration of volunteerism, humanitarian initiatives of university students (help for the older generation, donation), event-related video materials are typical (*On Volunteer Day, initiative center for volunteers opens at Novgorod State University*). The footage includes formats of volunteer activity and simultaneously features representatives of different generations in interaction.

The *social responsibility* value is realized through headlines about the university *Golden Reserve* representatives improving the region: *medical students in practice*, as well as narratives on the role of the university in its social life: *Students from the medical institute, for example, try to balance work and study, starting from the second year. More than 150 people are currently undergoing internships in city clinics.* Visual markers of the value are the demonstration of the activities of university students for the benefit of the region: planting trees, master classes for exceptional children.

The *historical heritage* value is realized through interviews with humanities scholars who have dedicated their research to the history and culture of the region, showing historical monuments and iconic places: "We talked about how the *Poozery* (people living on the territory of the northwestern shore of Lake Ilmen) film was created, what attracts anthropologists and urbanists to the territory of the Ilmen Lake District, what are the features of the dialect of the inhabitants living there and how they pass on traditions and customs from generation to generation"; many videos about initiatives and technological victories mention the significance of Veliky Novgorod for Russia in the historical context. University initiatives to support historical heritage and perpetuate iconic names also often serve as news: *Novgorod State University determines winners of competition for best Kirik Novgorodets monument design.* A significant part of the news is related to archaeological finds, stories about artifacts and their demonstration: *"Novgorod archaeologists continue to study a unique find. At the end of September, during excavations on the banks of Lake Ilmen, in the Yuryev area, a practically intact molded pot was discovered, which is approximately 6,000 years old."*

Thus, the most frequent topics of university life were videos about university research, scientific victories and student participation in large-scale events.

The multimodal analysis of the representation of values in the video content of Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University shows that the most frequently represented values are the groups of *historical heritage* and *patriotic service*, which is due to the large symbolic capital of the region. In the local TV news promoting these values, the newsmakers are most often the university and regional management and in the university program *City-University Diaries* – students.

5. Conclusion

Thus, the image policy of the university is directly related to the transmission of value meanings in video products; event publications in media formats fit into the beyond-event value context: TV news and university TV stories show universities as creators of value meanings. At the same time, it is necessary to emphasize that the differences in the presentation of these meanings are due to both the characteristics of the territories and the capabilities of the universities themselves to influence the culture and politics of Russia.

Thus, Yaroslav-the-Wise Novgorod State University, located in a non-industrial area, has decided to take on the role of a driver of regional development, promoting humanitarian values, the image of a scientist and a student, territorial identity due to the great historical past.

Derzhavin Tambov State University, paying attention to spiritual, moral and patriotic values, at the same time puts a lot of effort into positioning the university as a scientific, educational and cultural center, as the main driver of development of the socio-cultural space of the region. The key university-image feature is the emphasis on the name *Derzhavinsky* for various events, promotions, awards and for the formation of the value field of teachers and students of the university. It is not without reason that the most mentioned value in the videos is the families one.

Lomonosov Moscow State University positions itself as a university with a long history and a significant contribution to the development of Russian education as a whole. In the year of the university's 270th anniversary, this emphasis is most noticeable and well-founded. There is also a desire to become a kind of spiritual and moral guide for the general public and a leader in scientific research.

The research has shown that the authors of the videos – current students and recent alumni that have received professional media education in the above listed universities, display the same base values that are pursued by the universities themselves in their educational practices. Thusly, alteration of the public image of a university in the media space require alteration of educational and conditioning practices of said university. A correlation is required between the media education of professionals and the core values broadcasted by the universities.

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