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Original Article

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Participation of young people in online social communities: an exploration of attitudes among university students in a case study in Spain

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the different dimensions of online citizen participation for the purpose of delving into the types of engagement that are being developed in order for citizens to benefit from the opportunities offered by the Internet. A self-administered survey has been carried out with 420 students from a Spanish public University (Universidad Rey Juan Carlos) from its five campuses in Madrid. A typology of attitudes has been developed, firstly with factor analysis, and then with a varimax rotation. Moreover, a hierarchical linear regression has been applied in order to discover the variables that might predict the typology of participation. The study shows that online participation is a complex phenomenon influenced by multiple personal and social factors. The results have revealed three points of view: 1. Scepticism toward the ability to exert influence; 2. Social networks as a channel for maintaining social contact and expressing opinions; and 3. Capability of empowering users. Certain attitudes toward social networks can predict online participatory behaviour in different types of profiles on these networks. Furthermore, age does not affect online participation, and gender only has an influence on sports and media profiles.

Keywords: online participation, attitudes, motivations, young people, social network, Internet.

Introduction

Social networks allow citizens to contribute their opinions by providing feedback to institutions and public figures beyond the private sphere of friends and family, and enabling them to have an influence on decision-making in public life. Having contact with organisations and figures linked to collectives such as politicians, political parties, administrations, associations, or journalists, in order to convey opinions, complaints or demands, is a fundamental feature of participation, as well as social and political activism (Anduiza et al., 2010; Ganuza & Francés, 2015; Hargittai & Shaw, 2013; Yamamoto, Kushin, & Dalisay, 2015). Ganuza and Francés (2008) coined the term *institutionalized individual participation* to describe such activity. From time to time, the issue of participation by young people is raised as a subject of concern (Hart, 1997; Linmer & Kaufman, 2002; Benedit, 2020), which has been examined from highly diverse

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perspectives, ranging from social points of view (Balsells, Fuentes-Peláez y Pastor, 2017) to others within the scope of communication (García, del Hoyo & Fernández, 2014; García-Jiménez, López de Ayala & Montes-Vozmediano, 2020). Nevertheless, young people can also participate with other public profiles such as companies, celebrities, youtubers, etc., by offering their opinion, sharing content, or asking questions. Moreover, activities connected with relationships and entertainment are the most common paths taken by young people (García-Jiménez, López de Ayala, & Gaona, 2012).

Piechota claims that social media can contribute to the development of horizontal communication, creating groups and communities as well as active support for different kinds of social participation (Piechota, 2014). Online participation indicates an active personal contribution that implies varying degrees of involvement and commitment (Muntinga, Moorman & Smit, 2011), yet there is no consensus about which types of activities are considered participation in the sphere of social networks. Thus, many authors consider *Likes* to be a low-effort action and are reluctant to consider these acts as participation (Soyer, Cornelissen & Karelaia, 2013). However, very few users create their own content and share their ideas publicly online (Brake, 2014; Men & Tsai, 2013; Livingstone & Helsper, 2007), which would result in a greater degree of involvement on social networks (Kalsnes, Olof, & Gunn, 2017).

Social participation in the digital sphere requires attitudes that are compatible with sharing, collaborating, contributing to the community, and shaping people's willingness to engage. According to McGuire (1986), in a broad sense attitudes refer to a set of beliefs, feelings and tendencies of an individual that support a certain behaviour. Being of a social nature, these attitudes are also shaped by the evaluation of previous experience, expectations, and self-efficacy. As such, the expectations and consequences that individuals anticipate regarding their participation in commenting on different social network profiles guide the decision to participate in such spaces in order to influence the decision-making processes. As suggested by Ünal (2017), the freedom of expression inherent in the digital sphere creates a sense of self-efficacy in the user that can act as a condition that fosters civic participation. However, this author has also revealed certain beliefs that might limit the use of social networks as channels for political expression, such as those related to personal consequences resulting from actions taken by a public authority, as well as the social or political usefulness of online activities.

In this context, a growing body of research has analysed the way in which the Internet can contribute to social and political participation among young people, and especially their motivations for contributing to these participative spaces (López-de-Ayala & Paniagua, 2019). However, in spite of the fact that the literature has described different online participation patterns (Shaw & Hargittai, 2018; Muñiz et al., 2017; Brake, 2014; Hargittai, Connell, Klawitter & Litt, 2014; Morán & al., 2017; Livingstone & Helsper, 2007), as well as attitudes toward the Internet and social networks (Joyce and Kirakowski, 2015; Haight, Quan-Haase & Corbett, 2014; Tsai, Lin & Tsai, 2001), studies that examine the ways in which attitudes influence participation on social networks are scarce. This study aims to explore the different dimensions of online citizen participation by young university students through their actions of sharing comments, and to discover the predictors of online participation. In particular, attitudes toward social networks have been analysed.

Theoretical framework

Network participation occurs for various reasons, and technology has contributed to changes in the intensity and types of participation in which people engage, an example of which is the nearly universal use of smartphones (Montes, Pastor, Martín-Nieto & Atuesta, 2020).

According to Preece, there are generally two main types of environments: a "Community of Practice (CoP)", and a "Community of Interest (CoIs)" (Preece, 2007). A CoP will seek either professional improvement or enhanced competence in a subject in which the participant is an expert. The CoIs will seek improvement in the context of learning. Wenger defined CoPs according to a social theory of learning that includes learning by doing (practice), learning as experience (meaning), learning as becoming (identity), and learning as belonging (community) (Wenger, 1998: 188). There are many other possible classifications, but in all of them the common point is the different motivations that lead the user to participate, as the motivations are the components that determine behaviour (Maslow, 1943: 371).

However, the concept of participation itself is complex. Koh et al. (2007) distinguish between passive participation (viewing or lurking), and active participation (posting). Nevertheless, a key issue highlighted by Malinen (2015) is the uncertainty regarding the concept of 'poster' and 'lurker', which has been investigated by diverse research studies. For Kim & Ketenci (2019), there are three levels of participation: the peripheral participant, inbound participant, and full participant. Finally, another way of considering participation is according to contexts: online and offline.

Koh et al. (2007) believe that from a social perspective, a virtual community is weak due to the fact that it is difficult to maintain an authentic idea of community when compared to what occurs in an offline community. According to Nielsen (2006), participation is distributed following the 90:9:1 rule (90% inactive, 9% occasional participants, 1% active). There are three elements that influence greater or lesser participation. On the one hand, there is the impact of technical aspects that help to create a social feeling, such as avatars, images or video chats. The second element is the presence or absence of leaders in the virtual community. Finally, there are technical-communicative factors such as greater or lesser difficulty in accessing the social network, navigating through it, usability issues, etc., which influence activity on the network as well (Koh et al., 2007: 70-71).

According to research conducted on social networks, participation seems to depend to a greater or lesser extent on the type of social network involved, among other reasons (Arguello et al., 2006). This is partially in line with Maslow's motivational theory of the hierarchy of needs, because although he proposed an ordering of needs, he also observed alterations in the hierarchy (Maslow, 1943: 395). The researcher Nov (2007) has studied eight possible motivations in collaborative networks: career, enhancement, fun, ideology, protection, social aspects, understanding, and values. The highest motivation-participation correlations were found in the categories of fun, understanding, enhancement, and protection (Nov, 2007). Koh et al., 2007 (cited in Malinen, 2015: 229) agree with this assertion, as they have also found a positive correlation between having fun and the number of contributions.

Nevertheless, such motivations change according to the type of social network involved. Chan et al. (2017) have studied participation in informal medical communities, which are less strict than traditional channels for knowledge dissemination (an example of which is scientific journals), in which debate and participation are truly public and current. Staying up-to-date or circulating possible findings are the obvious motivations. On the other hand, in creative communities related to music or photography, for example, the motivation that makes users participate is receiving feedback about their work. Social networks are not only defined by their theme, but by their size as well. The larger they are, the weaker they are as social entities, because they become more uncontrolled: some participants may engage in inappropriate or unpleasant conduct toward the rest of the community, and the result is often lower participation (Wellman et al., 2001).

The reasons for participation also seem to depend on the profile of the participant (professional-consolidated or amateur-basic), because their interests are different. In this sense, the results are confusing or contradictory. According to Tausczik & Pennebaker (2012), no

relationship has been found between the degree of participation among experts (to help others) and non-experts (aimed at using resources to learn mathematics, for example). Personality seems to have an influence as well. Even though extroverts spend less time in online communities, they participate more than introverts (Nov et al., 2013). According to these same authors, the higher the emotional stability of the participants, the lower the possibility of social anchoring in an online network, based on personality profiles and experimental research. Likewise, people who use a social network for a longer period of time tend to participate more (Wellman et al., 2001).

Cultural values also seem to be related to participation and to the type of social network chosen. For example, materialistic values are related to participation in sports-related or multiplayer social networks (competitiveness), while people with less materialistic values participate in health, religious, or social assistance communities (Grace-Farfaglia et al., 2006). The use and gratification theory is present in these situations. Johnen, Jungblut and Ziegele (2017) have confirmed that in the specific case of networks promoted by moral issues (and more specifically by moral panic or a feeling of fear in society), participation is linked to establishing moral limits and the desire to achieve social recognition. In this case, the social context plays an important role in the level and type of participation. However Tejedor, Carniel & Giraldo (2019) have observed similarities in the use of social media by young university students in countries with significant economic differences. Thus, it is important to continue conducting research and searching for aspects that reveal nuances in the contributions of different studies.

The issue of gender is controversial. Although some studies seem to show differences in use according to this factor (Gaspard, Hors, Gómez & Pink, 2020), gender seems to have an influence in conjunction with personality, at least for certain ages, as outgoing women ask less questions than outgoing men (Cullen and Morse, 2011). For these authors, there is no predominant personality type among the participants in a social network, but the motivations to participate in them are indeed related to personality. People with an agreeable profile (understanding, good-natured, cooperative, and lenient) spend less time on the Internet, despite seeing it as useful. Conscientiousness personalities (self-disciplined and strong-willed) spend less time on leisure networks on the Internet, yet they regularly use networks that are useful to them. Extroverts spend less time on the Internet but are more participatory, and are motivated to express an opinion and willing to share information. Neurotics (people with a "lack of psychological adjustment and emotional stability", Cullen and Morse, 2011: 3), are less likely to participate actively.

Other more comprehensive reasons have been studied as well, including research by Preece, Nonnecke and Andrews (2004), who concluded that there are a wide variety of reasons for low participation: feeling that participation is not necessary, distrust of the social network, feeling the need to be helped (but not participate), or even technical problems (usability issues), were some of the reasons that prevent users from participating, whereas Nov (2007: 62) found that Career, Enhancement, Fun, Ideology, Protection, Social aspects, Understanding, and Values were possible motivations

If online networks are compared to off-line networks, one can observe that triggering factors in the formation of offline groups, such as age, gender, educational levels, geographical origin, etc., are not features that determine participation, or a lack thereof, in an online social network (Bisgin et al., 2010, cited in Malinen, 2015: 234). However, some studies have established a relationship in this regard (Wellman et al., 2001). Butler & Princeswal (2010) have showed that many actions and mobilizations occur as a one-time response.

In short, the results are not consistent due to variability in the type of network, participant, gender, and country, among other factors. This highlights the importance of knowing the motivations involved in network participation, which confirms the need for their continued

exploration, given their current unpredictability. According to Wohn et al. (2012) (cited in Malinen, 2015: 233), participation can be defined as "non-conscious habits" .

In a previous study by one of the authors (López de Ayala & Paniagua, 2019), which examined the motivations that affect online participation among five types of public profiles on social networks, a variety of reasons were found as to why different profiles make comments, and similarities were revealed among NGOs and celebrities, as well as political and other influential profiles.

A key factor closely related to motivation is attitude, with the latter being less goal-specific (Van Deursen & Van Dijk, 2015), although some studies have approached them as being integrated. Attitudes can generally be defined as predispositions to respond in a positive or negative way to specific stimuli (Fabrigar & Wegener, 2010). These predispositions arise from the long-term organization of beliefs and cognitions about a topic, or social representations (Moscovici, 1988), which are learned through interaction with others and are considered to have a strong influence on behaviour. Although there is great controversy regarding the influence of attitudes on behaviour, with low levels of correlation between the two, as well as results that are inconsistent in a large percentage of studies with surveys (see Chaiklin, 2011), researchers Van Deursen and Van Dijk (2015) have demonstrated that attitudes directly and indirectly influence the diversity of Internet use. This supports the view of Jonassen (1955, cited in Claiklin, 2011) regarding the ability to predict behaviour from attitudes in non-problematic areas.

Similar to the diversity of Internet use, attitudes and social representations are considered to have an effect on social network use to the extent that beliefs about the effects and consequences for society, or for the users themselves as a result of participation on social networks, may affect this participatory behaviour on such networks, as suggested by use and gratification frameworks (Larose & Eastin, 2004). Thus, those who have a positive attitude toward technology and expect positive results from online contributions will tend to participate more than those with opposing attitudes.

Although multiple studies have described the attitudes and motivations of individuals toward the Internet or have sought to develop scales to measure such attitudes (Tsai & Lin, 2004; Joyce and Kirakowski, 2015; Cai, Fan y Du, 2017), the amount of research that has analysed the influence of these factors on participatory online behaviour is scant. This statement can also be extended in the case of social networks.

Objectives and methodology

This exploratory study aims to examine different dimensions of online citizen participation by young university students based on their sharing of comments, in order to delve into the types of participation that young Spanish people are developing in order to benefit from the opportunities offered by the Internet, and to augment their ability to become actively involved as citizens of an increasingly virtual world. More specifically, the aim is to discover different spheres of online participation linked to political, social, economic, and leisure facets of their lives, and factors that promote or reduce greater participation by young university students in diverse online profiles on social networks. The reason for focusing on this age group is due to the boundless use of social networks among students and young people aged 16 to 24, which has reached percentages that are higher than the rest of the overall population in Spain (over 90% versus 64.7%) (INE, 2020). In addition, youth culture has been associated with digital media defined by participation and the production of "user-generated content" (Jenkins, 2006; Deuze, 2006).

This paper is based on a self-administered survey carried out with young university students (18-24 years old; N=420) at Rey Juan Carlos University (Madrid, Spain), a public university in the Autonomous Region of Madrid with five campuses located in the City of Madrid, Alcorcón, Móstoles, Fuenlabrada, and Aranjuez, in addition to online students as well. All the courses are represented, as well as four branches of knowledge in proportions that are similar to the overall data at Rey Juan Carlos University. The survey respondents are 73.3% women and 26.7% men, and the average age is 20 years old.

A questionnaire with closed questions was conducted in the classroom. Moreover, the survey was tested prior to being used in order to ensure that it was understandable and consistent. The completed questionnaires were filtered on the basis of the consistency of the information reported. A database was generated using the information collected, which was processed using the SPSS Statistics 26.0 statistical package.

Table 1. Sample demographics and characteristics

	Percentage				Percentage	
Sex	Male	26.7	Time spent on		M-F	Weekend
	Female	73.3	social networks	Less than 2 h	24.6	15.1
				Between 2-3 h	33.7	30.4
Status	Studying only	76.8		Between 3-5 h	27.2	27.0
	Studying & working	23.2		More than 5 h	14.3	27.3
Age	18	19.3	Branches of	Social & legal Sciences		69.6
	19	20.0	knowledge	Engineering & Architecture		3.3
	20	29.0		Health Sciences		11.9
	21	17.1		Arts & Humanities		15.2
	22-24	14.5				
Year						
	1	36.7				
	2	37.1				
	3-4	26.2				

Source: prepared by the authors

Method of Analysis

In order to discover the underlying dimensions of online participation among different profiles on social networks on which undergraduate students have commented, an exploratory factor analysis has made it possible to reduce a set of variables to a lower number of unobserved latent variables called factors. This statistical method describes variability among observed, correlated variables and creates a model as linear combinations of the potential factors, thus avoiding redundancies. Afterward, a new analysis was carried out in order to reveal which variables are able to influence the different types of online participation of sharing comments in public profiles. Specifically, we are interested in determining whether there is a correlation between the dimensions of online participation among young university students and variables related to the characteristics of the students, the time they spend on the Internet, and attitudes and beliefs related to social networks. To achieve this aim, a hierarchical linear regression analysis was carried out in order to explore the predictive power of diverse variables introduced sequentially.

Measures

Participation by commenting in profiles on social networks

In this study, participation by users is seen from a restrictive point of view that implies participation in conversations by making comments, as well as by asking and answering questions in public profiles, as the user's contribution requires greater effort, which corresponds to a higher level of involvement and commitment (Kalnes, Olof & Gunn, 2017) with specific motivations (López-de-Ayala & Paniagua, 2019). Additionally, contributions have been gathered from diverse public profiles due to the fact that online participation is directed toward a broad audience beyond interpersonal online communication (Hoffman, 2012), with the ultimate goal of having an effect on the social environment. The people in the sample were asked how often they participate in conversations, comment, or ask and answer questions on a list of social networking sites, with the following possible responses: never (0), rarely (1), sometimes (2), and frequently (3). Table 2 gives the full texts of the items and descriptive statistics for this question.

Table 2. Users who share or comment in different profiles (in percentages)

	Never	**Rarely**	**Sometimes**	**Frequently**
Public authorities	84.2	12.2	3.3	0.2
NGOs	80.5	14.7	4.1	0.7
University/Colleges	69.8	19.2	8.9	7.8
Companies and brands	72.9	15.9	7.8	3.4
Civic Platforms created from social networks	83.0	10.6	5.5	1.0
Cultural organisations	77.2	16.1	5.3	1.4
Sports clubs, associations & federations	71.1	16.7	8.1	4.1
Sports figures, actors, and singers	59.6	20.2	13.9	6.3
Media	62.8	23.3	10.3	3.6
Television programmes	64.5	18.2	13.2	4.1
Political parties	77.8	14.1	6.0	2.2
Political leaders	79.2	12.4	6.2	2.2
Trade unions	85.9	11.2	2.4	0.5
Union leaders	87.4	9.7	2.2	0.7
Professionals and leaders in my field of study	60.9	24.0	10.8	4.3
Youtubers/influencers in leisure: television, films, music, games, sports events, etc.	53.4	24.5	1.1	7.0
Youtubers/influencers in fashion, beauty, nutrition, cooking, etc.	60.0	20.5	12.8	6.7
Youtubers/influencers in humour	61.7	20.5	11.3	6.5
Other youtubers/influencers	69.7	16.9	7.7	5.6

Source: prepared by the authors

The age when Internet was first used and time of Internet use

Empirical evidence shows that those with more Internet experience engage in a wider range of opportunities that involve creative activities (Livingstone, Haddon y Görzig, 2013). This issue

has two dimensions: the time spent on the Internet, and how long they have been Internet users. These aspects were applied to social networks. Thus, in addition to sociodemographic variables such as age and gender (with no conclusive results regarding their effect on online participation), we have included measurements regarding how long people have been using social networks and other media based on the age at which they began. This issue was addressed with a closed-ended question with four possible responses according to grouped age ranges: "< 7 years old", "7 to 9 years old", 10 to 12 years old" and "over 12 years old" " (consecutively coded as values from 1 to 4).

The Time of Internet Use variable was measured through the combination of two questions. The first was the following: "How often do you connect to social networks and other media?" There were four possible answers: "Every day or nearly every day", "3-4 days a week", "2 days a week", and "one day a week" (coded with values from 1 to 4). The second question referred to the time spent on social networks and other media, differentiating between school days and weekends. There were five possible answers: "less than 2 hours", "2 to 3 hours", "3 to 5 hours", "6 hours or more", and "I don't connect" (coded as values 1 to 4 consecutively, with the last one, "I don't connect", coded as value 0).

Attitudes toward using social networks for political purposes / perception of political self-efficacy on social networks

In order to gather the beliefs that characterise different attitudes toward social networks, either positive or negative, a series of statements was included with a scale of five levels of agreement or disagreement that registered the intensity of the interviewees' feelings about a given item (strongly disagree=1, disagree=2, uncertain=3, agree=4, strongly agree=5). Overall results are reflected in the following chart.

Table 3. Beliefs about social networks (in percentages)

	Strongly disagree	**disagree**	**Uncertain**	**Agree**	**Strongly agree**	**N (valid case)**
I feel better informed with social networks	1.9	4.8	15.3	57.3	20.9	417
Social networks allow for greater participation by ordinary people	1.2	3.4	24.7	4.8	25.9	413
I can express my opinions through social networks	2.7	5.5	23.6	42.9	25.3	415
Commenting on social networks is useless	12.0	27.5	39.5	14.5	6.6	408
I can keep in touch with people on social networks with tastes and hobbies similar to mine	1.2	2.2	15.1	53.1	28.5	418
Social networks allow me to keep in touch with my friends and stay up-to-date on things that happen in their lives	1.4	3.3	8.8	42.5	43.9	419
Nowadays, you're fully controlled on social networks	2.4	9.6	15.9	29.2	42.9	415

Social networks provide more power and control to ordinary people	4.1	14.6	40.3	29.1	11.9	419
Anyone can comment on social networks without fear of reprisal	19.7	32.9	22.3	15.6	9.6	417
You should be careful with information uploaded to social networks because it can have negative consequences	0.5	1.0	4.3	23.7	70.5	417
The comments I upload to social networks do not change anything	6.7	19.3	48.7	16.7	8.6	419
You can express ideas and opinions more honestly on social networks because of anonymity	5.5	15.3	2.6	36.8	18.9	419
The institutions on social networks aren't interested in our opinions. They're just posturing.	3.1	14.2	44.5	25.0	13.2	416

Source: prepared by the authors

We carried out a factor analysis in order to obtain a typology of attitudes toward social networks among young university students that summarises the thirteen assessments above. This method of extracting principal component factors maintains the maximum information of the variables in determining the factors. To extract the factors, eigenvalues lower than one were excluded.

The programme provided a five-factor solution that synthesized the information and explained the 60.48% variance. The analysis obtained a sampling adjustment of 0.701 (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy), which is enough, and an observed significance level of 0.000 (Barlett´s Test of Sphericity), which indicates that the model of correlations obtained is not due to chance. To improve the interpretation of the results, a varimax rotation was applied to the factors obtained. In this way, the features that define each of the five factors obtained could be defined more clearly and interpreted following the criteria of selecting scores of over 0.5. The results are reflected in the following chart.

Table 4. Rotated Component Matrix. Attitudes and representations about social networks

	Components				
	1	2	3	4	5
I feel better informed with social networks	**.665**	.026	.209	-.053	-.172
Social networks allow for greater participation by ordinary people	**.725**	-.084	-.038	.102	.108
I can express my opinions through social networks	**.641**	-.322	-.087	.090	-.075
Commenting on social networks is useless	-.367	**.719**	-.117	.010	-.003
I can keep in touch with people on social networks with tastes and hobbies similar to mine	.523	-.151	**.564**	-.079	.099
Social networks allow me to keep in touch with my friends and stay up-to-date on things that happen in their lives	.491	.016	**.520**	-.057	.195

Nowadays, you're fully controlled on social networks	-.038	.020	-.031	.178	**.736**
The comments I upload to social networks do not change anything	.002	**.862**	-.068	-.016	-.014
The institutions on social networks are not interested in our opinions. They're just posturing	-.022	**.549**	.348	.042	.128
Social networks provide more power and control to ordinary people	.373	.075	-.093	**.731**	.079
Anyone can comment on social networks without fear of reprisal	-.174	-.048	.239	**.790**	.003
You can express ideas and opinions more honestly on social networks because of anonymity	-.062	.057	**.753**	.187	-.059
You should be careful with information uploaded to social networks because it can have negative consequences	.021	.049	.089	-.112	**.770**
Eigenvalues*	2.736	1.752	1.218	1.153	1.003
Variance explained*	21.04	13.48	9.37	8.87	7.72

Extraction method: Principal components analysis. Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation.
a. The rotation converged in 10 iterations.
Items with scores of over 0.5 in bold.
Source: prepared by the authors.

The following factors were extracted from the survey:

Factor 1: Participation channel for ordinary people - information and expression. This factor comprises factor saturation and positive statements about social networks: "I feel better informed with social networks"; "Social networks allow for greater participation by ordinary people"; and "I can express my opinions through social networks".

Factor 2: Inefficiency as a tool for change. This factor is made up of the following items: "Commenting on social networks is useless"; "The comments I upload to social networks don't change anything"; and "The institutions on social networks aren't interested in our opinions. They're just posturing".

Factor 3: Anonymous social contact. This dimension comprises the following items: "I can keep in touch with people on social networks with tastes and hobbies similar to mine"; "Social networks allow me to keep in touch with my friends and stay up-to-date on things that happen in their lives"; and "You can express ideas and opinions more honestly on social networks because of anonymity".

Factor 4: Empowerment through free expression. This factor includes items related to user empowerment as a consequence of expressing their ideas on social networks: "Social networks provide more power and control to ordinary people"; and "Anyone can comment on social networks without fear of reprisal".

Factor 5: Prevention. This dimension includes items regarding control and negative individual consequences: "Nowadays, you're fully controlled on social networks"; and "You should be careful with information uploaded to social networks because it can have negative consequences".

Results

Online participation by young audiences

In order to obtain a typology among young university students of the dimensions of participation by sharing in profiles other than those of peers and family members, the nineteen items that refer to this issue in our survey underwent principal components analysis. This method of extracting principal component factors maintains the maximum information of the variables in determining the factors. To extract the factors, eigenvalues lower than one were excluded.

Finally, the program provided a four-factor solution that synthesized the information from these twenty items and explained the 73.43% variance. The analysis obtained a sampling adjustment of 0.900 (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy), which is very good, and an observed significance level of 0.000 (Barlett´s Test of Sphericity), which indicates that the model of correlations obtained is not due to chance. To improve the interpretation of the results, a varimax rotation was applied to the factors obtained. In this way, the features that define each of the four factors obtained could be defined more clearly and interpreted following the criteria of selecting scores of over 0.5. The results are reflected in the following chart.

Table 5. Rotated Component Matrix. Commenting on social network profiles.

	Components			
	1	2	3	4
Public Authority profiles	**.714**	.143	.300	.170
NGO profiles	**.733**	.167	.291	.159
University/College profiles	**.678**	.149	.220	.374
Company and brand profiles	**.658**	.313	.046	.369
Civic Platforms on social network profiles	**.761**	.161	.181	.004
Profiles of cultural organisations	**.707**	.122	.233	.196
Profiles of sports clubs, associations & federations	.212	.116	.183	**.756**
Profiles of sports figures, actors, and singers	.171	.404	.145	**.737**
Media profiles	.341	.453	.212	**.532**
TV programme profiles	.336	.393	.251	**.588**
Political party profiles	.222	.081	**.771**	.401
Political leader profiles	.252	.098	**.762**	.395
Profiles of trade unions	.266	.127	**.897**	.020
Profiles of union leaders	.254	.132	**.882**	-.013
Journalist profiles	.260	.304	**.617**	.394
Leisure Youtuber profiles	.156	**.835**	.169	.317
Fashion Youtuber profiles	.213	**.865**	.101	.114
Humorous Youtuber profiles	.175	**.810**	.120	.292
Profiles of other Youtubers	.155	**.858**	.100	.080
Eigenvalues*	9.11	2.34	1.43	1.10
Variance explained*	47.95	12.32	7.54	5.61

Extraction method: Principal components analysis. Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation.
a. The rotation converged in 6 iterations.

Items with scores of over 0.5 in bold. High score, but under 0.5, in italics.
Source: prepared by the authors.

Four factors were extracted from the survey. However, some items scored high in more than one dimension: "media profiles" had a very high score (under 0.5) in leisure participation and sports/media fan, which is not surprising. The final factors are given below:

Factor 1. Social participation. This factor includes variables of participation in profiles of social, cultural and economic organisations: "Public Authorities", "NGOs", "University/College", "Companies and brands", "Civic Platforms created from social networks", and "Cultural entities".

Factor 2. Leisure participation. This factor comprises the items "Leisure Youtubers", "Fashion Youtubers", "Humorous Youtubers", and "Other Youtubers".

Factor 3. Political participation. This consists of factor saturations and questions about participation in topics of political interest: "Political parties", "Political leaders", "Trade unions", "Union leaders" and "Journalists".

Factor 4. Sports and media fan. This factor includes items related to sports and television programmes: "Sports clubs, associations & federations", "Sports figures, actors, singers, etc.", "Media profiles", and "Television programmes".

Regression analysis

Based on factors that gather participation by commenting in different profiles, a hierarchical linear regression analysis was applied in order to discover the variables that could predict the typology of participation among young university students (Table 6).

Among the variables chosen to be included in the model as predictor variables, some were chosen that form an initial category linked with the characteristics of the students and their relationship to social networks ($p<0.01$ and $p<0.05$): gender (male=0; female=1), age, and age of first Internet use. A second set of variables was also chosen that relates to the time spent on the Internet: "number of hours of use on school days", and "number of hours of use at the weekend" ("frequency of use in days" does not correlate with the dependent variables and has not been included in the analysis). A third group of variables was linked to attitudinal variables.

It should be noted that no independent variables correlate with the social participation factor. Accordingly, the "online social participation" factor did not acquire significance levels for F (.418), which would allow us to speak of a linear regression model.

For the second factor, "participation in leisure profiles", the model selected explained 14.7% of the variance (R^2 corrected), with an F significance level equal to 0.000. Significant variables were "Age of first use", "Social networks as participation channels" (positive) and "Inefficiency of social networks as a tool for change" (negative).

Commenting in political profiles obtained a model with an explained variance of 4.7 % and an F significance level of 0.003. Predictor variables in this case would be Inefficiency of social networks as a tool for change (negative).

For the fourth factor, referring to "sports/media fan participation", the model explained 5.9% of the variance, with an F significance of 0.000. The predictor variables would be "Gender" (negative) and "Social Networks as participation channels" (positive).

Therefore, university students participate more in political profiles when they disagree with the idea that commenting on social networks is useless for changing things because institutions are not interested in their opinions. Students who start to use social networks at younger ages and think that commenting on social networks is useful for changing things, and that social networks allow for greater participation by ordinary people, participate more in leisure profiles. Males and those who see social networks as a participative channel engage more by commenting in sports and media profiles. Finally, no variable predicts commenting in social profiles.

Table 6.- Hierarchical linear regression of characteristics of the young students, time of use, and attitudes toward Social Networks

Variables	**Social participation**			**Leisure participation**			**Political participation**			**Sports/media participation**		
	B	**Beta**	***p***	**B**	**Beta**	***p***	**B**	**Beta**	***p***	**B**	**Beta**	***p***
(Constant)	.983		.248	1.442		.066	.037		.963	1.556		.056
Gender	.098	.044	.422	.047	.021	.675	-.191	-.090	.094	**-.472**	**-.214**	**.000**
Age	-.046	-.067	.226	-.032	-.047	.360	.032	.049	.365	-.029	-.043	.429
Age of first Internet use	-.004	-.003	.963	**-.326**	**-.207**	**.000**	-.106	-.071	.195	-.031	-.020	.710
Time spent on Internet on schooldays: hours	.042	.042	.574	-.027	-.027	.698	-.061	-.064	.384	.037	.037	.608
Time spent on Internet at the weekend: hours	-.122	-.129	.087	.129	.136	.050	.053	.058	.427	-.052	-.055	.449
Social Networks as participation channels	.020	.020	.723	**.190**	**.188**	**.000**	.092	.095	.085	**.109**	**.109**	**.046**
Inefficiency of social networks as a tool for change	-.077	-.076	.152	**-.158**	**-.157**	**.001**	**-.185**	**-.193**	**.000**	-.100	-.100	.051
Social networks for anonymous social contact	-.005	-.005	.930	.066	.067	.182	-.095	-.099	.060	.070	.071	.179
Empowerment through free expression on social networks	-.032	-.032	.549	-.026	-.026	.604	.057	.059	.260	-.095	-.095	.068
Social Networks as a tool of control with negative consequences	.074	.072	.178	-.094	-.092	.064	-.028	-.029	.585	.057	.057	.274

The results were obtained from a sample of 362 valid cases. Those values of the variables that are significant for $p<0.05$ and $p<0.01$ are shown in bold type.

Source: prepared by the authors

Discussion and Conclusions

Online participation is a complex social phenomenon influenced by multiple personal and social factors. Online participation potentially empowers users who contribute to social discussions by allowing them to provide opinions, criticism or suggestions in order to influence their social environment, which has sparked the interest of researchers. However, very few users share comments on social networks.

Despite interest in online participation, there has been very little academic analysis of these practices, and contributions in this area have focused on political, civic and, to a lesser extent, commercial participation (López-de-Ayala & Paniagua, 2019). Researchers have also scrutinised specific online communities. Nevertheless, few studies have analysed online participation from a comprehensive perspective (Lutz, Hoffmann, & Meckel, 2014), and only slight attention has been paid to the way in which attitudes and social representations toward the Internet affect participatory online behaviour, which can also be said of social networks. In this study, we have hypothesized that those who have a positive attitude toward technology and expect positive consequences from online contributions will participate more than those who have opposing attitudes.

The first conclusion to be drawn from the present work refers to the various dimensions of attitudes toward social networks and participation that can be observed according to the comments made on such networks. On the one hand, there is the position that highlights scepticism toward the ability to influence the social environment through participation on social networks, as well as obstacles to achieving results from such participation. On the other hand, a differing view asserts that social networks stand out as a channel for information and communication, as well as their capability of allowing users to maintain social contact and express opinions. Finally, a third perspective is related to the ability of participation to empower users thanks to the option of openly expressing ideas.

Secondly, the factor analysis carried out has differentiated four dimensions or types of profiles in which young university students have commented: social, leisure, political, and what we call sports/media profiles, with different variables having an influence in the participation in these spheres.

We shall now define the profiles of young people and their attitudes toward social networks that predict online participatory behaviour in different types of profiles on social networks:

1) Commenting in social profiles: no variable can predict this.
2) Commenting in leisure profiles is more likely among students who start to use social networks at a younger age and think that commenting on social networks can be useful for changing things, and that social networks allow for greater participation by ordinary people
3) Commenting in political profiles is greater among university students who disagree with the idea that commenting on social networks is useless for changing things because institutions are not interesting in their opinions.
4) Commenting in sport/media profiles: according to the model, this is more common among males and those who see social networks as a participatory channel.

Regarding socio-demographic variables, we found that age does not affect online participation in any dimension, and that gender only has an influence in commenting in sports and media profiles, with higher participation by males in this area. In addition, those who start using social networks at the earliest ages tend to comment more in leisure profiles. On the other hand, commenting in different profiles is contingent upon different attitudes and beliefs about social networks. Inefficiency as a tool for influencing change (in a negative sense), as well as

the idea of a participation channel for ordinary people, influence participation in different types of profiles. The former affects participation in leisure and political profiles, and the latter influences engagement in leisure and sports/media profiles. Thus, disagreement with the idea that commenting on social networks is useless for changing things fosters participation in political and leisure profiles. Finally, those who think of social networks as channels for ordinary people are prone to participate in leisure and sports/media profiles.

Our conclusion is that only a minority of students publish in profiles of entities that are not those of their own relatives or friends, and they do so more often in leisure profiles. There is no doubt that most students only look at what others publish in these profiles, yet do not contribute their own comments. In theory, this could be explained by the fact that few students believe that participation on social networks is useless for making an impact or changing things. This would indicate not only digital literacy, but also the need to foster certain values and attitudes such as sharing, collaborating and contributing to the community. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the R^2 (R-squared) (explained variance) in the resulting models were very low, except for the factor of online participation in leisure profiles, which stood at 15%. Specifically, the scores of the factors that summarize attitudes toward social networks and that influence online participation are very low, in contrast to the scores obtained from other social variables. This indicates that the relevance of attitudes toward the action of commenting in different public profiles on social networks is not very high, even if they refer to the effectiveness of commenting on social networks. According to Chaiklin (2011), these results are not surprising, as this author points out that most scientific evidence does not support the idea that attitudes guide behaviour.

From a psychological point of view, other authors have asserted that attitudes influence behaviour when they become objectives (Kruglanski, Baldner, Chernikova, Lo destro, and Pierro, 2018; Armintage and Christian, 2003; cited by Chaiklin, 2011), which lead to motivation.

Another possible explanation is that processes by which attitudes and cognitive dispositions translate into behaviour differ whether they are deliberate or spontaneous (Kahneman, 2003). According to Trafimow et al. (2004) (cited by Chaiklin, 2011), a distinction can be made between attitudes that stem from expectations about the consequences of behaviour and those that take into consideration the expectations of others (subjective norms that relate to symbolic interaction). Furthermore, Chaiklin (2011) (following Merton), suggests that the role of social structure is a factor that has a stronger influence on behaviour than on attitudes. In this sense, we can see that the gender and age of first Internet use achieves scores that are higher than attitudes in fostering participation in commenting in public profiles.

In conclusion, our results suggest that other variables should be taken into account as well, referring specifically to situational factors related to the social structure or personality variables that moderate the attitude-behaviour relationship, or that act as a stronger factor in influencing online participation. In this regard, from a psychological point of view, Cullen and Morse (2011) have proven that personality variables such as the degree of extroversion or introversion can influence participation in social networks. Another possible variable that affects online participation is self-efficacy, which Hoffmann, Lutz and Meckel (2015) have confirmed is a powerful factor in influencing online participation, with substantial increases in the variation explained.

Regarding the implications of this study, our data show that despite the fact that young people of these ages are already starting to become interested in issues related to their broader environment, they manifest a high degree of scepticism toward the relevance of their participation in social networks, to the extent that they do not believe this implies real consequences for the social and political reality. Together with a general mistrust of politics (*Observatorio de la Juventud en España*, 2017), this explains why their participation is largely

limited to leisure and entertainment profiles. Only a receptive attitude on the part of institutions toward the feedback received from social networks that would give rise to real changes can modify this attitude and foster greater participation by young people, generating a truly participatory culture that will allow the democratic promise to be fulfilled, which many have witnessed in the development of the new interactive media. Nevertheless, the data also point out the limited importance of attitudes in influencing online participation. Thus, if we want to encourage this type of practice, we must focus attention on other social and psychological factors.

This study is not without limitations. Our concept of online participation is not based on participation in community profiles that do not appear on the list of public profiles included in this article, nor on the creative contributions published on those profiles, yet it is valid to the extent that we believe participation is aimed at intervening in social dialogue in order to influence the social environment. Future research should delve more deeply into the relationship between attitudes and behaviour, examining different situational variables that might moderate this relationship.

Moreover, it should be noted that this is an exploratory study based on a sample composed specifically of young students at Rey Juan Carlos University. Although the sample is varied regarding the qualifications and fields of study of the students, the extent to which this sample is representative of university students in Spain is unclear. Although the analysis is explicative, it is necessary to approach the results with caution. Likewise, even though the commonplace belief holds that young people adopt avant-garde behaviour that subsequently spreads to the rest of society, or that such youthful behaviour persists throughout a person's life, caution must be exercised in not confusing the age effect with the generation effect. On the one hand, work and family obligations limit the free time available to older adults, whereas young people have more free time to dedicate to social networks, and on the other hand, the effects of age, cohort and historical context have an impact on attitudes and beliefs in complex ways. Future studies could delve into the effects of age and cohort on attitudes and beliefs regarding social networks, and how these factors influence online participation in different contexts.

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Beyond the Classroom Walls: The Case of Israeli Youths' Sense of Group Climate in Online and Offline Educational Environments

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Abstract: The study examined Israeli youths' sense of group climate in online and offline educational settings, i.e., in Instant Messaging (IM) groups organized by homeroom teachers for their respective students and in the physical classroom environment. Participants included 550 students (152 boys, 398 girls), of ages 10–18, who completed an online survey. The findings reveal that the students perceived the classroom climate to be more positive than that of the IM group in which the homeroom teacher is present. Furthermore, the more positive the perceived face-to-face (FtF) classroom climate was, the more positive the perceived IM group climate. In addition, when both class and IM group climates were perceived to be highly positive, a sense of non-violence among the participants was found to be the highest. These findings shed light on the unique phenomena of homeroom teachers who participate with their students in IM groups. Based on the findings, implications for educators and school counsellors are discussed.

Keywords: Adolescence, Group climate, IM Groups, Communication platform, Teacher-student relationship

Introduction

In the past three decades, there have been rapid developments in the field of information technology and accessibility, through the use of computers and the Internet. Different surveys from around the world present a clear picture of the intensive use of online applications among adolescents (Gunter & Gunter, 2019). These data are evidence of a rising trend, according to which the age of smartphone users is decreasing and the percentage of young users is increasing. In this state, when adolescents and children own mobile phones and are accustomed to using them daily, it is only natural that a growing portion of their social interactions would also take place in cyberspace (Shapka, Onditi, Collie, & Lapidot-Lefler, 2018), specifically through instant messaging applications that enable them to conduct private conversations with their peers (Klein, Junior, Barbosa, & Baldasso, 2018). Instant Messaging (e.g., WhatsApp application) is one of the most popular communication platforms among adults and adolescents in Israel (Addi-Raccah & Yemini, 2018; Hershkovitz, Elhija, & Zedan, 2019). The Instant Messaging (IM) application enables private or group synchronized conversations, free transfer of photos, videos, and voice-recorded messages, features that attract a great crowd of users (Peter, Valkenburg, & Fluckiger, 2009).

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The class climate is greatly affected by the relationship between the teacher and the student. It appears that this relationship is perceived by students as being of crucial importance in terms of their enjoyment of learning and their time spent in the school in general (Gest, Welsh, & Domitrovich, 2005). Furthermore, a positive teacher-student relationship plays an important role in facilitating students' optimal development. Hence, these relationships should be characterized by warmth, closeness, and absence of conflict (Driscoll, Wang, Mashburn, & Pianta, 2011).

The current study explored the class climate as expressed in class-wide IM groups managed by the homeroom teacher who is the main educator, supervisor, organizer, and contact person for students and their parents (Roorda, Jorgensen, & Koomen, 2019). These groups can contribute to and have a substantial positive or negative effect on group climate, especially in light of the fact that the online environment of cyberspace affords the removal of constraints. Consequently, the behaviors manifested in these environments include bullying, harassment, and shunning, alongside altruism and support (Lapidot-Lefler & Barak, 2012; Dolev-Cohen & Barak, 2013).

The class-wide IM groups have become a prevalent component in the classroom functioning in Israel and are used as a tool for information transfer between the homeroom teacher and the students within an online social space. Despite its great prevalence in Israel and the discussions on how these groups should be administered and conducted, the IM group dynamics have not yet been investigated from the students' point of view, their sense of the group climate, and especially in terms of the presence or absence of violence therein.

Related Literature

Class Climate and Cyberspace

One of the most significant environments for a young person is the school environment, in which they spend many hours of their day with the same companions; hence, the social and educational experiences that take place in the school environment tend to influence their identity development (Lambert, 1998; Oliver, Lambert, & Mason, 2019). It appears that the class framework gives rise to social processes that are affected by the characteristics of the physical environment, the students, the teachers, and additional organizational characteristics. All of the above influence the unique characteristics of the classroom: the behavioral norms; students' attitudes towards learning, performing chores, democracy, mutual help, and cooperation; as well as their communication patterns and their feelings of belonging (Oliver, Lambert, & Mason, 2019). As for the teacher influence, it was found that teacher–student online communication in times of war, may increase adolescents' wellbeing by providing the students emotional support (Ophir, Rosenberg, Asterhan & Schwarz, 2016). As mentioned, the relationship between the teacher and the students is significant and its role is even more pronounced in the class IM groups that are managed by the homeroom teachers.

The Appeal of Instant Messaging

Instant Messaging (e.g., WhatsApp) is one of the most popular communication applications in Israel (Addi-Raccah & Yemini, 2018). It seems that the nature of synchronic-textual communication conducted through instant messaging can be appealing to different people for different reasons. Thus, for example, it was found that people who are shy and find it difficult to create social interactions find it easier to communicate via this medium (Bardi & Brady, 2010). This finding is especially important when examining online communication among

adolescents, who have a great need for social interaction with their peer group (Steinberg, 2008).

Indeed, Valkenburg and Peter (2009) studied the long-term effects of communicating through instant messages on the quality of friendship among 812 Dutch adolescents, ages 10 to 17. Their findings indicated that the use of instant messaging by adolescents encouraged them to expose and share intimate information, which led to a strengthening of their relationships. This result was supported by another study, which examined communication through instant messaging among adult colleagues. That study found instant messaging (IM) to be a convenient platform for offering assistance, as it enabled reciprocity and sharing and intensified social connections (Lin & Chiu, 2011). Dolev-Cohen and Barak (2013) found that IM conversations improved the moods of adolescents who were experiencing emotional distress. This finding supports that of a study that compared IM communication with a stranger with a similar case of face-to-face communication. In both conditions, it was found that the interaction had contributed to the participants' sense of elation, but this positive feeling was more prominent among those who communicated via IM. The researchers explained this finding by noting that in IM, there is no need to impress one's interlocutor visually and that the participants tended to associate IM conversations with socializing (Green, Hilken, Friedman, Grossman, Gasiewski, Adler, & Sabini, 2005). Moreover, teachers' out-of-class communication in WhatsApp was found to be associated with better relationship with students and with better classroom environment (Abd Elhay & Hershkovitz, 2019).

Understanding the Cultural Context of Israeli Youth in the Online and Offline Space

Israel is described as a multicultural society. Although considered a Western industrialized society with mostly individualistic values, the Israeli ethos is characterized as more communal and more collectivist than that of the United States, (Lapidot-Lefler & Hosri, 2016; Sagy, Orr, Bar-On, & Awwad, 2001), emphasizing the central role of family (Goldner, Sachar, & Abir, A. 2019; Lavee & Katz, 2003) and the importance of the collective. The explanation for the latter is the need to rely on the collective in times of national crises, whereas the former is explained in relation to the prominence of the family in the Jewish tradition and religion. Strong and frequent contact with family members and especially with parents is maintained throughout one's life; it is a common practice that, even after marriage, children live near their parents and visit them frequently. These aspects are related to the strong sense of involvement that Israelis have regarding their country and their fellow countrymen (Mayseless & Scharf, 2007).

In line with this communal orientation, there is also a high degree of focus on peer groups. Israelis describe themselves in terms of their peer group frameworks and, from infancy on, children are encouraged to identify with their peer group (Lavee, & Katz, 2003). It is not uncommon for a child to be a part of the same group of peers from infancy to late adolescence. Furthermore, in Israeli culture, children are expected from early on to get along with their peers and to manage their "social problems" without adult interference. The education system emphasizes social cohesion (Scharf & Mayseless 2010).

Interestingly, the relative prominence of collectivism in the Israeli culture does not entail much submissiveness or adherence to rules, orders, or regulations. In fact, questioning and challenging authority is both common and appreciated in Israeli society (Mayseless & Scahrf, 2007). Nevertheless, it should be noted that, in general, social relationships of Israeli children resemble those of North American middle-class children in terms of emotional and instrumental aspects (Scharf & Mayseless 2010). Naturally, the relationships that Israeli youths maintain with their classroom peers and teachers are embedded in the culture and narrative of Israeli society. The implications of this cultural context are relevant to Israeli youths' sense of group climate and the potential for violence in online and offline educational environments.

The present study

As the literature in the field proves, many studies have examined different aspects of adolescents' feelings and experiences in the online arena; yet, to the best of the authors' knowledge, no study to date has examined students' sense of group climate and the potential for violence in a school-related IM group that includes the homeroom teacher. The current study relates to the classroom climate in the physical classroom and in the online IM group, with the homeroom teacher present in both realms. Class IM groups are very common in Israel and are used as a tool for information transfer between the homeroom teacher and the students while simultaneously providing an online social space.

This pioneering use of IM technology to extend the reach of the physical classroom is not a common practice in other parts of the world (e.g., North America or Japan). Despite its great prevalence in Israel and although there have been numerous discussions on how it should be administered and conducted, the phenomenon of classroom-based IM groups has yet to be investigated from the point of view of the students, particularly in terms of their sense of group climate and the potential for violence in them. This study is important, not only because it examines a unique phenomenon but also because it can illuminate aspects of students' interactions with the homeroom teacher and with their peers in a realm outside of the school framework, by focusing on the students' perspective and their perceptions.

The focus of this study is on students' sense of the group climate and the potential for violence as they participate in the classroom IM group, in which also the homeroom teacher is present and active. On the basis of previous research (Dolev-Cohen & Barak, 2013; Lin & Chiu, 2011; and others), we hypothesized that:

(a) Overall, students' IM group climate perceptions would be lower than their classroom climate perceptions, and correspondingly, they would indicate a stronger perception of violence in the virtual environment than in the physical classroom.

(b) A correlation would be found between students' class-climate perception and their IM group climate perception, such that the more positive the class-climate perception, the more positive too would be their IM group climate perception.

Methods

Participants

The current study included 550 adolescents, 152 boys (27.6%) and 398 girls (72.4%). Students' ages ranged from 10- to 18-years-old (M = 15.42 years, SD = 1.75); they were attending grades 4 to 12, in junior high schools (N = 158, 28.7%) and high schools (N = 371, 67.5%). All of the students reported being members of a classroom-based IM group that included their homeroom teacher and 97% of them (N = 532) reported participating actively in the group. The older participants (aged 16-18) were recruited via Facebook advertisements. The ad invited them to complete an anonymous online questionnaire for an academic research project. Those who chose to click on the link were directed to a landing page, where they found information about the study and were asked to obtain their parents' consent. Before they were given access to the questionnaire, they had to indicate that their parents did not object to their participation. Younger participants (aged 10-15) were recruited via their parents.

Instruments

The Short Classroom Environment Scale

The Classroom Environment Scale questionnaire (Moos & Trickett, 1987) was administered, to measure participants' perceptions of the classroom climate. The short CES, which was translated into Hebrew (and then back into English, by the researchers), included 36 items measuring three dimensions: Relationship Dimension, Personal Growth, and System Maintenance and Change. For the sake of the study, participants were requested to fill out the questionnaire in its entirety, but only the Relationship Dimension and System Maintenance and Change scales were actually used for hypothesis-testing in the current research. The scale items referred to respondents' perceptions of the environment climate in the classroom and of the relationship between the students and the teacher. For example: "Students in the class get to know each other really well", "This teacher spends very little time just talking with students." Items were presented in a true/false response format.

Due to a low internal consistency score, exploratory factor analysis was conducted (principal components with varimax rotation). Its results were inconclusive and did not match the theory underlying the Classroom Environment Scale. Hence, only the two central dimensions were used: the Relationship Dimension (α=.73) including all three subscales (*Involvement, Affiliation*, and *Teacher Support*), and System Maintenance and Change Dimension (α=.62) including three subscales (*Order and Organization, Rule Clarity*, and *Innovation*), but excluding the subscale of *Teacher Control*. The total score was calculated for the classroom climate (α=.82). Items were worded so that higher scores reflect a more positive class climate.

Applying the Short Classroom Environment Scale to the instant messaging environment

This questionnaire was administered to measure participants' perceptions of the climate of the IM group, in which the homeroom teacher was present and active. Exploratory factor analysis was used (principal components with varimax rotation) and yielded inconclusive results. In light of the items that were used, two dimensions were calculated as well as the total score: Relationship Dimension – α=.68 (8 items); System Maintenance and Change Dimension – α=.60 (6 items, without items 9, 10); Total score – α=.70. Scale means were calculated such that higher scores reflect a more positive climate.

Measuring the perception of non-violence in the instant-messaging group.

The Perception of non-Violence Questionnaire (Benbenishty, Astor, & Zeira, 2003) was used to measure participants' perception of non-violence in the IM group. The questionnaire includes four statements, e.g., "I usually feel safe in the classroom-based IM group in which the teacher is a member." Using a 5-point Likert-like scale, ranging from 1 ("not at all") to 5 ("very much"), participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with the statements of the questionnaire items.

Correlations between the four items ranged between r = .30 to r = .62 (p < .001). A principal components factor analysis revealed one factor, which explained 59.66% of the variance (Eigenvalue = 2.39). Thus, the total score was composed of the item means, such that higher scores reflect a greater sense of non-violence in the IM environment.

Procedure

The questionnaire was distributed via Facebook, according to age groups. Individuals who expressed their willingness to participate in the study received the online questionnaires asking about their experience in the IM group with their classmates and teacher. Participants were assured that the information they provided would remain anonymous and confidential.

Data Analysis

Pearson correlations were used to assess the relationships between the climate in the classroom and in the IM environment. T-tests were employed to assess the differences between them. The perceived violence in the IM group was described in terms of frequencies and percentages.
Multiple regressions were used to predict the perception of non-violence in the classroom and in the IM groups, adjusting for gender and grade level. Finally, using the standard deviations, four subgroups were defined (2x2), consisting of positive and negative climate perceptions both in the physical classroom and in the IM group. Univariate analysis of variance was used to assess differences in the perceptions of non-violence in the IM group between these four subgroups.

Ethical considerations

The current study examined youths' sense of group climate, which required the maintaining of participants' anonymity and secrecy. Therefore, participants were ensured full confidentiality of the information collected during the research. All the students reported belonging to an IM class group of which the homeroom teacher was a member. Prior to participation, participants were asked to indicate that their parents did not object to their filling out the questionnaire. All the participants chose to take part in the study and stated that their parents did not express any objection to their participation. Participants were not identified in any way. Furthermore, the participants received the researcher's contact details, so that they could obtain additional information, a copy of the results, or other details of interest, in accordance with the customary ethical standards.

Results

Classroom and Instant Messaging Environments

The findings of the study indicate significant differences between the mean scores attributed to the classroom climate and those attributed to the climate in the IM groups (see Table 1), revealing a higher positive climate in the classroom than in the IM group. Overall, means are moderate, being about 0.60 for the classroom and 0.50 for the IM group (range 0–1). Further, a significant correlation was found between the perceived class climate and the perceived IM group climate, such that the higher the class climate, the higher too was the IM group climate, as perceived by the students (Relationship – $r = .58$, $p < .001$, System Maintenance and Change – $r = .40$, $p < .001$, Total score – $r = .59$, $p < .001$). In addition, positive and significant correlations were found between Relationship and System Maintenance and Change, both in the classroom environment – $r = .58$ ($p < .001$), and in the virtual environment – $r = .27$ ($p<.001$).

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of Classroom Environment and IM Group Environment (*N*=550)

Dimension	Classroom Environment *M* (*SD*)	IM *M* (*SD*)	Differences *t*(549)
Relationship Dimension	0.62 (0.23)	0.53 (0.27)	8.34***
System Maintenance and Change Dimension	0.57 (0.20)	0.48 (0.28)	8.14***
Total Score	0.61 (0.19)	0.51 (0.22)	13.31***

***$p < .001$

Perceived classroom and IM climates did not differ by gender. They generally did not differ by grade level either (junior high versus high school), except for in the dimension of System Maintenance and Change in the IM environment, which junior high school students perceived to be higher ($M = 0.52$, $SD = 0.28$) than did high school students ($M = 0.45$, $SD = 0.27$) ($t(527) = 2.68$, $p = .008$). All gender by grade level interactions were non-significant.

Perceived non-violence in the IM group

The total mean score for perceived non-violence was rather high $M = 4.01$ ($SD = 0.96$), on a scale of 1 to 5, indicating that overall, students considered the IM group climate to be non-violent. A review of the results presented in Table 2 reveals that about 80% of the students felt safe in the IM group (which included the homeroom teacher), and about the same percent (78%) in the IM group felt that the homeroom teacher cared about non-violence – either "quite a lot" or "a lot." Nearly two-thirds of the students felt that the homeroom teacher was able either to manage students who misbehaved in the IM group (66%) or took active steps to lessen instances of violence in the group (64%). About 9% to 17% of the students considered the level of violence that occurred in such instances to be moderate, and about 9% to 20% of the participants viewed such instances as either involving a very low level of violence or non-existent.

About 9% to 17% of the students assessed the presence of violence components as moderate, and about 9% to 20% assessed them as not existent or as present, but only to a little extent. Categories 4 and 5 in the questionnaire were combined to reflect a low level of violence or non-existence of violence; participants responses indicated moderate level of category 3 components, and categories 1and 2 were combined to reflect high levels of violence (as shown in Table 2).

Table 2. Distribution of the perception of Non-violence in the IM group ($N = 550$)

In the IM group:	Not at all/ A little *N* (%)	Moderately *N* (%)	Quite a lot/ A lot *N* (%)
I feel safe	48 (8.7)	59 (10.7)	443 (80.5)

Homeroom teacher cares about non-violence	71 (12.9)	49 (8.9)	430 (78.2)
Homeroom teacher handles misbehaving students	93 (16.9)	96 (17.5)	361 (65.6)
Homeroom teacher acts to lessen violence	111 (20.2)	88 (16.0)	351 (63.8)

The total scores of perceived violence in the IM group did not differ by gender or grade level, nor by their interaction. Next, two multiple regressions were calculated, to assess the relationships between perceived non-violence in the IM group and the perceived climate in both the classroom and in the IM environment, beyond the effects of gender and grade level (see Table 3).

Table 3. Hierarchical Multiple Regressions to Predict the Perception of non-Violence in the IM Group (*N*=550)

	Perception of non-violence in the IM group					
	B	*SE*	β	*B*	*SE*	β
	Prediction by general scores			Prediction by dimension scores		
Gender	-0.06	0.08	-.03	-0.08	0.08	-.04
Age group	0.11	0.07	.06	0.14	0.07	.07
Classroom Environment total score	1.81	0.22	.36***	--	--	--
IM Environment total score	1.21	0.19	.28***	--	--	--
Classroom Relationship Dimension	--	--	--	1.05	0.20	.25***
Classroom System Maintenance and Change Dimension	--	--	--	0.79	0.21	.17***
IM Relationship Dimension	--	--	--	0.40	0.16	.11*
IM System Maintenance and Change Dimension	--	--	--	0.78	0.13	.23***
Adj. R^2	.31			.32		
	$F(4, 545) = 63.39$, $p<.001$			$F(6, 543) = 43.91$, $p<.001$		

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

Results reveal that classroom and IM climates were significantly and positively related to perceptions of non-violence in the IM group, beyond the effects of gender and grade level. The total scores of both the classroom and the IM climates were significant (in relation to perceived non-violence), as were the total scores of the four dimensions (Relationship and System Maintenance and Change X classroom and IM). The total IM group climate score explained an additional 5% of the variance ($p < .001$) in the perception of non-violence in the IM group, beyond the explanatory effect of the total classroom climate score. Likewise, the dimensions of Relationship and System Maintenance and Change in the IM group explained an additional 5% of the variance ($p < .001$) in the perception of non-violence in the IM group, beyond the explanatory effect of the total classroom climate scores.

Finally, an attempt was made to assess whether the gap between the classroom and the IM climates was related to the perception of non-violence in the IM group. For this purpose, four subgroups were composed:

1. Low classroom climate and low IM climate (both one SD below the mean)
2. IM climate scores higher than the classroom climate scores (with a difference of at least one SD), yet overall these scores were neither high nor low
3. Classroom climate scores higher than the IM climate scores (with a difference of at least one SD), yet overall these scores were neither high nor low
4. High classroom climate scores and high IM climate scores (both one SD above the mean).

This procedure yielded a classification that included 424 participants (77.1% of the sample). The remaining participants rated both the classroom and the IM climates as neither high nor low, but with no significant difference between them.

A significant difference was found in the distribution of the participants in the four subgroups ($\chi^2(4) = 72.38$, $p < .001$). A significantly low percentage corresponded to the subgroup of low classroom climate scores and high IM climate scores ($t(549) = 5.70$, $p<.001$) and a significantly high percentage corresponded to the subgroup of high classroom and low IM climates ($t(549) = 3.13$, $p=.002$), compared to the expected even distribution (see Table 4).
Table 4. Perceived Non-violence in the IM Environment by the Joint Distribution of Classroom and IM Environments ($N = 424$)

Table 4. Perceived Non-violence in the IM Environment by the Joint Distribution of Classroom and IM Environments ($N = 424$)

Scores for Perception of Non-violence: classroom environment	IM environment	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*
Low	Low	95	17.3	3.16	1.03
Low	High	42	7.6	3.77	1.20
High	Low	161	29.3	4.06	0.81
High	High	126	22.9	4.55	0.67

The perception of non-violence in the IM group was significantly different between the four defined subgroups of classroom and IM environments ($F(3, 418) = 48.26$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .257$). Posthoc Tukey analysis revealed that the perception of non-violence was the lowest when both environments were assigned low climate scores and highest when both environments were assigned high climate scores (see Table 4). The perception of non-violence was in between these values when one environment was evaluated as low and the other as high.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine students' sense of group climate and the perception of violence in online and offline educational environments, specifically, in the classroom and in an online, class-based IM-group environment. The study was conducted within the cultural context of Israeli society, where (as mentioned above, Hershkovitz, Elhija, & Zedan, 2019) homeroom teachers typically initiate and participate in an IM group, which they establish specifically for use by the students in their respective classes. Due to this unique phenomenon, we chose to relate to the manner in which the students experience the two environments they share with the homeroom teacher: the physical one in the classroom and the online one in the IM group.

Hypothesis (A): A Sense of Poorer Group Climate and a Greater Perception of Violence in the Online Environment

Although there is a connection between the physical and the online environment and they are often a reflection of each other, the physical environment was valued at a higher quality than the online environment, thus confirming Hypothesis 1. In addition, participants perceived violence to be lowest when both class and IM group climates were strongly positive. This finding is highly important for understanding the students' experience in the IM group, which, as mentioned, has become an integral part of the school experience and a major means of communication with the homeroom teacher. A finding of an earlier study, which demonstrated that students' experience of the classroom climate is related to their scholastic success in school (Bulach, 1995), can further explain the current study's finding of a sense of poorer group climate and greater perception of violence in the online environment, where the role of scholastic success is relatively marginalized. Furthermore, a study that evaluated an intervention for improving the class climate provides evidence that student involvement and group consolidation are factors that play a significant role in students' perception of the group (in this case the physical classroom) climate (Shechtman, Weisery, & Kurtz, 1993).

Hypothesis (b): The Relationship between the Physical and the Online Environments: Reflection and Resonance

The findings of the study indicate a correlation between the perceived classroom climate and the perceived climate in the IM group, so that the higher the perceived classroom climate, the higher too is the perceived IM group climate, thus confirming Hypothesis 2. We found a positive correlation between the online and the physical environment in terms of students' sense of group climate and potential for violence. When the climate scores in the two environments were high, the students' perception of violence was the lowest (i.e., they felt safe), and when the climate scores in the two environments were low, the perception of violence was the highest (i.e., they felt the environment was unsafe).

This finding was repeated also with reference to both dimensions that were examined and which characterize the class climate: the dimension of Relationship with the teacher and the System Maintenance and Change dimension. It seems, therefore, that the perceived quality of climate in the cyberspace group is a reflection of the quality of climate perceived in the physical space. These findings support those of other studies in the field, which found correlations between various phenomena in these two spaces. For example, a relationship was found between cyberbullying and face-to-face bullying: those who experience cyberbullying also experience bullying in the physical space (Lapidot-Lefler & Dolev-Cohen, 2014). However, while the climate quality in the classroom is reflected in the quality of climate perceived online, the findings of the current study indicate that there is a difference in the extent of the positive or negative climate perceptions between the physical and the online groups. Thus, in the IM group, the rating of the positive climate was lower than the rating of the positive climate in the physical environment. The reason may be that online environment and online interactions are characterized by authenticity and bluntness, resulting from the process of online disinhibition (Lapidot-Lefler & Barak, 2012). This interpretation is supported by literature from recent years, whereby studies found that children and teens experience online bullying mostly from peers whom they know and with whom they share the physical space in the school or classroom (Lapidot-Lefler & Dolev-Cohen, 2014; Mishna, Cook, Gadalla, Daciuk, & Solomon, 2010). Therefore, it is not unlikely that also in these class-based IM groups, students might experience incidents of bullying (hence the importance of the homeroom teacher's presence in these online groups). It seems that the quality of the climate in cyberspace reflects the quality of the climate

in the physical space and vice versa. This relationship suggests that student-teacher relations in an online IM environment take on a social aspect. Hence, we may draw the conclusion that within the cultural context of Israeli society, where teachers initiate, participate in, and are in charge of a class-based IM group (Hershkovitz, Elhija, & Zedan, 2019), the boundaries between the classroom and the virtual environment are becoming less patent.

Implications

The role of the teacher

It seems that teachers have an important role in creating a safe space for students, and when they establish a class group through an IM application, they should strive to create a supportive and secure climate, with clear rules of behavior and interaction, to allow students to feel safe. Indeed, the current findings revealed that the majority of participants felt secure in the online environment and, it should be emphasized, they felt that the homeroom teacher played an active role in preventing or lessening the level of violence. Nevertheless, there was still a substantial portion of the students who felt unsafe and criticized the teacher's behavior in the online environment.

This finding is highly important and merits the attention of the professional community, especially in light of a previous study, which found that a high level of teacher competence correlates with good classroom relationships and fewer social problems (Breeman, Wubbels, Van Lier, Verhulst, van der Ende, Maras, Hopman, & Tick, 2015). It was also shown that teachers' involvement in programs for reducing classroom violence and especially the number of victims among the peer group is highly important (Guimond, Brendgen, Vitaro, Dionne, & Boivin, 2015). Although the importance of the teacher's role in monitoring and maintaining group safety has been established in the professional literature, the manner in which their role can be extended beyond the classroom walls remains unclear, especially in Israeli society, where the boundaries between adults and youths are less pronounced than in other cultures and the education system emphasizes the importance of social cohesion (Scharf & Mayseless 2010).

Study Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

The existence of clarity and explanation with respect to the nature of online interactions can contribute to the development and implementation of a clear set of rules intended to guide the behaviors of the students and the homeroom teacher in the IM group, so that the students feel safer. This study used a non-random sample. Further, participants in the current study responded to a Facebook ad published in the accounts of students of ages 10 to 18 (M = 15.42), offering the opportunity to participate in the study. However, given that the participants remained anonymous and did not meet the researchers, there is a chance that some of the participants are not in the predefined age range. Nonetheless, it may be assumed that even if this were so, these would be isolated and negligent cases that do not modify the significant study results. Future studies could add a qualitative methodology using semistructured interviews with the students, to thoroughly probe their experience. In addition, investigating teachers' and parents' perceptions regarding students' IM-based interactions may prove fascinating and could expand our understanding of the nature of both online and face-to-face communication between teachers and students.

Conclusion

This study has examined the climate of online IM groups consisting of homeroom teachers and their students, a common practice in the Israeli educational framework, and compared this with the class climate in the physical space. Thus, it has expanded our understanding of the relationship between the group climate and perceptions of violence in both the physical and the virtual environments (with the teacher present in both), as well as our understanding of the relationship between the physical and virtual spaces in which students and teachers interact. In an age when virtual interpersonal communication is prevalent and there exists a gap between the ways it is perceived by students compared to teachers' and parents' perceptions, there is clearly a need to gain an in-depth understanding of the implications that using this medium has for students' wellbeing and, consequently, its optimal frequency of use and role in school life. Furthermore, in these groups, given that the younger generation is often more familiar with the platform and its milieu than are the members of the older generation, the conduct of the teacher may model that of the students, which, in turn, underscores the teachers' need for clear instructions about maintaining rules of (their own and others') conduct in the online environment. If delivered in an organized and constructive manner, such guidelines could help teachers maintain a significant and educational role also in the virtual environment of the online class IM group. Likewise, developing a systematic educational program that clarifies the advantages and the difficulties in online communication, so as to support students in the online environment from a young age and throughout their schooling years, could lead to increased awareness and better communication between teachers and their students in the different environments of the educational experience.

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Fractured implicitness. Why implicit populism matters?

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Abstract: This paper aims to refine a theoretical and methodological approach in social sciences, namely implicit populism. To achieve this goal, the study aims to connect implicit populism and its counterpart, explicit populism to a specific research approach, namely the political communication style and introduce their contributions to the literature. Additionally, the paper introduces implicit populism's possible effects on content analyses to demonstrate its methodological potential. Finally, the study attempts to provide an aspect by which the antagonist part of implicit populism can be subcategorized. Therefore, new subdimension of antagonism might emerge in populism studies. The first focuses on the articulated enemy by employing, for instance, the signifier of 'dangerous people.' The second aims to explore the more sophisticated populist political style embedding the 'culprit others' in a concealed way. Consequently, expressions such as 'danger,' 'threat,' 'anger,' and 'hatred' are also parts of antagonism representing a universal and unarticulated problem that harmfully affects people.

Keywords: populism studies, explicit populism, implicit populism, populist political communication style, content analysis

Introduction

In recent years, populism has become one of the most-analyzed research fields within social sciences. Populism is a slippery concept that mostly lacks cohesion (Taggart, 2000), thus several definitions have emerged in the research field. Although there is no single definition that scholars accept (Zsolt et al., 2021), many of them agree with the idea that populism is a (thin) ideology (Mudde, 2004), stressing the core concept of the corruptness and goodness between the *elite*[1] and the homogenous mass of the ordinary people (Elchardus and Spruyt, 2016, Van Aelst et al., 2017, Pauwels, 2014). Other researchers consider populism as a discursive frame (Aslanidis, 2016), a style (Moffitt and Tormey, 2014), a performative style

[1]As an empty signifier, the 'elite' might refer to the political, economic, cultural, medical, or scientific one.

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(Bucy et al., 2020), a logic (Laclau, 2005b), an organization (Weyland, 2001), and a political communication style (Jagers and Walgrave, 2007, Bracciale and Martella, 2017).

Recently, a new analytical refinement has emerged in the research field, namely explicit (EP) and implicit populism (IP) relying partly on the *ideational* and the *stylistic* approaches (Tóth, 2020b). EP appears when a communicator directly refers both to the 'people' and their 'common enemy' in the very same coding unit stressing that the latter is harmful for the *volonté general* or disregards the general will (Mudde, 2004). IP focuses on either the popular sovereignty or the threat that the 'dangerous' others represent for the general will (Hameleers, 2018). Even though this refinement is an essential contribution to research field (see the explanation in the subsequent sections), at least three gaps emerge in the paper (Tóth, 2020b) that introduced the concept. Two gaps connect to the theory, while the third relates to the methodology. First, the study above highlights that populism is a thin ideology and it also regards it as a political communication style. It is important to mention that Tóth (2020b) refers to an argument that considers populism both as a thin ideology as a political communication style (Pauwels, 2011). Although this argument is acceptable, choosing a theoretical aspect that suits best EP and IP would be an important step towards cleaning these refinements' goals and feasibility. We aim to fill this gap by choosing the most relevant theoretical background for EP and IP, namely the political communication style. Second, Tóth (2020b) argues that IP implies either people-centrism or antagonism, but he does not discern further categories within the implicit stye. This paper aims to develop different IP categories to help scholars detect, measure, and analyze the phenomenon in future studies focusing on one of the vital attributes of the populist style: antagonism that emphasizes that specific agents or vague entities threaten the people's sovereignty or the general will. We aim to provide an approach by which researchers might recognize the diverging populist political communication styles (PPCS) by implementing supplemented categories relying on antagonism. Finally, the former study lacks exact arguments how EP and IP contribute to content analysis methods. We also attempt to cover this gap. We hope that the further elaboration of EP and IP might be practical support for academics who concentrate on language-specific in-depth analysis even in cross-national studies.

The Core Features of Explicit and Implicit Populism

In this section, we introduce the features of EP and IP to characterize this theoretical and methodological approach. EP and IP might be useful methods because they might help researchers understand the possible connections between the style-attitude-mobilization 'troika' (Bonikowski, 2017). EP and IP can be apparent when scholars aim to analyze whether politicians employ people-centrism (Canovan, 2005) or antagonism (Gonawela et al., 2018) solely (IP) in their communication or both (EP) to acquire support. Do political agents and their consultants think that stressing direct dichotomies (EP) or focusing on rather one feature of populism (IP) is more effective in political communication?

At this point, we define, who the culprit others are, besides the political elite: in the PPCS, smaller, vertical groups (economic elite) can be attacked from the left-wing populists and horizontal minorities can be ostracized from the right-wing (immigrants, refugees, Muslims, other ethnic minorities, and LMBTQ communities) if the communicator emphasizes that (1) the political elite favors these groups rather than "its own people" (Schmuck and Matthes, 2015, Hameleers et al., 2018). Additionally, if these groups are depicted as threats for welfare or the sources of (relative) deprivation, they challenge people's will, such as maintaining health care systems (Speed and Mannion, 2020, De Cleen and Speed, 2020). The right-winger Trump and Farage also focused on this idea in the presidential election in the US and at the

Brexit vote in 2016, while the far-right Austrian FPÖ blamed immigrants for the COVID-19 virus' onset and proliferation (Falkenbach and Greer, 2020, Speed and Mannion, 2020). In turn, the left-wing Irish Sinn Féin blames the private insurance companies, the economic elite, which keep the policy fees increasing on a yearly basis; therefore, people can choose whether they pay more for treatment or disregard private insurance and face long waiting lists (Murray, 2020).

The explicitness, implicitness and the degrees of the populist communication styles might be dependent on several aspects. First, the communicators' incumbent-opposition positions might affect their styles, especially if the challenger does not have experience in politics. The less experience a candidate has in politics, the higher the chance that they will utilize the PPCS (Bonikowski and Gidron, 2016). In contrast, incumbents who formerly were inexperienced in politics applies the populist style with less intensity in their second campaign periods as defenders of the incumbent positions (Bonikowski and Gidron, 2016). There are several instances where politicians employ populism only at a communicative level (Bracciale and Martella, 2017), while several individuals are populists both in communication and in the legislation (Bartha et al., 2020). Second, the different periods might invoke the PPCS more intensively: campaigns might indicate a higher frequency of the style than 'calmer' times between two elections (Tóth, 2020a). Third, specific events such as rallies, debates, press conferences, ribbon-cutting ceremonies, local or global crises such as immigration, pandemic, wars, austerities, protests, and riots might affect to what extent political agents use the PPCS (Eatwell and Goodwin, 2018). Scholars argue that crises might make the PPCS attractive because the establishment's ruler position becomes vulnerable (Berman and Snegovaya, 2019). Fourth, the texts' types, for instance, live speeches, Facebook posts, tweets, party manifestos, and interviews might show various types and degrees of PPCS (Aslanidis, 2018, Gründl, 2020). Former studies have already shown that Donald Trump's tweets are IP instead of EP (Tóth, 2020a), while style-wise, Fidesz's Facebook posts are EP-dominant during the 2018 campaign in Hungary (Tóth, 2020b). Finally, people's diverging demands (de Nadal, 2020), such as changing the establishment, tax-reductions, protecting inhabitants' culture, and welfare might also influence the political agents' communication, especially if one considers a positive correlation between political mobilization and anti-elitism. Bos et al. (2020) suggest that anti-elitism might induce political mobilization while the exclusive style (e.g., blaming immigrants or the capitalists) might not. EP and IP might help researchers understand what type of styles are employed by specific political agents, in diverging countries, at different times and which category might help political forces on the ascendancy of power.

Now, we aim to introduce the main characteristics of EP: one can perceive it if any direct, Manichean dichotomy appears between the homogenous masses and the culprit others in the analyzed coding unit. If the communicator mentions directly the morally unacceptable, culprit enemy, either by emphasizing the name of a person, a specific group, or provide a broader picture of the foe and refers directly to the people, EP occurs. It is crucial that the term 'dangerous people' functions as a universal but articulated threat while 'danger' is an unarticulated one. Following Laclau (2005a), the former word combination contains an empty signifier (e.g., the people), while the latter does not refer to the *source* of the threat. According to populists, threats might be immigrants, entire countries, businessmen, the political elite, lying experts, the fake news media, austerities, banks, the European Union, the United Nations, NGOs, specific ideologies, and their followers (Stavrakakis and Katsampekis, 2020, Hameleers, 2018, Eatwell and Goodwin, 2018). These features of the PPCS signify the threat's source, but 'danger' itself is an implicit term and cannot be a sufficient EP feature.

IP, on the other hand, has two different subcategories. The first (IP_1) relies on people-centrism (Franzmann, 2016); therefore, if the sovereignty of the people (Canovan, 1981) or

the people's demands appear (Laclau, 2005a), which oppose antagonist agents' interests, but the foe does not occur in the coding unit (e.g., the communicator does not mention it explicitly), the message falls under the implicit category. It is important to note that referring to the people might be *demoticism* (March, 2017) but IP_1 focuses on the presence of the people and their will in the same coding unit. The second (IP_2) focuses on antagonism (Hameleers, 2018): if the communicator mentions the enemy, regardless of it is a specific person, group, a vague circle, hostile ideologies, austerity, or a universal 'danger,' which mean common threat for the people, but does not evoke the masses, the coding unit also becomes part of the implicit style.

In sum, antagonist agents and the people are morally irreconcilable groups; therefore, they might appear solely in coding units and still be the features of the PPCS. Threating the general will or appealing to the people whose will is the focal point of the populist style are eligible to categorize content units as IP.

Why to choose the political communication style and what the added theoretical contributions are?

Choosing the concept of political communication style rather than the ideological approach is supported by what Aslanidis (Aslanidis, 2016) calls the problem of 'degreeism.' Allegiance to ideology is often perceived as a dichotomous attitude: someone subscribes to it or refrains from being attached to one (Aslanidis, 2016). Consequently, the ideological aspect has a 'take it or leave it' nature, thus measuring the phenomenon at a communicative level from this perspective might provide binary results *in content analysis*. In turn, the PPCS implements the stylistic features of populism and provides an opportunity for researchers to analyze to what extent politicians operationalize this type of communication. As a result, many comparative studies emerge that analyze PPCS' similarities and differences within the different languages, territories, and cultural contexts (Gründl, 2020). We assume that the degrees of the different styles and their effects on citizens' populist attitude might be researched by considering the phenomenon as a political communication style.

Similarly to Jagers and Walgrave's (2007) perspective, we consider EP and IP as a political communication style that avoids complexity in communication and praises common sense politics supported by strong emotional appeals (Meijers and Zaslove, 2020). Jagers and Walgrave (2007) also took into consideration (1) anti-elitism, (2) exclusion (e.g., anti-immigrant rhetoric), and (3) people-centrism when they analyzed right-wing populism. The latter, according to Canovan (2005), is the crucial feature of populism. If all of them emerge, full populism kicks in, but if the masses appear in the coding unit solely, empty populism occurs (Bracciale and Martella, 2017). *In this sense, EP is between the full and empty categories because one apparent dichotomy is sufficient for this direct style.* This a vital contribution to the theory that considers populism as political communication style. Put it differently, only one antagonistic character is eligible to label a message as EP if the 'people' also appear in the coding unit.

On the other hand, IP_2 challenges one of the specific claims of Jagers and Walgrave, who argue (2007) that anti-elitism is not eligible for coding a message as 'populist' if the people are not present in the analyzed content. On the contrary, IP_2 endeavors to show that despite the absence of explicit references to the people or the *volonté general* in specific texts, they might be the invisible part of individual coding units. Thus, IP_2 is a possible unit for measuring the fragmented elements of populism (Tóth, 2020) if the enemy's interest threatens the general will. This is the second theoretical contribution: sole antagonism is not enough to label a message as IP_2, *but a common enemy that threatens the people's will, sovereignty,*

and welfare is the sufficient typology for this category. Threatening the general will is a distinctive feature of IP_2 and it is a stark contrast to negative campaigns. In sum, the political agents might focus explicitly on either the IP_1 or IP_2; however, the other entity is still part of the coding unit but in a concealed way. In this light, IP has, similarly to Taggart's claim, an 'inherent incompleteness' (Taggart, 2004).

Besides emotionalization (Bos et al., 2011) and simplification (Moghadam, 2018), several aspects might complete the populist style as follows:

- actualization (Krämer, 2014),
- antagonism (Arnold, 2018),
- blaming the common enemy which disregards the people's will (Laclau, 2005a),
- emphasizing negative pieces of information (Caiani and Graziano, 2016),
- informality (Moffitt and Tormey, 2014),
- people-centrism (Bracciale and Martella, 2017),
- stressing the idea of 'Zeitgeist vision' (Mouffe, 2005),
- taboo-breaking (Krämer, 2014),
- vulgarism (Bracciale and Martella, 2017).

EP and IP connect primarily to the stylistic approach because the direct, articulated dichotomies and suggested tensions might also be features of the PPCS. This is the third contribution of EP and IP and an essential reason why the stylistic approach suits better this concept rather than others do. From this perspective, explicitness is a plausible component of the PPCS because it compresses and converts the political frontier between the people and the culprit others in the same message. On the other hand, implicitness supports scholars' arguments claiming that the populist style often relies on a fragmented communication method; thus, it disregards one specific element of the phenomenon but enhances the other (Engesser et al., 2017). Therefore, considering populism's fragmented nature is useful to understand why the incomplete subtypes of the PPCS might proliferate.

Why EP and IP are important in content analysis methodologies?

In this section, we outline two important ideas that should be considered in content analysis methods if one aims to use EP and IP. First, as discussed above, EP implements manifest dichotomies, where at least one antagonist agent and the people are mentioned by the communicator. Dictionary-based automatic content analysis methods might easily detect EP, which is vital if one aims to code manifest contents with a scientific objectivity (Holsti, 1969). This process has a maximum reliability, but its validity might be contested (Aslanidis, 2018). However, implying manual coding to use mixed-methods analysis might increase the validity of the results (Gründl, 2020).

Second, and most importantly, IP evokes a challenge connecting to the coding unit lengths. We introduce quotes from Donald Trump's White House Press Conference during the Election Count on 5 November 2020 to demonstrate the emerging challenge:

'Democrats are the party of the big donors, the big media, the big tech, it seems.' This sentence from Trump fits IP_2 category. However, the entire paragraph looks like as follows:

'Democrats are the party of the big donors, the big media, the big tech, it seems. And Republicans have become the party of the American worker, and that's what's happened. And we're also, I believe, the party of inclusion.' This content unit consists of antagonism and people-centrism; therefore, it should be labelled as EP. Note that the second, longer quote is an entire paragraph from Donald Trump's speech held at the press conference above.

It is important to note that there is no consensus among scholars on which coding unit length is the most appropriate in content analyses (Krippendorff, 2004). Scholars scrutinize words, semantic triplets, core-sentences, paragraphs, and entire texts in content analysis (Aslanidis, 2018). However, just few researchers implement different coding unit lengths in populism studies, such as Rooduijn and Pauwels (2011) did. Anderson as colleagues (2000) claim that expanding a coding unit's size, for example from a sentence to a paragraph, might encompass more variables. This is what exactly happens in the example above; the first coding unit type (e.g., the core-sentence) is IP_2 because it highlights that the Democrats prioritize the elite, while the expanded coding unit (paragraph) also contains that the Republican party is for the working people. In other words, it upgrades the message from IP to EP.

Following the argument above (Anderson et al., 2000), scholars might acquire different results (e.g., ratios) of EP and IP even with the codebook if content analysis is conducting on different coding unit lengths. Put it differently, if one works with more extended coding units (paragraphs and whole texts), IP's frequency might decrease while EP's proportion might increase. In contrast, if scholars analyze smaller coding unit lengths (semantic triplets or core-sentences), a reversed process might be apparent: the smaller the coding unit is, the higher the chance that implicit messages will appear because political agents aim to use PPCS' fractures such as anti-elitism, exclusion, and people-centrism (Engesser et al., 2017). If our presumption was correct, we would suggest to code EP and IP on at least two levels of coding units, namely the narrow and extended ones in the same content. Scholars might test this hypothesis on a narrow level in semantic triplets or core-sentences and on the extended level in paragraphs, or whole texts (tweets, Facebook posts, speeches, and manifestos).

The further elaboration of Implicit Populism

As discussed above, IP has two fundamental categories: people-centrism (IP_1) and antagonism (IP_2). These subtypes might imply either the articulated appeal to the (will of) 'people' or the common 'foe.' In this paper, we elaborate the antagonist messages' subcategorizations ($IP_{2a\text{-}2b}$, see Table 1). Before we introduce the details of antagonism in IP, we provide another example from Donald Trump, who utilized people-centrism. We demonstrate this PPCS type in the intersection of 'People-centrism' and 'IP_1' in Table 1.

Table 1. Diverging features of the populist styles with examples

	EP	IP_1	IP_{2a}	IP_{2b}
Unarticulated antagonism	✗	✗	✗	'Genuine power-sharing and good government are possible, but the current impasse is unacceptable – Mary Lou McDonald told the British Secretary of State following a meeting in Belfast today.[2]
Articulated antagonism	✗	✗	The failing @nytimes writes total fiction concerning me. They have gotten it wrong for two years, and now are making up stories & sources![3]	✗
People-centrism	✗	'Instead of driving jobs and wealth away, AMERICA will become the world's great magnet for INNOVATION & JOB CREATION.'[4]	✗	
Articulated dichotomy	'Let people see what radical left Democrats will do to our country.'[5]	✗	✗	✗

In this message, nobody knows who is responsible for the disappearing vacancies, but the people are explicitly present in the tweet above. We suggest that this text, as part of people-centrism, should fall under IP_1 category. From Trump again, the following tweet, which was posted after his electoral victory and presented in the intersection of 'Articulated antagonism' and '$IP_{2a,}$' focuses on the new primary enemy, namely the media, which misleads the people. The foe appears while the masses are missing from this message. Even though the people do not occur explicitly, and Trump claims that the media is lying about him, the message under the surface is the following: the journalists lie to the people, which is morally unacceptable. In this light, the masses are involved in the tweet where they seem to be missing at first glance. Therefore, that tweet falls under the category of IP_2. To further elaborate the concept of IP_2 and avoid vague categorizations, we suggest that antagonistic messages containing *the articulated type of the culprit others* but disregards mentioning the people should be labelled as IP_{2a}.

However, there are messages in which antagonism occurs in a much more moderate, blurry, or hidden way. For example, neither the people nor the culprit others are directly addressed, like in the message in the intersection of 'Unarticulated antagonism' and 'IP_{2b}' (Table 1). However, it enhances the situation's unacceptableness; thus, there is a need for a change. In this case, references to the missing checks and balances, the emphasis of a government that listens to the people's voice, and explicit criticism towards the undesirable situation bring the message closer to antagonism than people-centrism. Our explanation is the following: there are not articulated dichotomies within Sinn Féin's post, so it cannot be part of EP. The term

[2] A Facebook post from the left-wing populist, Irish Sinn Féin party on 21 November 2019.
[3] A tweet from Donald Trump posted on 2 February 2017.
[4] A tweet from Donald Trump posted on 3 January 2017.
[5] A quote from Donald Trump from the Oklahoma Rally Speech held in Tulsa on 20 June 2020.

'impasse' is blurry and universal, and it disregards any reference to the source of the problem, threat, or danger. However, Sinn Fein brings attention to a morally 'unacceptable' situation, suggesting that it harms the people. The people are invisible, and the source of the problem does not appear, but the need for change refers to the failing, ineffective, and corrupt establishment. This message might be part of $IP_{2,}$ as it contains unarticulated signifiers (the situation) and lacks the articulated ones. Therefore, we suggest operationalizing $IP_{2b,}$ which does not contain references to the people and the threat's source but focuses on the vague danger.

Limitations

We would like to enhance that our study has specific limitations. First, as introduced above, this paper only focuses on antagonism in IP for creating subcategories relying on articulated (IP_{2a}) and unarticulated foes (IP_{2b}). Second, people-centrism within IP might be separated further. One might assume that several pronouns such as 'we,' 'our,' 'ours,' 'us,' 'you,' and 'yours' might address the masses; however, these words might be more general than the 'good people,' 'nation,' 'county,' and 'homeland' and they challenge the content analysis' validity. Indeed, the pronouns above, might not refer directly to ethnopopulism, yet they might support it implicitly. Therefore, they might become part of a new subcategory in implicit people-centrism. Besides, in languages such as Hungarian, the communicator does not have to use pronouns but only modify the relevant verb to operate a collective tone. Detecting people-centrism is complex progress, so the in-depth, empirical analysis is inevitable to conceptualize $IP_{1a\text{-}1b\text{-}1x}$. Third, a methodological challenge might also emerge when one aims to analyze EP and IP on different coding unit lengths. First, if a communicator decides to refer solely to the common enemy or the people, either people-centrism (IP_1) or antagonism (IP_2) will appear in the findings, excluding the chance of detecting EP. In this case, there is not much sense to implement content analysis on narrow and extended coding units. Finally, this paper is theoretical one, thus empirical research is sufficient to prove our methodological assumptions.

Conclusion

Researchers argue that several political agents utilize the PPCS solely because its fragmented features might provide extra supports from citizens of diverging political partisanships (Bracciale and Martella, 2017). As we outlined above, the scrutiny of populism is essential in social sciences, and one of the most critical units of examination is the *content* of the discourse (Jagers and Walgrave, 2007). Consequently, content analysis might be a helpful analytical tool to make scholars understand the phenomenon's holistic nature and find possible ties between communication, political mobilization, and partisanship.

In this light, EP and IP might be applicable methods in content analysis. IP might be a useful methodological tool for scrutinizing political agents inclined to implement the fractured PPCS to win campaigns or maintain power. In other words, IP might help researchers detect the populist style in political agents' communication who are not considered 'populist' in their politics but can utilize this part of the PPCS to expand their supporting background. Scholars have recently started to focus on people-centrism and antagonism in specific content analyses (Aslanidis, 2018). However, according to our knowledge, there is no research implementing the subcategories of IP_2. In this study, we attempted to supply and suggest creating two versions within implicit, antagonistic messages. IP_{2a} highlights coding units bringing attention to the articulated source of the common threat. On the other hand, IP_{2b} takes into account messages

where the people do not occur, and the danger is too universal as the communicator does not provide minimal characterizations such as dangerous 'people,' 'minorities,' 'immigrants,' 'legislations,' 'ideologies,' 'austerity,' 'viruses,' 'organizations,' 'aliens,' 'criminals,' and 'rioters.' IP_{2b} can supply an extra opportunity for scholars to extend their measurements so they can analyze more extensive data. Besides, operationalizing $IP_{2a\text{-}2b}$ might support explorative research to examine whether political agents tend to articulate the source of the danger that threatens the people's will or instead keep the common problem as universal as possible. As Engesser et al. (2017) and Goodwin and Eatwell (2018) suggest, *implicitness will be, if not it is already, one of the critical features of populism*. The subcategories of IP_2 might be feasible approaches to verify scholars' hypothesis above. Finally, if further research proves that there are statistically significant differences between EP and IP ratios on narrow and extended coding units, it is possible that this content analysis method should be used on at least two different coding unit lengths. The main reason for this methodological adjustment is PPCS' fragmented nature, which might be detected and analyzed by operationalizing mixed-methods content analysis to provide high reliability and validity. We aim to test this assumption in further empirical research. https://doi.org/

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Reporting on suicide in Malaysia: Problem characterization and solution advocacy by media

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Abstract: Rising incidents of suicide capture the attention of healthcare providers, government agencies, non-governmental organizations and media. Furthermore, public conversations about social problems are largely mediated by the media. It is noteworthy that media have the power to shape the way the public thinks about an issue by suggesting what the issue is about, what the cause is, and what should be done as a solution. The current study aims to examine suicide coverage in Malaysia, particularly the problem characterization and solution advocacy by *The Star* in reporting suicide from 2014 to 2018. *The Star* is the English-language daily newspaper with the largest circulation in Malaysia. Through content analysis, the study found that there was a statistically significant difference between the number of articles reporting suicide and the different years. Most of the coverage was published in the form of straight news with a negative depiction of suicide. There was reporting on both local and international suicide news. In addition, suicide was linked to various issues (e.g. mental health, relationship or marriage problems, financial problems, workplace stress, etc.) in the coverage. The study also found a significant difference between issue narrative styles and suicide solutions. The practical implications of the findings are discussed with regard to the role of media in raising awareness of suicide, promoting prevention and intervention efforts at the institutional level, as well as undertaking a more robust interpretive approach in addressing the issue.

Keywords: suicide, mental health, social problem, framing, content analysis

Introduction

The news media are important platforms where complex social problems are presented, discussed and defined. In addition, media are also important venues where various issue solutions are often suggested and debated. It has been well documented in literature that news frames play a significant role in influencing readers' interest, attention, interpretation and comprehension of the news (Scammell & Semetko, 2018).

Since Shanto Iyengar's (1990) study of responsibility framing and Bernard Weiner's (1995) work on attribution theory, a significant amount of communication research has investigated how society attributes responsibility for social problems (Kim, 2015). These studies particularly focused on examining societal- and personal-level consequences of the responsibility attribution. In addition, Liu, Robinson and Vedlitz (2016) saw a growing body

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of literature that extensively examined the dynamics of problem characterization in politics and policy processes. The authors mentioned that problem characterization is also known as problem definition, issue framing or issue attributes. They further outlined four dimensions of problem characterizations, namely issue image, issue scope, issue linkage and issue narrative style. It was suggested that these problem characterizations influenced how problem solutions are generated in media.

In news reporting, which topics were covered (or not) and how they were covered were influenced by many considerations, including law, economics, political forces, power relations, culture, race, the organizational structure of media and work routines of journalists (Wichgers, Jacobs & van Spanje, 2020). von Sikorski (2020) also recognized that framing analysis allows researchers to examine the roles of media in the development of social and political issues. It is noteworthy that attribution of responsibility is a social attitude that shapes individuals' issue opinions, political attitudes and behaviors (Brownell et al., 2009). More importantly, attribution of responsibility is an important target of change, especially in identifying problem solutions or issue prevention, intervention and treatment (Hernandez-Aquado & Chilet-Rosell, 2020).

Suicide is an international public health problem, more than 800,000 people are dying by suicide worldwide every year. Suicide is also among the top 10 causes of death in the world and is the second biggest cause of death amongst those aged between 15 and 29 (World Health Organization, 2017). In Malaysia, there has been a 60% increase in suicide cases in the past 45 years according to the Malaysian Psychiatric Association statistics. It was estimated that seven people would attempt suicide daily in the country. Furthermore, previous studies also indicated that 13 out of every 100,000 people die from suicide a year in Malaysia (Indramalar, 2018).

It is important to note that Malaysia is a country with a Muslim majority for whom attempted suicide is a serious breach of the faith (a grievous sin). Furthermore, those who survive a suicide attempt in the country may be prosecuted under Section 309 of the Penal Code, which allows punishment up to a year in jail, a fine, or both (Zolkepli, 2020). In 2019, the then de facto law minister Liew Vui Keong announced that the Attorney General's Chambers was studying possible amendments to laws related to suicide. It was also mentioned that there would be consultations with several ministries, police, Fire and Rescue Department, Department of Islamic Development, and Malaysian Psychiatric Association (Pandiyan, 2020).

Considering the influence of media in reporting social issues, as well as the severity of suicide in both Malaysia and globally, it is important to understand how the media frame responsibility for suicide. However, this knowledge is largely missing from current scholarship, as existing research has primarily focused on the copycat or prevention effects of suicide coverage by the media. Also, research examining how Malaysian news media report about suicide is relatively scarce (e.g. Chan, Ibrahim, Rahman, Bartlett, Ping & Nordin, 2018; Johari et al., 2017; Victor, Heng, Govindaraju, Tan, Rajaratnam & Yang, 2019), and neither of these studies examined responsibility framing of suicide in the country. Therefore, the current study attempted to fill this gap by employing the framing and attribution theory to examine the problem characterization and solution advocacy by media in reporting suicide.

Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What was the issue image of suicide presented by the media?
RQ2: What was the issue scope of suicide reported by the media?
RQ3: What was the issue linkage of suicide portrayed by the media?
RQ4: What was the issue narrative style used by the media in reporting suicide?
RQ5: What was the solution advocated by the media in reporting suicide?
RQ6: What was the association between issue narrative style and solution advocated by the media in reporting suicide?

Framing theory

The origins of the framing concept lie in the fields of cognitive psychology and anthropology. Subsequently, it was adopted, often with a shift in meaning, by other disciplines, including sociology, economics, linguistics, social-movements research, policy research, communication science, political communication, public relation research and health communication (Bryant and Miron, 2004). Gaye Tuchman (1978) and Todd Gitlin (1980) were credited as the two scholars who expanded the application of framing into journalism studies.

According to Chong and Druckman (2007), communication scholars generally use the term "frame" in two ways. First, a media frame refers to the words, images, phrases and presentation styles that a media outlet uses when relaying information about an issue or event to an audience. The chosen frame reveals what the media outlet sees as important to the topic reported. Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) regarded this way of framing as a macro-level construct. Entman's (1993, p. 52) definition of framing falls into this category, whereby framing means "to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described".

In addition, Tankard, Hendrickson, Silberman, Bliss and Ghanem (1991, p. 9) considered media frame as "the central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration." McCombs (1997, p. 143) also described framing as "the selection of a restricted number of thematically related attributes for inclusion in the media agenda when a particular object is discussed."

Secondly, a frame of thought or an individual frame is another way of how communication scholars use the word "frame". It refers to an individual's cognitive understanding of a given situation (Chong and Druckman, 2007). Unlike a media frame that reflects a media outlet's emphasis, frames in thought refer to what an audience member believes to be the most salient aspect of an issue. It is considered as a micro level construct (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007) as well as a media effects approach (Scheufele, & Scheufele, 2010).

In the micro level construct approach, scholars have been using the concept of frame to refer to schemas (Wood, Stoltz, Van Ness and Taylor, 2018). Goffman's (1974, p. 21) defined frames as "schemata of interpretation that enable individuals to understand certain events and to locate, perceive, identify and label occurrences". Reese, Gandy Jr and Grant(2001, p. 14) also posited that "frames may best be viewed as an abstract principle, tool, or schemata of interpretation that works through media texts to structure social meaning". Significantly, Scheufele (2004, p. 411) summarized that the effects of media framing can be divided into four categories:

1. Audience schemas can be activated because individuals deem these schemas applicable to the frame(s) that they encounter (activation or applicability effect).
2. Audience schemas can be modified by media framing (transformation effect).
3. If there is no schema available, cumulative and consonant media framing can establish such a schema (establishing effect).
4. Media framing can alter recipients' attitudes or opinions (attitudinal effect).

In addition, Iyengar's (1990) research showed that when a social issue such as poverty was portrayed via a thematic frame (i.e., depicting the general context and conditions of an issue), government and society at large were seen as at fault and consequently held accountable. In contrast, when an episodic frame (i.e., presenting an issue through individual stories) was used to feature a personal story, individuals were blamed for their own situations. In his work,

Iyengar also differentiated causal responsibility, which ‘‘focuses on the origin of the problem,’’ from treatment responsibility, which is about ‘‘who or what has the power either to alleviate or to forestall alleviation of the problem’’ (p. 879). Entman (1993) expanded the above definition by delineating the components of a frame: causal attribution (who or what is responsible for causing the issue), the definition of an issue (consequences of causal agents' actions), moral judgments (evaluation of causal agents and their actions) and treatment responsibility (who or what can best resolve the issue).

According to Iyengar (2005), communication researchers have identified two distinct types of media framing effects: equivalency framing and emphasis framing. In equivalency framing, objective equivalent information is presented in positive versus negative, and certainty versus probability language. Emphasis framing includes a range of perspectives or considerations in the coverage of a topic or issue. Consequently, frames give emphasis to some aspects of the topic, making certain interpretations more salient in audience cognition. In health communication, most framing research has focused on examining the effects of equivalence framing (i.e., gain vs. loss frames) on compliance with recommended health behaviors (Sun, Krakow, John, Liu & Weaver, 2016). The purpose of this line of framing research is to examine the persuasive efficacy of gain versus loss frames on different types of desired health behaviors (i.e., prevention and detection behaviors).

Attribution theory

Attribution theory was suggested by Heider (1958), and subsequently improved and expanded by Kelley (1967) and Weiner (1979). The theory postulates that individuals use available information to identify the causes of their own and others' behavior (Wallace, 2019). Internal attribution refers to the tendency to believe that behavior is caused by personality, disposition, beliefs or other internal factors. In contrast, external attribution is the inclination to assume that behavior is caused by environmental or situational factors (Liu, Cui, Zhang, Xia, Chen & Skitmore, 2020). In general, individuals tend to attribute their behavior to external causes and the behavior of others to internal causes (Wallace, 2019).

In his study about negative public perceptions of juvenile diabetics, Vishwanath (2014) mentioned that attribution theory explains the phenomenon of stigma as a socio-cognitive process stemming from the need to make sense and infer a cause for events. The author also discussed three attributional dimensions that could influence public stigma: 1) locus of causal responsibility, 2) perceived curability or severity of a disease, and 3) temporal stability or reoccurrence.

Locus of responsibility can be further divided into two aspects: controllability and biological basis of diseases. In controllability, behaviors that are thought to be within the control of individuals are more prone to being stigmatized. This applies to illnesses like AIDS, child abuse, drug abuse and obesity. Vishwanath (2014) addressed that such beliefs within individualist cultures such as that of the US are thought to be founded on traditional conservative values of self-determination, individualism, internal control and self-discipline.
In their framing analysis of obesity and policy support, McGlynn and McGlone (2018) found that internal cause attributions for obesity (e.g., lack of motivation to exercise) are negatively associated with support for public obesity policies. Conversely, external attributions for the obesity epidemic (e.g., food companies and restaurants make too much unhealthy food) are positively associated with support for the implementation of public policies.

In addition, diseases that have a biological basis (e.g. blindness, cancer, heart disease, etc.) are less likely to be stigmatized, less likely to lead to an emotional state of anger or hostility.

On the contrary, sicknesses that have a biological basis tend to generate more empathy and consequently more helping behaviors toward the target individual.

The second attributional dimension that could influence public stigma is the perceived curability or severity of a disease. Diseases that are thought to be completely curable and perceived as being under the control of the individual are more prone to being stigmatized (Vishwanath, 2014). Individuals who suffer over a long time from curable or reversible diseases are perceived to be weak or noncompliant. In contrast, illnesses that are incurable and biologically caused are less likely to be judged because they engender sympathy toward the patients. It was mentioned that diseases such as migraines, obesity and substance abuse are more likely to be stigmatized because they are considered reversible while terminal cancer is less likely to be stigmatized (Turosak & Siwierka, 2021).

The last attributional dimension outlined by Vishwanath (2014) is temporal stability or reoccurrence. Sicknesses that are considered as being rare and uncertain are expected to be more stigmatized than those that are common, predictable and reoccur. This is because the consistency of occurrence makes such diseases seem less threatening. Moreover, Vishwanath (2014) cited the optimistic bias theory to explain the phenomenon, whereby people tend to anticipate negative events to happen to others but not to themselves. Thus, people with a rare disease are more likely to be stigmatized because they are perceived to be weaker or inferior. Vishwanath (2014) also stated that beliefs about mental illness being rare and unpredictable significantly predict stigma toward people with mental health issues.

Moreover, Gounder and Ameer (2018) posited that attributions of health issues derive from three framing pathways, namely behavioral, medical and structural. Behavioral and medical frames emphasize individualized causal and treatment attributions by using exemplars living with the issue's consequences, while the structural frame considers social and environmental determinants. The authors also pointed out that individualized behavioral and medical frames are pervasive in health discourse. Concerns with the high use of these individualized frames, Gounder and Ameer (2018) addressed that they are tied to the perpetuation of blame and stigma attribution through the causal and treatment attributions. This is because neither the behavioral nor the medical frame addresses systemic problems, which seek to eliminate root causes of societal health issues. In contrast, the third pathway, structural frame (also referred to as societal frame), takes a wider lens, situating human agency within individuals' socio-economic and environmental constraints, which impact the availability and affordability of health-related choices and may even undermine what actions individuals can take in fixing the problem.

In their examination of the framing contest between food and marketing industries and public health groups at the New Zealand inquiry into obesity, Jenkin, Signal and Thomson (2011) found that the food and marketing industries framed obesity as a consequence of poor lifestyle choices. It was also attributed to factors like personal knowledge, cultural or other character deficits. In addition, the food and marketing industries claimed that lack of physical activity rather than increased food consumption was the dominant cause of obesity. However, obesity was considered as an effect of an obesogenic environment by public health groups. It was explained that the pervasive marketing and availability of low-cost, energy-dense/nutrient-poor foods have contributed to an obesogenic environment. While the food and marketing industries stressed on education as the key solution to obesity, public health groups called for regulation of the activities of the industries, and policies to address wider determinants of health and social inequalities.

Framing public health issues

Issue image

By offering a typology of problem characterizations, Liu, Robinson and Vedlitz (2016) stated that issue image is the overall and fundamental impression of whether an issue involves potential stakes of causing harm or providing assistance. The concept of issue image is related to equivalency framing as well as what Manheim (1994) called "valence" in frame analysis. In other words, issue image means presenting information in positively versus negatively valenced language. In addition, Yang (2020) also explained that valence is the tone, slant or attitude of a news story, or comment regarding certain frames. By displaying the value of the statement or with positive and/or negative factors, the valenced news frame indicates the degree of the favorable or unfavorable influence of the coverage on the event/issue (Yang, 2020).

Specifically, loss-framed messages are more effective when promoting illness-detecting (screening) behaviors, while gain-framed messages are more effective when promoting health affirming (prevention) behaviors (Sun, Krakow, John, Liu & Weaver, (2016).

Issue scope

Issue scope refers to how an issue may have a broad or narrow range of effects at various levels of the policymaking system (Liu, Robinson & Vedlitz, 2016). It could be local, state, national or international level that can ultimately be tied to issue responsibility and policy jurisdiction. Furthermore, issue scope is also about issue ownership. It connects to different levels of policy authority, which affects what institutions and participants considered legitimate for having jurisdiction over the issue and possible solutions.

Traditionally, issue ownership posits that political parties hold reputations for their ability to handle certain issues. For example, Democrats in the US have been considered to be better at dealing with education, while Republicans have a better reputation in lowering taxes (Guo & Vargo, 2015). In their analysis of issue ownership and policy communication, Dahlberg and Martinsson (2015) recorded that the topic of issue ownership has not received much attention. It was mentioned that research questions such as where issue ownership comes from, how it changes and how it is maintained have received only limited attention, while at the same time being fundamental for understanding the logic behind party competition and electoral choices.

Issue linkage

Issue linkage is defined as the association of a specific public problem with other public issues (Liu, Robinson & Vedlitz, 2016). In other words, it is about which policy domain to which a specific issue is attached. Suicide is often associated with depression, while depression could be triggered by a wide array of biological, physical, environmental, socioeconomic and cultural conditions that interact in complex ways to contribute to its onsets and recurrences (Halladay, Munn & Boyle, 2020).

It is important to note that Arafat, Menon and Kar (2021) highlighted that suicide in Southeast Asia differs from the West in several aspects. These include the lack of a bonafide mental illness in a significant proportion of those who took their life, the lower male-to-female gender ratio and the greater elderly to non-elderly suicide ratio. The authors addressed that the major drivers of suicide in the region include socioeconomic factors such as social inequities, gender disparities, financial strife and family conflicts.

Significantly, Hjelmeland and Knizek (2017) criticized that one of the most well-established truths in Western suicidology is that almost all (90% or more) of those who die by

suicide suffered from one or more mental disorders. The main evidence base for this 90% statistic is a series of psychological autopsies, in which psychiatric diagnoses have been assigned to the deceased by means of interviewing a few of the bereaved, often many years after the suicide. This statistic has been constantly repeated in academic literature, in suicide prevention strategies, as well as in the media.

While questioning the reliability and validity of the method used in establishing the 90% statistic, Hjelmeland and Knizek (2016) addressed that there may be a strong association between suicide and mental disorders but the authors stressed that "association is not cause" (p. 357). Moreover, Hjelmeland and Knizek (2017) argued that the discourse on the relationship between mental disorders and suicide is permeated with ideology, politics, and power positioning suicide as a predominately biomedical or psychiatric issue. It was revealed that critical voices and arguments were often dismissed as unsubstantiated opinions.

In addition, Hjelmeland and Knizek (2017) also pointed out that the suicidological field has been dominated by a narrow focus on risk factors, particularly mental disorders, with the linear cause-and-effect association. It was observed contended that there is even negative attitudes or prejudice toward qualitative research. Nonetheless, the authors claimed that qualitative research has found that complex contextual and existential issues (e.g. sociocultural context, the immediate social/relational circumstances, life course, etc.) are much more important to suicidality than mental disorders.

Issue narrative style

Issue narrative style is about whether the issue is portrayed as an episodic occurrence or a thematic concern. Episodic frame depicts a public problem in the form of a single, concrete instance, specific event or case (e.g., by reporting a specific suicide death). It usually focuses on hard news and tends to be more drama-oriented and visually compelling (Papacharissi & de Fatima Oliveira, 2008). Furthermore, episodic framing is compatible with the economics of the news cycle because it requires less time and effort for background research and data collection than thematic framing (Zhang, Jin, Stewart & Porter, 2016).

In contrast, thematic frame presents an issue within a broader context by providing more background information. It highlights the general connections between problems and encourages the understanding of public problems at a collective level, which is the societal, governmental or systemic level. In general, thematic framing approach presents the topic less descriptively and more analytically (Papacharissi & de Fatima Oliveira, 2008). When reporting about suicide, a thematic frame might discuss national statistics related to the prevalence of suicide, whereby it looks into the influence of gender, religion, ethnicity, etc. Even though both episodic and thematic frames are distinct, scholars asserted that they are not mutually exclusive. In general, a news story contains both types of framing but typically one news frame exceeds the other (Iyengar, 1990, Papacharissi & de Fatima Oliveira, 2008).

In their study about news media coverage of stakeholder views on suicide and its reporting in New Zealand, Jenkin, Slim and Collings (2020) recorded that the debate around suicide and its reporting were marked by the conflating of two different types of media reporting on suicide: 1) the reporting of individual suicide cases, 2) news media coverage of suicide as a public health issue. The first category of news is most likely to report suicide as an episodic occurrence while the latter is expected to adopt a thematic narrative style.

According to Starr and Oxlad (2020), framing research has found some variation depending on the health topic. For example, cardiovascular stories tend to focus more on scientific/medical information, whereas infectious disease outbreaks and cancer stories are likely to focus on an individual. Furthermore, research into the effects of framing on reader responses has also found differences between health topics. It was mentioned that mental illness is associated with more

thematic comments, whereas obesity and personal health stories (such as nutrition) are associated with more episodic comments.

Solutions advocacy

Through analyzing news framing and attribution of responsibility, Kim (2015) found that liberal newspapers focused more than conservative papers on societal responsibilities. The author suggested that political orientations of newspapers could affect the media's attributions of responsibility. It was also mentioned that commercial pressure seemed to encourage news writers to frame a story with a human-interest or episodic angle, thereby diverting attention away from larger societal responsibilities.

While entertainment television was considered to be a medium for episodic framing (Barry, Brescoll & Gollust, 2013), Iyengar (1990) stated that televised news reports focus on concrete acts or live events at the expense of general contextual material. It was mentioned that episodic reports do not require reporters with subject-matter expertise, and they are less likely to be criticized as biased by avoiding interpretive analysis. In addition, Iyengar (1996, p. 70) claimed that the dominant episodic frame used by television news tends to "reduce complex issues to the level of anecdotal cases, thus leading the audience to attributions that shield society and government from responsibility".

Furthermore, Wikler (2002) addressed that the American public health system has largely adopted an individualistic model by placing more causal and problem-solving responsibilities on individuals and privileging individual-oriented solutions such as encouraging behavioral changes and promoting the use of pharmaceuticals. This approach has been attributed partly to the individualistic cultural values prevalent in American society, and also to the biomedical explanation of causation for health problems. Another justification for the lack of society-oriented solutions is the potentially drastic and prohibitive changes in societal resource allocations that any social remedy requires, such as new regulations, taxes, and social services (Petticrew, Eastmure, Mays, Knai, Durand & Nolte, 2013).

Method

The present study analyzed *The Star*, which is an English-language daily with the largest circulation in Malaysia. According to the Audit Bureau of Circulations Malaysia (Audit Bureau of Circulation Malaysia, 2019), the 2018 average daily circulation of *The Star* was 175,986. The major shareholder of *The Star* is the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), which is one of the component parties of *Barisan Nasional* (National Coalition). This means that MCA is a pro-government political party while *The Star* a pro-establishment newspaper (Yang, 2020).

The time frame of the study was 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2018 (five years). The study employed a purposive sample, whereby all articles mentioning "suicide" and all variations of the term (e.g., "killed himself or herself"; "shot himself or herself", "sudden death", "fell to death", "plunged to death", "jumped to death", "hung to death", "hanged to death"), which were found within headlines or body text were retrieved from *The Star*'s database. Sometimes the same story was published in *The Star* but in different days, or in different focus or types of articles. These duplicate reports were included in the count of suicide reports because this study aimed to examine the frequency of reporting instead of the number of unique suicides.

Coding procedure

Issue image refers to the overall portrayal of suicide. As mentioned earlier, the concept of issue image is related to "valence" in frame analysis. Valence/tone of the articles refers to the attitude expressed towards any individual, group, party, institution or topic by its author (Baumgartner and Wirth, 2012). Previous studies mostly employed the categories of negative/positive or critical/supportive in the examination of valence in news coverage (e.g. Holling, 2019; Naab et al., 2020). This study used the categories of negative, positive and neutral for the analysis of attitude expressed towards suicide. Only the most dominant issue image presented in the article was coded.

1. Negative – portrayed suicide as a severe social problem; conveyed an unfavorable impression towards suicide; criticized the act or intention of suicide; contained quotes by individuals who disapproved suicide; reported mourning of a person's death to reflect the pain suicide brought to families and friends while avoid glorifying suicide victims as objects of public adulation; reported injury of a person who attempted suicide; reported charge against a person who attempted suicide.
2. Positive – conveyed favorable impression towards suicide; supported the act or intention of suicide; glorified suicide victims as objects of public adulation; contained quotes by individuals who approved suicide.
3. Neutral – neither favorably nor unfavorably portrayed suicide case.

The examination of issue scope looked at whether the suicide reporting was discussed at one of the following levels:

1. Local –reported suicide cases that happened in Malaysia.
2. International – reported suicide cases that happened outside Malaysia.

Wimmer and Dominick (2013) stated that there are two ways to establish coding categories for content analysis. The first is known as priori coding, where the researcher establishes the categories before the data are collected, based on some theoretical or conceptual rationale. The second is called emergent coding, where the researcher establishes categories after a preliminary examination of the data. This study employed the emergent coding approach for examining issue linkage. Seven categories were established for the current study and all the reasons behind a suicide cited in an article were coded accordingly:

1. Mental health issues – reported about mental health problems (e.g. depression, bipolar affective disorder, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, dementia, etc.) of the deceased or person who attempted suicide; discussed the connection between depression and suicide; addressed various topics related to depression and/or mental illness.
2. Relationship or marriage problems – reported about relationship or marriage problems faced by the deceased or person who attempted suicide.
3. Financial problems – reported about unemployment, debts or other financial challenges faced by the deceased or person who attempted suicide.
4. Workplace stress – reported about pressure, anxiety, worries or other harmful emotional responses towards job demand or workplace relationships faced by the deceased or person who attempted suicide.
5. Bullying or cyberbullying – reported about bullying or cyberbullying faced by the deceased or person who attempted suicide.

6. Academic pressure – reported about examination pressure faced by the deceased or person who attempted suicide; reflected issues of high expectation from parents, teachers and schools.
7. Others – any content that could not fit the above six categories.

Narrative style was assessed under the rule of whether the story used an episodic or thematic framing approach. This study employed two categories for narrative style:

1. Episodic frame – predominantly depicted suicide in the form of a single, concrete instance or a specific event.
2. Thematic frame – predominantly presented suicide within a broader context; portrayed suicide in the form of general outcomes; reported national or international statistics related to the prevalence of suicide.

Emergent coding approach was also used in this study to develop the categories for solutions advocacy:

1. Individual responsibility – emphasized individual resilience and effort for one's own life and wellbeing.
2. Societal responsibility – called for parents and teachers to manage academic expectation towards students; advocated the need to prevent and intervene in cyberbullying by parents, teachers and policy-makers; stressed on the responsibility of corporations, financial institutions, traditional media, social media, etc. to address social and/or economic problems; urged the government to improve the healthcare system.
3. Combination – an almost equal mix of both individual and societal responsibility.
4. Not mentioned – no solution for suicide was mentioned in the article.

Data analysis

The 467 articles collected from *The Star* were analyzed using SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 26.0. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to summarize the data. In addition, one-way between-groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to test if there is a significant difference between the number of articles and different 1) years, 2) types of articles, and 3) problem characterizations. Also, Pearson Chi-Square Test was used to test if there is a significant difference between problem characterization and solution advocacy.

Inter-coder reliability

To ensure the reliability of this study, a communication graduate was chosen as the second coder. During the training session, the writer (who was also the first coder) and the second coder coded 50 articles that were chosen randomly from the sample of this study. Disagreements were analyzed and some additional explanations were included in the coding instruction in the codebook. Wimmer and Dominick (2013) suggested that between 10% and 25% of the body of content should be tested. Therefore, the inter-coder reliability for this study was established by randomly selecting 10% of the news items, which was equivalent to 47 articles. Using Krippendorff's alpha, the inter-coder reliability for each coding category are

issue image (0.973), issue scope (1.000), issue linkage (0.877), narrative style (0.916) and solutions advocacy (0.973).

Findings

Table 1 records the distribution of articles according to publication years. There was a statistically significant difference between the number of articles and different years as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F(7,469) = 27.333$, $p = .000$). The highest number of articles reporting on suicide came from 2014, which was the year in which the late famous American actor and comedian Robin Williams died by suicide. Out of 169 articles that were reporting on suicide in 2014, 14.8% was about Robin Williams's passing as well as tributes to him.

Table 1. Number of Articles Reporting on Suicide by *The Star* from 2014-2018

Year	Frequency	Percentage
2014	169	36.2
2015	37	7.9
2016	61	13.1
2017	71	15.2
2018	129	27.6
Total	467	100.0

In addition, Table 2 shows that most of the articles were published in the form of straight news (82.2%), followed by feature articles (9.9%), letters-to-the-editor (6.0%) and column articles (1.9%). Nonetheless, there was no statistically significant difference between the types of articles and number of articles as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F(2,469) = .944$, $p = .408$).

Table 2. Types of Articles Covering Suicide by *The Star* from 2014-2018

Types of Articles	2014 (n = 171) %	2015 (n = 37) %	2016 (n = 61) %	2017 (n = 71) %	2018 (n = 129) %	Mean %
Straight news	91.8	86.5	82.0	76.1	91.5	85.6
Editorial	0	0	0	0	0	0
Columns	2.3	13.5	3.3	7.0	0	5.2
Features	0	0	9.8	9.9	2.3	4.4
Letters	5.8	0	4.9	7.0	6.2	4.8

Throughout the timeframe of the study, 61.7% of the articles reporting suicide portrayed a negative issue image while 37.5% depicted a neutral image. Only 0.9% of the articles presented a positive issue image of suicide, and these articles were mainly reporting about advocacy for euthanasia in the US and Spain. One-way ANOVA showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the issue images and the number of articles [$F(4, 467) = .694$, $p = .603$].

Table 3. Issue Images of Suicide Reported by *The Star* from 2014-2018

Issue Image	Percentage (n = 467)
Negative	61.7
Positive	0.9
Neutral	37.5

More than half of the articles published by *The Star* (59.3%) reported suicide cases that happened in Malaysia. International cases contributed to 40.7% of the coverage on suicide, which mostly involving celebrities, prominent political or business personalities. There was also coverage about how the increased usage of social media by teenagers in the US was linked to cyberbullying and subsequently suicide. In addition, there was news about Netflix's series *13 Reasons Why* that had led impressionable viewers to develop suicide-revenge fantasies. According to one-way ANOVA, there was no statistically significant difference between the issue scopes and the number of articles [$F(1, 467) = .192$, $p = .666$].

Table 4. Issue Scopes of Suicide Reported by *The Star* from 2014-2018

Issue Scope	**Percentage (n = 467)**
Local	59.3
International	40.7

In *The Star*'s coverage of both local and international news on suicide, 21.8% of the reporting was linked to mental health issues (see Table 5). This was followed by "Others" (25.5%), which included problems like sexual abuse, child abuse, substance abuse, poverty, sickness, loneliness in elder people, conflicts with parents and/or siblings, grief and loss, refugee problems, committing suicide to escape punishment, copycat suicide following celebrity's death or television series, as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) problems.

Table 5. Issue Linkages of Suicide Reported by *The Star*

Issue Linkage	**Percentage (n = 467)**
Mental Health Issues	21.8
Relationship or Marriage Problems	8.1
Financial Problems	3.9
Workplace Stress	3.9
Academic Pressure	3.4
Bullying/Cyberbullying	3.4
Others	25.5
Not Mentioned	30.0

Furthermore, suicide coverage by *The Star* was also linked to relationship or marriage problems (8.1%), financial problems (3.9%), workplace stress (3.9%), academic pressure (3.4%) and bullying/cyberbullying (3.4). Nevertheless, there was 30% of suicide coverage by *The Star* that did not include any issue linkage. There was no statistically significant difference between the issue linkages and the number of articles [$F(7, 467) = 7.560$, $p = .000$] as determined by one-way ANOVA.

The suicide news reported by *The Star* was mainly following episodic narrative style (65.3%). Meanwhile, less than half (34.7%) of the suicide coverage adopted a thematic narrative style. According to one-way ANOVA, there was no statistically significant difference between the issue narrative styles and the number of articles [$F(1, 467) = .446$, $p = .513$].

Table 6. Issue Narrative Styles Used by *The Star* in Reporting Suicide from 2014-2018

Issue Narrative Style	**Percentage (n = 467)**
Episodic	65.3

Thematic	34.7

More than half of the suicide articles (60.2%) in *The Star* did not discuss a solution for the issue (Table 7). Meanwhile, there was an almost equal percentage of individual and societal responsibility reported in the articles, which was 18.0% and 19.7% respectively. There was only 2.1% of articles that reported an almost equal mix of both individual and societal responsibility. Out of the 467 news articles analyzed, only 15.8% included help-line at the end of the article. There was no statistically significant difference between the suicide solution and the number of articles [F (3, 467) = 1.396, p = .260] as determined by one-way ANOVA.

Table 7. Suicide Solutions Advocated by *The Star* from 2014-2018

Suicide Solution	**Percentage (n = 467)**
Individual Responsibility	18.0
Societal Responsibility	19.7
Combination	2.1
Not Mentioned	60.2

Table 8 recorded the cross-tabulation between issue narrative styles and solutions advocated by *The Star* in reporting suicide. In addition, there was a statistically significant association between issue narrative styles and suicide solutions as determined by Pearson Chi-Square test (X^2 = 160.883, df = 8, p = .000). While 63.1% of episodic narrative was leading to individual responsibility, only 36.9% of thematic narrative was leading to individual responsibility. Also, 84.8% of thematic narrative was leading to societal responsibility, but only 15.2% of episodic narrative was leading to societal responsibility.

Table 7. Issue Narrative Styles and Suicide Solutions Advocated by *The Star* from 2014-2018

Suicide Solution	**Episodic Narrative** *(% within Solutions)*	**Thematic Narrative** *(% within Solution)*
Individual Responsibility	63.1	36.9
Societal Responsibility	15.2	84.8
Combination	10.0	90.0
Not Mentioned	83.9	15.7

Discussion

This study found that there was a statistically significant difference between the number of articles reporting suicide and different years. This reflected that *The Star* gave an unequal weight of attention to suicide during the time frame of the study, which also reflected the gatekeeping and agenda-setting functions of the newspaper. In addition, most of the coverage was published in the form of straight news, which reported facts or quote references on general information like who, what, when, where, why and how. This descriptive style places the journalist in the role of an observer (Salgado, Stromback, Aalberg & Esser, 2016). It is important to note that opinion pieces like editorial, column articles, feature articles and letters-to-the-editor offer readers a diversity of interpretation, viewpoints and in-depth analyses from multiple perspectives, hence enhancing the marketplace of ideas and educating public understanding of the issues.

In their discussion about interpretive journalism, Salgado, Stromback, Aalberg and Esser (2016) mentioned that the interpretive style requires the journalist to act as an analyst in addition

to being an observer. The authors stressed that interpretive journalism aims at finding out the truth behind the facts and statements while educating audiences to understand not only what is happening but also why. More importantly, interpretive journalism is characterized by journalistic explanations, evaluations, contextualization or speculations going beyond verifiable facts or statements by sources. As mentioned earlier, the major drivers of suicide in Southeast Asia include socioeconomic factors such as social inequities, gender disparities, financial strife and family conflicts. Therefore, it takes interpretive journalism to raise the awareness of suicide and to prevent the problem not only through internal, individual or personal effort but also intervention and treatment from various societal, structural, systemic and policymaking levels.

Hjelmeland and Knizek (2016, p. 362) observed that the researchers outside "the West" are more open to understand suicide from a non-biomedical perspective, and more ready to see the contextual issues involved. Notably, the authors alerted that too much focus on mental disorders in suicide prevention may be counterproductive because people might think that there is no danger of suicide for as long as there is no sign of mental disorder. Additionally, associating suicide to mental disorders would attribute a stigmatized image to those with suicidal tendencies, and preventing them from seeking help due to fear of being labelled as mentally ill (Shahtahmasebi, 2015).

Nonetheless, Hjelmeland and Knizek (2017) underscored that it is important to treat mental disorders with regard to suicide prevention. This study also calls for future research to examine the news coverage on mental health as 21.8% of the suicide reported by *The Star* was linked to mental health issues. In Malaysia, the 2017 National Health and Morbidity Survey reported that 29% of the 32 million population in the country suffered from depression and/or anxiety disorder compared to 12% in 2011. The survey also reported that suicidal thoughts among teenagers aged 13 to 17 have increased from 7.9% in 2012 to 10% in 2017 (Malek, 2019). Scholars have been warning that mental illness is expected to be the second biggest health problem affecting Malaysians after heart disease by 2020 (Chong, Mohamad & Er, 2013). It is alarming that the cumulative global impact of mental disorders in terms of lost economic output will amount to USD16.3 million between 2011 and 2030 (Word Health Organization, 2020). In Malaysia, the cost of mental health issues in the workplace to the economy is estimated to be RM14.46 billion or 1% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2018 to employers (Arumugan, 2020).

A review of literature showed that reporting that portrayed suicide negatively was less likely to be followed by a rise in suicide rates (Gunn, Goldstein & Lester, 2020). Significantly, Niederkrotenthaler et al. (2010) asserted that reporting that portrayed how people have overcome their suicidal crisis was less likely to be followed by a rise in suicide rates, and this is called the Papageno effect. Although this study found that 61.7% of the articles reporting suicide portrayed a negative issue image, none of them was undertaking the suicide preventive reporting suggested by Niederkrotenthaler et al. (2010).

Media framing could influence the level of mental health literacy, responsibility attribution and stigma alleviation (Zhang, Jin, Stewart & Porter, 2016). According to Vishwanath (2014), lack of awareness and knowledge are the reasons for people's negative attributions and stigmatized beliefs. While positive public perceptions could help to promote a sense of acceptance among those facing mental health challenges, negative perceptions may result in individuals feeling rejected or stigmatized. Vishwanath (2014) also alerted that stigmatized perceptions may lead to more problems at a macro level, including a lesser coverage of the problem by media or a lack of funding in an institutional effort to treat or support individuals. Future studies could use the problem characterization and solution advocacy framework employed in this study to further investigate the coverage of mental health issues by media.

Although this study found that episodic framing was the predominant issue narrative style used by *The Star* in reporting suicide, there was an almost equal percentage of individual and

societal responsibility advocated by the newspaper. The current study also found a significant difference between issue narrative styles and suicide solutions, which is consistent with the findings of previous studies. Nevertheless, it is worrisome that most of the articles (60.2%) did not mention any suicide solution. While this calls for a more robust interpretive journalism, it also points to an area to be investigated by future research. Malaysia is a country with a Muslim majority for whom attempted suicide is a serious breach of the faith (a grievous sin). Furthermore, those who attempt suicide in the country may be prosecuted under Section 309 of the Penal Code. Future studies could examine Malaysian journalist's professional role conception, specifically in studying the factors or challenges affecting journalist's approaches in reporting suicide or even euthanasia. This might provide some insights into the gatekeeping, agenda-setting and framing of suicide coverage. It is hoped that this will also help to explain why most of the articles failed to offer solution for suicide.

Conclusion

The current study found that *The Star* gave an unequal weight of attention to suicide during the time frame of the study, which reflected the gatekeeping and agenda-setting functions of the newspaper. Most of the articles were published in the form of straight news and portrayed a negative issue image/attitude towards suicide. *The Star* also reported both local and international suicide news. In addition, *The Star* linked suicide issue to contextual factors like sexual abuse, child abuse, substance abuse, poverty, sickness, loneliness in elder people, conflicts with parents and/or siblings, grief and loss, refugee problems, committing suicide to escape punishment, copycat suicide following celebrity's death or television series, as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) problems. Mental health issues were also reported as a major cause for suicide. Although this study found that episodic framing was the predominant issue narrative style used by *The Star* in reporting suicide, there was an almost equal percentage of individual and societal responsibility advocated by the newspaper. However, the majority of the articles failed to mention responsibility attribution for suicide, which is a severe issue facing the country. The current study also found a significant difference between issue narrative styles and suicide solutions, which is consistent with the findings of previous studies. The current study further extends suicide-framing literature through the exploration of problem characterization and solution advocacy, as well as attribution theory. It also adds value to the study of mediated health communication.

Future studies could look into the interconnection between journalist's professional role conception in reporting suicide, and problem characterization and solution advocacy. This is important because there are practical implications to how media frame suicide, it influences both public perceptions of the need to address this social problem and public support for individual-level or societal-level policies in addressing suicide. Furthermore, further research could analyze the impact of framing suicide as an individual versus societal concern on the audience' response towards societal-level policies to solve the problems.

The findings of this study could provide some suggestions for reporting suicide within the Malaysian context. An interpretive journalism approach, which offers in-depth explanations, evaluations, contextualization or solution could help to convey the complexity of suicide. Subsequently, it could raise awareness of the public, as well as encouraging prevention and intervention effort at an institutional level. In addition, the media could work on including more stories of how individuals have overcome their suicidal crisis to enhance the Papageno effect. Significantly, more coverage should portray suicide as a societal concern to reduce stereotyping of individuals to have gone through the trauma. Media should also report about the vulnerable populations, namely those who experience mental health challenges, sexual abuse, child abuse,

substance abuse, poverty, sickness, loneliness in elder people, conflicts with parents and/or siblings, grief and loss, refugee problems, as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) problems.

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Dr. Excellent: The Systemic and Personal Conditions for Being an Academic Star in Communication Studies

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Abstract: Pursuing excellence is a legitimate ambition of many scholars worldwide. However, between wishful thinking and real facts lies a great leap that can only be bridged using a myriad of resources. We label these the *excellence repertoire*. Based on 25 interviews with successful communication scholars, we show the key role of accumulating social, economic, and institutional capital in shaping the *excellence repertoire*. The study argues that the *fetishization* of productivity might jeopardize the traditional *ethos* of science, in a context where research excellence may be disconnected from the quality of education.

Keywords: research excellence, field theory, communication sciences, publish or perish, productivity, academic stars

Introduction

One of the key factors to measure academic excellence, and which is thus crucial in tenure processes and hiring decisions is publication in top-tier journals (Tóth and Demeter, 2021; Zdenek, 2017). It is generally assumed that journals with higher impact factors are deemed more important than those with lower ones and, therefore, the quality and excellence of research publications is often derived from the scientific outlets in which they appear (Holden et al., 2006; Vanclay, 2011). In recent years, journals have become the central spaces for scientific dissemination and theoretical discussions, and publishing regularly in top journals is perceived as a sign of status, excellence, and success (Pendlebury and Adams, 2012). Moreover, since university rankings put a significant emphasis on research output (Stack, 2021), faculty members, especially at research universities that strive for better ranking positions, are under pressure to get papers published. In this context, many researchers are increasingly concerned about the degree to which their own work is considered "excellent". The secret of excellence or, as other authors in cultural studies call it, "academic stardom" (Moran, 1998; 2000) is the focus of this study.

This article explores how and why some communication scholars became so excellent. Drawing upon Bourdieu's field theory and based on 25 in-depth interviews with prominent

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international academics, we try to elucidate the secrets of excellence and its impact on scholars' daily-life. Our findings reveal how the social construction of excellence is mainly driven by the coordinates of its craft and psychology, arguing that both must necessarily be aligned with systemic premises. We also show the crucial role of capital accumulation in shaping the *excellence repertoire*, specifically in the form of social, economic and institutional resources. This study contributes to the international problematization of the publication culture in social sciences (Darbyshire, 2007; Watson, 2011), focusing on how excellence is socially constructed and achieved in practice in the communication field**.**

Individual and Systemic Aspects Accounting for Research Excellence

An extensive research agenda in communication studies shows that recognized excellence—as measured by holding top positions at leading universities (Burris, 2004; Cowan and Rossello, 2018; Demeter and Tóth, 2020), gatekeeping positions such as editors and editorial board members in prestigious journals (Goyanes & de-Marcos 2020; Lauf, 2005), and publication output (Efranmanesh, Tahira and Abrizah, 2017; Moody, 2004; Tóth, 2018)—is the interplay between systemic dynamics and individual merit. Several research traditions have examined these systemic inequalities, empirically showing how they significantly favor scholars from the Western parts of the world or, more precisely, scholars educated at elite Western universities (Collyer, 2014; Enders, 2001; Fumasoli, Goastellec and Kehm, 2015). Within a world-systemic perspective, previous works have defined such research imbalances as both vertical and horizontal inequalities.

As regards horizontal inequality, research shows that the top positions of communication scholarship are mostly occupied by Western educated scholars, typically with an American background (Demeter and Tóth, 2020; Wiedemann & Meyen, 2016). This holds not just for top positions, but also for publication output and gatekeeper positions (Goyanes & Demeter, 2020; Enders, 2001). In terms of vertical inequality, extant research shows that, besides geopolitical differences, there are vertical differences as well, even within the center. This means that, in order to be in a leading position, it is not enough to have Western degrees, but also elite credentials such as education from Ivy League or Russell Group universities (Altbach, 2010; Clauset, Arbesman and Larremore, 2015; Cowan and Rossello, 2018; Enders, 2001). Research shows, however, that in order to acquire such an elite track record, scholars need more than individual talent and personal effort since admission to elite education is, at least in part, a consequence of social status, including family background and race (Bourdieu, 1996; Golden, 2007.

Extant research has also provided robust analytical tools to account for global geopolitical, racial, and gender inequalities in global science (Goyanes, 2020b). First, when it comes to geopolitical biases in global scholarship, imbalances are typically discussed in the terms of the Matthew effect (Bonitz, Bruckner and Scharnhorst, 1997; Merton, 1968) and de-Westernization (Waisbord and Mellado, 2014; Wang, 2011). Bonitz, Bruckner and Scharnhorst (1997) directly used the Matthew-effect for the description of the inequalities between the academic representation of geopolitical locations and they argued that rich countries have disproportionally higher number of citations, grants and publication output than developing countries. They coined the term 'Matthew-effect for countries' to refer to this country level bias.

According to a number of studies, the aforementioned systemic biases hold not only for education, but also for many other aspects of career prospects (Gerhards and Carlson, 2017). This is not surprising: as career success is in many ways is determined by prior elite education, and since elite central students are more likely to have elite education than their non-core counterparts, it is most likely that, as a consequence of their elite education, they will hold a

disproportionally greater share of power positions than their more peripheral peers (Bourdieu 1996; Clauset, Arbesman and Larremore, 2015; Demeter and Tóth 2020;).

Accordingly, elite journals that are indexed in prestigious international databases (i.e. JCR and Scopus) typically favor Western scholars that publish in Western publishing houses, write in English, and employ Western methods and practices (Istratii, 2020; Istratii and Hirmer, 2020; Narayanaswamy, 2019). These aforementioned systemic inequalities are further exacerbated by financial issues such as the higher salaries of Western scholars and the uneven distribution of international research funding between the center and the periphery (Around and Bell, 2009; Bloch and Sorensen, 2015). When discussing the excellence repertoire, we should remember these systemic dynamics that constitute a significant part of perceived excellence as it manifests itself in different aspects of a scholar's career success. Accordingly, we argue that Bourdieu's field theory might be a good starting to point from which to better understand the publication culture in the field and the role of capital accumulation, habitus and the underlying norms that regulate the field. Through 25 in-depth interviews with prominent international profiles, we try to elucidate the secrets of excellence in the international marketplace.

Theoretical framework

Bourdieu exerted heroic efforts to highlighted the role that the field of forces plays in academic life, and his later followers dedicated an enormous amount of research to this topic (Demeter, 2019; Wacquant, 2018; Wiedemann and Meyen, 2016). According to Bourdieu, in order to develop the appropriate set of winner strategies to success in a given field, i.e. what we conceptualize as the *excellence repertoire*, competitive agents have to acquire the winning *habitus*. Habitus refers to certain durable and transposable dispositions or tendencies that social agents have in order to be active during social actions (Grenfell, 2008). Bourdieu deliberately states that the most important commitment of elite universities is to make their students implement a habitus whereby elite students can demarcate themselves from students of other, less prestigious universities (Bourdieu, 1996). Accordingly, students of future academic excellence might pick up the winning habitus at elite institutions without being aware of this elitist demarcation. Moreover, elite students, even without knowing that, might develop a habitus that includes the idea that they are the "cream of the crop", and it might have implications to their future networking strategies as well. With this, they embrace the myth of meritocracy that has been extensively critized by several authors (Darbyshire, 2007; Demeter, 2020).

Bourdieu's notion of capital can be roughly conceived as the extension of the economic sense of the concept, since Bourdieu's purpose is to extend the sense of the term "capital" by employing it in a wider system of exchanges whereby various types of assets are transformed and exchanged within complex networks or circuits within and across different fields. Based on the Bourdieusian concept of capital, Demeter (2018) distinguishes four types of capital that can be related to the field of academic scholarship. The first and most important is *academic capital,* which can be accumulated in the form of certifications, degrees, fellowships, research grants, and work experience. Academic capital that has been collected at the top of the hierarchy (typically, in the US and other English-speaking countries) is much more valuable than that collected in more peripheral countries.

Another type of capital is *social capital*, which consists of demonstrable records of participation in international collaborations, research groups and associations such as, in the case of communication studies, the ICA, NCA or AEJMC. Of course, being a fellow or in a presidential position entails much more social capital than being a mere member of these associations (Wiedemann & Meyen 2016). The third type of capital is *economic capital,* which is one of the main factors behind academic labor migration towards the West (Asheulova &

Dushina, 2014). Economic capital typically consists of factors like salary, equipment and technology for scientific activities, and the accessibility of external funds. The relatively low level of economic capital tends to inflict great damage on the career trajectory of non-Western scholars, since they frequently have to undertake other duties besides their academic work, and this "divided or parallel career paths" lifestyle often results in leaving academia.

Finally, the fourth type of capital is *symbolic capital* in the widest sense, which consists of many forms and aspects of contemporary recognition. Of course, this symbolic capital can easily be transferred to economic capital. For example, one of the most important manifestations of symbolic capital is the number of citations, which is a powerful asset in a job interview or an academic promotion. Other types of symbolic capital are hierarchical positions in tenure or selection committees, memberships in editorial boards of prestigious journals, and other gatekeeper positions. Lastly, the number of publications in prestigious journals should be seen as symbolic capital which, similarly to the citations scores, can be transferred to economic capital through job appointments or promotions.

Based on our aforementioned critical assessment on systemic inequalities of the field and on our recent conceptualization that applies Bourdieusian concepts to the examination of communication scholarship, this study contributes to the international problematization of publication culture in social sciences in general (Darbyshire, 2007; Watson, 2011) and in communication sciences in particular (Ang et al, 2019; Waisbord, 2019), critically exploring how measureable excellence (as it is expressed by publication records, citations, research grants and power positions) is determined by systemic pressures and biases, how it is socially constructed, and how it can be accomplished in practice.

Method, Procedure and Analysis

We conducted in-depth interviews with 25 international scholars. In order to be considered as an international scholar, our respondents should meet several criteria such as being editorial board members in international journals, publishing in international journals, and be highly cited in their research fields. While the definition of an international scholar might be blurred in a globalized field, we focus on well-known figures that have an international reputation that is expressed by international publication records, international memberships and international citations.

The semi-structured interviews were carried out between March and November 2018. We conducted semi-structured interviews, as this method allows us to reach deep knowledge from a person's "lived experience" and "perspective" (Johnson & Rowlands, 2012, 100). From an analytical point of view, the purpose of semi-structured interviews is to find patterns from the "thick descriptions" offered by participants (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006, 119). We used purposive sampling, specifically maximum variety sampling. Following Patton (2002), participants were chosen to reflect a large diversity in information-rich cases relevant to the research interest: different universities, communication departments, and countries (see Table 1).

Table 1

Sample Characteristics

Gender	(%)	Current position	(%)	Race	(%)	Education (%)	BA (%)	MA (%)	PhD (%)	Affiliation (%)
Male	55	Associate professor	13	White	94	US	62	79	83	60
Female	45	Full professor	87	Other than white	6	Western Europe	17	12	12	20
						South America	8	0	0	8
						Asia	8	4	0	8
						Canada	0	0	0	8
						Australia	4	4	4	0

As a consequence of our sampling strategy, our interviewees represented a great heterogeneity in their profiles, both in the field of expertise (political communication, media studies, journalism, advertising, health communication, etc.), the geographical level covered (multinational.), demography (men and women of different ages, races, and experiences), responsibilities (respondents included editors-in-chief of major journals, managing editors and editorial board members) and methodological approaches (quantitative and qualitative). All participants were, at the time of analysis, editorial board members of at least one major communication journal of the Journal Citation Report (*Journal of Communication*, *Human Communication Research, Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *New Media & Society*, *Communication Research*, *Information, Communication & Society* etc.), and highly cited in their respective sub-disciplines.

We decided to focus on editorial boards from leading journals because we were interested in accounting for excellence according to excellent researchers. Editorial board members typically contribute to ensuring the quality of scientific journals and are selected based on their experience and prestige. Extant research has clearly demonstrated that the selection of editorial board members is usually based on the career trajectory and excellence of scholars, which generally means publishing in top journals (Burgess and Shaw 2010). Accordingly, we focus on those journals typically seen as leaders in the field: those indexed in the first quartile of the Journal Citation Report. In addition, in order to account for the different visions that may influence the social construction of excellence, our sample includes scholars that have conducted both quantitative and qualitative research. Therefore, based on our sampling strategy, the definition and secrets of excellence outlined in this study are significantly influenced by our respondents' own success in this particular marketplace of ideas.

Despite the efforts to have an inclusive sample size, the many journals (and scholars) that were left out preclude us from claiming that our findings are representative. In this regard, there are obvious limitations to our sampling strategy, as different editorial boards from other lower-ranked, more critical or humanistic journals may hold a different approach towards research excellence, as expectations, priorities, and norms of research practice and/or production may diverge (Goyanes, 2020a). However, as we outlined previously, we are interested in the secrets of excellence from those scholars who combine a prominent reputation, productivity, and impact, and who hold a position at one or many editorial boards of top-ranked communication journals.

The confidentiality of interviewees was guaranteed. Given the national diversity of selected participants, the majority of interviews were conducted online via Skype. The interviews were

transcribed by a research assistant and later codified and analyzed by the first author. To achieve saturation of ideas, we intentionally sought out both relatively young scholars (but with a strong record of publications) and highly experienced ones. The different profiles in terms of academic background, research interests, and methodological approaches enabled us to reach data saturation at 20 interviews. Data saturation is reached when there is enough information to replicate the study when the ability to obtain additional new information has been attained, and when further coding is no longer feasible. In order to re-ensure this, we included 5 more interviews, providing more robust findings.

The interview guide embraces three topic areas. The first part concerned academics' perception of their own path to excellence. Questions addressed academics' vision of their own excellence and the tactics and basic rules that they have followed to its achievement under their academic circumstances. The second part relates to their own description of the structure of excellence: questions were asked regarding what academics think about assessment exercises like RAE or RAF, the double-blind peer-review process and the role of productivity. Finally, the third part focused on academics' perceptions of the "publish or perish" system.

All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim following the transcription rules proposed by Dresing et al. (2015). We conducted a thematic analysis which posits "a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke 2006, 79), following the analytic six-phase procedure proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) that allows for the systematization and transparency of the coding and analysis process. Codes and thematic maps were discussed with two independent researchers, which then informed the refinement of themes, their definition and naming. The thematic analysis allowed us to identify shared patterns across the statements of various interviewees centered around our three research interests while staying flexible to identifying other emerging themes. In the next section, we will discuss the key findings.

Results

Systemic Mechanisms behind Measureable Excellence

While only a few respondents referred to those systemic features of international academia that strongly and directly affect measureable individual excellence, their responses included considerable information regarding the implicit bias of the system. Many of our respondents emphasized the fact that excellence is a social construction, meaning that it is a relatively closed group of professionals who define who is considered excellent: "how good you are always depends on a small community", Participant 23 mentioned. Our respondents acknowledged that this small group or network consists of members of elite academic agents such as leading departments: "you know, I was at Oxford and now I'm at Stanford, and you could say that to get to these places you have to be excellent" (P5). Elite institutions are considered to serve an "institutional nepotism", as one of our respondents called it, since "people in the most successful and recognized institutions get better guidelines than other people" (P24). This assumption shows that the myth of meritocracy is typically accepted by successful scholars that tend to work at elite institutions.

Journals are also effective agents for the aforementioned institutional nepotism, since leading periodicals tend to favor authors that are close to the editorial team: "we're human beings so we like to help our friends, right? I think the journals do a pretty good job of it", Participant 13 blatantly stated. Another respondent suggested that there could be a systemic, institutional "elitist bias" that works on the editorial level, too: "I imagine that if you're an editor and you see someone from the Annenberg School or something like that, these are like

one of the leading schools in our field. And you see a single article and you will think that if this article comes from more leading institutions it will be better." (P19). The dominance of English and Western academic standards are also considered as systemic forces that affect individual excellence. "In order to be internationally excellent, you have to abandon your native language and write in English, even if it is not your mother tongue. Consequently, you have to put in extra effort that is not needed for those scholars who have English as a first language", Participant 21 stated. Likewise, as one of our respondents summarized, internationally recognized scholars might consider writing in their original language as a mistake: "I made mistakes in my own career, at the beginning of my career I published in my mother tongue, so a lot of that kind of disappeared because nobody was citing it because people couldn't read it basically, could not understand it outside the German market. So that was kind of wasted." (P14). Besides language, there are several standards that should be followed in order to get published at the international level, and all these standards come from the Western world: "there are some formalities and standards that you should know, like for example language standards and the way how you write that stuff." (P14).

Networking and being familiar with international standards is definitely connected to systemic positions. Most respondents directly refer to the financial determination of being part of elite networks and being able to follow current norms. Excellent scholars need grants and funds in order to attend leading international conferences that are considered to be the most important forums for networking. Typically, elite Western universities have enough resources to offer travel and conference grants (Istratii, 2020), and international grants also typically go to researchers working at elite universities (Around and Bell, 2009; Bloch and Sorensen, 2015). As one of our respondents puts it, "you need to have resources. So when I started out I was in a very fortunate position and then I was able to pay my expenses to go to various conferences. So that helped,, because you get to meet other people, you see what other people are doing and people get to know you." (P17). Conferences also help to get new ideas and future research agenda: "Going to conferences helps me to be more productive as I run into more opportunities at conferences than I would maybe run into if I hadn't gone to the conferences." (P6).

Finally, one of our respondents expressed the opinion that, while there might be no open nepotism on a personal level, there is a systemic bias against both racial and sexual minorities. This is a consequence of the fact that, in his opinion, editors and reviewers can guess the author's identity by the topic of the article, and thus their decision can be affected by their personal attitude. In summary, our respondents referred to two kinds of systemic determination of measureable excellence. First, there is the Western determination of language and academic standards that contribute to the development of measureable excellence. These norms can be acquired though elite education in a Western environment, which significantly favors scholars either from the Western world or from a family background that can finance an elite education. Second, the role of the infrastructure can be also interpreted in a systemic way. One should have all those resource-intensive assets (supportive and resource-abundant environment, article trackers like Scopus and Web of Science, the ability to attend conferences and access to databases and journals) that have a great impact on the path towards recognized excellence. Since these resources can be most likely obtained at elite Western universities, the system highly favors scholars working at these institutions.

The Psychology and Craft of Excellence

Most of our respondents understood academic excellence in terms of research and, more specifically, in terms of research output in "top-tier" journals. Only two participants embraced excellence as a "multidimensional construct" or a combination of "services" in three inter-related domains: "research, teaching, and service to the academic community" (P2). According

to our participants' testimonies, the psychology of excellence is the product of different personal traits, such as passion, curiosity, enthusiasm, conscientiousness, and creativity. However, the psychology of excellence is not only a combination of "positive" emotions or individual traits, but also entails the confidence "to believe that what you are doing is good enough to be published" (P21).

In addition, most of our participants acknowledge that being "resilient" is a key ingredient for academic success because, in academia, "you get a lot of negative feedback and a lot of criticism. Academics are very good at critiques, and it's not always helpful" (P3). Beyond personal traits, there are other conditions related to the "expectations", "familiarity" and "conventions of the discipline" (P5) that have even more impact on shaping a successful career. The "adaptation" and "internalization" of all these "tacit rules", as one of our respondents stated (P9), are key to understanding the craft of research and thus to get published and excel in the field. Beyond learning the conventions of the discipline, most of our respondents believed that posing good research questions that can be empirically answered, having good training, and mastering methodologies (both qualitative and qualitative), are fundamental to getting published (and thus to excelling).

The Excellence Repertoire

The psychology and craft of excellence are key elements at an individual level to shaping greatness in scholarship. However, top scholars seldom publish by themselves and typically have significant resources at their disposal as well. We term these the *excellence repertoire*. Specifically, the *excellence repertoire* is the combination of a myriad of economic, social and institutional resources that enable outstanding scholars to design and conduct their scholarship and boost their productivity as a result (see Table 2). According to the testimonies we collected, having "good collaborators" is the most relevant asset to conducting top-quality research. However, most participants state that in order to achieve research excellence, co-authors and financial resources must be aligned. The financial resource most frequently cited is in the form of "grants", i.e. funding given by a third party to conduct empirical research and for "gathering original data, running statistics or going to international conferences", as one participant explained (P13).

Table 2
The excellence repertoire

Type of Capital	Specification	Illustrative quotations
Economic capital	Grants	"Applying for grants and having some money is fundamental"
Social capital	Collaborators	"Collaboration and learning from other people. I think I am more productive when I work with others in a team"
	Networks	"Excellence is very often a reputation, and reputation is on the way of depending on your social network with the people actually like what you do"

Academic/ Symbolic capital	PhD Programs	"My PhD program shaped who I am" "I think that being in an actual doctoral program was fundamental to me"
	Colleagues	"Having good colleagues around you is important, people you can talk to, you can work with"
	Students	"Our researchers are our students" "Students have tremendous huge impact one me"
	Time management and time to do research	"If you work in a place that does not have good resources and has a lot of teaching, you cannot become a good researcher very easily"
	University environment	"You have to have a very supportive environment"

Accumulating economic and social capital seems fundamental to excellence. However, the *excellence repertoire* also includes key institutional resources around five key ingredients: PhD programs, colleagues, students, time management, and the university environment. First, for the vast majority of our respondents, the enrolment in and cultivation of a great PhD program is "the first step to excellence" (P23). Being trained with excellent supervisors on how to conduct empirical research and to understand the "tricks" of the research process and peer review seems fundamental. In addition, high quality training enables many PhD students to increase their number of publications and thus their chances to get external funding, as the following respondent acknowledges: "When I finished my doctorate, I was already used to writing papers and I was very skilled. Then it was easier to get funding." (P14).

With regards to the academic institution, our respondents believed that having "great" colleagues, grad and PhD students, and being involved in a research-intensive department were key to fostering excellence. Departmental colleagues play a fundamental role not only as potential collaborators, but also because "you can talk with them and explain your problems", as one of our respondent raised (P11). All these social interactions, immersed in a research-oriented department, create an atmosphere in which all faculty members seek to pursue academic greatness. Students were also relevant to helping our respondents grasp social reality and come up with new and original ideas. Learning new things and the motivation of some students to conduct particular research projects inspired some of our interviewees to collaborate with them and finally "get stuff published".

Finally, to be excellent, our respondents needed time, which generally meant reducing their teaching load or simply neglecting teaching duties. Finding time to write and focus on their research projects, which they typically considered as the most relevant work as academics, was fundamental to producing high-quality scholarship and being productive. These dynamics of research dominating over teaching duties might point to an important challenge that leading scholars and, most importantly, research-intensive universities are currently facing: research excellence may be disconnected from or come at the expense of quality of education.

Productivity and the Publish or Perish/Flourish System

For our respondents, productivity is key to understanding the academic dynamics of the publication culture that surrounds the scientific institution. Productivity is a "pretty fuzzy term"

(P24), generally understood as one's record of publications. Some other participants also understood productivity "as the total number of Google Scholar citations" (P21), clearly pointing to the huge weight that citation counts have in shaping scientific success. In general terms, the concept of productivity is discussed around the possible imbalances that might be triggered in relation to the quality of scholarship and the type of scientific outlets in which that scholarly work might appear.

First, despite the assumption that being productive might be detrimental to research quality, some of our participants argue that in fact, the two are positively correlated. "I think that the sentence 'the more productive you are, the lower the quality of your work', is a lie. I think that's positive to say that the more productive you are the higher quality of your work. It is not a perfect relation. But generally speaking, I often say that you cannot have quality if you don't have quantity", a responded explained (P9). Echoing this voice, another participant stated: "You can't get more things published unless you're doing good work. So I'm sure this is a positive correlation, but it's also true that there is pressure to publish a lot and sometimes you might publish things that aren't all that great. If you had less pressure to publish, you might work more deeply on something" (P17).

However, other testimonies related productivity with quantity and not quality. Therefore, counting the number of publications, sole authorships, invitations, awards and grants becomes "the greatest indicator to know if a scholar is excellent or not" (P5). This *fetishization* of productivity and research credentials jeopardizes the traditional *ethos* of science—the advancement of human understanding, as the following participant introduces:

> "I think we are moving to productivity-based on counting how many publications and citations we have, we can't leave productivity aside as the progress of the discipline. The issue of productivity metrics is important, but we should qualify it as soon as this study increases our knowledge on a topic" (P8).

The concept of productivity is also very much associated with the academic ladder and, more specifically, with the tenure-track system of most public universities in the US and the "publish or perish" institutional framework that underpins it. As one of our interviewees acknowledged, publish or perish means "to publish enough to get tenure or you're out." (P6). However, collecting research credentials mostly in form of journal publications, teaching, and service to the academic community, pushed most of our participants to the brink of intellectual collapse, pressuring them to publish as much as they can and thus generating anxiety, frustration, and even academic dropout.

Acquiring tenure means that our participants can keep their jobs almost under any circumstances, even if they stop publishing. By holding a protected job for the rest of their lives, our participants felt that they were in a position of control of their academic performance and of freedom to conduct the research they love. "The tenure system was making me have to wait to do the work I loved", one participant lamented (P6). As a result, after tenure, most of our interviewees felt relieved, and the anxiety and pressure to publish decreased dramatically. Similarly, some participants acknowledged that after tenure they radically changed their research interests, pursuing ideas that really appealed them instead of the ideas that they thought could be published or would impress the community. Therefore, on many occasions, the tenure system might jeopardize original research questions, generating desperation and even ethical research issues, as the following respondent illustrated:

> "It's a really horrible system because I think it squashes good questions and I think real productivity comes when you're relaxed, as some people get their best ideas in the bathroom. So I think that it works undue pressure and I think it's painful, but it's part of an economic commercial set of research. But I think it's harmful, absolutely." (P18).

Conclusions

The publication culture that surrounds the scientific habitus has established the norm that communication scholars must publish regularly until retirement. Publish or perish, and the subsequent anxiety and pressure that most scholars feel to meet the demands of the tenure process engender an academic field characterized by growing competition and the inflation of research credentials. In a context where being excellent is a function fundamentally derived from someone's record of publications (Butler and Spoelstra, 2012), many scholars worldwide are challenged to demonstrate their research ability and thus to show that they "are able to publish". This study contributes to international discussions on the publication culture in social sciences (Darbyshire, 2007; Watson, 2011; Demeter & Goyanes, 2020), focusing on how excellence is socially constructed and achieved in practice in the communication field. Based on 25 interviewees with prominent scholars, our findings offer six inter-related contributions to this line of inquiry.

First, in our critical analysis, we investigated both systemic and individual conditions of the development of measureable excellence. The analysis of the interviews resulted in a complex picture of the process whereby academic excellence can be achieved in communication sciences. First, there are clear systemic determinants of international visibility and excellence that are little affected by individual factors such as talent, hard work, and intelligence. The most openly expressed systemic factors that contribute to research excellence were elite education along with a mastery of the English language and Western academic standards, all of which are connected with one's family background, nationality and the place of education. Another systemic determinant is the financial potential of one's research institution, since most preconditions of networking such as attending international conferences and being up-to-date with trending topics and methodologies need considerable financial resources. Obviously, researchers that work at elite Western universities can get financial support for networking more easily than their peripheral peers, which allows them to further reinforce their power positions.

In a Bourdieusian frame, this is a perfect example of how economic capital accumulated at Western elite institutions can be converted to social capital that can later be converted to academic capital in the form of research output, citations, and powerful positions. The recognition of the aforementioned facts led many excellent scholars to move towards elite Western norms, the English language, and elite Western institutions, all of which leads to systemic dynamics whereby academic capital is both collected and accumulated in the West. As Table 1 shows, all the analyzed researchers obtained their education in the West and they all hold Western affiliations. This systemic bias towards Western academia considerably affemight affect the individual habitus of many excellent researchers who strive to develop a professional habitus that corresponds to the norms of the field.

Second, according to our findings, excellence is generally understood as one's ability to publish in top-tier communication journals which are considered a prime form of academic capital. Our results thus confirm the general assumption that being productive and appearing in leading scientific outlets is the most important part of the habitus that leads to academic success and renown. Looking at the formalities of the field, it is rational to assume that publishing in top-tier communication journals is shorthand for excellence: having good ideas and being recognized for the quality of scholarships is generally part of the reason for being published by a leading journal. In addition, there are journals whose history makes them authoritative; accordingly, "being able" to publish there sends a message to the academic community about the quality of one's research.

At the same time, the narrow and closed definition of excellence points to the structural distortions of the field and certain research visions that delimitate excellence from "other

things". First, taking a broad perspective on scholars' responsibilities, excellence might also be applicable not only to research but also to teaching, supervision, and service to the community (Watson, 2011). Neglecting these crucial responsibilities might also point to a zero-sum game in which quality of research might be disconnected from or come at the expense of quality of education. In a context where productivity has become a fetish for most leading academic institutions, education and administrative responsibilities might be at the greatest risk, since excellence in teaching apparently counts less when it comes to the accumulation of academic capital, thus the winner habitus concentrates much more on research than on other aspects of academic life and accordingly the habitus might become one-sided.

Third, beyond systemic features, we show how excellence is constructed and framed according to two rational coordinates: its psychology and craft. With the psychology of excellence, we refer to the personal traits and emotions (as parts of the successful and adaptive habitus) needed to conduct research deemed as excellent (passion, motivation, creativity, etc.). Our results demonstrate that, beyond the psychology of excellence, the craft aspect involves 1) understanding the norms, values, and conventions that shape the form and contents of the field of forces; and 2) translating this information into a successful habitus by (not necessarily consciously) following the standards and scientific procedures generally established in science. In short, it requires following the research conventions, interests and values of a research community and conducting "sound research" based on tacit rules of the scientific craft, which were acquired at elite universities. Research professionalism is, therefore, a function of two aspects: the norms and values of a given sub-discipline and the practical implementation of those conventions, i.e. in a research paper.

Fourth, this study addresses the myriad resources needed to boost one's capital accumulation and thus to excel or to challenge the norms of what excellence is. Our results indicate that the accumulation of capital is crucial for shaping a highly successful academic career, specifically: economic capital, social capital, symbolic capital, and academic capital. We label this accumulation the *excellence repertoire* and show how it manifests in practical terms. In particular, the *excellence repertoire* includes the accumulation of research grants and collaborators, the design and care of scientific networks, the development of research-intensive PhD programs, the control of interactions with key doctoral and graduate students, time management in order to focus on research, and the stabilization of academic institutions inspired by the motto "research first". In general terms, the *excellence repertoire* is the accumulation and management of resources at the disposal of excellent researchers, understood as those scholars that clearly surpass the basic criteria imposed by scientific bureaucracies and research communities in promotion processes. Scholars under this umbrella of resources are able to propose as many research questions as their repertoire allows them to, and develop a great capacity to empirically answer the former, mobilizing different kinds of capital accumulated during their scientific careers.

Fifth, our results show how research productivity is increasingly equated not only with quality but also with quantity. These opposing discourses are framed according to disputes around normative discussions about the objectives and *ethos* of communication research. Institutionally supported by the tenure-track system, the *fetishization* of productivity and research credentials are crucial to understanding the psychological costs not only for excelling, but for being in the academic system as a complex field. Despite the fact that obtaining tenure means a permanent, protected job for life, it also creates dysfunctionalities and distortions in top scholars: many have to wait until their promotion to work on the projects they love. The tenure-track system thus represents an academic process in which scholars have to test their research skills and prove they can contribute in order to advance their discipline further. At the same time, it may also create frustration and desperation as the tenure clock ticks, calling into question aspirants' identities and potentially causing them to neglect challenging ideas.

Sixth, our findings might also help provide guidance to scholars in developing their academic careers. On the one hand, our evidence shows that there are considerable systemic forces that play crucial roles in determining career development and measurable excellence. Scholars that either originated from or were educated in the center are favored over their non-core competitors, and this feature of the system should be taken into consideration. Peripheral scholars should invest extra efforts in acquiring those norms and habits that are natural for their central peers. According to our respondents, while the standardization and the mandatory nature of Western norms are sometimes contested, adapting to them still seems inevitable for international recognition. In order to acquire familiarity with Western norms and current trends in both methodology and topics, scholars should both follow trending literature and attend international conferences, since being up-to-date and building networks were considered as very important parts of success. Most of our respondents also referred to the importance of teamwork, so aspiring scholars should continuously monitor the international field in order to connect with researchers working on similar topics.

Selecting the appropriate journal in which to publish was also said to be very important, thus emerging scholars should be familiar with the topics, accepted methodologies, and audience of the leading journals in the field. On the other hand, the systemic bias in the field should be also criticized, and leading scholars in power positions such as journal editors and tenure committees might want to take into account those implicit biases that were mentioned by our respondents. Having elite degrees from prestigious universities, mastery of the English language, and trending methods are not always the result of individual excellence, but of systemic forces as well. Consequently, if powerful agents of the field are committed to the equality and equity of communication scholarship, they might consider systemic biases and try to balance their assessment of measureable excellence by weighting with the systemic features of the field such as education, language proficiency, and participation in elite academic networks.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has some limitations that should be addressed in subsequent studies. First, as a consequence of our more general perspective, we did not include some potentially significant influencers of career success such as gender and race, nor did we formulate specific questions related to these features in our interviews. Second, and perhaps more important, our sample was not representative in terms of these specific demographic features, and we had only two non-white participants. Thus, on the basis of our sample, it would not be possible to draw conclusions regarding racial or gender inequities in the field. These limitations of the study should be addressed by future research that directly aims to investigate the possible role of gender and race in the development of research excellence and career paths.

Third, future studies may consider empirically problematizing how scholars change their research agenda after receiving tenure or a promotion to full professor. As far as this research is concerned, we only superficially touched on the impact of the tenure system on academic performance and scholars' research interests. Therefore, future studies may consider empirically examining scholars' research paths before and after getting tenure, relying also on scientometric data (i.e. publication records and citations). Fourth and finally, future studies may also account for how an activist approach to research production may trigger divergent approaches to research excellence and to scholars' feeling of belonging/marginalization in the field. In our interview guide, we did not include questions on these issues, because we aimed to specifically problematize excellence from "hegemonic" or "standard" research paths. These limitations aside, our study critically contributes to the current discussion on how excellence is socially constructed and how it can be achieved in practice in communication science.

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Demeter, Márton: Academic Knowledge Production and the Global South. Questioning Inequality and Under-representation. Palgrave Macmillan, 2020, 274 pp.

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Demeter's book 'Academic Knowledge Production and the Global South. Questioning Inequality and Under-representation' focuses on different aspects of global knowledge production, including the structural features of international higher education, research policies and academic publishing. The thought-provoking monograph will be interesting to the community of communications scholars from at least two points of view. First, the book can be read as an analysis of scholarly communication or science communication, since the most important agents of the field – higher education institutions, international journals, ranking systems, research policy makers and the scholars themselves – connect each other by various means of communication. These communication facilities through which the international scientific community is interconnected includes academic culture, international language, academic rhetoric, accepted methodologies and several means of transnational academic capital. Second, since the author is a communication scholar himself, most empirical evidence discussed in the book come from the field of communication and media studies. Readers of the book will become familiar with various segments of the global field of communication research such as the author and editorial board diversities of leading communication journals, the composition of the research staff of leading communication departments and the share of different world regions in the research output of the discipline.

The book consists of seven chapters in two parts. The first two chapters present the theoretical framework of Demeter's analyses, while the second part (Chapters 3 to 7) discuss and critically analyze empirical data regarding various features of communication and media scholarship and related disciplines. The first chapter introduces several problems of inequalities in global knowledge production, which is the main focus of the monograph. Demeter reveals the main systemic problems of global academia: the exploitation and exclusion of the academic periphery, the hegemonic position of the Western core and the serious bias against both global South authors and peripheral academic institutions, especially universities. Moreover, the author analyses and criticizes the phenomenon of social blindness in terms of global knowledge production. This refers to the processes whereby an elitism based on "social class" and geopolitical exclusion works in a way that is clearly visible for the oppressed but, in most cases, totally invisible for the beneficiaries of the system. Demeter also introduces the misleading idea of academic work and competition being similar to the Olympic Games and thoroughly criticizes this analogy. Finally, the author presents the main questions that he addresses in the book and provides a short summary of the individual chapters. In the second chapter, Demeter introduces the main theoretical frameworks of the book, namely the Wallersteinian world-

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system theory and the Bourdieusian frame theory. Beside this, the author offers a unique theoretical model whereby geopolitical and societal inequalities as well as existing hegemonies can be properly analyzed in the world-system of global knowledge production. This specific model shows how so-called international scholars collect and accumulate transnational academic capital by acquiring central diplomas, international research grants and elite power positions at different institutions of the global academy. Chapter two also shows that the hegemonic structure of global knowledge production is a very complex one in which geopolitical hegemony (in the form of the rule of elite central institutions) is tightly interwoven with societal (class-based) stratification. The third chapter deals with the dynamics behind the problem of inequality through a discussion of economic, epistemic, moral, and institutional problems, including those directly linked to global academia. Demeter introduces the main processes that have historically led to a center-periphery structure in international science. This chapter also discusses the network-based operation of elite academic institutions that systematically overvalue each other's transnational academic capital to constitute an exclusionary elitism that the author calls (paraphrasing Bourdieu's state nobility) the development of a Global Academic Nobility. Finally, the author presents the main economic, moral and epistemic problems of central elitism that not only totally exclude the periphery, but also lead to serious setbacks in global knowledge production. The fourth chapter begins with the categorization problems of the world-system of global knowledge production since, as the author argues, categorizing the world into central and peripheral regions has led to some confusion. As a case study, Demeter presents the situation of Eastern Europe by showing how the Soviet invasion led to the Sovietization of the region, a situation which could be compared with the more commonly known colonization of knowledge. Demeter shows that cultural imperialism goes hand in hand with the uneven distribution of material resources such as publishing houses, journals, research grants and international associations. Finally, the author demonstrates how language policy, topical selectiveness and conscious citation universe development can lead to the global recognition of the periphery without central assistance, and he also presents the effort of central agents to stop or absorb emerging peripheral agents by coemption, thus making them part of the hegemon's academic center. The fifth chapter presents a great volume of empirical data on the scholarly output of different world regions in the social sciences in general, and in communication and media studies in particular. Demeter's analysis shows that while different scholarly disciplines have a different distribution of academic capital, the center/periphery structure of the field of knowledge production is rather similar in the case of all research fields with the absolute hegemonic position of the US, the UK, the developed countries of Western Europe and the rich countries of the so-called developed Asia, while the production of the periphery is almost invisible. Demeter also argues that the exclusion of the periphery and the excessive brain drain, and re-education practices maintain central hegemony to a great extent, while potentially causing even the most successful peripheral authors to lose their authentic voices. As counterexamples, Demeter presents the more adaptive, state-funded tactics of some BRICS countries and peripheral world regions, especially ibero-America, that have successfully raised their visibility without losing talent and authenticity. Finally, the author proposes some approaches and academic measurements that can reduce or even eliminate the bias against peripheral scholars. Chapter six presents the most important considerations behind the gatekeeper activities of central agents, namely editorial policies. This chapter focuses on the so-called invisible motives of editorial boards, and the author argues that, since editors must maintain or, preferably, raise the global rank of their journals, they consciously deal with issues concerning the Matthew effect, topical and thematic biases, preferential attachment or the "rich get richer" effect. Demeter argues that, as a consequence of the structural features of the world-system of knowledge production, gatekeepers of knowledge impede the emergence of the periphery: journal rankings, publishing practices and

standards, epistemic and methodological requirements, language issues and even topical preferences work against noncore scholars and serve the interests of their central peers. The final, seventh chapter sets out to study the characteristics of the network of the global academy by showing and explaining the most important connections between publishers, universities, authors, professional organizations, as well as certain external economic and political factors. This last chapter also addresses the question as to what should be done. As a possible answer, Demeter discusses the failure of centrally initiated de-Westernization processes in knowledge production and proposes an Easternization or peripheralization project which would entail global North professionalism without Westernizing peripheral education, approaches and values. The author also argues that global South agents should learn the game that international scientists play in order to use and subsequently modify current biased rules, and to be catalysts who will change the field of global knowledge production into one which is more diverse, inclusive and even more productive. The book is extended with a technical appendix in which the author discusses the methodologies he used throughout his empirical analyses.

The author tries to discuss inequalities and inequities from a critical lens, but, besides criticism, he also offers potential solutions and policy recommendations for building a more balanced international academia. While the book was launched only a few months ago, it has already received some positive feedback from leading international scholars. Larry Gross from the Annenberg School (and editor-in-chief of the International Journal of Communication), Gilbert Achcar and Romina Istratii from SOAS University of London, Louisa Ha from Bowling Green State University (then-editor-in-chief of Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly) and Christopher Chase-Dunn from the Institute of Research on World-Systems (University of California Riverside) applauded the book's harsh criticism and empirical rigor. Chase-Dunn considered the author as an intrepid protagonist of a more egalitarian human future, and this is the future indeed that will decide whether Demeter's book contributed to the construction of such a world.

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2021 Reviewer Thank You

Hungarian Communication Studies Association and the KOME editorial team would like to express their gratitude to all who reacted positively to our invitation and participated in the peer review process. We are indebted to you, to your patience and generousity for letting us take some of your precious time. Your expertise is much appreciated and your efforts in providing thorough reviews and valuable comments are among the key reasons KOME is continuing to be a successful journal recognised by the international scientific community. For this, as well as for reasons concerning accountability and transparency, we would like to publicly recognize all 22 reviewers who reviewed, in 2021, at least one manuscript submitted to KOME:

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