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The US-Taliban Peace Deal: A Buberian Analysis of the Declaration's Language

Azmat Khan[1] & Syed Irfan Ashraf[2]

Abstract

In this paper, we use critical interpretive and rhetorical analysis, informed by three theoretical concepts from Martin Buber's philosophy of dialogue, i.e., *I-It-Thou*, *Reciprocity*, and *Interhuman*, to analyze the US-Taliban peace declaration document which was released after the actors signed a Peace Deal in February 2020. The analysis revealed that the document's text embodies a nondynamic, non-dialogic and non-reciprocal spirit; creates *It-It* and *I-It* relationships; and does not extend the democratic and creative deliberative spaces which, according to Buber, every dialogue must aim to accomplish. The analysis further revealed that the declaration's aim tends to be to obtain a consensus/closure, i.e., to end the physical confrontation between Taliban and American troops, and not to attend to the underlying historical, cultural, and political structural forces which had created, and will continue to create, the conditions for the protracted conflict. Implications of the Deal for the Afghan people and for regional and global peace have been discussed. Moreover, we hope to bring the philosophy of Martin Buber, an eminent dialogue thinker yet little-known in Pakistan, to the peace and conflict literature produced within the country, and open it up for a critically engaged criticism and commentary. Finally, since the declaration is only a four-page text and its analysis is understandably limited in methodological and epistemological scope, suggestions for future research have been offered.

Keywords: Protracted conflict, dialogue, democracy, peace, deliberation

Introduction

According to Coleman (2003), protracted, intractable conflicts characterize our contemporary moment and "may well determine our capacity to survive as a species" (p. 1). This realization has compelled scholars to develop theories and models that could help us study, understand, and find means to effectively negotiate these conflicts. Ellis (2020), for instance, has identified two such research models. His "rational model" assumes that conflicts emerge around scarce material resources, while the "intractable model" upholds that conflicts arise mainly from identity and involve emotions. Ellis further adds that intractable conflicts are recalcitrant, nonrational, and particularly resistant to resolution as they generate difficult conversations. Similarly, Coleman (2003) has noted that these intense, inescapable conflicts involving issues such as identity, meaning, justice, and power are complex, traumatic, and often resist even the most serious attempts at resolution.

However, "[e]ventually, all parties to a conflict must talk" (Coleman, 2003, p. 183). After fighting a two-decade long deadly war, the United States and Taliban ("Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan," as they call themselves and as is written in the deal document) signed a peace deal on February 29, 2020, in Doha, Qatar. The actual details of the proceedings of the talks leading to the Deal are unknown, however, a four-page long document detailing the peace agreement was issued to the public. One important epistemological and methodological

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clarification that we want to make at the outset is that a majority consensus exists among Buberian scholars who contend that Buber's theories are most suitable for explaining and applying to contexts that involve dialogue (Barge & Little, 2002; Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Broome, 2019; Ganesh & Zoller, 2012; Holquist, 1990; Kramer, 2004; Patton, 2014; Wolfe, 2018). For the purpose of this study, we assume the *talks* to represent a *dialogue* because: first, "talks" inherently imply a two-way *free* interaction; and second, phrases like "negotiations" and "process" were widely used in media and political commentary to refer to the *talk*, which in our opinion, constitute the elements of dialogue. Besides this, we believe that the analysis of this document could, *ex post facto*, yield important insights about the nature of the *talks*, the actors involved and the intertwining power dynamics.

In this paper, we analyze the four-page Peace Deal document by employing three concepts from Martin Buber's (2003 [1947]; 1958 [1923]; 1988 [1965]) philosophy of dialogue: *I-It-Thou*; *Reciprocity*; and *Interhuman*. The purpose of the paper is to explore what can Buber's philosophy reveal about the present-day "hypermodern" (Lipovetsky, 2008) inter-nations dialogues. In addition, it also aims to show how a dialogue that is grounded in Buberian philosophy can transform those socio-cultural conditions and communicative structures that lead to the creation and sustaining of protracted conflicts. Finally, we also hope to introduce Martin Buber, an influential European philosopher of dialogue however little appreciated in Pakistani context, to the academics whose work concentrate on conflict resolution and peace building. For the last 40 years, the country has been facing its own internal conflicts as well as spillovers from imperialist wars in Afghanistan. Therefore, we hope to inspire some critical engagement with Buber's work.

Bubering the dialogue: A Literature Review

Martin Buber's (1878-1965) philosophy of dialogue has been a major influence in the literature, theory, and practice of dialogue, whether interpersonal, organizational, or inter-nations (Black, 2005; Cissna & Anderson, 1998; DeIuliis, 2021). His central idea *I-Thou/I-It* forms the ontological basis of dialogue. In his book *The knowledge of Man* (1988 [1965]), Buber presented the twofold principal of human life, which, according to him, is humans' innate need to be confirmed and to confirm others. However, Buber stated that this *confirming* should not result in an instrumentalizing *It*, rather in a humanizing *Thou*. A *Thou* confirming, he observed, unfolds during a true dialogue which is a "dynamic, adaptable, pluralistic form of association" (p. 57). This is a revolutionarily humane conceptualization of dialogue, given that today, dialogue is most often used by powerful actors to "diplomatically coerce" (Beaulieu-Brossard, 2015) and instrumentalize the *other* (DeIuliis, 2021) or co-opt the dialogue (Ganesh & Zoller, 2012).

Connected to *I-Thou* is Buber's concept of *reciprocity*. Buber (1988 [1965]) argued that we can grasp our common humanity (*I-Thou*) only if we engage in genuine *reciprocity*. "Through reciprocal relationships between individuals, new values, new psychic facts are created that are not possible in isolated individuals" (p. 93). To this, we would add that, though in today's world, dialogues do happen, and new facts and values are also created, however, they may not be based on the *I-Thou* principle. This brings us to Buber's third point, *Interhuman*. Buber (1988 [1965]) posited that through an *interhuman* relationship, people confirm each other, becoming a *self* with the *other*. Drawing on Buber, DeIuliis (2021) asserted that the fuller growth of the self is not achieved by one's relation to oneself (in this paper: a nation), but by the confirmation in which one person knows herself to be made present in her uniqueness by the *other*. Thus, *Interhuman* is a powerful dialogic construct for exploring modern dialogues between humans that, in most cases, are shaped/mediated by nations and corporations. After this brief primer, we believe that a detailed elaboration of Buber's *I-It-Thou*, *Reciprocity*, and *Interhuman* is warranted.

I-It-Thou and Interhuman/The Between

Kramer (2004) argued that "I", "You", and "It" are the elemental variables of Buber's philosophy. According to him, Buber held that no isolated *I* exists apart from relationship to an other (*It* or *Thou*). Therefore, for Buber, Kramer claimed, *I* can only exist in a dialogue, or what Buber called "encounter." Similarly, Buber's biogrpaher Maurice Friedman (2002) noted that by *Thou*, Buber meant an experience not of an *object* but of a *relationship*. Friedman further maintained that this relationship is neither objective nor subjective but *interhuman*. According to Buber (1988 [1965]), this interhuman, a "dynamic solidarity," is contained neither in one or the other, nor in the sum of both, but in the realm of "the between." This realm, Buber asserted, *happens*, or is *present* between the encountering entities. He further maintained that only *I-Thou* can take place in the realm of *the between*. On the other hand, *I-It*, according to him, takes place within the mind of the *I* and not between the individual and the world, hence it is subjective and lacks mutuality.

In *The knowledge of Man* (1988 [1965]), Buber posited that humans have two "primal attitude" or ways of speaking. First, *I-It*, which is more objectifying and monological, while the second, *I-Thou* is immediate, mutual, and dialogical. However, he contended that these are not absolute opposites, rather two complementary stands of life and must continue to interchange with one another, though he cautioned that we become human only through *I-Thou* because it calls us into a unique wholeness. In *I-It*, Buber claimed, the object is reduced to the observer's experience while in *I-Thou* "he [sic] is invited to meet me where I stand in open reciprocity" (p. 16). Friedman (2002) also noted that for Buber, *I-It* can never be spoken with the whole being. Similarly, Patton (2014) argued that an I–It relationship regards other human beings from a distance, from a superior vantage point of authority, as objects or subjects, as things in the environment to be examined and placed in abstract cause–effect chains. An I–Thou perspective, in contrast, Patton asserted, acknowledges the humanity of both self and others and implies relationship, mutuality, and genuine dialogue.

In *Between Man and Man* (2003 [1947]), Buber elaborated his ontological conception of the *self*, the *other*, and *The Between*/*Interhuman*. He argued that human experience is divided between two poles: the individual and the collective. Buber coined the term "the sphere of the between," a third dimension, to describe this reality, i.e., the between in which the human being has its origin and root. Kramer (2004) pointed out that the interhuman comprises of inner impressions (feelings), and external conditions (interaction structures). According to Kramer, it is the true community, a realm shared here and now in an encounter, accessible only to the persons who participate in the meeting. The sphere of the between, Buber insisted, transcends the specific spheres of each one: "On the far side of the subjective, on this side of the objective, on the narrow ridge, where *I* and *Thou* meet, there is the realm of between" (p. 243). Thus, both Kramer (2004) and Friedman (2002) held that the interhuman is not a social or psychological condition but an *event* that takes place on the edge between a person and their surroundings. True community, Buber (1988 [1965] asserted, is "the dynamic facing of the other, a flowing from I to Thou" (p. 37). The event, Kramer explained, is extraordinary, fragile, and floating. Similalrly, Levinas (1967) also observed that *the between* is not an independent space but an *opening* unique to both *I* and *Thou* in which they enter into a meeting.

Reciprocity

In a contentious and unequal but globalized world, human communication face different challenges. "Today, what is ethical communication? Can we expect dialogue? Should I demand reciprocity," DeIuliis (2021, p. 340) asked these questions as he examined the ethics of reciprocity in hypermodern dialogues, which increasingly involve asymmetrical power and communication contexts. Several dialogue scholars (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Black, 2005; Cissna & Anderson, 1998) have asserted that dialogue is constitutive of communication. Further, DeIuliis posited that communication is a particular mode or *quality* of relating with the *other* that is characterized by mutuality (or reciprocity) and difference (or strangeness). DeIuliis continued that the *relating*, a turning toward the other, is characterized by a recognition of both mutuality and difference as inherent within the communicative dialogic praxis. *Strangeness*, Friedman (2002) claimed, is the recognition, honoring, and celebration of the uniqueness of the other. Reciprocity, on the other hand, according to DeIuliis, is a communicative ethic of responsiveness, i.e., the attention paid to the simultaneous recognition of the difference and similarity in the *I* and the *other*.

For Buber (1988 [1965]) also, dialogue is a mode of human communication that privileges a phenomenological attention directed toward the *other*. He observed that this *attending* to the *other* in conversation is rare and intentional, not the norm. Buber reasoned that reciprocity enables the interlocutors to take advantage of the historical moment (encounter) if genuine ethical responsiveness is observed. He further observed that reciprocity is grounded in true dialogic encounters that protect and promote the *Other* rather than the *self*. Some scholars also use reciprocity interchangeably with *intersubjectivity*. Tauber (1995), for instance, noted that the fulcrum of Buber's entire argument rests on recognizing that intersubjectivity is a reciprocal responsibility. From the above discussion, it emerges that the *interhuman* can only be realized through *reciprocity* which in turn makes possible the *I-Thou* relationship.

Protracted Conflicts

As we mentioned above, Buber's philosophy of dialogue has extensively informed the literature, theory, and practice of dialogue (Black, 2005; Cissna & Anderson, 1998; DeIuliis, 2021). In this paper, our focus is on a major conflict of the twentieth century, i.e., the war in Afghanistan (2001-2021) as part of the United States' "Global War on Terrorism." Viewed through the definition of Ellis (2020), this conflict meets the criteria to be identified as *protracted*. In protracted conflicts, "sacred values (e.g., religion, group identity, ethnicity) fundamentally inform the values and beliefs of each side and provide a group with a comprehensive and bounded system of beliefs…[and] are often the most troubling and recalcitrant (2020, p. 184). He further noted that, though, protracted conflicts implicate religion and ethnicity, however, it is more a matter of political issues being filtered through religious and ethnic lenses. Ellis has listed the following five characteristics of protracted conflicts.

First, intractable conflicts involve power imbalances where language and ethnicity are used to define the other and maintain power differences. Second, these conflicts are concerned with existential threats. They are less about tangible resources and more about human needs and identity. Third, intractable conflicts typically involve social and political distance between groups that results in misinformation and stereotypes and other cognitive distortions. Fourth, intractable conflicts involve extreme emotions. Deep feelings of humiliation and anger are part of these conflicts. And fifth, intractable conflicts result in trauma. Such traumas can be intergenerational. (2004, p. 184)

Ellis (2004) offered that protracted conflicts around identity are best studied through the Intractable Model. This model, he explained, is based on the principles of democracy, inclusion, and dialogic communication. Protracted conflicts most often involve two asymmetrical power wielders. Scholars (Ellis, 2004; DeIuliis, 2021; Coleman, 2003; Mullen, 2001) have noted the problematics of asymmetrical relationships between conflicting parties. Ellis suggested that groups must function in an environment of equality; "that is, all participants or citizens must be able to participate and avail themselves of the opportunities for debate, discussion, and to shape group outcomes" (p. 194). This environment of equality, he claimed, can only be achieved through the democratic principles of dialogue and deliberation, which in turn, are enabled through the expansion of deliberative contexts and public conversational spaces.

Ellis (2004) also asserted that the definition of inclusion must be serious and deep. "Contemporary democracies such as the United States, as successful as they may be, still fall short of genuine deliberative experiences that include a wide array of groups and voices" (p. 192). Ellis claimed that absolutist cultural notions that usually result from power asymmetry restrict the dialogic transformation of participants and increase misunderstanding. He offered the example of The Israeli–Palestinian conflict and suggested that Islam and the West "must construct new frameworks because it is no longer the case that a single culture is the holder of a universally valid technique or set of assumptions" (p. 191). We submit that similar assumptions underlined the conflict in Afghanistan and, therefore, demands thinking along the lines demonstrated by Ellis.

Finally, Ellis (2004) emphasized that communicative activity – especially democratic communicative activity – must have a dialogic experience in order to articulate cultural stances and resistance. He asserted that managing, let alone solving, difficult cultural conflicts must involve the transformation of culturally embedded communication patterns. To this end, he noted that the vocabulary used in their communication by conflicting parties is important. Terms/phrases, Ellis maintained, are representative of conflicts and reflect group status as well as the intensity of the group differences. In protracted identity-based conflicts, Ellis (2004) and Mullen (2001) held, language is based more on obtaining self-interest rather than the understanding of self and other.

Mullen described how the structure of the terms can reveal the differences between high- and low-status groups, superior and subordinate groups, and the underlying complexity. He pointed out that communication should not be reduced to simple instrumental strategies but aimed at transforming the relationship between the conflicting parties.

The four-page peace agreement, we contend, offers a rich text that contains the positionalities, mutualities, differences, and expectations of both parties. In the light of the above literature, we thoroughly analyze the document's text, however, we specifically investigate the following two questions.

1. What ontological positions (*I-Thou-It*) does the Peace Deal's text take/create?
2. What epistemological claims (*reciprocity* and *interhuman*) are made (i.e., words and phrases used, and cultural/master narratives/stories implicated) in the Peace Deal's text?

Methods

Theoretical Framework

According to Jørgensen and Phillips (2002), "[i]t is by seeing the world through a particular theory that we can distance ourselves from some of our taken-for-granted understandings" (p. 22). To achieve this critical distance, and maintain an analytic consistency throughout the study, we employ three concepts from Martin Buber's philosophy

of dialogue, i.e., *I-It-Thou*, *Interhuman*, and *Reciprocity*. These constructs were discussed in detail in the literature review section.

Data Source

As we mentioned earlier, we analyze the four-page document of the US-Taliban Peace Deal. Though, the analysis of the actual proceedings of the talks in which this document was agreed upon would have been ideal, however, the details of it have been kept in complete secrecy (George, 2021). The dialogue started in 2016 and, following an on-gain off-again trajectory, culminated in the Peace Deal in February 2020. The talks were held in Doha, Qatar's capital city, where the Taliban maintained their political office since 2010 (AlJazeera, 2013). According to the Deal document, it is a "comprehensive peace agreement" made of four parts. The first part details the guarantees that the US seeks from Taliban; the second explains the timeline of the US' complete withdrawal from Afghanistan; and the third and fourth parts elaborate on a post-withdrawal permanent and comprehensive ceasefire, and intra-Afghan negotiations, respectively. We believe that this document offers a rich data source for a rhetorical-interpretative analysis that can yield a wider and critical set of meaning and themes related to dialogue, communication, conflicts, culture, democracy and community.

Analytical Tools

To analyze the text of this document, we use a combination of two interpretive approaches (tools), namely: interpretative textual analysis (Chandler, 2002; Allen, 2017); and critical discourse analysis (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Interpretative textual analysis, Chandler (2002) states, looks at texts as semiotic objects, "that position text users as holders of different subjectivities, playing various roles in semiotic interaction, and which speak to other texts through relations of intertextuality" (p. 202). Similarly, Allen (2017) posits that interpretation involves understanding the text within the multiple facets of the historical, cultural, and social understandings of the world at the time when the text was created. However, interpretative analysis tends to overlook the question of power and agency. Therefore, Jørgensen and Phillips' (2002) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) was also used to account for power, agency, and the prospects of social change. Jørgensen and Phillips argue that using CDA, the analyst works with what has actually been said, explores patterns in and across the statements, and identifies the social consequences of different discursive representations of reality. Using these two frameworks, we critically scrutinize the document for sub-texts, unstated assumptions, discursive concealments, hegemonic normalizations, and dialogic disruptions.

Analysis Procedure

Following Merskin (2004), our first step of the analysis involved "a long preliminary soak" (Hall, 1975), i.e., we individually gave a thorough reading to the text. Next, we jointly had close and deeper readings of the text interspersed with rigorous analytic and interpretive discussions. Thus, we mutually identified and agreed upon the rhetorical, dialogical, and communicative themes and patterns in accordance with Chandler (2002), Allen (2017), and Jørgensen and Phillips (2002), and corresponding to, or contrasting with, the central questions of our research, i.e., *I-Thou-It*, *Reciprocity*, and *Interhuman*. Although, this is a qualitative analysis, however, we also noted important quantitative nuances, i.e., the number of times a specific word/theme or combination of themes was used/repeated.

Data Analysis and Findings

I-Thou-It

Although, Buber has nowhere hinted at any possibility of *It-It* relationship, however, based on our analysis, we want to make a naïve claim (innovation) to state that, overall, the Deal reflects a relationship that can best be described as *It-It*. The document is written by a "third" person in the third person's voice, and in a passive grammar with rarely (clearly) mentioning the author(s) and the addressee(s). According to Derrida (1998), passivity of speech is a relation to an absolute past that can never be fully mastered, i.e., brought to presence, and to a future that is not anticipated. To Derrida, in this type of relation of signification, a "dead time is at work" (p. 68). In our interpretation, this document embodies and symbolizes a dead time which tends to diminish any possibility for the *I*, a temporal entity, to exist either as *I-Thou* or *I-It*. Therefore, the document not only objectifies (*It*) Taliban but also the USA, which we will show in the succeeding sections.

Moreover, the document does not contain any form of regret/remorse from both conflicting parties on the loss of lives and property which also represents an *It-It* relationship. Thus, both parties neither transcend themselves nor is this experience (Peace Deal) transcending for the humanity as a whole (see The Buber-Rogers dialogue 1957 in Cissna & Anderson, 1994). According to Buber (1988 [1965]), affirmation, validation, and confirmation are at the heart of an *I-Thou* encounter in which both parties acknowledge the uniqueness of each other and their common humanity. Martin and Cowan (2019) have refered to affirmation/confirmation as the "growth choice" while non-affirmation as the "fear choice." The analysis of the document reveals that both the US and Taliban still hold to the *fear choice* and are not willing to discuss the prospects of how they both can grow from the situation they find themselves in.

Though, the document, we argue, displays an overall *It-It* scenario, however, specific sections of the document do establish a relationship which is *I-It*, to which we turn now. One important aspect of the text is that it reflects a big power asymmetry (Ellis, 2020) between both parties. Throughout the document, Taliban are referred to as "The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan which is not recognized by the United States as a state and is known as the Taliban" which shows an *I-It* relationship. Used 16 times in the document (17 % of the text), this label designates the Taliban as an illegitimate group. Seen through Buber's philosophy of dialogue, with this invalidating and delegitimizing tag dotting the document, we can infer that genuine dialogue and reciprocity could not be established. Buber, in his book *I and Thou* (1958 [1923]), has compelling called the subject position that the deal's text articulates for the US as the "lord of the hour." He writes:

> In our age the l-it relation, gigantically swollen, has usurped, practically uncontested, the mastery and the rule. The I of this relation, an I that possesses all, succeeds with all, this I that is unable to say Thou, unable to meet a being essentially, is the lord of the hour." (p. 56)

Reciprocity

The text shows no signs of reciprocity: it is one-dimensional in its tone and texture. This is evident from the following almost identical sentence-structure used throughout the document.

> The US is committed to….
>
> The Taliban will be responsible for…

From the first statement, we can infer that the US considers itself as the only entity to which it owes a *commitment*. Taliban, on the other hand, are obligated to an *other* force: apparently, the US. In addition, as Fromm (1941) has demonstrated, the phrase "committed to" symbolizes a relationship of freedom while "responsible for" shows a diminution of choices. Moreover, the US is situated as the absolute center (Holquist, 1990), or a self-sufficient *I* to an *It* (Buber, 2003 [1947]), while the Taliban is constructed as an absolute periphery. Similarly, Broome et al. (2019) assert that reciprocity values *We* more than *I,* and celebrates relational harmony, not the erosion of relational diversity. Seen in this context, the peace deal document places *I* higher than the *We*.

Finally, the document is aimed at achieving *consensus*. Barge and Little (2002) cautions that attempts to secure *consensus* (collective thinking) tend to diminish the prospects of dynamism. They point out several ironies in consensus-based approach, arguing that consensus (an end, not a process) could become static which can erase some voices. Instead of consensus, they favor a *dialogical wisdom* i.e., cultivating a productive dynamic between the centrifugal and centripetal forces and not obsessing with dissolving them into a *solution*. Moreover, by establishing an *I-It* instrumental and fixed relationship, the Deal effects, what Deetz et al. (2007) terms "the discursive closure." For instance, Afghanistan comprises of multiple ethnic and national groups and not all of them align with what Taliban stand for, plus the fact that dissenting groups exist within the Taliban (Barfield, 2011; Behuria et al., 2019). Thus, the document preemptively closes any discursive and dialogic room for all other Afghan groups to leverage their voices within the Taliban rule once the US has left. Moreover, it shows that even the *It* (Taliban) itself has been 'conceived' in an extremely reductionist, homogenizing epistemological form, exclusive of all other possible *It*s or *Thou*s.

Interhuman/The Between

The document's grammar is intriguingly mechanical and tends not to produce the dialogic effects. Following Bakhtin (1984), we infer that the document's syntax represents a "structured episode" which, according to him, offers no possibility for the *fleeting moments* to occur. Cissna and Anderson (1998), drawing on the Buber-Rogers debate (1957), have stated that "mutuality and, by extension, dialogue, are matters of moments of meeting [i.e., *fleeting moments*]" (p. 93). In line with this argument, we add that until there exists inequality – in any of its forms – among human beings, the between, or interhuman, can only be realized in the ephemeral moments, which in turn can be made possible by a spontaneous and organic encounter. It is through such organic moments, Freire (1970) held, that encountering members can realize their common humanity, which otherwise remains hidden from them in the bureaucratically composed and heavily routinized and ritualized structures. Building on Barge and Little (2002), we also want to add that the document fixes the centrifugal/centripetal forces rather than, as Barge and Little proffer, honor them, the latter fosters possibilities for learning to coexist with each other's complexities. This shows that it sets aside "the between" and hence, also the possibility of the moments of meeting (Cissna & Anderson, 1998). Lastly, Baxter and Montgomery (1996) observe that a true dialogue requires a surplus/excess seeing of the *other*, i.e., that difference should not be defined as a conflict rather a quality which makes possible the *coming to being* of both the *self* and *other*. The document, however, does not reflect that either of the parties sees an excess of the *other*, thus positions both of them as stuck in an eternal conflict.

Unconclusion

One important quality or goal of the dialogue is that it does not attempt to achieve a *perfect* and *final* resolution (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Cissna & Anderson, 1998). Buber's dialogic philosophy not only stresses the need to accommodate complexity and difference, but also emphasizes that dialogue is a continuous and unending process. To assert and appreciate this understanding conceptually, scholars have created phrases like "To be continued" (LeGreco & Douglas, 2017) and "Unconclusion" (Black, 2020). Using the unconclusion as a useful dialogic lens (or insight), we argue that although, the peace deal document hints at unconclusion, however, it declares that dialogue will only continue between the US and the post intra-Afghan dialogue government (post-settlement government). Thus, it preemptively erases Taliban as any possible entity to continue engaging with. Therefore, *unconclsuion* is achieved at the cost of the conclusion/eraser of the *other* (Taliban).

Discussion

Drawing mostly on the critical discourse tradition (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002), in this section, we endeavor to locate the discursive themes that we found in the analysis into the global and local material, socio-cultural and political structures, and examine their possible real-life consequences for the Afghan populations in particular, and for the people of all nations in general. The overarching premises of this *locating* is democracy, human rights, intercultural and inter-civilizational conflicts, intercultural communication and dialogue, global civic solidarity, emancipation, and local community building.

First, as Ellis (2004) states, the most common successful way of managing the conflicts that involve religion, ethnicity, and politics is liberal accommodation. However, the Deal document does not mention democracy a single time. Democracy, besides civil rights, and women's liberation, were the master constructs which the US and the allied forces heavily used to legitimize the "war on terror." It is curious to note how the document and its authors turn a blind eye on these "master signifiers" (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985) and the highest ideals of contemporary civilization. Moreover, according to Ellis, democratic principles oblige all contending parties to create truly and deeply inclusive experience for authentic dialogue to happen. Ellis also mentions that inclusion rests on equality which can be realized only if all participants are able to shape group outcomes. Given the power asymmetry between the US and Taliban which is reflected in the document being a single authorship (unidirectional tone), it seems harder that an "environment of equality" (Ellis, 2004) was created during the proceedings leading up to the peace deal. In addition, the *agent* of the text flows unidimensionally from the US to Taliban, therefore, the *I* does not flow towards the *Thou* (Buber, 1988 [1965]), rather it is brought into being by instrumentalizing the *other*, i.e., by *Iting*.[1]

Second, following Heath (2007), the document does not seem to be "generative" as it fails to aim at any creative and democratic outcomes. Heath (2007) proffered that creativity and diversity make dialogue and collaboration generative, i.e., productive, dynamic, and open-ended. She proposed that collaboration stakeholders would be better able to negotiate creative and democratic outcomes if they embrace and engage diversity, because, diversity, she adds, facilitates creativity; and dialogue is the manifestation of diversity. The document, as we mentioned earlier, is addressed solely to Taliban, which is situated as a monolithic, *listening-only* entity, and diversity and dynamism are progressively removed. In the same vein, it also depicts the US as a monolithic voice and does not engage the plurality of opinions among Americans about this Deal. Many in Afghanistan and America think differently from those who have authored this Deal, and demand that the Deal should prevent

the gains made in democracy and civil liberties including women's rights from being lost to Taliban (Afzal, 2020; Dozier, 2020). Moreover, the document's analysis also shows that both parties do not make any attempt to disrupt the conditions that fostered the conflict in the first place (Wolfe, 2018). Wolfe (2018) presented an "agonistic resistance-pluralism theory" of public dialogue, according to which differences are integral to being human and should not be presented in an innocent/victim *Us* vs a threatening *Other* binary. She argued that "agonistic pluralism" should attempt to de-reify rigid boundaries (us/them) and cultivate respect for difference because the latter has productive potentials for collective progress. She also states that deliberative moment should not solely aim at creating consensus, rather the aim must be to visibilize invisible positions (identities) and unequal power-relations, and direct us towards the issue, not just the positions. Since the document does not engage the socio-economic, cultural, and religious conditions that had created Taliban authoritarianism, and the anti-West – particularly, the anti-US mindset – therefore, following Wolfe (2018), the same conditions are bound to return. The Deal, at best, seems to cure (read: dump) the symptoms rather than heal the root causes of this protracted conflict.

Buber (1958 [1923]) argues that the fundamental aim of dialogue is to bring the *other* in the *presence*, and thus also become *present* themselves. The *other*, he observes, is ineffable, and to make sure the *other* remains so, dialogue should aim to speak *to* rather than speak *of* the *other*. The document, however, consistently speaks *to* the Taliban and thus dictates the *other* rather than bring it to *presence*. This is in contradiction with Buberian principle which holds that only through *I-Thou*, i.e., speaking *to* (to effect *presence*), can we become fully human. In *I-Thou*, Martin and Cowan (2019) observe, the uniqueness and separateness of the *other* is acknowledged without obscuring the relatedness or common humanness that is shared. In *I-It* relationship, they claim, *other* is experienced as an *object* to be influenced or used as a means to an end. From the document, the only *end* that we can see is to make sure a convenient withdrawal of the American troops is accomplished, leaving all the cultural and communicative context intact which would continue breeding the conditions of the protractedness. Thus, the document/Deal, we conclude, is not inherently dialogical but instrumental in nature and is not aimed at *transforming* the relationship between the conflicting parties (Ellis, 2020).

Finally, according to Martin and Cowan (2019), Buber understood that an authentic encounter between people or groups contains wonderful potential which becomes apparent when the two actively and authentically engage each other in the here and now and truly "show up" to one another. In such an encounter, Martin and Cowan maintain, a new relational dimension that Buber termed "the between" becomes manifest which then serves as the basis for the *I-Thou* relationship. The document reflects neither the *here* and *now* nor engage the past/history. Jovanovic et al. (2007) argue that a dialogic reckoning of the history is essential for achieving a sustainable conflict resolution. They further add that a constructive discussion of the past is a positive move for the future. The document, however, shows no hints at present/future reconciliation efforts.

Conclusion

Martin and Cowan (2019) have used the phrase "missed meetings" to refer to those counselling sessions between the therapist and the 'client' that could not actualize an *I-Thou* relationship. For them, such meetings are the ultimate failure of human relationships and result in *us* losing a part of ourselves. We argue that Martin and Cowan's argument also holds true for the US and Taliban Peace Deal. The Deal seems to be a *missed* meeting, and a broken dream. A Buberian dialogic analysis of the Peace Deal's declaration showed that both parties were only concerned to end a physical war without engaging to transform those social, cultural, geopolitical, and historical forces and structures that had brought them to the war in

the first place. The document poignantly indicates that both US' and Taliban's *I*s (self) have withered away, and each has lost their *part* in the *other*.

Limitations and Recommendation for Future Research

The study is limited in several ways, however, we wish to highlight two of them. First, the emotional complexity resulting from our own identities as ethnic Pashtun/Afghan, who came of age amidst unending imperialist wars, might have affected our ability to achieve the critical detachment necessary for carrying out an objective analysis. Second, we analyzed only a textual document. Additional research is required to look longitudinally into the entire negotiation process, and the actual proceedings (meetings, media talks, minutes etc.), and also conduct interviews/group discussions with those who attended these talks in order to capture every aspect of the actual dialogic experience, and produce a methodologically comprehensive study.

Endnotes

[1]We add "ing" to the pronoun "it" to make it a verb that performs the action/work of *othering*.

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Appendix

The pdf of the Peace Deal was downloaded from the United States Department of State's website at https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Agreement-For-Bringing-Peace-to-Afghanistan-02.29.20.pdf on February 17, 2023.

Spirituality as a Predictor for Fear of Recurrence Among Cancer Patients

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Abstract

This study's primary objective was to evaluate the impact of spirituality on the fear of cancer recurrence among cancer patients. A structured interview schedule was used and data from 200 cancer patients were collected employing a purposive sampling technique. SPSS V-20 was used to analyze the data. For the demographic information, simple percentages, frequency, and mean scores were employed. The relationship between the variables was examined by using Pearson's correlation test. The results show that most of the cancer patients (75%) were men in the age range of 49 to 58 (35%), were single (58%), and (42%) were members of joint families. According to the clinical feature data, stage III (38%), patients were found in the majority, throat cancer (12%), while 80% had no family history of the disease. According to an analysis of patients' spirituality, the majority (37%) were extremely spiritual people, and (36%) used the recital of sacred Quranic verses to promote healing. According to the univariate analysis, total spirituality received a higher mean score (M=2.4) and FCR (M=2.60). In a correlation study, spirituality shows a substantial negative relation (r=-0.65; p=.000) with fear of relapse and a significant positive link (r=0.485; p=.000) with intrusiveness. The findings also show a negative and significant relationship between the independent variable and FCR in patients (r= -0.532; p=.000). The study concludes that patients performed various spiritual practices as a supportive mechanism to avoid the fear of recurrence. This study recommends that healthcare professionals need to understand the significance of spirituality as an essential coping therapy and provide holistic care to reduce cancer patients' FCR.

Keywords: Cancer recurrence, Fear of recurrence, Progression, Healthcare

Introduction

Chronic diseases are a growing burden and a significant problem for healthcare systems around the world (World Health Organization, 2002). One of the critical health issues that persist despite significant advancements in medical technology and care is cancer. However, the disease is still progressing, and according to research, 10 million cases of mortality and 19.3 million new cases were registered globally in 2020 (Sung et al., 2021). Cancer becomes a major cause of death in rich nations, and it ranks second to heart disease in impoverished countries. Pakistan is a cancer-emerging nation as well, with only 178388 new cases reported there in 2020 alone, with 13% of those cases being recurrences (International Agency for Research on Cancer, 2020).

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The WHO report states that the expanding cancer problem supports a serious prerequisite for the deterrence of disease and its care (Plummer et al., 2016). The experience of cancer diagnosis and treatment can be astonishing and can shake one's sense of life experience (Girgis et al., 2013). Patients with cancer were dealing with many issues, including worry, fear for the future, hesitation, remission of cancer, alterations in sexual and reproductive function, as well as changes in one's social role within the family and other relations affect their QoL and make dealing with diagnosis and treatment of cancer difficult (Institute of Medicine, 2013).

Several research studies have recognized that fear of recurrence is a unique and prominent dilemma for all cancer patients, irrespective of the period of cancer diagnosis, stage, and since diagnosis (Pistrang & Barker, 1992; Vickberg, 2000; Cameron et al., 2007). Even among patients who are at present getting cancer treatment, fear of recurrence is recorded as the utmost source of psychological stress, higher than the practice of being diagnosed with cancer or the effects of treatment (Antoni et al., 2006). Several research studies point out that the greatest worries for a female with initial-stage of breast cancer are the probability of the disease recurrence. The diagnoses of breast cancer often compel females to face fear, insecurity, and more thinking about their death (Spencer et al., 1999). Furthermore, high levels of fear of recurrence hinder daily life routine, an indicator of maladaptive adjustment and distress experienced by cancer patients (Stanton, Danoff-Burg & Huggins, 2002).

Simard, Thewes & Humphris (2013) studied FCR and its relationship with psychological stress in patients who had been diagnosed with prostate, breast, and colorectal cancer within the previous 10 years. It is assumed that greater levels of FCR were considerably connected with greater anxiety (r=.64) and depressive symptoms (r=.43). According to Frost et al. (2000) research study, recurrence was associated with a greater degree of hesitancy, a greater number of stress-related symptoms, as well as less hope (Samsi, 2008; Vickburg, 2000). Besides, in cancer patients, post-traumatic stress disorder is linked to a greater fear of recurrence (Leiderman-Cerniglia, 2002; Mehnert, Berg, Henrich, & Herschbach, 2009; Vickberg, 2003). Lee-Jones et al. (1997) theorized that patients who observed their cancer as an enduring fact, with destructive and irrepressible consequences, were likely to involve in additional emotional health fear and have a greater fear of cancer recurrence.

There is some evidence of the common-sense model in dealing with the fear of recurrence; patients who consider they are exposed to cancer are further emotionally at risk and show higher levels of fear of recurrence, while the adaptive coping mechanism is connected with lesser fear of recurrence (Llewellyn et al., 2008). Mahon, Cella & Donovan (1990) reported that more patients in their study found the reappearance of cancer to be more disappointing than the first time diagnosis and that they were less optimistic than they were at the stage of the first time of diagnosis. According to Carver et al. (2005), increased stress and social and sexual disorders are associated with a fear of recurrence. Patients practiced various coping strategies to minimize the harmful effects of cancer disease and decrease the level of fear of cancer recurrence. Patients applied various coping mechanisms, but there are slight research studies on the direct association between spirituality and fear of cancer recurrence. The outcomes of the two studies support a favorable connection between the two notions. Among prostate cancer patients' spirituality negatively predicted fear of recurrence and level of stress (Krupski et al., 2005). Samsi (2008) stated that spirituality added significantly to the prediction of recurrence in Caucasian and African American patients. In specific, a shortage of spirituality leads to death uncertainties, health fears, and womanhood suspicions connected to cancer remission. They further claimed that it is particularly significant to study the association between fear of recurrence and spirituality as it includes stressful existential

problems such as death and alterations in the household role. Breast cancer patients frequently utilized different spiritual practices to manage this chronic disease and its related socio-psychological stress.

A longitudinal study of 80 cancer patients indicated that using spiritual practices and coping reduced FCR (Stanton, Danoff-Burg & Huggins, 2002). Observing the guidelines of Islamic principles., Iranian females have strong faith that cancer is the willpower of God. Even though they freely accept this as a portion of their spiritual beliefs, their faith was reported to support them, and agree with their diagnosis and anticipation of a cure (Fasishi-Harandy et al., 2010). These women take benefits and depend on prayer to fight for FCR. A study of African American women noted that they were inclined to utilize prayers to support them and cope with the FCR (Thompson et al., 2006). This study is mainly interested in shed light on spirituality's role and spiritual practices in coping with cancer patients' fear of cancer recurrence.

Methods

This study adopts the quantitative correlational study design and data collected from the IRNUM cancer hospital, Peshawar, KP. This hospital was established in 1975, becoming the leading cancer institute to diagnose and treat cancer patients and deliver them comprehensive cures. Owing to the sensitive and complex nature of the study, the researcher was ethically bound not to misuse any findings. They were guaranteed the privacy of data taken from them and the pseudo-names of the respondents were used to protect their identities. For the quantitative data, a structured interview schedule was followed. The figure and flow of patients fluctuate from time to time, whereas a sample size greater than 30 and less than 500 is suggested by Roscoe (1975) for this kind of research. A sample of 200 cancer patients was chosen using the purposive sampling method because it was challenging to access and collect data from such a sensitive population. A demographic data sheet was developed for the selected respondents and the researcher visited personally the unit of the study to attain the basic and required information. Patients' level of spirituality was measured through Peterman et al. (2002) (Functional Assessment of Chronic Illness Therapy-Spiritual wellbeing scale (FACIT-Sp) consists of three subscales: Meaning, Peace, and Faith. While the Concerns About Recurrence Scale (CARS) was used to evaluate the fear of cancer recurrence among cancer patients. This scale has furthermore three subscales: fear of relapse, awareness, and intrusiveness (Vickberg, 2003). Response choices for both scales were based on a 5-point Likert scale that ranges from 0 to 4. The quantitative data was punched into the SPSS V.20 datasheet. Descriptive statistics (percentages and frequencies) were used to study the basic demographic information of the respondents. The descriptive analysis comprised means and standard deviations (SD) of the selected scales. Pearson's Correlation test was applied for measuring the relationship between spirituality and FCR in cancer patients.

Results

Table-1: Demographic Information of the Respondents (n=200)

Gender	F	%	Gender	F	%
Male	151	75.5	Female	49	24.5
Age Group			**Educational Level**		
18-28	35	17.5	Illiterate	19	14.2
29-38	34	17.0	Primary School	52	38.8
39-48	44	22.0	High School	37	27.6
49-58	70	35.0	Higher Secondary School	15	11.2
59-68	12	6.0	Bachelor	10	7.5
Above 68	5	2.5	Master	1	.7
Marital Status			**Structure of Family**		
Widower/widow	20	10.0	Nuclear family	37	18.5
Unmarried	116	58.0	Joint Family	84	42.0
Married	63	31.5	Extended family	79	39.5
Divorced	1	0.5	**(Field Data)**		

Table 01 shows the basic demographic data of the 200 selected respondents through a simple frequency and parentage. In the total selected sample size, 151 (75.5%) were men and 49 (24.5%) were women respondents. In the age group, the greater difference was observed as the majority of 70 (35.0%) respondents were from the 49-58 age group and only 5 (2.5%) participants were from the above 68 age group. In terms of marital status, 116 people (58%) were single, and only 1 (0.5%) were divorced respondents. In educational qualification, a significant number of 52 (38.8%) participants were primary level education and followed by 1 (0.7%) has master levels of education. Moreover, the family structure consisted of nuclear, joint, and extended families. Among the three categories, 84 (42%) were belonging to a joint family and 37 (18.5) were living in a nuclear family setting.

Table-2: Clinical Information of the Respondents (N=200)

Type of Cancer	F	%	Cancer Stage	F	%
Colon	16	8.0	Stage 0	13	6.5
Breast	23	11.5	Stage 1	16	8.0
Prostate	12	6.0	Stage 2	52	26.0
Lung	18	9.0	Stage 3	77	38.5
Throat	24	12.0	Stage 4	42	21.0
Lymphoma	13	6.5	**First Time Diagnosed**		
Myeloid	11	5.5	Yes	140	70.0
Liver	17	8.5	No	60	30.0
Gastric	15	7.5	**Family History of Cancer**		
Bladder	15	7.5	Yes	29	14.5
Leukemia	11	5.5	No	161	80.5
Kidney	10	5.0	Don't know	10	5.0
Brain/CNS	15	7.5	**(Field Data)**		

Table-02 points out the clinical characteristic of the participants, such as; type of cancer, cancer stage, time of diagnosis, and family history of cancer. Among the cancer types, throat and breast cancer encompass the majority of the samples with 24 (12%) and 23 (11.5 %) of the total sample size respectively, and kidney got the lowest 10 (5.0%) rank among the study

sample. While in cancer stages, 77 (38.5%) cancer patients were having stage-III cancer and only 13 (6.5%) was belonging to stage-0. Whereas, in response to the question is the first time diagnosed? Mostly 140 (70%) answered the question with a positive option and 60 (30%) mark the question with a negative option and shows that they were the victim of the cancer remission. Moreover, regarding the family history of cancer, 161 (80.5%) respondents believed that they have no family cancer history, 29 (14.5%) said that some of their family members had been diagnosed with various kinds of cancer, and only 10 (5%) don't know about their prior family cancer history.

Table-3: Levels and Spiritual Practices of the Respondents (n=200)

Spirituality level	F	%	Recitation of holy scripts	33	16.5
Low	14	7.0	Rosary	14	7.0
Medium	45	22.5	Spells	12	6.0
High	73	36.5	Amulet	13	6.5
Very High	68	34.0	Visit a Spiritual Healer	10	5.0
Spiritual / Religious Practices			Specific Quranic Verses	72	36.0
Petitionary prayer	21	10.5	Fasting	13	6.5
Pray	8	4.0	Holy water/ Zam Zam water	4	2.0

The above table shows the spiritual specifications of the study participants. Regarding the spiritual level, mostly 73 (36.5%) cancer patients cared about themselves and were highly spiritual, and 14 (7%) mark a low level of spirituality. Generally, the result indicates that cancer patients practice many types of spiritual therapies for recovery. Only 4 (2%) patients employed Holy water/Zam Zam water for healing, while 72 respondents (36%) practiced the recitation of particular Quranic scripts. The previous study also reported that patients become spiritual and perform various spiritual practices when they are diagnosed as cancer patients as it provides them the courage to cope with their cancer situations throughout treatment and survivorship (Puchalski, 2012).

Table-4: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Variables

Variables	M	SD	Variables	M	SD
Meaning	2.55	.825	Fear of Relapse	2.91	.766
Peace	2.65	.813	Awareness	2.51	.721
Faith	2.45	.861	Intrusiveness	2.33	.810
Spirituality	2.42	.596	**Fear of Cancer Recurrence**	2.60	.601

In the table-4 the study participants' perceived levels related to the study variables were assessed through means and standard deviations. To detect the different levels of selected variables and find their average means. The participants represent their attitude for each variable from 0 to 4 (*not at all* too *very much*) on a five-point Likert scale. The greater the score specifies the higher the level of variables and a lesser average score (M=1.99) indicates the lower level of the variable. In the above table, spirituality received the high (M=2.45) score, while, the sub-scales, such as meaning (M=2.55), peace (M=2.65), and faith (M=2.45) also got a higher mean score respectively. It denotes that patients have a higher score for overall spirituality and its subscales. While the Burt, (2010) study result shows that patients with cancer have a great spiritual level and rely on spirituality/spiritual healing practices due to the chronic condition of illness.

The average FCR score for the patients was very high (M=2.60), which demonstrates that cancer patients have a greater fear of the disease returning. The sub-scales such as fear of

relapse got (M=2.91), awareness (M=2.51) and intrusiveness got (M=2.33) mean scores. These findings suggest that FCR is one of the main concerns that is faced by cancer patients from diagnosis till to the end of life and further produces several health issues. While the former study by Simard et al. (2013) indicated that up to 79% of cancer patients considered FCR to be the most common fear among cancer patients during and after treatment phases.

Table -5: Correlations between Independent and Dependent Variables

I. Variable	D. Variable	r	p
Spirituality	Fear of Relapse	-0.651	.000
	Awareness	0.518	.189
	Intrusiveness	0.485	.003
	Fear of Cancer Recurrence	-0.532	.000

Table-5 indicates the direction and degree of the relationship between the variables. The results indicate that spirituality has a substantial negative connection (r=-0.65; p=.000) with fear of relapse and a significant positive correlation (r=0.485; p=.000) with intrusiveness. While awareness and spirituality had a weak correlation (r=0.518; p=.189), respectively. Further, the outcomes also show that the independent variable has a negative and significant relationship (r= -0.532; p=.000) with FCR in patients.   The previous study by Koral & Cirak (2021) also indicated that spirituality is a mediating factor and a negative correlation was observed between spirituality and FCR (β=-0.22, P=0.04). Furthermore, the study by He, Li & Hong (2020) showed that spirituality is a negative predictor for FCR among cancer patients.

Discussion

Cancer diagnosis is a serious and ongoing problem that has an impact on the patient's entire health both during and after treatment. A patient's health improvement through various and efficient methods is one of the main goals of cancer treatment. The current study looked into how spirituality affected cancer patients' fear of recurrence of the disease. According to the study's findings, 36% of cancer patients were high and 34% of very high spiritual patients expressed a belief in spirituality. Additionally, (36%) of patients regularly recited sacred Quranic verses, and (10)% of respondents prayed for health. They considered spiritual practices as a positive source of strength and healing for a patient. The univariate analysis reveals that the FCR received a higher mean score overall (M=2.60), indicating that it is one of the most important issues for patients who have been diagnosed with cancer. The correlation results reveal that spirituality significantly and negatively influences cancer patients' overall fear of cancer recurrence (r= -0.532; p=.000). Spirituality is constantly associated with lesser fear of cancer recurrence in the present study as well as previously conducted studies. A research of 551 Caucasian cancer patients noted that 59% of the respondents had FCR, but those patients who considered themselves as very much spiritual had a lesser amount of FCR (Cannon et al., 2011). Likewise, in an empirical study with 130 breast cancer patients, Schreiber (2011) reported that belief in God's existence was related to a low level of FCR. The results further display that spirituality has a negative and significant correlation (r= -0.651; p= .000) with fear of relapse and a positive significant relationship (r= 0.485; p= .003) with intrusiveness. Krupski et al. (2005) conducted a research study on prostate cancer patients and found that patients' spirituality negatively predicted fear of recurrence and the degree of anxiety associated with the fear. Furthermore, the same result was also found in a study by Ashing-Giwa (2004) which demonstrates that African American women rely on their spiritual beliefs to help them deal with the FCR. Moreover, several other

studies reported that spiritual coping was considerably connected with lower FCR (Mirabeau-Beale et al., 2009; Matulonis et al., 2008; Schreiber, 2011).

Conclusion

The impact of spirituality on cancer patients' fear of cancer recurrence was assessed and summarised in this study. The findings demonstrate that cancer patients engaged in a variety of unconventional spiritual practices to improve their health and reduce their fear of cancer recurrence. The study found that spirituality plays a significant role in cancer patients' FCR and to overcome their health-related problems attached to the disease and increasing their well-being. Therefore, this study recommends that healthcare professionals need to understand the importance of spirituality as well as other allied healthcare strategies as an integral coping therapy and provide holistic care to minimize cancer patients FCR.

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Primordial Resonance of the Self: A Jungian Analysis of Individuation in John Keats' Poetry

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Abstract

This paper offers a Jungian psychoanalytic analysis of John Keats' odes, exploring how they symbolically represent the psychic growth of the poetic persona. Drawing on key concepts in Jungian theory such as the collective unconscious, archetypes, and individuation, the study demonstrates the relevance of Jungian theory to literary analysis. In particular, it focuses on the concept of primordial resonance and its connection to psychic individuation, and discusses the importance of psychic growth for both the individual and society. Through a close reading of Keats' odes, the paper illustrates how they reflect the process of psychic individuation, showing the poet's own journey towards self-realization and the realization of collective consciousness. The odes' themes and imagery are interpreted in light of Jungian concepts, revealing how they represent the integration of conscious and unconscious elements of the psyche. The paper concludes that Keats' odes provide valuable insights into the concept of psychic individuation and the potential for growth and transformation in both the individual and society.

Keywords: poetic persona, ode, archetype, symbolism, romantic poetry, Jungian psychoanalysis, individuation, self-realization, unconscious mind, integration

Introduction

Keats aimed to convey the beauty of the world and reflect on the fleeting nature of life through his poetry. His imagery is evocative, transporting readers to the landscapes and emotions he describes. In his odes, he elevates everyday objects and experiences to a transcendent level, and his exploration of themes such as love and mortality is poignant and insightful. Keats thrived in the Romantic era, a movement in English literature known for its emphasis on emotions, nature, and individualism. He is renowned for his exquisite poetry that vividly captures the essence of the human experience. In particular, his odes are celebrated for their sensory language and their exploration of universal themes (Curran, 2017; Woodman & Faflak, 2005). Keats' poetry has been extensively analyzed, with his odes praised for their aesthetic appeal and symbolic representation of aspects of the human psyche (Aske, 2005; Giovanelli, 2013; Khan, 2021; Mishra, 2011). They are considered some of the greatest works in the English language, influencing a number of poets who came after him. This article analyzes the psychic growth of the poetic persona in Keats' odes using Jungian analytical psychology, focusing on three symbolically present stages of development: adolescence, adulthood, and spiritual maturity. Through this analysis, the article explores the themes of growth, self-discovery, and individuation in Keats' poetry, highlighting its psychological depth and complexity.

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Jungian analytical psychology is a psychological approach developed by the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung that emphasizes the study of the unconscious mind and its influence on conscious behavior (Jung, 1966, 1976, 2014). This approach has found wide application in the analysis of literary texts, providing deeper meanings and insights into the human psyche (Dobson, 2005). A key feature of Jungian analytical psychology in literary analysis is the concept of archetypes. Archetypes are universal patterns or symbols deeply embedded in the human psyche that can be found across cultures (Leigh, 2011). Characters, themes, and motifs in literary texts can manifest these archetypes, and by identifying and analyzing them, literary analysts can gain a greater understanding of the psychological underpinnings of a particular work (Jung, 1966).

Jungian analytical psychology, developed by Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung, is an approach that emphasizes the study of the unconscious mind and its impact on conscious behavior (Jung, 1966, 1976, 2014). This method has been applied extensively in literary analysis to reveal deeper meanings and insights into the human psyche (Dobson, 2005). One key element of Jungian analytical psychology in literary analysis is the use of archetypes. These universal patterns or symbols are found across cultures and deeply ingrained in the human psyche (Leigh, 2011). Literary analysts can identify and analyze these archetypes, which can manifest in characters, themes, and motifs in literary texts, to gain a better understanding of the psychological foundations of a particular work (Jung, 1966).

Another essential aspect of Jungian analytical psychology in literary analysis is the focus on the personal and collective unconscious. According to Jung (2014), the personal unconscious is made up of repressed memories and experiences, while the collective unconscious contains archetypes and symbols that are shared across cultures and periods. Examining these aspects of the unconscious can provide literary analysts with insights into the motivations and behaviors of characters in a text, as well as the wider cultural context in which the work was created. Jungian analytical psychology also emphasizes the significance of dreams and symbolism in the human psyche (Wali, 2011). Dreams and symbols frequently offer clues to unconscious desires, fears, and motivations, and literary analysts can use this information to gain a deeper understanding of the themes and symbolism in a work of literature.

The Jungian analytical approach to literary analysis posits that a literary work is a reflection of the author's psyche and personal experiences. Through this lens, literary analysts can gain insights into the author's unconscious mind, including their beliefs, fears, desires, and experiences (Dobson, 2005). For example, an analysis of a character's shadow side can reveal the author's own unresolved issues with their own shadow. The examination of symbols and archetypes can also expose the author's personal experiences and belief systems. This approach can also aid readers in understanding the author's motivations for writing a particular work and the themes they explore. By analyzing the author's psyche and personal experiences, readers can gain a deeper appreciation for the work's complexity and the author's intentions (Jung, 1959). Thus, Jungian analytical psychology offers a rich and intricate framework for analyzing literary texts, which provides insights into the deeper psychological underpinnings of a work and its cultural context. By utilizing this approach, literary analysts can gain a greater appreciation for the complexities of literature and the human psyche.

Objectives and research questions

The current paper applies Jungian psychoanalytic theory to analyze John Keats' odes and explore the theme of individuation. By examining the symbolic representations of the poetic persona's psychic growth, the study investigates the contribution of Jungian analytical psychology to our understanding of Keats' work. The objectives of the study are to analyze the role of Jungian theory in understanding the persona's growth, the symbolic representation

of its development stages, and the relevance of Jungian psychoanalytic theory to the analysis of literary devices in Keats' poetry. The paper argues that Keats' poems depict the journey of self-discovery and integration of the unconscious into the conscious mind. By analyzing Keats' use of archetypes, symbols, and myths, this paper demonstrates the relevance of Jungian psychoanalytic theory to literary analysis and shows how Keats' poetry reflects the universal human experience of individuation. More specifically, the paper seeks to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How does Jungian analytical psychology contribute to our understanding of the poetic persona's psychic growth in Keats' odes?

RQ2: How does Keats symbolically represent the stages of development (adolescence, adulthood, and spiritual maturity) in his odes, and how do they relate to the themes of growth, self-discovery, and individuation?

RQ3: In what ways is Jungian psychoanalytic theory relevant to the analysis of literary devices in Keats' poetry?

Literature Review

Carl Jung's psychoanalytic theory is based on the collective unconscious, which is a reservoir of shared, inherited psychological material that underlies the personal unconscious. It comprises archetypes, which are universal patterns or symbols that appear in various cultural and religious traditions. Archetypes reflect innate human experiences, desires, and fears, and can be accessed through dreams, myths, and symbols. The concept of the collective unconscious and archetypes has been extensively discussed in literature (Dobson, 2005; Faflak, 2008; von Franz, 1995; Wali, 2011). Jung believed that the collective unconscious is present in all humans, regardless of cultural or individual differences (Jung, 1959, 1971, 2014). This concept is applied in various fields, including literature, to analyze symbolism and deeper meaning in works of art. Archetypes in literature convey universal themes and experiences that readers can recognize (Frye, 2020). Jungian analysis is often used in literary criticism to explore the psychological depth and inner workings of the human mind (Dawson, 2008; Khan, 2021; Leigh, 2011). Literary scholars can gain insight into the symbolic and psychological elements of literary works and better understand their meaning and significance by drawing on Jung's theory.

Jung's theory posits that the human psyche contains inherent patterns of thought and behavior that are shared across cultures and generations, known as archetypes. These archetypes can be seen as psychic DNA that shapes our individual experiences, rooted in the collective unconscious. Lawson (2018) argues that this concept of the collective unconscious complements Darwin's theory of evolution, as a form of evolutionary inheritance that shapes our psyche over time. Jung's concept of the archetype is not solely individualistic but can also help us understand how cultural and historical factors shape the human psyche. As Stevens (2015) argues, this perspective can shed light on the relationship between biology and culture and inform contemporary discussions of consciousness, particularly regarding the conscious and unconscious aspects of the mind. By recognizing the importance of the unconscious in shaping conscious experience, we can gain a more complete understanding of the workings of the human mind.

A central concept in Jungian theory is individuation, the process of psychological maturation in which an individual integrates various aspects of their psyche, and develops a sense of wholeness and authenticity. Individuation is often depicted as a journey or a quest, wherein the individual confronts and integrates their unconscious, acknowledges their shadow aspects (i.e., repressed or unacknowledged aspects of the self), and attains access to their core psyche (Jung, 1978). Jung's concept of individuation has been widely researched

and implemented in various disciplines, such as psychology (Jacoby, 2016), literature (Faflak, 2008; Jackson, 2008), and spirituality (Stein, 2019). In the field of psychology, scholars have examined the role of individuation in mental health and well-being. For instance, studies have demonstrated that individuals who have undergone the process of individuation report greater life satisfaction, resilience, and psychological flexibility (Clark, 2006).

Jung believed that literature is a valuable source of archetypal material since it often taps into the collective unconscious and expresses universal human experiences (Jung, 1966, 2002). The Jungian theory has been widely used in literary analysis to explore the symbolism, motifs, and themes that reflect fundamental human experiences, desires, and anxieties. Jungian analysts assert that poetry, like dreams, reveals the collective unconscious and enables access to archetypal images and symbols that represent universal psychological patterns (Lawson, 2008). Therefore, the use of Jungian theory in poetry analysis involves interpreting the symbols and images in the poem as representations of archetypes, such as the hero, the mother, or the shadow, which can provide insights into both the poet's psyche and the collective human psyche (Richardson, 2001).

Jungian analysis has been applied to various romantic poets, including William Wordsworth and S. T. Coleridge. Analysts have used Jungian archetypal analysis to examine Wordsworth's poetry and argue that it liberates readers from their rigid personas by encouraging them to look beyond societal expectations and embrace their individuality (Ur Rehman, 2011). This highlights the importance of Wordsworth's poetry in shaping a more open and accepting society. Similarly, Shah and Khattak (2016) have analyzed Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" through the lens of Jungian psychoanalytic theory. The authors suggest that the poem explores the deep layers of the human psyche by using archetypes, symbols, and dreams that resonate with Jung's theory of the collective unconscious. They claim that the poem's dream-like quality and its use of mythical figures and symbols create an atmosphere that connects the reader to the unconscious, allowing for a more profound exploration of the psyche. Through this analysis, the authors reveal the psychological themes and insights into the human condition that the poem conveys.

Jungian analysis is highly relevant to poetry since it provides a theoretical framework for comprehending the symbolic language of poetry. Fard (2016) asserts that Jung's theory of the collective unconscious and archetypes can aid in explaining the universal symbols and motifs found in literature. The poetic persona, similar to the hero in myths, is on a journey of self-discovery and individuation, and Jungian analysis can assist in unraveling the psychological themes of poetry. By examining the symbols and archetypes present in poetry, one can gain insight into the poet's inner world and how their psyche is reflected in their art. Therefore, Jungian theory can provide a comprehensive framework that aids in interpreting the themes, symbolism, and imagery employed in Keats' poetry.

Keats' odes are often viewed as representations of his individuation process. Faflak (2008) contends that questions of mortality, beauty, and self-identity are central themes in Keats' poetry as he grapples with issues of mortality and the nature of the self. Jungian analysis can offer a rich perspective for comprehending the symbolism and imagery in Keats' poetry, particularly in how the odes depict the development of the poetic persona as he integrates his unconscious and achieves a greater sense of wholeness. The odes can also be viewed as representations of archetypal experiences, such as the pursuit of beauty and the confrontation with mortality, which can deeply resonate with readers on a psychological level.

The above review suggests that the application of Jungian psychoanalytic theory to literary analysis has been fruitful, providing insights into the symbolic patterns and

archetypes in literature, and shedding light on the creative process and the role of the unconscious in artistic expression. Keats' odes offer a rich opportunity for this type of analysis, as they contain themes and imagery that resonate with Jungian concepts of individuation and the collective unconscious.

Methodology

Primordial resonance refers to the intrinsic connection that human beings have with the collective unconscious, which is a repository of all human experience and knowledge deeply rooted in the human psyche (Jung, 1959, 1976, 1978). This connection enables individuals to access a deeper level of consciousness, leading to the process of psychic individuation. Psychic individuation involves integrating the unconscious and conscious mind, leading to the development of a unique and fully realized individual (Jacoby, 2016). According to Jung, psychic growth is crucial for leading a fulfilling life and contributing to society (Jung, 1978). He suggested that individuals who can integrate their unconscious and conscious minds can better deal with life's challenges and derive meaning from their experiences. Moreover, individuals who have undergone the process of psychic individuation are more likely to live an authentic and genuine life (Smith, 1990). The Jungian theory provides a framework for individuals to develop a deeper understanding of themselves, their place in the world, and enrich their appreciation of literary works.

The current article combines the above Jungian archetypal analysis with close textual reading. Close textual reading is a method of literary analysis that involves a detailed examination of the language, structure, and themes of a text to uncover the underlying meanings and messages conveyed by the author through their use of literary devices (Culler, 2010; Smith, 2016). In this article, close textual reading and analysis are employed to explicate Keats' poetry by examining the language, imagery, and symbolism used in his odes. This analysis provides insight into the unconscious processes that underlie psychic growth and the stages of the individuation process represented by Keats in his odes. The article demonstrates the value of Jungian psychoanalytic theory for literary analysis and sheds light on the significance of psychic growth for individuals and society.

Findings and Discussion

This section provides a brief explanation of the three stages of psychological development that are revealed through a symbolic reading of the growth of persona in Keatsian odes. These stages are discussed in greater detail in subsequent sections of the findings. The first stage of adolescence is exemplified in the two odes, "Indolence" and "Psyche". The analysis of "Indolence" reveals that the persona is content in the numbness of indolence on a summer day and is not drawn to imaginative endeavors such as love and poetry by the "shadowy figures." The persona encounters projections of the unconscious in the three robed figures, but it is unreceptive to their messages regarding the need for productive interaction with the unconscious. In contrast, the analysis of "Psyche" demonstrates that the persona moves from relishing numbness to reveling in the joys of creative imagination. It encounters the feminine aspect of the unconscious in the form of the Greek goddess Psyche. The persona worships Psyche as a "goddess" by acting as her priest but does not yet form a complementary relationship with this aspect of itself. The integration of psychic polarities, which is necessary for the process of individuation, is a lifelong journey. In the world of dreams, fantasy, and imagination, the anima or animus mediates a range of possibilities, from the body's sexuality and materiality to the spirit's intimations of the absolute:

In Jungian theory, the lifelong process of individuation requires the resolution and integration of polar aspects of the psyche. In the dialectic, the animus or the anima presents to the woman or the man aspects which at first she or he experiences, or has been acculturated to experience, as "other," but which for that very reason must be integrated into a developing self-identity. In the life of dreams, fantasy, and imagination the anima or animus comes to mediate the whole gamut of possibilities, from the body's sexuality and materiality to the spirits' intimations of the absolute (Sugg, 1992, p. 377)

The second stage of psychic growth, which is adulthood, is related to the "Nightingale" ode. In this ode, the persona establishes a deeper and more rewarding reciprocal connection with the unconscious through the exercise of active imagination. The persona is flexible enough to access the dark aspects of the self, the unconscious, through its unification with the "immortal bird," singing under the "Queen-Moon" in "some melodious plot / Of beechen green, and shadows numberless" (lines 8-9). However, the persona's refusal to accept the darker aspects of life suggests a lack of maturity.

In the third stage of spiritual attainment, the development is demonstrated through the "Melancholy" ode in terms of the acceptance and integration of the dualities of life. In "Melancholy," the persona declares that "in the very temple of Delight/Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine" (ll. 25-26), pointing towards the ideal of achieving a state of assimilation of psychic polarities, leading to an integrated self-attainment of wholeness where joy coexists with melancholy. Wali (2011, p. 42) explains that the image of "temple" suggests a place where we can let go of our everyday worries, unite with ourselves, and find new energy and possibilities for life. The persona's further development occurs in the "Ode to Autumn" as it has achieved wholeness and the ability to accept life as it is. The cyclic recurrence of seasons teaches the persona to embrace the natural cycle of life, symbolically revealing its psychic growth in the ode. The subsequent sections provide a more detailed examination of how the persona in Keatsian odes undergoes a transformation that occurs in three distinct stages of development, ultimately culminating in its readiness for individuation and a life of harmony between psychic polarities.

Three Stages of Psychological Development

Adolescence: "Indolence" and "Psyche"

In the first stage of psychic development, the persona in "Indolence" represents the ego, the conscious aspect of the psyche, which dissociates itself from the unconscious represented by the figures of Love, Ambition, and Poesy. In this ode, the persona disconnects from meaningful experiences of the inner and outer world. Its fantasy world exists solely for heedless pleasure, and it refuses to recognize the complementary opposite.

> For Poesy! – no, she has not a joy,
> At least for me, so sweet as drowsy noons,
> And evenings steep'd in honied indolence;
> O, for an age so shelter'd from annoy,
> That I may never know how change the moons,
> Or hear the voice of busy common sense! (ll. 35-40)

The final two lines of the "Psyche" ode represent the opposing aspects of the psyche: the conscious and unconscious. The moon is a common symbol for the feminine, representing the anima/unconscious, while "common sense" symbolizes reason, representing the conscious aspect of the psyche. In this ode, the persona ignores both aspects of its psyche. The number three is significant in this ode, as it is considered a holy number associated with

superhuman power. The three visits of the figures suggest spiritual development and emphasize the persona's need to contemplate the messages coming from the unconscious. However, the persona rejects the spirits of love, ambition, and poetry in favor of "honied indolence," which symbolizes a state of withdrawal from life into a self-created reality where only the pleasurable aspects of life are experienced.

The persona in "Psyche" avoids confronting the figures of love, ambition, and poetry as they represent aspects of life that require it to face reality and feel deeply. However, the persona is hesitant to do so as it fears death, decay, and pain. The three figures visit the persona three times to try and awaken it from its state of lethargy, but the persona chooses to remain in a state of indolence. The three visits symbolize the importance of paying attention to messages from the unconscious. The persona's reluctance to engage with these figures is a reflection of its preference for a life of ease rather than facing the realities of life:

> So, ye three ghosts, adieu! Ye cannot raise
> My head cool-bedded in the flowery grass;…
> Fade softly from my eyes, and be once more
> In masque-like figures on the dreary urn;
> Farewell! I yet have visions for the night,
> And for the day faint visions, there is store. (ll. 51, 52, 55—58)

The persona's declaration that it will not be moved by inner voices from the "flowery grass" is later contradicted in "Nightingale" and "Melancholy," where it confronts the paradoxes of life. Symbolically, the "masque-like figures on a dreary urn" foreshadows the persona's imaginative engagement with the Grecian urn in the "Ode on a Grecian Urn." The final two lines summarize the theme of the odes, using the metaphors of "visions for the night" and "faint visions" for the day.

Keatsian odes aim to unify opposites in the physical and mental worlds. This is often expressed through metaphors of light and shade in subsequent odes. In "Indolence," the persona is disconnected from significant experiences in the inner and outer worlds due to fear of death, decay, pain, and end. The persona's refusal to acknowledge the messages from the unconscious, represented by the three figures, highlights the need to reflect on them. In "Ode to Psyche," the poem demonstrates a transformation of the persona from one of indolence and sensory numbness to one of imaginative creativity and romantic love. The persona's journey into the forest represents a journey into the unconscious aspects of the self, which have been shrouded in mystery and darkness.

> I wander'd in a forest thoughtlessly,
> And, on the sudden, fainting with surprise,
> Saw two fair creatures, couched side by side
> In deepest grass… (ll. 7-10)

The forest symbolizes the unconscious and the female principle or the Great Mother. The discovery of Psyche and Eros in the mid-forest can be interpreted symbolically as the contra-sexual archetypes of anima and animus, representing the psychic attraction of the conscious to the unconscious. Cirlot (2002) explains the symbolic significance of forest:

> Forrest's symbolism is complex, but it is connected at all levels with the symbolism of the female principle or the Great Mother… Since the female principle is identified with the unconscious in Man, it follows that the forest is also a symbol of the unconscious. It is for this reason that Jung maintains that the sylvan terrors that figure so prominently in children's tales symbolize the

perilous aspects of the unconscious, that is, its tendency to devour or obscure
the reason (2002, p. 112)

In the latter part of the ode, the persona sings a hymn that praises love and creative imagination through the metaphor of the myth of Psyche and Eros. The persona commits itself to imaginative creation and integration of seemingly opposite aspects of the psyche to better integrate the self. It desires to build a temple in the "untrodden region" of the mind where "branched thoughts" can praise the goddess Psyche, showing greater confidence in accessing the unconscious. The paradox of "pleasant pain" alludes to the persona's ability to synthesize opposing aspects of the psyche, leading to their exploration and integration in later odes such as "Nightingale," "Melancholy," and "Autumn."

In Jungian psychology, psychological wholeness involves integrating oppositions such as the conscious and unconscious, masculine and feminine, mental and physical, and old and new. Jungian therapy aims to achieve this integration through a conjunction of opposites, rather than a fusion. The unconscious prompts the ego to become aware of these irreconciled oppositions and integrate them. The "Ode to Psyche" embodies this transformation of the poetic persona and desire for integration and wholeness through the interpretation of its symbols and imagery.

Adulthood: "Nightingale"

The persona's psychological state in "Indolence" and "Psyche" is that of an adolescent stage, making lopsided projections. The persona engages with the internal world in ways that lack reciprocity. In "Indolence," the persona refuses to engage the shadowy figures, while in "Psyche," it offers itself as a worshiper to Psyche. The persona either runs away from authentic experiences or relishes in pleasure without acknowledging the darker side of life. In "Nightingale" depicts the persona's journey to the realm of the "immortal bird" where the persona experiences a profound sense of drowsy numbness, leading to an exploration of the paradoxical aspects of human life and creative endeavors. The bird's song is of eternal beauty in a world of embalmed darkness, in contrast to the world of the persona where pain and transitory nature are prevalent. The more it discovers about the dark side of the mind, the greater its awareness of darkness in the outside world. Through its imaginative union with the "immortal bird," the persona wishes to fade away and forget the weariness and fever in the outside world: "My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains/My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk" (ll. 1-2). Unlike in "Psyche," where the persona is oblivious to the darker aspects of the mind while worshiping the beauty of Psyche, the unification with the nightingale and its world of "embalmed darkness" brings a keen awareness of the principle of pleasure complemented with the principle of pain. The bird's song is of eternal beauty in a world of "embalmed darkness," which is in contrast to the world of the persona, where "palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs, / Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies" (ll. 25,26).

The persona is keenly aware of the principle of pain and the transitory nature of the realm of temporal existence, wishing to join the sweet-scented world of the bird, under the throne of "Queen Moon." The symbolic association of the bird with darkness and the Moon is loaded with meaning. Explaining the psychic symbolism of the complementary symbols of the moon and the Sun, Stewart (1998) states:

The Moon's light is soft and gentle and is equated with the feeling function,
the collective unconscious and imagination. These qualities are in contrast to
the burning heat of the Sun, which relates to intellect and to thinking. The light
of the Moon reveals the world of stars that are hidden by the light of the Sun;

creatures emerge in the moonlight that lies hidden during the light of day, in much the same way as hidden parts of us are revealed through imagination that the light of the Ego would blot out. (p. 227)

The darkness of unknown regions is accessed where the moon rules and the nightingale sings an eternal song of surpassing beauty, heard by countless generations of men. The persona is inspired to explore the paradoxical aspects of human life and creative endeavors while the bird is "pouring forth [its] soul abroad."

> The voice I hear this passing night was heard
> In ancient days by emperor and clown…
> The same that oft-times hath
> Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
> Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn. (ll. 63, 64, 68—60)

The aforementioned lines imbue a simple avian melody with a mythical quality by endowing it with the antiquity of ages, thereby imparting a sense of genuineness and potency. The speaker no longer perceives the bird or its song as mundane or commonplace. Instead, the very same melody is elevated to a symbolic representation of the unknown facet of the psyche, namely the unconscious. This is achieved by invoking references to mythology and antiquity, as well as by using a metaphor of treacherous waters to augment the symbolic image of the nightingale. Through this ode, the speaker engages with the totality of existence - both its attractive and repulsive facets. However, the speaker is not yet equipped to reconcile the opposing polarities within his/her own self, or in the external world, where pleasure/pain, beauty/ugliness, and light/darkness coexist inextricably. The word "forlorn" marks the termination of the speaker's connection with the bird. Although the experience is fulfilling in itself, it remains transient, and the speaker is unable to derive any lasting fulfillment in the realm of mortals to which he/she inevitably returns.

Spiritual Attainment: "Melancholy" and "To Autumn"

The poem "Melancholy" depicts the persona's understanding of the paradoxical nature of reality, accepting pleasure and pain as inseparable. The inevitability of suffering and loss is a natural law that reinforces this realization, as seen in other odes such as "Indolence" and "Nightingale." The persona urges those who suffer from melancholy not to seek solace in Lethe or poisonous substances, but to embrace their anguish and recognize its role in enriching their experience of the world. Unlike the other odes, "Melancholy" is written in an imperative tone, warning against seeking numbness and advocating for the preservation of the "wakeful anguish of the soul." The persona now finds wisdom in indulging neither in numbness nor in rapturous "drowsy numbness" but in keeping the wakeful anguish alive by staying open to it and finding pleasure in the beauty of nature and the beloved.

The rose in the poem is a powerful symbol of beauty, tenderness, charm, and the fragrant aspects of life. It also symbolizes the mandala, representing the quest for the attainment of the center of being (the self) through mandala contemplation. The rainbow symbolizes unity behind apparent diversity, with its seven colors representing shades of white. The persona's integrative vision leads to the realization that beauty and decay originate from the same oneness, and they are two sides of the same coin. This realization can be interpreted as a process of psychic maturity, where the persona recognizes the polarities inherent in its own nature which we may describe in Jungian terms as conscious/unconscious, animus/anima, introversion/extroversion. Through inner illumination, it gains a clearer perspective of the outer reality, where the principle of duality is apparent.

The temple of Delight, mentioned at the end of the stanza, has veiled Melancholy's sovran shrine, which is seen only by the one whose tongue can burst joy's grape against his palate fine:

> Ay, in the very temple of Delight
> Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
> Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue
> Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine (ll. 25—28).

The stanza represents the persona's spiritual growth, enabling it to experience both joy and sorrow equally. The imagery depicts the persona's journey towards a mature perspective on life, and the symbolism of eating grapes of experience alludes to the enriched realization of the persona about life's travails along with its pleasures. In contrast to the adolescent stage of blindly idealizing reality and projecting its fantasies onto the goddess Psyche in "Psyche," the persona has progressed through personal experience. It now devotes itself to "Melancholy" and recognizes the paradoxical duality of life and the human mind, as depicted in the metaphor of Melancholy's shrine located "in the very temple of Delight."

"To Autumn" presents a simple and holistic metaphor of the internal process of psychic maturity. Unlike other works by the same persona, this poem doesn't rely on far-off places or veiled melancholy to convey its message. Instead, the persona uses the natural world, specifically the autumn season, to create its own mythology of the human psyche. According to Jung (1989), autumn is a symbolic representation of old age and its associated psychological processes.

> …there is something sunlike within us, and to speak of the morning and spring, of the evening and autumn of life is not mere sentimental jargon. We thus give expression to psychological truths and, even more, to physiological facts, for the reversal of the sun at noon changes even bodily characteristics. (p. 31)

"To Autumn" is different from earlier odes as it presents a persona who has achieved a sense of calm and acceptance rather than restlessness and complaints. The persona now appreciates life as it is and incorporates themes from earlier odes into a new mythological structure built around the autumn. The autumn is depicted as a mythic man, whose hair is lifted by the wind while sitting on a granary floor, reflecting the peaceful acceptance of the persona.

In the odes, autumn represents the culmination of the seasonal cycle, following the spring of "Indolence," "Psyche," and "Nightingale." Unlike the previous odes, the persona in "To Autumn" accepts life as it is, without restlessness or mourning. The personification of Autumn as a patient man at ease with nature contrasts with the persona's searching mind in previous odes. Autumn's calm demeanor and attributes suggest the archetype of The Wise Old Man, which represents psychic integration and assimilation of spiritual guidance. The persona's growth and maturity are reflected in the character of autumn in the ode. Autumn is portrayed as a Wise Old Man who has gained wisdom through observing nature's cyclical patterns. The persona, identifying with autumn, has also gained wisdom through its own experiences. The qualities attributed to autumn, such as patient observation, are metaphors for the persona's own psychic growth. Dunne explains the symbols of The Wise Old Man from a Jungian perspective:

> In a woman's dreams, the Self can be personified in female form as a priestess, earth mother, or goddess of love; in a man's it appears as a male guru, wise old man, or spirit of nature. This psychic image of the transcendent

> can also be Cosmic Man, a divine or royal couple, a person that is both male
> and female, young and old, or an animal, crystal, round stone, or mandala.
> Whatever the symbol, its meaning is wholeness, totality. (p. 89)

The ode to autumn is a celebration of life's cyclical nature and personal growth. The cyder-press image reminds the persona of the importance of hard work and gathering resources for the future. The falling leaves represent the shedding of old habits and beliefs to embrace new experiences. The persona learns from the wise old man of autumn and is encouraged to let go of old patterns and embrace change to continue growing.

Conclusion

The findings of this study have significant implications for our understanding of Keats' odes and the relevance of Jungian psychoanalytic theory. Keats' odes demonstrate his deep understanding of the human psyche, as revealed by his use of symbols and metaphors that reflect his familiarity with Jungian psychoanalytic concepts. Through a Jungian lens, we gain a better understanding of the persona's development as a symbolic representation of psychic growth. This study also highlights the value of Jungian psychoanalytic theory in literary analysis. By recognizing patterns of symbols and metaphors, which can reveal the psychological aspects of literary works, we can identify underlying themes and better understand a work's psychological nuances. Jung's theory of the collective unconscious and archetypes can significantly illuminate our understanding of literary works, providing insights into the unconscious motivations of characters and authors, as well as the broader cultural context in which the work was created.

The current study demonstrates that applying Jungian theory can enhance our understanding of literary works and their underlying psychological themes. Faflak (2009) examines the intersection of Romanticism and psychoanalysis, arguing that the Romantics were not only precursors to psychoanalysis but also explored the same psychological themes and tensions. As such, Romantic literature provides a unique opportunity to study the human psyche, as Romanticism and psychoanalysis share a deep interest in the irrational, the unconscious, and the subjective. By analyzing the works of Romantic poets such as William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge through a psychoanalytic lens, it becomes apparent that their use of language, symbolism, and imagery conveys psychological states and the process of psychic maturation. In this sense, Romanticism challenged the Enlightenment's emphasis on rationality and objectivity and paved the way for psychoanalytic theory by exploring the unconscious and the irrational.

Although psychoanalytic theory can offer valuable insights into literary works, it is crucial to recognize that literature is a complex and multifaceted art form. The risk of reducing literature to a mere expression of psychological themes must be acknowledged. While psychoanalytic theory can be a useful tool in analyzing literature, it should not be the only approach used to approach literary works. Literary works are composed of various elements, including historical, cultural, and social contexts, which are fundamental to their interpretation. Additionally, there are limitations to applying psychoanalysis to literary works. Critics argue that reducing literature to mere psychological themes oversimplifies complex works of art. Furthermore, the application of psychoanalytic theory to literature can be highly subjective since it depends on the analyst's interpretation of the text. It is essential to approach the application of psychoanalytic theory to literature with caution and recognize its limitations. While it can provide valuable insights, it should not be the only method used in literary analysis. Instead, it should be used in conjunction with other approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of literary works.

This study suggests several areas for future research in the field of literary analysis. Firstly, researchers could investigate the use of Jungian theory in the analysis of literary works beyond Keats' odes. This approach could potentially provide insights into the underlying psychological themes and symbolism present in various works of literature. Secondly, future research could focus on applying Jungian theory to the works of other poets and writers of the Romantic period. Finally, future studies could examine the psychological effects of reading and analyzing literature through the lens of Jungian theory. This could involve investigating the impact of such an analysis on readers' understanding of the text, emotional response, and overall well-being.

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Exploring Typology of Operant Resources at Actor-to-Actor Level in Microfinance Institutions: The Service-Dominant Logic View

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Abstract

The multidisciplinary theories define resources with a narrow view of inclusivity at different strategic levels. Mainly, it lacks contextuality, an emerging property of resources in strategic management and marketing in the Industry 4.0 era. This study addresses the gap in multidisciplinary theories by exploring contextual resources at the actor-to-actor level in microfinance institutions (MFIs) to cope with the challenges of Industry 4.0-powered service experiences. The Service-Dominant Logic metatheoretical framework explores the contextuality of operant resources, including erudite personnel, customer-actor proficiency, information gateways, humane and social conduct, digital conduct, adherence, and righteous and divine ideology. The qualitative Gioia methodology was adopted to explore the typology of contextual operant resources at actor-to-actor level while interviewing 25 industry experts. These resources can be treated as potential resources for MFIs' actors, offering a new frame of reference for devising engaging service strategies. The analytical exercise of zooming in on the contextual operant resources of MFIs enables scholars and practitioners to adopt a multi-perspective view of contextual operant resources.

Keywords: Service-Dominant Logic, Context, Operant resources, Microfinance Institutions, Actor-to-Actor level, Gioia methodology

Introduction

Industry 4.0 has disrupted the service sector by utilizing advanced technologies like automation, AI, and IoT. It has empowered customers with new interaction methods, thereby compelling firms to provide a more engaging and satisfying experience (Ehrenthal et al., 2021; Hartwig et al., 2021; Nittala et al., 2022). Through mobile apps, e-commerce platforms, and digital devices, customers are now endowed with more information, knowledge, and skills that influence firms' strategic decisions. For instance, microfinance institutions (MFIs) are adopting digital channels such as mobile apps, internet banking, and omnichannel to serve customers. They have also embraced digital media to maintain customer loyalty, market penetration, and brand identity. Now, the service sector, including MFIs, needs skills and knowledge from their constituents to adopt a multi-actor service design, particularly from their employees and customers (Brodie et al., 2019; Neuhofer et al., 2017). It requires adopting a broader perspective of service (Greer et al., 2016), and this transformation begins with redefining the actors' resources.

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Furthermore, resources give firms a strategic advantage to capture a larger market and efficiently neutralize competition. Barney (1991) resource-based view (RBV) and Hunt and Derozier (2004) resource-advantage (R-A) theory aided practitioners in strategic decision-making for designing engaging experiences. Both theories proposed the categorization of resources for sustainable competitive advantage. However, the difficulty lies in their applicability to Industry 4.0. *Can the RBV and R-A classifications and definitions of resources aid MFIs executives in redesigning their multi-actor service experience?* Both theories have three limitations to a degree. First, both theories excessively emphasize internal resources and disregard external resources and stakeholders. Second, neither theory has paid sufficient attention to the internal and external actors and their respective resources. Thirdly, they comprehensively categorize resources as capital, human, organizational, informational, and relational without elaborating on their application at the actor-to-actor and actor-to-many levels of strategy. This question has motivated scholars to revisit theories in redefining resources that could facilitate the transformation of multi-actor service exchange (Ford & Bowen, 2008; Hadad, 2017; Williams et al., 2020).

As discussed, practitioners need to adopt the modern perspective on resources, and service-dominant logic (SDL) offers a lens that embraces this new shift. The SDL logic provides a framework for capturing the changing dynamics in which all actors are increasingly networked and integrating their resources for value cocreation. SDL logic is regarded as a future theoretical lens that can reconceptualize resources by applying evidence-based research. Scholars from the disciplines of marketing (Brodie et al., 2019; Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008a, 2016), strategic management (Gummesson et al., 2010), education (Díaz-Méndez et al., 2019), health (Joiner & Lusch, 2016; McColl-Kennedy, 2012), supply chain management (Koh et al., 2019; Vural, 2017), and public administration (Alford, 2016; Osborne et al., 2013; Vargo & Lusch, 2017) are now reemploying their concepts with the metatheoretical lens of SDL.

SDL reconceives actors and resources from a modern perspective (Madhavaram & Hunt, 2008; Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008a, 2008b) and argues that all actors are resource integrators (Vargo & Lusch, 2016, 2017). SDL redefined resources as operands and operants. Operand resources are physical resources, whereas operant resources are intangible and are skillfully combined with other operant resources to generate value (Akaka & Vargo, 2014; Caridà et al., 2019; Madhavaram & Hunt, 2008). Likewise, SDL defines resource integration as a process by which actors integrate their skills and knowledge in complex service ecosystems (Akaka et al., 2019; Peters, 2019; Vargo & Lusch, 2019). Though SDL has a more modern approach than RBV and R-A theory, the resource categorization inherits the same conceptual limitations of inclusivity and overarching resource classification. Furthermore, context and exclusivity are lacking at various strategic levels. In SDL literature, research on redefining resources with a contextual perspective is still in the conceptualization stage, leaving a void for underlying research. (Caridà et al., 2019; Peters, 2016, 2019).

This study intends to fill a research gap by extending the operant resources at the actor-to-actor level (A2A). It unpacks the inclusive classification of operant resources and brings the context of the A2A level for MFIs. The SDL also provides theoretical support as it offers a new property of operant resources as *resourceness,* which means *"realization of potential resources through actors' evaluation and action to transform the potential resources into realized resources" (Peters, 2019).* It is assumed that the resources have no inherent value; instead, they have latent value based on how actors integrate resources in their specific context. (Edvardsson et al., 2014; Kleinaltenkamp, 2019). This new property offers conceptual support to unpack the operant resources of actors within the context of MFIs at an A2A level. Exploring contextual operant resources at the A2A level in MFIs will provide

scholars and practitioners with a list of prospective operant resources they have yet to realize and use to redesign engaging service experiences.

Two ways this study contributes to SDL literature. First, it unpacks the contextuality of operant resources (Peters, 2019) at the A2A level and provides a unique typology of resources. Second, in SDL, there is less consensus on context. For example, Akaka and Parry (2019) define value-in-context on the micro, meso, and macro scales. Several empirical studies define context as industries, geographical boundaries, events, society, and culture. In addition to resources, actors also configure their context to obtain value. (Baker & Welter, 2018; Wadhwani et al., 2020; Welter et al., 2016). This research is significant because it utilizes two contexts, A2A and MFIs, to exoplore the contextuality of operant resources with the following question:

RQ: Using the service-dominant logic theoretical lens, what are the contextual operant resources at an actor-to-actor level in the context of microfinance institutions from the providers' perspective?

Literature review

Multiple disciplines, such as marketing, strategic management, human resource management, sociology, and psychology, define resources and their classification. Likewise, the SDL logic has elevated the discussion on resources to the forefront. The multidisciplinary approach has conceptualized and categorized resources in various ways, such as competency-based, contextual, and interchangeable (Peters, 2019). The term resource is drawn from the study of Economics and is defined as natural resources that are static and limited. However, in recent decades, resources have been labeled as dynamic, immaterial, and contextual (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2014a). The contemporary view of resources holds that resources cannot be examined as objects in isolation. The social context, expected value, integration process, and actor's evaluation are also critical in facilitating value cocreation. (Kleinaltenkamp et al., 2012; Peters, 2016, 2019).

Barney (1991) initiated the concept of resources as intangible and intrinsic in Resources-Based-View (RBV) theory. RBV theory defines resources as non-imitable, non-substitutable, valuable, and rare in gaining long-term competitive advantage. It divides resources into three categories: physical capital, human capital, and organizational capital resources. Barney et al. (2001) identified dynamic organizational capabilities, capability, knowledge, process, and protocols as intrinsic intangible resources contributing to sustainable competitive advantage. RBV theory provided a valid theoretical basis for SDL's contemporary definition of resources. This concept of intrinsic and tangible resources is also supported by DeGregori (1987), which explains the nature of resources as *becoming*. He explained that the availability of resources does not guarantee their value. Instead, human intervention transforms the resources into valuable ones. Marketing practices prioritize customer well-being, but research on customer-owned and managed resources is limited, providing a research gap.

The Resource-Advantage (R-A) theory reveals an alternative definition of resources. Hunt and Derozier (2004) proposed human, organizational, informational, and relational resources. Hunt (2011) explained the foundational premises of R-A theory as heterogeneous, imperfect, self-seeking, legal, human, physical, organizational, informational, relational, and innovative for sustainable competitive advantage. The information, relation, and human resources of categorization also yield theoretical support for moving away from resources' static, object-oriented, and endogenous meaning (He et al., 2017). SDL initiates the discussion regarding the reconceptualization of resources as *operand* and *operant* resources (Vargo & Lusch, 2006, 2008a, 2019). Operand resources are physical resources that require

an action to acquire value, whereas operant resources are adept at integrating with other operant resources to cocreate value (Akaka & Vargo, 2014). Operant resources are knowledge, core competencies, dynamic capabilities, and skills, thus playing a significant role in the process of cocreation (Arnould et al., 2006; Vargo & Lusch, 2014c). Vargo and Lusch (2008a) defined resource integration as a process in which the actors transform their more specialized skills in their social context (Vargo & Lusch, 2016). While linking the scholarly work of DeGregori (1987), Dorsch et al. (2017), and Peters (2019), the resources can be to redefined to cope with the challenges of Industry 4.0. The contextual properties of resources are the new deliberation in SDL logic; thus, provide a research gap (Akaka, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c; Akaka & Parry, 2019; Akaka & Vargo, 2015; Frost & Lyons, 2017; Peters, 2019).

The Conservation of Resources (COR) and Service Science theories also support exploring the contextual properties to redefine resources. Hobfoll (1989) COR theory provides a framework for how individuals obtain, secure, and retain their social resources, categorizing them as material, conditional, personal, and energetic. The COR covers the actor's active participation in gaining resources, avoiding loss, and investing resources to achieve more (Hobfoll et al., 1990). COR theory states that depending on appraisal, individuals expect compensation for providing and investing their resources, including time, knowledge, social, and cultural bases. If the individual's value evaluation of well-being is not met, the service experiences are influenced by faulty appraisal.

Thus, resources can be rejuvenated and replenished. To date, the exposition of resources and value lacks the conceptualization of context and embeddedness (Kleinaltenkamp et al., 2012; Peters, 2019), and this paper addressed the gap. Vargo and Lusch (2014b) and (Peters, 2019) defined *resourceness* as the quality of potential resources requiring human appraisal and intervention to transform into realized resources. They argued that when the actors realize the resourceness of resources, they transform them into "*actual*" resources, but it is not yet empirically tested. Service science literature also offers the theoretical underpinning for reframing resources in context. Service science literature classifies the resources into four types, i.e., People, technology, organization, and information, where people and organizations are classified as operant resources, and technology and information are classified as operand resources (Spohrer et al., 2015). The research that initiates the redefining of resources from a customer perspective is conducted by Plé (2016), which explores resource integration in the context of a dyadic and identifies a list of 12 customer resources. Table I provides a summary of the relevant literature for critical resource-based theories.

Table I Summary of resource theories

Theory/framework	Classification	Contribution	Author(s)
Resource-Based View (RBV)	Physical capital resources, Human capital resources, Organizational capital resources	It provides both classifications of physical and nonphysical resources.	Barney (1991)
Resource-Advantage theory	Human resources Organizational resources Informational resources Relational resources	It broadened the classification of resources, including legal, technological, and relational.	Hunt and Derozier (2004)

Service-Dominant Logic	Operand Resources Operant Resources	It provides both classifications of physical and nonphysical resources.	Vargo and Lusch (2014a)
Conservation of Resource (COR)	Material Condition Personal Energy	It bring the debate of personal and social resources along with stress and motivation. Resources can be rejuvenated and replenished.	Hobfoll (1989)
Service Science	People Technology Organizational Information	It reinforces the preexisting theories of resources with the lens of SDL.	Spohrer et al. (2015)
Resource Integration and Service-Dominant Logic	Informational, Emotional, Physical, Financial Temporal, Behaviour Relational, Cultural Role-related, customer ability Customer willingness, social	It brings twelve potential customer resources that may be used in a cocreation.	Plé (2016)

Source: Literature review

Research Methodology

This research investigates the contextual operant resources at the A2A level in MFIs. The providers' perspective generally differs from the customers, as they interact with more complex and formal institutional arrangements. We followed a qualitative path with Gioia methodology and abduction reasoning. (Dong et al., 2015; Jarvi et al., 2018). Gioia's methodology validates the reality as context-bound (Creswell, 2017), whereas abduction reconceptualizes concepts, thus going with the aim of the study. The Gioia methodology guides the 1st-order concepts, 2nd-order themes, and aggregate dimensions coding technique to develop data structures (Gioia et al., 2013; Nag & Gioia, 2012). The 1st-order concepts are the actors' understanding of a phenomenon, the 2nd-order themes as the researcher's data interpretation, and the aggregate dimensions are the essence of literary language (Gioia et al., 2013; Nag & Gioia, 2012).

The context of MFIs that provide financial and non-financial services to small and medium-sized businesses was adopted. We interviewed 25 industry experts to explore the providers' perspectives. Purposive sampling was applied following the inclusion and exclusion criteria depicted in Table II. The list of MFIs was extracted from Pakistan Microfinance Network.

Table II

Inclusion and exclusion criteria of provider-actor as participants

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
1. The participants worked at MFI at the senior, intermediate, and operational levels.	1. The participants have less than a year of experience.
2. The participants interact directly with clients and superior management	2. Participants who do not directly interact with consumers or participate in strategy formulation.
3. The participants have over three years of professional experience.	3. The participants assigned to state-sponsored programs

Note: Microfinance Institutions (MFIs)

Semi-structured interview manual (see the appendix) was adopted for data collection. To acquire data, we conducted 20 face-to-face interviews with an average duration between 35 and 55 minutes. Later, five additional interviews were conducted to ensure data saturation to establish the trustworthiness and dependability of the primary data, we provided the participants with duplicates of their interview transcriptions for review and correction.

Data Analysis

As stated previously, 25 industry professionals were interviewed to collect primary data. To extract 1st-order concepts, we apply line-by-line coding and list essential codes in the participants' language. The initial two questions pertained to enlisting actors' valuable operant resources, including providers and customers. According to participants, the most valuable operant resources at the A2A level are qualified, knowledgeable, and trained employees. In addition, professionalism emerged as a recurring theme. According to P-A$_1$, "*Employees with relevant degrees in accounting and finance are good at serving customers.*" P-A$_5$ added, "*Education plays a significant role, but industry experience and knowledge are also crucial for customer service.*" Both P-A$_{11}$ and P-A$_6$ supported the same codes. P-A$_8$ and P-A$_{19}$ referred to legislative expertise as a crucial contextual operant resource. According to P-A$_9$, understanding the legal ramifications of leasing, pledging, and defaulting is essential to avoid unpleasant litigation. The emerging 1st-order concepts converge in 2nd-order themes as qualified and trained actors.

Participants like P-A$_5$, P-A$_{11,}$ and P-A$_{20}$ gave more weightage to skills and experience. "*A good employee should have relevant skills and industry experience, including financial and conflict management and numeracy skills,*" said P-A$_{20}$. Customer dealing as an essential skill was also a reoccurring code mentioned by P-A$_8$, P-A$_{12}$, and P-A$_{14}$. Industry knowledge and experience as 1st-order concepts include good administration, customer dealing, financial management, and conflict management. Likewise, the professional approach was the most reoccurring code. P-A$_3$ shared his experience, "*I have gained a great deal of knowledge from my branch manager regarding critical thinking and analytical evaluation.*" P-A$_9$ added*, " Demanding reimbursement from annoyed customer requires formidable marketing skills.*" P-A$_{23}$ mentioned effective communication as an essential resource for MFIs. The leadership, commitment, communication, and critical thinking for 2nd-order themes converged as professionalism. Thus, in search of our first question, qualified, trained, knowledgeable, and experienced providers aggregate as ***erudite personnel*** at A2A.

Industry knowledge emerged as reoccurring code for customer's resources. P-A$_{17}$ mentioned, "*It is essential to know the industry dynamics in which the customers are operating.*" P-A$_2$ shared, "*I focus on industry and customers' financial needs.*" The P-A$_{23}$ answer supported a similar code: " *Customers with industry knowledge bring a long-term*

relationship with MFIs." Thus, customer-actor qualification and experience emerged as a 2nd-order theme. The customer's market credibility and integrity were the most reoccurring codes mentioned by P-A$_4$, P-A$_{16}$, P-A$_{17}$, and P-A$_{20}$. All credit officers emphasized market integrity, business sustainability, and customer reputation as essential criteria for a worthwhile actor. P-A$_4$ said, " *I place more weight on the customer's credibility and market dealings."* P-A$_{22}$ and P-A$_{24}$ mentioned work ethics as one of the most effective instincts regarding the payback intentions of customers. P-A$_{10}$ shared, " *If the customer shared accurate information during the initial meetings, he is valuable."* Another recurring code from questions two is the customer-actor's professional attitude. P-A$_4$, P-A$_{6,}$ and P-A$_{15}$ describe the professional attitude as maintaining books of accounts, on-time payments, cooperation, and avoiding misuse of funds. P-A$_{15}$ said, *"Small enterprises that keep records and have prompt access to books of accounts for credit assessment are valued."* Customer-actor qualification, experience, market credibility, business integrity, and professionalism converged as an aggregate dimension of **customer-actor proficiency**. While examining Industry 4.0 dynamics, such as digital banking, P-A$_8$, P-A$_{12,}$ and P-A$_{13,}$ added information as a valuable resource. Through traditional or digital sources, MFIs establish trust for financial services based on credit assessment through the book of accounts, property papers, documentation, and actor-customer credit history. P-A$_{12}$ answered, *"MFIs offer financial services to small and medium-sized businesses, valuing those maintaining records. They prefer active text-fillers for digital presence verification."* Tacit knowledge, market information, market dynamics, and record-keeping themes converged into the **information gateways** dimension.

The fourth query pertained to context-dependent resources equally crucial for both actors. In contrast, the fifth question was focused on potential resources of MFI that are yet to be realized by scholars and practitioners. Humane and social conduct appeared as the context-dependent aggregate dimension for both actors. P-A$_2$, P-A$_3$, and P-A$_7$ addressed the impact of peer and senior management behavior toward their peers and subordinates on digital and non-digital platforms. P-A$_2$ answered, *"I have been working here for seven years because of the respectful environment."* P-A$_3$ also mentioned, " *My supervisor has confidence in my credit evaluation. He never used offensive language."* These 1st-order concepts emerged as workplace attitudes and ethics. Likewise, the customers and their personalities, moods, and emotions emerged as essential themes. P-A$_{17}$ reacted, *"A relationship with a consumer necessitates anger management from both parties, particularly regarding a pledged property."* P-A$_{21}$ contributed a distinct level of family legacy and credibility and reacted, *"Customers who are more family oriented and concerned about their market, societal, and familial integrity."* Providers' and customer actors' personalities, attitudes, and integrity emerged as the aggregate dimension of **humane and social conduct**.

The unique aggregate dimension extracted from transcriptions is the righteous and divine ideology. Participants talked a lot about this distinctive dimension. P-A$_2$ replied, " *I've discovered that religious conviction and the fear of being held accountable after death have a good association with the customer's payment intention."* P-A$_3$, P-A$_4$, P-A$_{7,}$ and P-A$_{10}$ discussed faith, religious orientation, citizenship, and fear of accountability as crucial operant resources that MFI practitioners should be aware of. P-A$_{10}$ emphasized the religious orientation of customers. He empathized, " *We disburse loans at religious institutions with astounding results. Customer religiosity translates into profitable financial results. "*. P-A$_7$ reacted, *"Consumers with a religious orientation avoid willful default."* The 2nd-order themes of morality, ethics, and spirituality converged into an aggregate dimension of **righteous and divine ideology**.
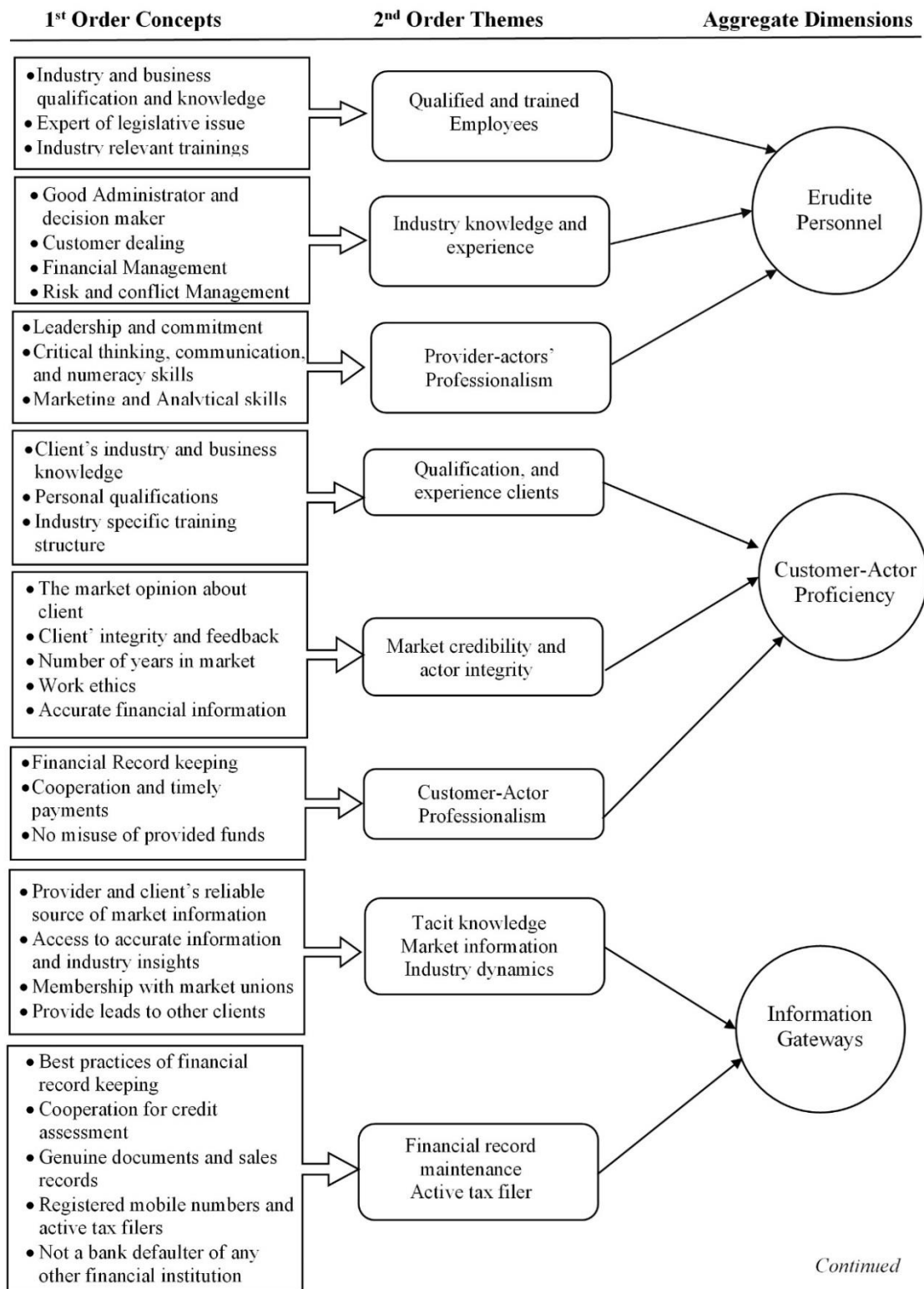
Digital conduct involves responsible behavior on social media. Although it is an actor-to-many level phenomenon, it emerged as a critical operant resource. The 1st-order

concepts that emerged from transcriptions were related to attitude with a helpline, comments on social media, and virtual communities' malpractices. P-A$_{16}$, P-A$_{18}$, and P-A$_{22}$ discussed digital conduct as critical operant resource in a digitized era. P-A$_{22}$ shared, "On *the helpline and social media, we encourage consumers to use respectful and constructive language, but occasionally they use abusive language"*. P-A$_6$ cited, "*Cybersecurity is a skill that digital banking customers must acquire."*

     Adherence is another contextual operant resource that needs realization. As legal compliance evolved into institutional loyalty, both actors must comply with rules, regulations, consumer rights, and banking laws. P-A$_{12}$ replied, "*Compliance with the rules and regulations is an exhibition of institutional loyalty.*" P-A$_5$ and P-A$_9$ also emphasized legal compliance as an essential contextual operant resource in Industry 4.0. P-A$_{25}$ accentuates the availability of legal assistance in the current digital era in a significant way. He added, "*Unlike two decades ago, the information about legislation, regulations, product information, consumer protection, and data protection are well communicated to customers.*" P-A$_5$ also shared his concerns about legal adherence as the most critical behavioral resource due to the unprecedented availability of legal guidance on social media, especially YouTube. Figure I present the 1st-order concepts, 2nd-order themes, and aggregate dimensions containing the distinctive typology of contextual operant resources at the A2A level in MFIs.

Figure I *(Continued)*

Data Structure Demonstrating Contextual Operant Resources at Dyadic level in Microfinance Institutions

1st Order Concepts	2nd Order Themes	Aggregate Dimensions

- Industry and business qualification and knowledge
- Expert of legislative issue
- Industry relevant trainings

→ Qualified and trained Employees

- Good Administrator and decision maker
- Customer dealing
- Financial Management
- Risk and conflict Management

→ Industry knowledge and experience

- Leadership and commitment
- Critical thinking, communication, and numeracy skills
- Marketing and Analytical skills

→ Provider-actors' Professionalism

→ Erudite Personnel

- Client's industry and business knowledge
- Personal qualifications
- Industry specific training structure

→ Qualification, and experience clients

- The market opinion about client
- Client' integrity and feedback
- Number of years in market
- Work ethics
- Accurate financial information

→ Market credibility and actor integrity

- Financial Record keeping
- Cooperation and timely payments
- No misuse of provided funds

→ Customer-Actor Professionalism

→ Customer-Actor Proficiency

- Provider and client's reliable source of market information
- Access to accurate information and industry insights
- Membership with market unions
- Provide leads to other clients

→ Tacit knowledge Market information Industry dynamics

- Best practices of financial record keeping
- Cooperation for credit assessment
- Genuine documents and sales records
- Registered mobile numbers and active tax filers
- Not a bank defaulter of any other financial institution

→ Financial record maintenance Active tax filer

→ Information Gateways

Continued

Figure I *(Continued)*

Data Structure Demonstrating Contextual Operant Resources at Dyadic level in Microfinance Institutions

1st Order Concepts	2nd Order Themes	Aggregate Dimensions
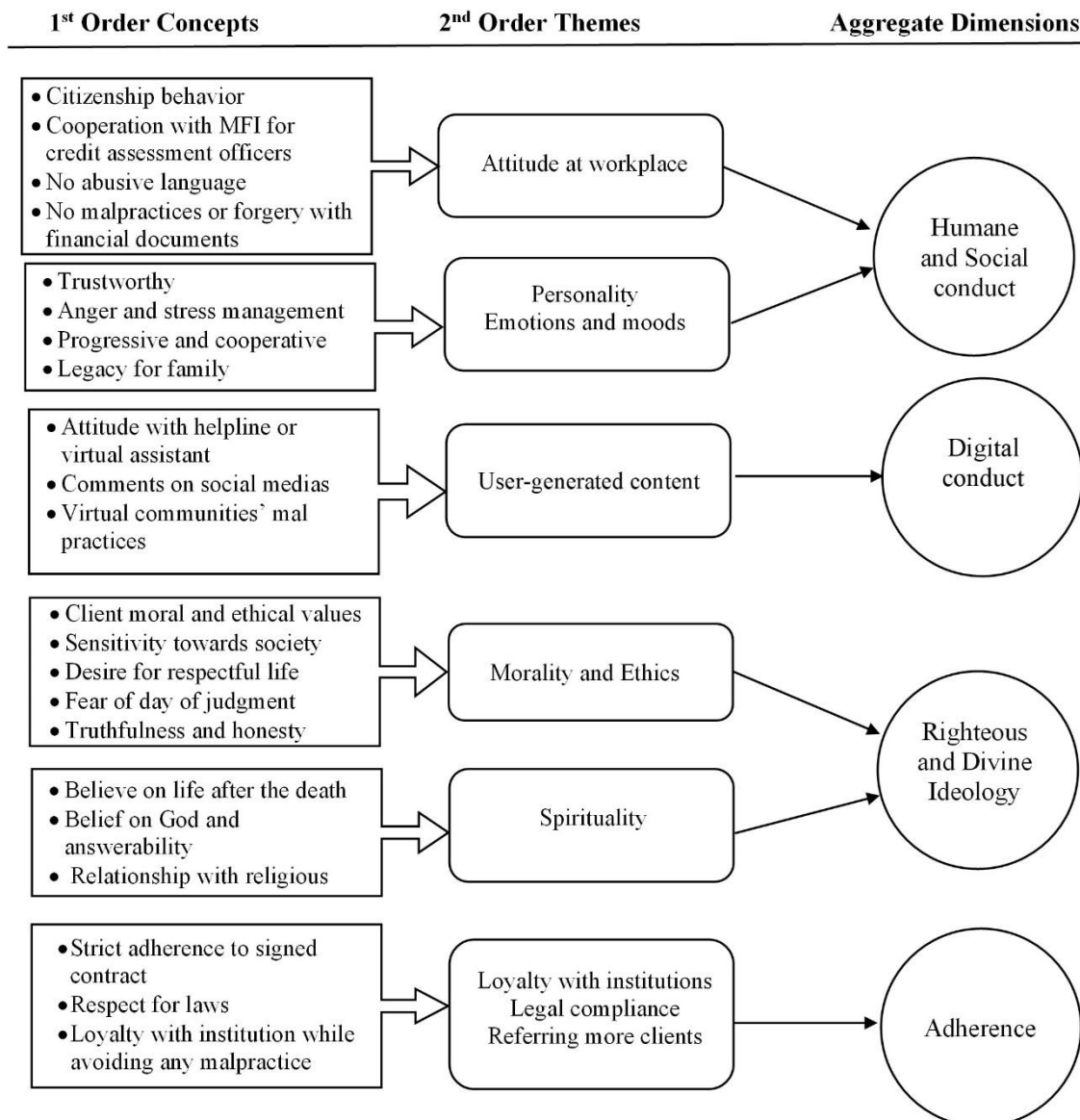
Discussion

As discussed, the resource theories lack in defining the contextuality of operant resources in terms of A2A and Actor-to-many perspectives and this study fills this gap. Data analysis showed that knowledge, experience, skills (Spohrer et al., 2015; Vargo & Lusch, 2017), customer ability, intellectual capital (Barney, 1991; Hunt & Derozier, 2004), market credibility, and integrity are valuable resources at A2A level for both actors. The data structure also includes the properties of knowledge such as relevant qualifications, financial management, numeracy, and risk management. Similarly, the experience comprises industry knowledge, customer interaction, and conflict resolution. The professionalism properties include communication, marketing, record-keeping, analytical skills, and leadership qualities. Additionally, the RBV (Barney et al., 2001) and R-A (Hunt, 2011) theories are applied to large firms and both theories used an inclusive approach while defining resources without

identifying the context. The MFIs provide financial and non-financial services to small and medium enterprises where the customer's credibility and integrity are the firm's market credibility proxies. While zooming in at the A2A level, the typology of contextual operant resources inferred is customers' market credibility and integrity with the properties of the market's opinion and work ethics. This typology of contextual operant resources is supported by Plé (2016) identification of twelve customer resource integration at dyadic. Market credibility and integrity are a proxy of relational and social resources. Both actors' qualifications, experience, and professionalism as operant resources preexist in the literature, whereas market credibility, customers' integrity, and financial record maintenance are distinctive categories. Hence the first proposition inferred from preliminary data is:

P$_{1a}$: At the actor-to-actor level, erudite personnel and customer-actor proficiency are valuable contextual operant resources in microfinance institutions.

P$_{1b}$: At the actor-to-actor level, market credibility and integrity of customer-actor as relational and social resources are valuable in microfinance institutions.

SDL, and Service Science abductively support the information gateways aggregate dimension. Spohrer et al. (2015) marked information as one of the essential operant resources in Industry 4.0. Likewise, Hunt and Derozier (2004) and Plé (2016) proclaim information as a predominant operant resource. In the context of MFIs at the dyadic level, provider and customer-actor tacit knowledge and accessible information unleash the market dynamics for evidence-based credit assessment and financial need. Financial record-keeping, NTN (national tax number), and access to central databases are crucial at the A2A level. The accuracy and reliability of information and access rights (Spohrer et al., 2015) are equally critical for both actors. Hence, the second proposition inferred from the data is:

P$_2$: At the actor-to-actor level, information gateways, including tacit knowledge, market intelligence, and record-keeping, are valuable contextual operant resources for providers and customers in microfinance institutions.

The argument COR theory by Hobfoll et al. (1990) and Peters (2019) affirm the resourceness construct, characterized as realizing potential resources for transforming resources through human appraisal and action. The same has been validated in the data structure. The aggregate dimensions in Figure I are the potential resources at the A2A level, requiring actors' appraisal and action to transform into realized resources. As mentioned, the construct of resourceness is also supported by the conservation of resource theory (COR). Hobfoll et al. (1990) define the human nature of evaluating the value of resources. COR theory hypothesizes the human motivation to build, protect, foster, and maintain valuable resources. Hobfoll (1989) suggested that recourses can be rejuvenated and replenished, analogous to the resourceness characterization. Humane and social conduct typology includes attitude, behavior, culture, and citizenship behaviors of provider-actors.

Furthermore, trustworthiness, anger, stress, and progressive actors' nature actors emerged as essential themes of potential resources. Stress (Hobfoll, 1989) for acquiring and maintaining value resources to avoid loss, the workplace culture, anger, and progression in an actor's personality as emotional and behavioral resources (Plé, 2016) are inferred as potential resources at a dyadic level. COR theory suggests that resource loss is more impactful than resource gain and thus could damage institutional loyalty and engagement. Plé (2016) also proclaimed the significance of emotional and behavioral resources during resource integration at the dyadic level, and the aggregate dimension of humane and social conduct enforces the same conviction. Thus, the third proposition is:

P₃: At the dyadic level, the humane and social conduct, including attitude, behaviors, emotions, and personality of actors, can be transformed into realized contextual operant resources in MFIs.

Similarly, the customers communicate their opinions and experiences via digital platforms (Mehdiabadi et al., 2020; Sima et al., 2020). As more customers adopt digital banking channels in MFIs, exhibiting socially acceptable ethical behavior and safeguarding transaction-related data becomes essential. Digital banking customers must engage in responsible online conduct to protect their personal information, comply with financial regulations, and regularly update their security settings. In addition, clicking on shady links or downloading unknown attachments may result in cyberattacks or malware. The same has been validated by the 1st-order concepts and 2nd-order themes that converged into the distinctive typology of digital conduct as an operant resource (Gupta, 2023; Machkour & Abriane, 2020; Sima et al., 2020). The fourth proposition related to digital conduct is:

P₄: At the dyadic level, digital conduct, including the attitude towards virtual assistance, social media, personal information handling, and user-generated content, can be transformed into realized contextual operant resources in MFIs.

The notion of actors' righteous and divine ideology, including morality, religiosity, and spirituality, is yet missing in SDL literature. This typology is inductive and emerged as a unique concept at the dyadic level in MFIs. The textual data revealed that the actors' righteous and divine ideology influenced their financial performance with MFIs. The COR theory (Hobfoll et al., 1990) provides theoretical support for these unique themes as it elaborates on the principles of individual development. It is inferred during the interviews that the financial gains from malpractices and forgery are assumed to be a loss of morality. Such subjective beliefs and ideologies of actors bring faithful, trustworthy, and good relationships among actors, including financial performance. The MFIs, especially those providing lending services for the cottage industry, distribute loans at religious places. Thus, the fifth proposition is:

P₅: At the dyadic level, righteousness, and divine ideology, including morality, ethics, and spirituality of actors, are potential contextual resources that can be realized into actual operant resources for MFIs.

Plé (2016) suggested that customer willingness is an essential actor resource in the current era. Likewise, the stressors, motivation, and energies are critical antecedents in acquiring and maintaining rescues. The same applies in the case of adherence. At MFIs, provider and customer actors exchange financial information to sign the legal contract; thus, stressors are natural, including fear of resource loss or actual loss. The only way to ensure the gain of resources is legal adherence. Spohrer et al. (2015) added entities' rights and responsibilities during resource integration. It is inferred from the data that at the dyadic level, as both actors exchange information for signing legal contracts, legal compliance is one of the most critical operant resources in MFIs. Thus, the sixth proposition is:

P₆: At the dyadic level, adherence, including legal compliance and loyalty and commitment to the institution and institutional arrangement, are valuable contextual operant resources of actors in MFIs

The emergent contextual operant resources in MFIs at the A2A level are summarized in Table II. The literature adequately supports the abductive operant resources, whereas the inductive operant resources arose from the transcription data and contributed significantly to this paper.

Table III

Typology of contextual operant resources

Typology	Properties of construct	Reasoning
Erudite Personnel	The qualification, expertise, experience, skills, and competencies of provider-actors at the dyadic level	Abductive
Customer-Actor proficiency	The qualification, expertise, experience, skills, market credibility, and integrity of customer actors at the dyadic level	Abductive
Information gateways	The tacit knowledge, accurate and reliable information, market intelligence, and registered identity of actors at the dyadic level	Abductive
Humane and social conduct	The behavior, attitude, emotions, personality, and cultural orientation of actors at the dyadic level	Abductive
Digital Conduct	The attitude with helpline or virtual assistants, comments on social media, and virtual communities' malpractices of actors at the dyadic level	Inductive
Righteous and divine ideology	The subjective belief concerning morality, meaningful life, God, and accountability of actors at the dyadic level	Inductive
Adherence	The legal compliance, loyalty, and commitment with institutions and institutional arrangement of actors at the dyadic level	Inductive

Source: Interview transcriptions

Conclusion and managerial implications

The SDL logic posits that value is a function of how customers subjectively perceive and interpret the benefits they can derive from experiences. If the service industry and, more precisely, MFIs need to adopt the service experience powered by Industry 4.0, they must embrace the contemporary approach of viewing all stakeholders as actors and realize their potential operant resources at different strategic levels. Resource integration at the A2A level is a crucial dimension of value co-creation, yet relatively unexplored. This article studies operant resources in the context of an A2A level while adopting the providers' perspective. This article identifies seven contextual operant resources at the A2A level that extends the

conceptual development resources. The study also provides six related propositions for future scholars.

The first future direction is contextualizing resources at actor-to-many levels with an empirical approach that may deepen and broaden the construct of resources and resourceness. The second future direction is related to theory testing and scale development. The data structures and descriptions of contextual operant resources provide dimensions and elements for scale development. For testing the constructs and propositions, this study will facilitate the quantitative scholars to develop a scale for measuring the perception of contextual operant resources of actors. This study is based on the perspectives of provider-actors. The viewpoint of the customer-actor and then the comparison of both views may bring the leading contextual operant resources. Thus, the fourth future direction is bringing the perspective of the customer-actor for comparative study. The comparative research will enrich the construct resourceness and context in the literature of SDL.

The managerial implication of this study is twofold. First, provided list of operant resources can be adopted to redesign the service experience. The second managerial implication is related to qualitative or subjective credit assessment. MFIs rely too much on the quantitative evaluation of customers and ignore the qualitative assessment to ensure financial self-sufficiency. The underlying study proposed that the customer's market credibility, integrity, good practices of maintaining the financial record, morality, ethics, and righteous and divine ideology can be transformed into institutional loyalty and adherence.

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Appendix

Interview Manual	
Sr	Questions
1	In the current era, what intangible assets should the personnel of MFIs possess?
2	In the current era, what intangible assets should the customers of MFIs possess?
3	What are the most valuable intangible resources equally important to MFI employees and customers?
4	What intangible resources have yet to be realized by the personnel and practitioners of microfinance institutions?
5	Does the above question exclude any crucial information?
MFIs: microfinance instituions	

Multiple Modernities: A Case Study of Indian and Hindu Modernity

Rose Mushtaq[1]

Abstract

In the article, the idea of multiple modernities is critically evaluated from the perspective of various civilizations. Concerning "traditional theories of modernization," the argument for "multiple modernities" contradicts the supposition of the convergence of industrial civilizations. It refers to the distinguishing expressions of progressive global modernity rather than merely to multiple societal structures. The main two premises are based on modernity, a multipolar notion that no longer depends on "Westernization," and that not all nations are uniformly modern because each civilization's cultural and historical settings impact how "modernity" is understood substantially. To follow through, the case study of Indian and Hindu Modernity confronts the pre-existing notion of modernity. At the same time, it draws a historical linkage from the ideas of Gandhi and his critique of the European concept of modernity to the current era, where modernity in India is viewed through the lens of the amalgamation of state and religion. The paper's first section highlights how multiple modernities challenge the assimilated idea of 'Eurocentrism' and the non-linearity of those convergence theories. The second section presents the theoretical perspective and literature on the contributions and challenges of multiple modernities, following which the third section scrutinizes the concept of alternatives to multiple modernities. In conclusion, it sums up the viewpoints of different ethnicities, asserting that there are many ways to be modern and acknowledging that not all modernities are necessarily secular.

Keywords: Multiple Modernities, Eurocentrism, Hindu modernity

Introduction

The concept of "multiple modernities" arose in sociology in the 1990s as a new paradigm for conceptualizing the modern world. This paradigm shift occurred throughout the modern era of globalization, altering our perceptions of the modern world. Perhaps the phenomenon of multiple modernities goes against the prevalent view of the traditional theories of convergence and emerges to challenge the primitive ideologies of classical theorists of 'modernization.' It challenges the assimilated idea of 'Eurocentrism' and the non-linearity of those convergence theories, ultimately leading to prolonged efforts to acknowledge the distinctive trajectories of political and social progression. The theory of multiple modernities argues for its irresistible impact worldwide. Nevertheless, with the radically different approaches, according to those societies' cultural and historical backgrounds, it encounters and gives it a sense of 'thinking plural' as multipolarity. An ambiguity is left in the implementation and formulation of this theory, as many scholars still argue that it fails to consistently set out the core and significant unit of analysis of modernity itself, thus failing to address the complexities of the modernization theory it evaluates. (Schmidt, 2006).

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Both protagonists and antagonists of this new rudimentary transformation critique this theory's characteristics and core values while emphasizing the diversity of these modern societies.

According to the critics, the pathway to modernity in each society varies according to their socio-cultural histories and backgrounds. Europe is the epitome of this cultural and institutional diversity, though it is from there that the notion of multiple modernities came into being. Nevertheless, the debate is not about the existence of heterogeneity but about the profoundness of its contemporary differences within modern societies and their future cognizance. It should not be disregarded that some modern societies share similar components that lead to transnational modernity. However, whether modernity is or not, a concrete set of processes still needs to be scrutinized. Moreover, the three fundamental aspects of the modern political process developed from the doctrines of the political aspect of modernity and the fundamental features of modern political institutions argue that the reconfiguration of center-periphery interactions as the primary focus of political dynamics in contemporary countries, a strong inclination toward politicizing the demands of various segments of society and the disputes between them, and an endless battle over the definition of the political's borders only became a significant focus of open political contestation and conflict with the advent of modernity (Fourie, 2012).

Since Modernity first emerged in West, it was dogged from the start by internal antinomies and contradictions, giving birth to ongoing critical debate and political contestations. Modernity's fundamental antinomies represented a profound shift of the traits of the axial civilizations. They demonstrated knowledge of a wide spectrum of transcendental visions and interpretations since they were focused on questions that were unknown at the time. I argue that the concept of modernity is not a homogenizing process and the existence of modernity still matters today in this contemporary world, however, it is not universally applicable to all societies (Domingues, 2009). Modernization theorists consider only western economies to be fully modern and consider other economies and societies to be primitive. These theories are accused of a 'Eurocentric' perspective which sheds light on the Era of 'Colonialism' and the concepts of 'Westernization and Capitalism'. The contention of this premise is based mainly on two counts; the former argues that modernity is a multipolar concept that is no longer conditioned on 'Westernization', and the latent argues, all societies are not equally modern since the cultural and historical contexts of each civilization tend to play a significant role in interpreting the concept of "Modernity (Eisenstadt, 2002).

There are the following questions will be analytically addressed in this paper that will further develop a more precise understanding and interpretation of this concept of multiple modernities:

Are all societies equally modern in our globalized world, and are societies more likely to sustain these social changes? How is the social-theoretical importance of society described?

So, to get concrete answers to these questions, a reasonable understanding of the critically debated concepts of modernity and modern societies ought to be established. After establishing supporting literature and background in the second section, a comprehensive view of interpreting a variety of modernities will be disclosed in the third section. The following section will discuss a case study and present a concluding thought on this analytical paper.

Theoretical Perspective

A sociologist named Shmuel N. Eisenstadt, who coined the term 'Multiple Modernities' in the late '90s, debates and goes against the other classical modernization theorists by rejecting the dynamics of convergence theories. He presumes the theory of

Multiple Modernity is not a closed-ended horizon but an open-ended one, which holds scope for various interpretations and changes from unidirectional trajectories of evolution and follows a single rationale towards multiple directions (Preyer, 2012). According to several authors, it is established that the concept of multiple modernities can be better illustrated and comprehended as a perpetual constitution and reconstitution of the multiplicity of cultural programs. A disparate understanding of this notion has been established within distinct nation-states and ethnic and cultural groups. One of the most imperative speculations about this phenomenon emphasizes that modernity and westernization are two distinct concepts that are confused as identical notions. These incessantly evolving modernities defy such problems, formulating modernity's common underpinning.

i. Contributions and Conflicts

Many scholars have argued regarding the goal of modernity while probing the center unit of modernity, which eventually came out as a creative adaptation and reweighed the idea of modernity by far-fetched social groups. Referring to the following idea, a theory of 'alternative modernities' by Gaonkar supports the idea as mentioned earlier, asserting that creative adaptation serves people in the transformation from the conventional to the modern state, thus constructing their conviction of modernity (Gaonkar, 2001). The prime contribution of 'multiple modernities' is pinpointing the cultural and historical backgrounds of societies that drive distinguished civilization. As a result, each civilization envisions its interpretation of modernity. Multiple Modernities is a cultural theory of modernity that relies on the comparative analysis of civilizations, making it provocative and noteworthy. To some extent, it overlooks the cross-cultural comparative historical analysis while corresponding with the concept of 'cultural turn.' China and East Asia have been under the intense scrutiny of such approaches where civilization is viewed as singular and, on the other side, as a plural substance (Fourie, 2012).

ii. Is Modernization, a homogenizing Process

Samuel Huntington put forth an opposing idea that contradicts a more considerable interpretation of Francis Fakuyuma regarding a sentiment of homogenization of the liberal worldview and the primordial theories of convergence. He signifies that modernization is a homogenizing process, and all societies, to some extent, retain those comparable factors in their civilization. However, a strong argument emanates from those who denounce this idea of homogeneity and declare that the pathway to developing one society economically, socially, and politically contrasts according to the varied background histories and traditional shifts from conventional to industrial societies (Eisenstadt, n.d.).

African modernity is another example of the collapse of modernity, which demonstrates that all societies are not uniformly modern because the cultural and political background of African civilization varies from those of European and even from the West. Consequently, an American economist, Walt Whitman Rostow, comes up with a doctrine that illustrates how the modernization process has to go through stages to procure certain growth (Chulu, 2006).

Cosmopolitanism and Alternatives to Multiple Modernities

The conviction of 'Alternatives to Multiple Modernities' belongs to the idea that modernity is inexorable in this period of the global world and that modernity is multiple but no longer conditioned on westernization, as backed by the theory of Modernization. It drives attention toward the significance of the reconciliation of cosmopolitanism and cultural diversity, which are of absolute importance. In today's age, where multiple modernities are

evolving, it no longer necessitates the West as a regulatory centre. The "alternatives to Multiple Modernities" theory in the post-modern era unrolls new cultures and civilizations, leading to a distinguished transition of modernism. Consequently, the outcomes of each modernity vary. The contributors now argue that the multiplicity of modernity is a highly embellished concept that has become inevitable. Ulrich Beck, a known German sociologist, rigorously probes a cosmopolitan turn in sociology that significantly assesses the dissipated social world through national or ethnic cultural boundaries and differentiates between the notions of globalization and cosmopolitanism (Shaykh, 2014).

Nevertheless, Gerard Delanty, a British sociologist, manifests another approach to the contemporary world while shadowing some light and allowing for the ideas of multiple modernity and cosmopolitanism (Vaughan, 2013). He defines *cosmopolitanism* as a multiplicity of distinctive modernities assembled in this social world. In Delanty's incongruous view, the goal is not to accompany universal principles. However, each society should be able to self-problematize, shift to a post-universalist perspective, and internally transform itself. Some other sociologists determine the thought of alternatives to multiple modernities as a reformulation of the modern colonial world system. It signifies that they see it from the observation of colonial diversity while relating to the alternative construction of a world where social life is no longer entirely restricted by the construct of rationality and that characteristic of autocratic Euro-modernity.

Case Study: Indian and Hindu Modernities

The case study of Indian modernities brings several questions regarding universality versus heterogeneity into the spotlight. It tends to scrutinize the Hindu civilization and its new-fangled manifestations. The concept of multiple modernities has gained prominence in modernity discourse, questioning the idea of a universal modernity. Within this context, Indian and Hindu modernity emerge as separate and lively entities demonstrating the intricate interplay between tradition and progress. The ability of Indian modernity to adjust and adapt is one of its most remarkable characteristics. India has shown an outstanding ability to absorb and assimilate ideas, technology, and ideologies from diverse sources while maintaining its distinct identity. An example is the cohabitation of old customs with advances in science, technology, and governance. Inclusion and social justice are essential aspects of Indian modernism. Despite the difficulties created by a deeply embedded caste system, efforts to elevate neglected people and promote equality have gained traction. The adoption of democracy, secularism, and human rights as basic concepts of Indian modernity has contributed to the development of a varied and inclusive society.

The current era is a shift towards a multipolar world, with powers such as China, India, and Brazil coming forward in East Asia, South Asia, and South America, respectively. With their rise in power have come forth the cultural values and norms of these powers and their approach towards modernization and progression. Chinese modernity came forward in the post-colonial period, when the cultural, political, and economic practices of ethnic Chinese filled the gap left by the leaving colonial powers (Pieterse, 2009). The rise of Indian and Hindu modernities followed the rise of the United States as the sole hegemon at the end of the Cold War and in the wake of the slow decay of its power in the current era. The exploration goes toward discovering if modernity still matters, which is the basic premise of this paper. The dive into the understanding of Indian and Hindu modernities is based on the insight brought forward by *Jan Nederveen Pieterse* in the paper, 'Multipolarity means thinking plural: Modernities.' The perception of the validity of multiple modernities is explored through the gaps in the existing macro-sociological theories that base modernity around convergence. The convergence theories revolve around the assumption that they are globally applicable, even though they can only reflect the ideas and concepts of the space and

time in which they were conceived. That is to state that these theories are one-directional, partial invalidity, time- and space-bound, selective, and ideological. The modernization theory, built upon the ideas of Max Weber and developed into a paradigm by Talcott Parsons, states that 'traditional' societies can be brought into the modern era with the assistance of developed countries (the U.S. and Europe). This reflects the convergence of all societies towards a singular Eurocentric modern.

However, the case of Indian modernity can be traced back to Gandhi's critique of modernity brought in under Western colonialization. Gandhi moves away to a certain degree from the concept brought in by the European Enlightenment that reason is above religion and, therefore, religion must be confined to a particular sphere, and logic must take over in the remaining sectors. Gandhi considered that all concepts emanate from a singular truth; therefore, all ideas of every religion, reason, and logic stem from cosmic truth. He argues that religions stemming from the truth are based on morality, and reason alone cannot provide a way toward modernity. This provides an ideological understanding of how modernity is multiple, not singular, and how various modernity concepts are based on the time and space in which they were conceived.

Gandhi's economic and political structure concepts also varied from Western ideas of capitalism and representative democracy. He propagated the concept of swaraj or self-rule, under which the concept of a government was considered detrimental to the people. People were conscious enough to enact rules and regulations for their communities and societies that best served the interests of the whole. Poverty may be a lifestyle choice of an individual based on their beliefs, but it is in no way a condition in which a human may have to live. His concept of modernity is economic freedom for all, not to have the freedom to accumulate as much wealth desired but freedom from the needs or, more precisely, their fulfillment for all. Moving forward with the concept of Indian modernity, in the era during the cold war, India progressed by adopting a non-aligned approach. It sided neither with communism completely nor capitalism. Keeping in consideration the political forces at work, they took the best from both concepts of modernization and, at the end of the cold war, band wagoned with the Western concept of modernization by presenting India as the world's largest democracy and a capitalist state (Kolge, 2009). However, Indian modernity in the current era does not reflect secularism nor does it follow the lead of the United States in respect to soft power.

Firstly, exploring the rise of the BJP to power in India alongside its policy of Hindutva shows that modern India is not the progression of secularism and democracy but the establishment of the hegemony of Hindus and Hinduism in India. This can be seen in the policies implemented in Kashmir, where a Muslim majority is assimilating into contiguous India by enacting laws that deprive them of the right to self-determination, which is a forebearer of democracy. More instability in modernity may result from the deterioration of political institutions, the emergence of regional nationalism, and increased societal demands on a collapsing core. According to (Eisenstadt, 2005), they also represent adaptation and increased power sharing. According to another theory, (Tambiah, 2005) contends that plural democracy gradually undermines India's propensity for tolerance and marginalizes minorities. Here, the potentially totalizing nature of the religious nationalism practiced by the BJP and its peers is again exposed.

Fundamentally, Indian modernity is based on Hindu modernity, in which the advancement of India is directly related to the progression of Hinduism as it takes roots in political, economic, cultural, and social spheres. On the economic front, modernization in India has taken a different route than Eurocentric modernization. The manifestation of European modernization reflects in the development of industry that has bettered the lives of ordinary people to a greater extent, providing more equal opportunities for all and, over time, reducing the economic disparity in the populous (the current situation in the U.S. is an

exception). However, it is not Eurocentric and holds its own concept of modernity. A case in point will be the farmer's laws recently enacted in India that will, for the country as a whole, have more generations from the agricultural sector yet will leave behind the small farmers that are in the majority and move forward with the wealthy farmers' oligarchy. In essence, this shows that modernity in the Indian context is a moving forward of the collective rather than of the individual, where the collective is contiguous to India and not its people as a whole.

The social theory of modernity in India revolves around how, unlike the West, India did not cut off the traditional aspects of its society when moving towards modernity. The emergence of modernity in India brought new concepts that challenged India's self-conceptions. According to Raghuramaraju, India nevertheless remains "largely a pre-modern society." However, this pre-modern view of self has resulted in a terrible conflict between these contending ideas about self-identity. He further argues that how modernity has been perceived and defined in one tradition or culture does not apply in another, with significant philosophical consequences (Brooks, 2012). While billionaires like Mukesh Ambani are among the top ten wealthiest people in the world, money, via capitalism, has not become the sole measure of success in society. The caste system is still alive, side by side with the move toward modernization. The technological and industrial advancements may have been brought in from the West. Regardless, their social, economic, and cultural application remains connected to their traditional Indian and Hindu roots. This is to say that the mobs will not follow Mukesh Ambani in the streets. In contrast, they will follow a religious leader, unlike in the West, where a preacher may not gather mobs to support a cause. However, billionaires like Elon Musk and Mark Zuckerberg definitely can, as in the case of cryptocurrency and the metaverse. The divergence can also be seen and argued in urbanization, family life (the nucleus family in the West and the joint family in India), and education, among other spheres.

Anthony Gidden characterizes modernity as a multi-dimensional phenomenon that has various dimensions. It contends that if the multiplicity of modernity existed formerly, India ought to have a variant of modernity. Considering India is a land of diversified cultures and plural ethnicities, modernity is demonstrated in terms of the social divisions of the nation and the socio-cultural conditions of diverse regions. Modernization in India commenced in the colonial era of British rule since multiple far-reaching structural and other social changes were witnessed in Indian society during this epoch (Jemberie & Kumar, 2019). Despite this, there has been a rather prolonged debate on the permanence of modernity in India. (Shulman, 2005) argues that modernity in south India was evident several ages ago, before the intercommunication with the West and the advent of the modern age. He holds that it mutated organically from the existing local culture of South Indian society.

In this regard, most of the theorists of Indian modernity, notably Eisenstadt, debate and render that for centuries, India has been extensively performing under the complex operation of "fractured sovereignty." While pleading to the question of one crucial question that is above-mentioned, how society is interpreted as modern, an Indian sociologist, Dipankar, says several characteristics and segments must be present in Indian society to be known as a modernized society, which are: dignity and self-esteem of each living in a society, congruity to universalistic norms, culpability in civic life, and an anti-racist approach towards oneself in all aspects. According to this Indian sociologist, if the factors mentioned earlier are present in society, it does not matter whether it has aligned on the same page with the same speed in technological development, consumerism, or in any other aspect as Europe and Western societies. Dipankar defines "inter-subjectivity as a core of Indian modernity, which, in simpler terms, stands out as a quality of being emphatic to each other living in a society and a state of substantive citizenship (Jodhka, 2013). Eisenstadt combats the Indian

political horizon, assuming that to match a totalizing vision of political order, India has scarcely any endeavours at restoring these political demands to be as fit as a fiddle at a mystical sight. In other words, the fundamental ideological dimension did not make up the essence and core component of the legislative struggle. Consequently, the shift that occurred in Indian modernity was not a revolution but rather an outcome of perpetual bargaining and power-sharing.

Although pluralism was imperative for the formation of modernities in the West as well as in India. (Eisenstadt, 2003) contends that earlier centuries were marked by more significant prejudice and ideological turmoil. For example, the Church and State in Europe may have been fragmented, but each side craved ontological control. Each side often discussed unity (under the supremacy of its unique grouping) as an ideal. Hinduism less frequently views politics as a place where one might find salvation. As a result, India has yet to entirely restructure the political system to conform to transcendental, totalizing views. In other words, the moral and intellectual dimension "did not constitute a central component of the political process and struggle." A significant change has happened in India, but more frequently due to ongoing, intense bargaining and power-sharing than a revolution.

Conclusion

The theory of Multiple Modernities is auspicious but a little latent and embryonic. The theory critically dissects the comparative cultural and civilizational approach by taking an Indian civilization as a case study. This paper has reviewed the best possible aspects of this theory by addressing its principal components. The case of Indian and Hindu modernities reflects that modernity is still very relevant. Indian and Hindu modernity offers vital insights into the concept of multiple modernities, questioning the premise that modernity is a homogeneous and universal phenomenon. By embracing varied traditions, values, and goals, Indian and Hindu modernism accepts the difficulties of contemporary life while retaining the richness of cultural legacy. The inclusive character, adaptability, and striving for harmony displayed by these modernities exemplify the potential for cultural diversity and pluralism to thrive within a globalized society.

However, modernity is no longer, or never was, a singular but a plural subject. Multiple modernities are the way to understand how modernization will move around the globe in different regions. Chinese modernity came forward in the post-colonial period when the cultural, political, and economic practices of ethnic Chinese filled the gap left by the leaving colonial powers. This statement reflects that the Chinese concept of modernity existed but was overshadowed and suppressed by the colonial powers that had taken hold. A similar case existed in India, with the case study above showing an oscillation between convergence and divergence.

According to the critics, the trajectory of the modernities in each civilization modifies in compliance with their sociocultural histories and backgrounds. The evident differences among cultures, civilizations, and ethnicities cannot be revoked. However, these differences are less requisite than the disparity between the pre-modern and modernized epochs of social realities. On the one hand, the conviction of multiple modernities incites homogenization within a civilization; on the contrary, alternative modernity and varieties of modernity inflate doubts on this impression considering they chiefly support the institutions, which have been thoroughly scrutinized earlier in the paper. The theory of "alternatives to Multiple Modernities' is also profoundly examined. In the post-modern era, unrolled new cultures and civilizations led to a distinguished transition of modernism, consequently devising different outcomes for each modernity. Nevertheless, the theory of 'Multiple modernities" is not presumed to be a closed-ended horizon, but an open closed-ended, holding scopes for

multiple interpretations and switching from unidirectional trajectories of evolution, accompanies a single rationale towards multiple directions. Multiple modernities are assorted, and which, while declaring the actual multipolar realities of the twenty-first century, transcends idea-type modernity.

Modernity has been understood from a Eurocentric point of view mainly because of the prejudice of the 'white man' and his 'burden' to enlighten the rest of the world (Kipling, 1899). The Enlightenment came forward in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, propagating logic and reason and setting aside the hold of the Catholic Church in Europe. Alongside this, the rise of colonialism conquered the 'rest' and 'enlightened' them based on the epistemological realities of European thinkers and philosophers. Therefore, the modernization that has been seen over the last century has reflected a Western discourse since it was the Western pole that dominated the world. However, with the shifting currently seen towards multipolarity, as seen in the rise of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), there will be a multipolar rise in modernity, explained as multiple modernities. Thus, modernity still matters when seen through the lens of multiple as the rise of regions in their fashion: China with nationalism and cooperation or India centered around Hinduism.

In addition, one of the most significant elements in the discourse on modernity was the emphasis on the ongoing conflict between more "traditional" segments of society and the so-called modern centers or sectors that emerged within them. There was also an underlying contradiction between modernity's culture and the modern "rational" model of the Enlightenment, which emerged as dominant in some times and places while others were perceived as embodying the more "genuine" cultural traditions of particular societies. While modernity's cultural program, as it emerged in the West, served as the initial common denominator, more recent developments have seen a variety of cultural and social forms that go far beyond the very homogenizing elements of the original version. These events all point to the emergence of various modernities, or diverse interpretations of modernity, and, most importantly, to attempts to "de-Westernize," stripping the West of its hegemony over modernity.

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