

European Scientific Journal, *ESJ*

February 2024

European Scientific Institute, ESI

The content is peer reviewed

ESJ Social Sciences

February 2024 edition vol. 20, No. 4

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ISSN: 1857-7431 (Online)

ISSN: 1857-7881 (Print)

Generativity is a Core Value of the ESJ: A Decade of Growth

Erik Erikson (1902-1994) was one of the great psychologists of the 20th century¹. He explored the nature of personal human identity. Originally named Erik Homberger after his adoptive father, Dr. Theodore Homberger, he re-imagined his identity and re-named himself Erik Erikson (literally Erik son of Erik). Ironically, he rejected his adoptive father's wish to become a physician, never obtained a college degree, pursued independent studies under Anna Freud, and then taught at Harvard Medical School after emigrating from Germany to the United States. Erickson visualized human psychosocial development as eight successive life-cycle challenges. Each challenge was framed as a struggle between two outcomes, one desirable and one undesirable. The first two early development challenges were 'trust' versus 'mistrust' followed by 'autonomy' versus 'shame.' Importantly, he held that we face the challenge of **generativity** versus **stagnation in middle life**. This challenge concerns the desire to give back to society and leave a mark on the world. It is about the transition from acquiring and accumulating to providing and mentoring.

Founded in 2010, the European Scientific Journal is just reaching young adulthood. Nonetheless, **generativity** is one of our core values. As a Journal, we reject stagnation and continue to evolve to meet the needs of our contributors, our reviewers, and the academic community. We seek to innovate to meet the challenges of open-access academic publishing. For us,

¹ Hopkins, J. R. (1995). Erik Homburger Erikson (1902–1994). *American Psychologist*, 50(9), 796-797. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.50.9.796>

generativity has a special meaning. We acknowledge an obligation to give back to the academic community, which has supported us over the past decade and made our initial growth possible. As part of our commitment to generativity, we are re-doubling our efforts in several key areas. First, we are committed to keeping our article processing fees as low as possible to make the ESJ affordable to scholars from all countries. Second, we remain committed to fair and agile peer review and are making further changes to shorten the time between submission and publication of worthy contributions. Third, we are looking actively at ways to eliminate the article processing charges for scholars coming from low GDP countries through a system of subsidies. Fourth, we are examining ways to create and strengthen partnerships with various academic institutions that will mutually benefit those institutions and the ESJ. Finally, through our commitment to publishing excellence, we reaffirm our membership in an open-access academic publishing community that actively contributes to the vitality of scholarship worldwide.

Sincerely,

Daniel B. Hier, MD

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p1](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p1)

Submitted: 03 January 2024
Accepted: 29 January 2024
Published: 29 February 2024

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OPEN ACCESS

Cite As:

Sheng L.W. & Jade M. (2024). *The Role of Macroeconomic Variables in Forecasting Equity Market Volatility in the East African Community Using Garch-Midas Model*. European Scientific Journal, ESJ, 20 (4), 1. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p1>

Abstract

This study delves into the dynamic relationship between macroeconomic variables and equity market volatility in the East African Community. The research employs the Generalized Autoregressive Conditional Heteroskedasticity (GARCH) model coupled with the Mixed Data Sampling (MIDAS) approach. Through a comparative process, it is found that the different macroeconomic variables exhibit heterogeneous effects on the different countries in the East African community that is macroeconomic factors significantly explain the variation in stock market volatility in Uganda and including these factors in the GARCH-MIDAS model improved its forecasting ability, however, in Kenya it was found that majority of the macroeconomic variables had insignificant effects on stock market volatility and didn't improve the forecasting ability of the GARCH-MIDAS model.

Keywords: GARCH, MIDAS, stock market, forecast volatility, East African Community

1. Introduction

The East African Community (EAC) is a regional intergovernmental organization in East Africa formed in 1967 and revived in 1999. It includes six member countries: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan. Originally established to promote economic development and

regional trade, the EAC collapsed in 1977 due to political and economic differences but was revived with a broader vision of cooperation in various fields. With a combined population of over 180 million people, the EAC represents a significant regional market with economic growth potential. The community's economic significance lies in its efforts to achieve deeper economic integration through a common market, customs union, and plans for a monetary union and political federation. The region's strategic location, natural resources, and growing consumer base have attracted international interest, leading to increased investment and trade opportunities. Through ongoing initiatives to harmonize policies and eliminate trade barriers, the EAC aims to enhance regional trade, collaboration, and the overall development of its member countries.

Equity markets hold immense significance in the East African Community (EAC) due to their pivotal roles in capital allocation, economic growth, financial stability, and overall development. As a regional bloc, the EAC benefits greatly from the establishment and growth of these markets. Firstly, equity markets facilitate capital formation by allowing businesses to raise funds through the issuance of stocks, thereby stimulating economic growth and job creation. Additionally, they efficiently allocate resources by directing capital towards promising ventures, promoting innovation, and encouraging entrepreneurship. Furthermore, equity markets attract foreign investment, injecting much-needed capital into the region and bolstering economic growth. On the other hand, they also contribute to financial stability by providing risk diversification opportunities for investors, encouraging long-term investment horizons, and improving corporate governance standards. As a result, equity markets instill investor confidence, safeguard the financial system, and mobilize domestic savings to support economic development. To unlock the full economic potential of the EAC and achieve sustainable growth, nurturing and developing robust equity markets remain crucial in attracting investments and ensuring the region's prosperity in the years to come.

Market volatility in equity markets refers to the fluctuation of financial asset prices over a specific time frame, reflecting the market's uncertainty and potential for rapid changes. It is measured using statistical metrics like standard deviation or the VIX. For investors, understanding volatility is vital for risk assessment, portfolio diversification, and timing investment decisions. High volatility signals greater risk, prompting investors to diversify their portfolios across various assets and sectors. They can also time their market entry during low volatility periods. Policymakers, on the other hand, analyze market volatility as an indicator of economic stability and financial system resilience. They use this data to make informed decisions about monetary policies and regulatory interventions. Financial institutions also rely on

volatility forecasts to manage risk, allocate capital, and adjust trading strategies. For them, understanding market fluctuations is essential to maintain stability and ensure financial system resilience. Overall, accurate volatility forecasting is crucial for investors, financial institutions, regulators, and central banks to make informed decisions, manage risks, and maintain economic and financial stability. By anticipating and responding to volatility effectively, stakeholders can navigate uncertain market conditions more adeptly and optimize their investment strategies accordingly.

While existing literature has delved into the study of equity market volatility within individual East African countries (Maqsood et al., 2017; Marselline, 2019; Namugaya et al., 2014, 2019), a significant research gap lies in the absence of a comparative analysis across these nations. Moreover, none of the current studies have harnessed the potential of the GARCH-MIDAS model, which uniquely allows the incorporation of crucial macroeconomic variables into equity market volatility forecasting. By employing the GARCH-MIDAS model, this research explores how various macroeconomic factors influence market volatility across the East African region, providing deeper insights into the interconnectedness and interdependencies of these economies and enhancing the accuracy and robustness of volatility predictions.

The GARCH-MIDAS model is an extension of the traditional GARCH model designed to forecast equity market volatility by incorporating macroeconomic variables observed at different frequencies. It enables researchers to combine high-frequency financial market data with lower-frequency macroeconomic data, allowing for a more comprehensive analysis. The model's advantages including improved forecasting accuracy, and the inclusion of macroeconomic information, aid in conducting a comparative analysis across the East African Community (EAC) region. By utilizing the GARCH-MIDAS approach to investigate the impact of macroeconomic factors on fluctuations in the EAC stock markets. The primary emphasis of this research is on forecasting variance, aiming to assess whether the inclusion of economic variables can enhance the predictive capabilities of conventional volatility models.

The study has significant implications for the financial industry, academic research, and policymakers in the region. By enhancing volatility forecasting through the incorporation of macroeconomic variables into the GARCH-MIDAS model, the research provides valuable insights for investors, risk analysts, and policymakers in managing investment decisions, risk exposures, and implementing effective policy measures. Moreover, it contributes to the financial literature, promotes regional economic integration, and fosters the development of East African financial markets, ultimately benefiting market participants and the overall stability of the region's financial sector.

It also makes significant contributions to the existing literature by providing a region-specific analysis for the East African Community, introducing the innovative GARCH-MIDAS framework for volatility forecasting, identifying relevant macroeconomic variables impacting stock market volatility, offering practical implications for risk management and policy recommendations, shedding light on financial market integration, contributing to research on emerging markets, inspiring methodological insights, and advancing academic knowledge in the field of financial econometrics and the relationship between macroeconomic variables and stock market volatility.

The structure of the paper is as follows: Section 2 delves into the existing literature, while section 3 explains the data and data sources. The methodology and the basic structure of the GARCH-MIDAS model are discussed in sections 4 and 5. The empirical estimation results are presented in Section 6, along with out-of-sample predictions to test the model's accuracy. The paper concludes in Section 7.

2. Literature review

The Mixed Data Sampling (MIDAS) model is a statistical and econometric framework designed for analyzing time series data that exhibit different frequencies of observations. It was developed to address the challenges of combining and analyzing data sampled at different frequencies, such as daily, monthly, or quarterly data, in a coherent and meaningful way. (Z. Chen et al., 2022) used the model to show the role of jumps and leverage in predicting the volatility of China's crude oil futures, and it was found that, these effects were useful in predicting volatility.

The GARCH-MIDAS model, combining the GARCH and MIDAS models, has emerged as a powerful tool for modelling volatility in financial markets by incorporating high-frequency and low-frequency data. Studies have used it to study volatility dynamics in a variety of financial markets.

In the commodities space, (Zhao, 2022) explores different factors that influence crude oil price volatility, categorized into four perspectives: commodity attributes, macroeconomic factors, geopolitical events, and alternative energy. The researcher uses the GARCH-MIDAS model which considers both level effect and volatility effect, and single and multi-factor models. To address multicollinearity issues, the Lasso-adaptive method is used for variable selection in the multi-factor models. The study finds that multi-factor models outperform single-factor models in predicting crude oil price volatility. In the long run, the most influential factors on oil price volatility are supply and demand. (Y. Fang et al., 2023) studied the relationship between global economic policy and the volatility of crude futures, the research's primary objective was to pinpoint the factors

responsible for oil price volatility and investigate how both long-term trends and short-term volatility elements reacted to these variables. Additionally, the study explored whether the impact of influencing factors differed among various oil types, including WTI and Brent crude oil. Also (Liang et al., 2022; Raza et al., 2023; Salisu, Gupta, et al., 2022) used the GARCH-MIDAS model to forecast volatility in the commodities space.

From the foreign exchange market, (Zhou et al., 2020) used the GARCH-MIDAS model to study the impact of the relative economic policy uncertainty between China and the United States (the Sino-US EPU ratio) on the Chinese exchange rate volatility and examined whether the Sino-US EPU ratio can predict Chinese exchange rate volatility. Their study found that the Sino-US EPU ratio had a positive impact on the long-term volatility of the Chinese exchange rate, and the GARCH-MIDAS model with Sino-US EPU ratio performed better than the traditional GARCH-type models.

Further looking at the studies related to the stock market, (Tumala et al., 2023) studied how stock market volatility responds differently to the variants of oil shocks in Nigeria and South Africa. It was found that stock market volatility in these two countries responded in a similar way to oil supply shock and oil consumption demand but there was a different response to economic activity shock and oil inventory demand shock. Utilizing Markov switching to enhance the GARCH-MIDAS model, (Wang, Wu, et al., 2022) found that incorporating Markov switching in short- and long-term forecasting improved the volatility forecasting accuracy in the renewable energy stock market. In addition (T. Fang et al., 2020; Salisu, Ogbonna, et al., 2022; Segnon et al., 2023; Wang, Zhao, et al., 2022) also used the GARCH-MIDAS model to forecast volatility in the stock market

GARCH models are designed to capture the time-varying nature of volatility in financial markets, acknowledging that volatility tends to cluster in certain periods. There exists a vast amount of literature applying GARCH models to forecasting stock market volatility in developed economies and advanced economic blocs, but few studies exist that attempt to understand the volatility dynamics in developing economies and less advanced economic blocs. The East African Community is one of those less advanced economic blocs, nonetheless, the few studies that have attempted to study volatility in this region include (Namugaya et al., 2014) who strived to model stock returns volatility on the Uganda Securities Exchange (USE) using different specifications of the univariate GARCH models that is symmetric and asymmetric, their study found that the GARCH (1,1) outperformed other competing models in modelling returns volatility. Utilizing various univariate specifications of GARCH type models, (Maqsood et al., 2017) aimed to model stock returns volatility for Kenya's Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE), the study found that the TGARCH (1,1) model was more appropriate in terms of

capturing the presence of volatility clustering and the leverage effect on the NSE. While using the Vector Autoregressive (VAR) and Granger causality, (Marselline, 2019) studied the interdependencies among East African markets in relation to Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), the study found that JSE has a low contributory impact on the returns on the East African markets.

This study makes several notable contributions to existing literature. Firstly, it conducts a region-specific analysis of the East African Community, filling a gap in the literature that often focuses on more developed or global markets. Secondly, it introduces the innovative GARCH-MIDAS framework, enabling the incorporation of macroeconomic variables with different sampling frequencies for more accurate volatility forecasting. Thirdly, by identifying and analyzing relevant macroeconomic variables impacting stock market volatility in the EAC, the study offers valuable insights for policymakers and investors. Moreover, it provides risk management implications, aids in formulating appropriate macroeconomic policies, and sheds light on financial market integration and cross-market linkages.

3. Data

For this study, the two largest stock markets in the East African community were considered that is Kenya and Uganda. The price index of the Nairobi All Share Index and the Uganda All Share Index were used to calculate the stock market returns of the respective countries. The data spans from August 2011 to June 2023 and was collected from investing.com The conditional variance model incorporates several financial and macroeconomic factors that previous studies have identified as significant contributors to stock market volatility, therefore in this study we will also use these variables.

The variables utilized in this analysis for both countries include:

1. Short-term interest rate: This refers to the yield on the three-month Treasury bill.
2. Crude Oil: This refers to the Brent Crude Oil benchmark.
3. Exchange rate: Represented by the exchange rate of the respective countries to the U.S. dollar.
4. Inflation: Assessed as the percentage change in the monthly consumer price index (CPI).

The CPI for Uganda was obtained from the official website of the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, while the CPI for Kenya was retrieved from the official website of the Central Bank of Kenya. Excluding these variables, the rest of the variables were retrieved from investing.com.

4. Methodology

By employing MIDAS regression, a methodology introduced by (Ghysels, Sinko, et al., n.d.) that enables the inclusion of macroeconomic variables sampled at distinct intervals together with financial series, we can deploy the new class of component GARCH model, called GARCH-MIDAS, which incorporates these macroeconomic variables directly into the long-term component of the model. Recent years have seen much attention devoted to this new class of the GARCH model, thanks in large part to the research of (Ghysels, Santa-Clara, et al., n.d.), (Ghysels, Sinko, et al., n.d.), and (Andreou et al., 2010). (X. Chen & Ghysels, 2011) have extended the MIDAS setting to cover a multi-horizon semi-parametric framework, and (Ghysels & Valkanov, n.d.) have provided a comprehensive study of the impact of news on forecasting volatility, including a novel method. (Ghysels & Valkanov, n.d.) have examined Granger causality with mixed-frequency data, and (Kotze, 2007) has used MIDAS regression to study high-frequency data on asset prices and low-frequency inflation forecasts. The inclusion of macroeconomic variables in the GARCH-MIDAS model is significant for several reasons. First, it enhances forecasting accuracy by capturing the impact of economic fundamentals on volatility, providing more precise predictions compared to models relying solely on past financial data. Second, it enables dynamic modelling of volatility, allowing the model to adapt to changing economic conditions and potential structural shifts. Third, for risk management purposes, the incorporation of macroeconomic variables is crucial in accurately assessing the overall risk environment.

The formal description of the GARCH-MIDAS model can be presented as follows

$$r_{i,t} = \mu + \sqrt{\tau_t g_{i,t}} \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad \forall i = 1, \dots, N_t \quad (1)$$

$$\varepsilon_{i,t} | \Phi_{i-1,t} \sim N(0,1)$$

where $r_{i,t}$ is the return on day i in the month t , the number of trading days in month t is N_t and the information set up to day $(i-1)^{th}$ is $\Phi_{i-1,t}$. τ_t represents the long-term component of volatility, while $g_{i,t}$ represents the short-term component of volatility.

The short-term $g_{i,t}$ component follows a GARCH (1,1) process and is presented as

$$g_{i,t} = (1 - \alpha - \beta) + \alpha \frac{(r_{i-1,t} - \mu)^2}{\tau_t} + \beta g_{i-1,t} \quad (2)$$

The smoothed realized volatility known as τ_t is defined using the principles of MIDAS regression.

$$\tau_t = m + \theta \sum_{k=1}^K \varphi_k(w_1, w_2) RV_{t-k} \quad (3)$$

$$RV_t = \sum_{i=1}^{N_t} r_{i,j}^2$$

K indicates the length of time we use to attenuate the volatility. The equation is altered to incorporate economic variables, allowing us to examine the influence of these variables on long-term return variance.

$$\tau_t = m + \theta_2 \sum_{k=1}^K \varphi_k(w_1, w_2) X_{t-k}^{l/v} \quad (4)$$

The level of a macroeconomic variable is denoted by X_{t-k}^l and X_{t-k}^v denotes the variance of the same macroeconomic variable in this analysis, the component τ_t remains unchanged during a set time period (such as a month).

The conditional variance is expressed as follows:

$$\sigma_{it}^2 = \tau_t g_{i,t} \quad (5)$$

The beta lag polynomial provides a description of the weighting scheme applied in equation (3) and equation (4).

$$\varphi_k(w) = \frac{\binom{k}{K} w_1^{-1} (1 - \frac{k}{K}) w_2^{-1}}{\sum_{j=1}^k \binom{j}{K} w_1^{-1} (1 - \frac{j}{K}) w_2^{-1}} \quad (6)$$

5. Estimation method

5.1 Model Specifications

Three different model specifications are employed, which vary in how they define the long-term variance component, τ_t , while keeping the equation for the short-term variance, g_{it} , constant across all three cases. The specifications are as follows:

- Model 1: The RV model employs only the monthly realized volatility (RV) for the long-term variance component as defined by the MIDAS equation. This model does not include any economic variables.
- Model 2: In the X^l model, our focus is solely on examining how the long-term variance component is impacted by macroeconomic variables' level
- Model 3: In the X^v model, our focus is solely on examining how the long-term variance component is impacted by macroeconomic variables' variance

Through an examination of these three options, we can explore how much of the long-term variation can be clarified by considering the previous realized volatility of returns and the macroeconomic factors.

5.2 Estimation Strategy

We make our estimates by observing returns on a daily basis, but we use a monthly frequency in the MIDAS equation to account for long-term factors. The preferred way to measure monthly variance is by using realized volatility. However, since daily data is not available for most macroeconomic variables, we cannot use this measure. Instead, we use the squared first differences as a measure of the variance of the economic variables. The models described above were estimated using an estimation window, and the estimated parameters were then used to predict variance outside of the sample. A ten-year estimation window was used, and the parameters were kept for the subsequent year.

The first estimation window began in October 2012 and ended in December 2021. However, 14 months of lagged data before each time period were needed to calculate the historical realized volatility. This means that the realized volatility for October 2012 was estimated using data from August 2011 to September 2012. The out-of-sample forecast covered the period from January 2022 to June 2023.

The prediction for long-term variance is based on the estimated value of τ_t obtained from the MIDAS equation. As τ_t values are calculated on a daily basis, they are multiplied by the number of trading days in each month. For short-term variance, the estimated daily total variance σ_t^2 is used as the prediction.

To assess how well a particular model predicts variance, there exist several methods. One of these methods involves comparing the variance predicted by the model to the actual monthly volatility, which we estimate by adding up the squared daily log returns for each month. We apply the Root Mean Square Error. The root-mean-square error (RMSE), is a statistical measure of the differences between predicted values and observed values. It is specified as follows:

$$RMSE = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{t=1}^T (\sigma_{t+1}^2 - E_t(\sigma_{t+1}^2))^2}{T}} \quad (8)$$

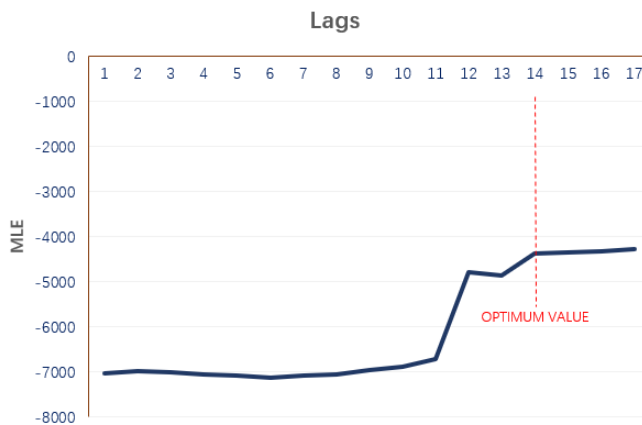
5.3 Weights and number of lags in the MIDAS equation

Throughout the estimation process, we have implemented various approaches aimed at streamlining the process and enhancing the efficacy of the model. One of the initial steps involved selecting appropriate weights (w_1 and w_2) for the beta functions outlined in equation (6). There are three options available to us:

1. We can consider both w_1 and w_2 as variables and calculate their values within the model.
2. We can decide a value for w_1 beforehand and let the model calculate the value for w_2 .
3. We can set fixed values for both w_1 and w_2 before running the model.

When w_2 is increased with w_1 equal to 1, the latest observations receive greater weight. If w_1 is greater than 1, it results in counterintuitive weightings, such as assigning lower weight to recent observations. Therefore, following (Engle et al., 2013), we fix w_1 to 1 to ensure monotonically decreasing weights. We let the model decide the value of w_2 .

Figure 1



The second decision concerns determining the number of lags to use in the MIDAS equation (K in equations 3, 4 and 6). The number of lags is determined by the number of years, known as MIDAS years, and the time-span t used to compute τ_t in equations (3) and (4), which can be a month, quarter, or half year. We choose a monthly time-span to ensure adequate out-of-sample predictions. The graph in Figure 1 plots the maximum likelihood function values for different lags in the MIDAS equation, indicating that the optimum value increases with the number of lags. The number of lags is selected by considering the value beyond which there is a minimal increment in the MLE value. Therefore, we limit the number of lags in the MIDAS equation to 14

Table 1. Statistical Summary and statistical tests

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Kurtosis	Skewness			
<i>use_returns</i>	0	1.922	174.274	0.515			
<i>nse_returns</i>	0.007	1.312	285.064	-0.904			
<i>Brent</i>	76.474	25.836	-1.2	0.152			
<i>kenya_3m_yield</i>	8.857	2.657	7.508	2.549			
<i>kes_usd</i>	101.41	12.444	1.052	0.766			
<i>kenya_cpi</i>	7.089	3.246	5.097	2.204			
<i>uganda_cpi</i>	5.965	5.081	5.163	2.327			
<i>uganda_3m_yield</i>	10.232	3.103	2.146	0.709			
<i>ugx_usd</i>	3307.216	495.142	-1.206	-0.732			
Variable	Q-test	p-value	Q ² test	p-value	ADF	p-value	Unit root
<i>use_returns</i>	310.49	0.000	695.313	0.000	-74.587	0.001	No
<i>nse_returns</i>	-60.36	0.000	726.021	0.000	-61.773	0.001	No

6. Results and analyses

6.1 Descriptive analysis

Table 1 displays the statistical properties of the primary variables and the statistical tests on the timeseries. It can be seen that the Kenya equity market has a higher return and lower risk compared to the Uganda equity market. This is due to the mean value of Kenya daily stock market return (*nse_returns*) being higher than Uganda's daily returns (*use_returns*). Similarly, the Kenya daily returns standard deviation is lower than that of Uganda. The unit root test, autocorrelation and ARCH effect tests are also shown in table 1. The logarithmic returns of both Kenya and Uganda passed the ADF stationarity test. The Ljung-Box Q-test for residual autocorrelation was carried out and it was found that both series showed weak autocorrelation. These return series exhibit a fluctuation clustering effect, according to the Q² test for ARCH effects. When the autocorrelation coefficient of the return shows weak persistence and no significant smooth decay, the standard GARCH model may not be able to effectively fit. This is because volatility has obvious term characteristics and is affected by different components in the long and short term. Therefore, decomposing the volatility into components is helpful for measuring and predicting stock market volatility.

Figure 2

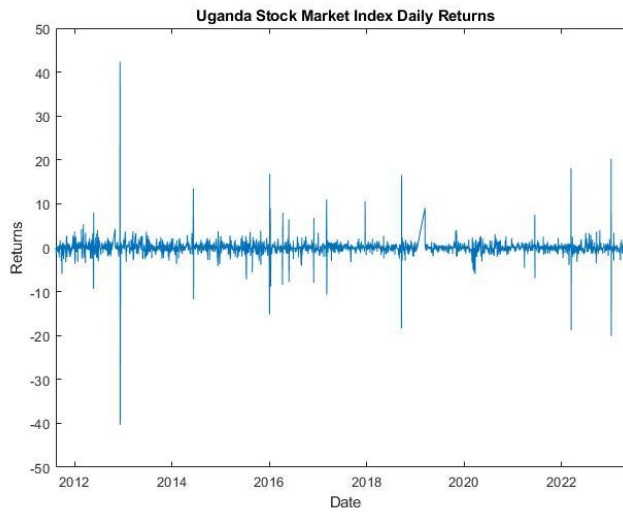
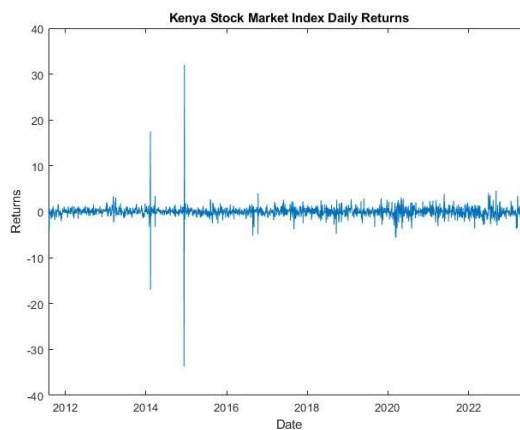


Figure 3



6.2 In-sample estimations

In the models, the main parameter that we focus on is the long-term composition of stock market volatility, which is characterized by the MIDAS polynomial. The coefficients θ reflect the impact of various factors on the long-term composition of stock market volatility, while the parameter ω is the optimal estimation coefficient of weight attenuation of low-frequency variables in the Beta function.

Table 3 represents the estimated parameters when we consider the realized volatility and the levels of the macroeconomic variables. As can be seen from the results, for Uganda, the parameters for short-term variance (α and β) are all significant at the 1% level of significance excluding the β for the 3-month yield. On the contrary, the values are relatively small and their

sum is close to 0.5 on average. This implies that there is low volatility persistence. For all the various influencing factors, we can see that the average value of α is 0.2, this means that past shocks have a low impact on current volatility, the average value of β is 0.38, which implies that past volatility has a weak impact on current volatility. Further looking at Kenya, we can see different outcomes, Kenya has relatively more volatility persistence as can be seen from the sum of the parameters for short-term variance (α and β), their sums are close to 1 for the various influencing factors. The different specifications give various results for the parameter estimations, well as realized volatility parameters show that past shocks have a weaker impact on current volatility and past volatility has a greater impact on current volatility, this relationship is reversed for CPI, 3-month yield and the exchange rate (KESUSD).

When the coefficient θ is positive and statistically significant, it implies that an increase in the level of the factor will lead to increased stock market volatility. Conversely, when the coefficient θ is negative and statistically significant, it implies that an increase in the level of the factor will reduce stock market volatility. From the results in Table 3, we see that excluding realized volatility, the coefficients for Uganda's macroeconomic variables are significant at the 1% level of significance. A positive coefficient for CPI indicates that an increase in the CPI leads to an increase in stock market volatility. A positive coefficient for the 3-month treasury yield indicates that an increase in the 3-month treasury yield leads to an increase in stock market volatility. A positive coefficient for the UGX/USD exchange rate indicates that an increase in the UGX/USD exchange rate leads to an increase in stock market volatility. On the other hand, the coefficient of Brent crude oil is negative indicating a reduction in stock market volatility for increases in the Brent crude oil price level. However, for Kenya, we can see that the realized volatility's coefficient is positive and statistically significant at the 1% level showing that increases in realized volatility lead to increases in stock market volatility. The macroeconomic variables give mixed results, moreover the coefficients of the CPI and 3-month yield aren't statistically significant. Brent's positive coefficient of 0.052 is significant at the 1% level implying increases in Brent crude oil prices lead to increases in stock market volatility. However, the coefficient of the exchange rate (KES/USD) is negative and only significant at the 5% level. This implies that increases in the exchange rate lead to decreases in stock market volatility.

From the perspective of AIC and BIC, it can be seen that for Uganda and Kenya, the values from the macroeconomic model specifications were lower than the model specifications using realized volatility. Well as these aren't absolute measures of model quality, they represent on a relative basis how well the different models fit the data.

Table 3. Estimation results for the level effect

	Uganda				
	RV	Brent	CPI	3M yield	UGX/USD
<i>mu</i>	0.028 (0.292)	0.037 (0.202)	0.040 (0.152)	0.073*** (0.009)	0.032 (0.222)
<i>alpha</i>	0.234*** (0.000)	0.260*** (0.000)	0.257*** (0.000)	0.308*** (0.000)	0.261*** (0.000)
<i>beta</i>	0.383*** (0.000)	0.391*** (0.000)	0.364*** (0.000)	0.000 (1.000)	0.389*** (0.000)
<i>theta</i>	0.000 (1.000)	-0.011*** (0.000)	0.419*** (0.000)	0.314*** (0.000)	0.001*** (0.000)
<i>w</i>	29.114 (1.000)	38.788 (0.496)	21.742*** (0.000)	5.819*** (0.000)	6.218 (0.197)
<i>m</i>	1.401*** (0.000)	2.805*** (0.000)	0.312*** (0.000)	-1.333*** (0.000)	-0.116 (0.625)
<i>LL</i>	-3596.8	-3591.95	-3553.18	-3547.46	-3590.79
<i>AIC</i>	7205.61	7195.9	7118.36	7106.92	7193.58
<i>BIC</i>	7240.51	7230.8	7153.26	7141.82	7228.48

Note: p values are in brackets (); ***, **, and * indicate statistically significant at the significance level of 1 percent, 5 percent, and 10 percent, respectively.

	Kenya				
	RV	Brent	CPI	3M yield	KES/USD
<i>mu</i>	-0.733*** (0.000)	0.058** (0.012)	0.203*** (0.000)	0.226*** (0.000)	0.132*** (0.000)
<i>alpha</i>	0.076*** (0.000)	0.277*** (0.000)	0.879*** (0.000)	0.880*** (0.000)	0.715*** (0.000)
<i>beta</i>	0.924*** (0.000)	0.474*** (0.000)	0.110*** (0.000)	0.111*** (0.000)	0.219*** (0.000)
<i>theta</i>	0.154*** (0.000)	0.052*** (0.000)	17.573 (0.583)	17.439 (0.554)	-0.606** (0.047)
<i>w</i>	4.876*** (0.000)	1.001*** (0.000)	5.556*** (0.000)	49.98 (0.262)	2.974*** (0.006)
<i>m</i>	0.010 (0.992)	-1.731*** (0.000)	-50.863 (0.582)	-71.765 (0.559)	68.801** (0.047)
<i>LL</i>	-4519.5	-3372.83	-3434.34	-3456.78	-3393.4
<i>AIC</i>	9050.99	6757.65	6880.68	6925.56	6798.81
<i>BIC</i>	9086.14	6792.8	6915.83	6960.71	6833.96

Note: p values are in brackets (); ***, **, and * indicate statistically significant at the significance level of 1 percent, 5 percent, and 10 percent, respectively

To further diversify the research, we consider the variance of the macroeconomic variables. Table 4 represents the estimated parameters when we consider the variance of the macroeconomic variables. As can be seen from the results, for Uganda, the parameters for short-term variance (α and β) are

all significant at the 1% level of significance. Similar to the levels' values, the values are relatively small and their sum is close to 0.5 on average. This implies that there is low volatility persistence. For all the various influencing factors, we can see that the average value of α is 0.26, this means that past shocks have a low impact on current volatility, the average value of β is 0.37, which implies that past volatility has a weak impact on current volatility. Further looking at Kenya, we can see different outcomes, Kenya has relatively more volatility persistence as can be seen from the sum of the parameters for short-term variance (α and β), their sums are close to 1 for the various influencing factors. The different specifications give various results for the parameter estimations, well as realized volatility parameters show that past shocks have a weaker impact on current volatility and past volatility has a greater impact on current volatility, this relationship is reversed for CPI, 3-month yield and the exchange rate (KESUSD).

Similarly to what was stated before, when the coefficient θ is positive and statistically significant for the variance of a macroeconomic factor, it implies that an increase in the variance of the factor will instigate stock market volatility. Conversely, when the coefficient θ is negative and statistically significant, it implies that an increase in the variance of the factor will reduce stock market volatility. From the results in Table 4, we see that excluding the 3-month yield, the coefficients for Uganda's macroeconomic variables are significant at the 1% level of significance. A positive coefficient for CPI indicates that an increase in the CPI variance leads to an increase in stock market volatility. A positive coefficient for Brent crude oil variance indicates that an increase in Brent crude oil variance leads to an increase in stock market volatility. A positive coefficient for the UGX/USD exchange rate variance indicates that an increase in the UGX/USD exchange rate variance leads to an increase in stock market volatility. However, for Kenya, the macroeconomic variables exhibit quite different results, moreover the coefficients of the CPI, the exchange rate (KESUSD) and 3-month yield aren't statistically significant. Brent's positive coefficient of 0.053 is significant at the 1% level implying increases in Brent crude oil prices variance lead to increases in stock market volatility.

Similarly from the perspective of AIC and BIC, it can be seen that for Uganda and Kenya, the values from the macroeconomic variance model specifications were lower than the model specifications using realized volatility. Well as these aren't absolute measures of model quality, they represent on a relative basis how well the different models fit the data.

Table 4. Estimation results for the variance effect

	Uganda			
	Brent	CPI	3M yield	UGX/USD
<i>mu</i>	0.021 (0.482)	0.0002 (0.995)	0.047 (0.103)	0.049* (0.063)
<i>alpha</i>	0.228*** (0.000)	0.263*** (0.000)	0.265*** (0.000)	0.272*** (0.000)
<i>beta</i>	0.383*** (0.000)	0.375*** (0.000)	0.326*** (0.000)	0.385*** (0.000)
<i>theta</i>	-0.009*** (0.000)	404.6*** (0.000)	79.475 (0.000)	0.0003*** (0.000)
<i>w</i>	2.497*** (0.000)	12.714*** (0.000)	7.683 (0.000)	3.900*** (0.000)
<i>m</i>	2.288*** (0.000)	0.529*** (0.000)	1.266*** (0.000)	0.980*** (0.000)
<i>LL</i>	-3589.71	-3561.61	-3536.74	-3483.32
<i>AIC</i>	7191.42	7135.22	7085.48	6978.64
<i>BIC</i>	7226.33	7170.12	7120.39	7013.54

Note: p values are in brackets (); ***, **, and * indicate statistically significant at the significance level of 1 percent, 5 percent, and 10 percent, respectively.

	Kenya			
	Brent	CPI	3M yield	KES/USD
<i>mu</i>	0.055*** (0.004)	0.250*** (0.000)	0.255*** (0.000)	0.250*** (0.000)
<i>alpha</i>	0.207*** (0.000)	0.912*** (0.000)	0.100*** (0.000)	0.100*** (0.000)
<i>beta</i>	0.715*** (0.000)	0.078*** (0.000)	0.000 (1.000)	0.0008 (0.901)
<i>theta</i>	0.053*** (0.000)	-1458.3 (0.511)	-9310.8 (0.991)	-118.11 (0.964)
<i>w</i>	49.997 *** (0.000)	48.479*** (0.000)	2.194*** (0.000)	1.333*** (0.000)
<i>m</i>	0.527*** (0.000)	73.832 (0.511)	3246.5 (0.9911)	1151 (0.964)
<i>LL</i>	-3159.5	-3431.62	-3443.3	-3444.19
<i>AIC</i>	6330.99	6875.24	6898.61	6900.39
<i>BIC</i>	6366.14	6910.39	6933.76	6935.54

Note: p values are in brackets (); ***, **, and * indicate statistically significant at the significance level of 1 percent, 5 percent, and 10 percent, respectively.

6.3 Out-of-Sample

In the following section, we study the capability of the different specifications of the GARCH-MIDAS model to forecast volatility. The

parameters are estimated using a rolling window of ten years and are kept constant for the following year. The out-of-sample forecast period spans from January 2022 to June 2023. For each of the countries, nine different model specifications are used in the MIDAS: One model that incorporates realized volatility, four models that incorporate the levels of the macroeconomic variables and four models that incorporate the variance of these macroeconomic factors. A ten-year estimation window is used and the parameters are kept for the subsequent year. In table 5 we can see the results from the forecast performance of the different models using Root Mean Square Error (RMSE). RMSE is one of the most commonly used measures to evaluate the forecasting accuracy of GARCH models. It is calculated by taking the square root of the average of the squared differences between the predicted and actual values. Looking at the results from Table 5, we can evidently see that for Uganda, macroeconomic variable level model specifications, either had an RMSE value less than or equal to that of the model which included realized volatility. On the variance side, its evident that excluding the model that incorporated Brent crude oil variance, all other models have a lower RMSE value than the realized volatility model. Further looking at Kenya, the results are mixed, for the level model specifications, only Brent crude oil and the exchange rate have RMSE values less than the realized volatility value. Similarly, for variance models, only two macroeconomic models that is Brent crude oil and the exchange rate exhibit RMSE values less than the realized volatility value.

Table 5. RSME values for the various models

	Uganda (levels)					Uganda (variance)			
	RV	Brent	CPI	3M yield	UGXUSD	Brent	CPI	3M yield	UGXUSD
<i>RMSE</i>	36.0	36.0	35.9	34.7	36.0	36.1	35.9	35.8	35.9

	Kenya (levels)					Kenya (variance)			
	RV	Brent	CPI	3M yield	KESUSD	Brent	CPI	3M yield	KESUSD
<i>RMSE</i>	3.5	2.9	3.6	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.6	3.7	3.4

Conclusion

This research has utilized the GARCH-MIDAS approach to forecast stock market volatility in the East African Community. Estimation of the short-term, long-term and total variance components involved the usage of information from macroeconomic variables with a consideration of both the variance and levels of these variables. These macroeconomic variables for the respective countries included Brent crude oil, CPI, 3-month treasury yield and the exchange rate. A rolling window approach was adopted to estimate the model parameters and to carry out out-of-sample forecasts. The various

specifications of the GARCH-MIDAS model with macroeconomic variables were considered against the GARCH-MIDAS model that only included realized volatility.

Findings of the research show that the levels of all the chosen macroeconomic variables significantly affected Uganda's stock market volatility. Also, the variances of the majority of the chosen macroeconomic variables significantly showed an effect on stock market volatility. The realized volatility showed an insignificant effect on Uganda's stock market volatility. On the other hand, realized volatility significantly affects Kenya's stock market volatility while the levels and variance of macroeconomic variables show mixed results, with levels of the CPI and 3-month yield being insignificant but the exchange rate and Brent oil being significant, for the variance only Brent had a significant effect while the CPI, exchange rate and 3-month yield were insignificant. Based on the results of the RSME and the comparative results of the AIC and BIC which were lower for the model specifications that included macroeconomic variables than the realized volatility model, it was found that incorporating macroeconomic variables (both levels and variance) improved the prediction ability of the GARCH-MIDAS model for Uganda. While for Kenya, including macroeconomic variables in the GARCH-MIDAS model didn't always improve forecasting ability. Further research should look to explore other macroeconomic variables that might affect Kenya's stock market volatility, the research can also adopt a different timeframe such as incorporating weekly and quarterly data. Finance industry practitioners and regulators are advised to recognize the country-specific nature of macroeconomic variables' impact on stock market volatility in the East African region, and should develop tailored investment, risk management strategies and regulations. They should also acknowledge the significance of different macroeconomic variables such as Brent crude oil, CPI, treasury yield, and exchange rates among others on the different countries.

Conflict of Interest: The authors reported no conflict of interest.

Data Availability: All of the data are included in the content of the paper.

Funding Statement: The authors did not obtain any funding for this research.

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The Influence of Organizational Justice on Managers' Decision-Making: A Critical Literature Review

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p21](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p21)

Submitted: 22 December 2023

Accepted: 30 January 2024

Published: 29 February 2024

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OPEN ACCESS

Cite As:

Hussein K.A. (2024). *The Influence of Organizational Justice on Managers' Decision-Making: A Critical Literature Review*. European Scientific Journal, ESJ, 20 (4), 21.

<https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p21>

Abstract

This paper focuses on studying organizational justice on managers' decision making. The process of decision making plays a substantial role in the life of each organization because the results affect all employees at all levels. Making decisions is considered the most significant and intricate managerial task. In addition, it might become more problematic when executives work with people across cultures since individuals from varied cultural backgrounds view issues differently. Decisions that are formed by senior managers are mostly imperative and impactful to the way an organization works. However, senior managers' decisions may have negative effects. In addition, organizational fairness is complex and refers to the fair and right treatment of persons within an organization. As a result, people would like fairness as it recompenses them for their input. Poor organizational justice is a considerable reason for negative responses from staff because they have a strong sense of inequality. Often, ethical dilemmas result from intricate circumstances and discrepancies in values within organizations. Hence, this theoretical paper is designed to investigate the salient literature to develop a holistic overview portraying the individual level of perceived organizational justice. It also indicates its prominent consequences based on a critical review of previous related studies.

Keywords: Decision making, senior managers, organizational justice, employees, ethical dilemmas, ethical treatment

Introduction

A decision involves choosing a choice among numerous alternatives. Thus, Knights and Willmott (2007) stated that decision making is the process of making choices from among two or more alternatives. In addition, it can be noted that managers will typically make numerous decisions, some of them being strategic and others operational. Therefore, making decisions is a matter of a considerable responsibility not only for the organization itself, but for their workers and other stakeholders (Negulescu & Doval, 2014). The process of making decision plays a pivotal role in the life of each organization, especially because the consequences affect most employees throughout the company (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2010).

Using the facts at hand at the moment, executives spend their time selecting amongst several courses of action (Dixon, 1997). Similarly, decision making is deemed to be the most important of all activities carried out by the management of an organization, as it has a substantial effect on the organization's future development and its ongoing presence in the field (Moorhead & Griffin, 1995). Consequently, making decision is regarded as an important and multifaceted managerial task (Rodrigues, 2001). Often, it could become difficult when executives work with persons across cultures. This is because people from different cultural backgrounds view matters in different ways. Nevertheless, although decisions are made at each organizational level, the most significant decisions are those which have the key effect, and they are made at the uppermost level in line with an organization policy (Rodrigues, 2001).

It is deemed that decisions made by senior managers are the most vital and effective to the way an organization operates. The values of senior managers' decisions could cause development in an organization's profits and surge the likelihood to beat competitors (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2010). For example, when management and product changes were implemented by Carlos Ghosn, this led to change in the debt-ridden Nissan into one of the most lucrative firms globally (Daft *et al.*, 2010). On the other hand, Buchanan and Huczynski (2010) stated that senior executives' decisions may have harmful significances and may bring about the organization being taken over. Chiefly, executives are anxious with the decision making process, which plays a pivotal role in attaining an organization's important aims. Salaman (2002) stressed that making such decisions needs obligation and commitment. Therefore, for current organizations to achieve their roles successfully and competently, the procedure of decision making uses much managerial time. Similarly, executives are appointed and placed at different levels to organize and coordinate employees' activities and efforts (Khan Sherwani, 2006).

Whenever an organization needs similarities to be made or explanations to be given for different action between two or more individuals,

the decisions should be taken professionally with fairness. Therefore, according to Cropanzano and Molina (2015), when employees believe that they have been treated justly, they tend to show lower levels of stress, higher job performance, and better work attitudes. In view of the study of Eberlin and Tatum (2005), organizational justice is not straightforward but belongs to the fair and right treatment of persons in an organization. It could also be claimed that employees are constantly confronted with fair or unfair decisions based on subjective criteria and personal judgments (Zayer & Benabdelhadi, 2020). Individuals want fairness because it rewards them for their contributions (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). Hence, Mengstie (2020) argued that the first virtue in social institutions is organizational fairness. Whenever workers are rewarded for completing a task successfully, they not only pride themselves at their act, but they also gain pleasure at the recognition voiced via the reward. This implies that workers are more likely to keep on completing tasks to such higher levels (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998).

Organizational fairness refers to the distribution of responsibilities, human rights, and profits in a method that is just and equal to all employees. Mengstie (2020) stated that organizational fairness is one of the determinant factors for an effective use of human resources and a key predictor of organizational success. It is crucial to consider how employees see justice in light of Zayer and Benabdelhadi's (2020) research. This is because a sense of fairness will foster loyalty to the organization, believe in executives, accept choices, and increase work satisfaction while simultaneously enhancing the appearance of good behaviours like cooperation, politeness, and performance (Cropanzano & Molina, 2015). On the other side, an employee's perception of unfairness will have well-known impacts including greater absenteeism, a reduced willingness to embrace change, turnover, and even theft (Zayer & Benabdelhadi, 2020).

1.1 Importance of the Research

The managerial decision making and organizational justice have been investigated by many researchers. However, in order to contribute to this important body of literature, the author of this paper intends to discuss how consideration to fairness might affect decision making. The paper highlights some of the ethical quandaries, which arise from endeavoring to treat all individuals justly and alike.

1.2 Research Questions

1. Why should organizations' managers attempt to make just decisions?
2. What are the benefits of organizational justice to management and employees?

3. What are the ethical dilemmas that arise from attempting to treat all individuals fairly and equally?

1.3 Methodology

Scientific researches aim to solve problems relating to a specific field. This theoretical paper presents a holistic view of the field of organizational fairness at the individual level perception; it synthesizes the gist of the literature review. Thus, the paper design is aimed to discuss and provide a critical review of previous related studies. As a result, the most significant studies in the field of organizational justice would be better exposed and analyzed.

1.4 Research Objective

Consequently, this research attempts to provide answers to the above research questions. The significant purpose developed for this paper is to find out the benefits of organizational fairness to management and workers.

1.5 Research Structure

The remainder of the research is divided into the following sections: Section 2 shows the decision-making process. Section 3 will attempt to describe decision-making approaches. Section 4 will identify organizational justice and its benefits. Section 5 will discuss the dimensions of organizational justice, while section 6 includes ethical dilemmas of justice. Finally, the research will conclude with an overview of all the points discussed throughout.

2. Decision-Making Process

A decision is a logical selection made on the basis of established causal relationships (Daft *et al.*, 2010). Although decision making is important for managers, it is becoming more decentralized as organizations become flatter (Brooks, 2003). Effective decision making is needed across the board. Making decisions is an important activity for organizations since poor judgements have a detrimental impact on the organization's future (Daft *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, this is mostly for choices made by the most powerful executives, who have the authority to contest the most important choices meant to achieve an organization's goals. One example of how decisions made at the top affect an organization's orientation is the extremely ambitious expansion strategy that the UK's RBS banking group under Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Fred Goodwin started (Daft *et al.*, 2010). Another perspective on this would be to assert that the progress of an organization is consistently shaped by the decisions of experienced professionals who have demonstrated wisdom in their past choices (Linstead *et al.*, 2009). This suggests that an organization's success is influenced by the calibre of its judgements and quality of decisions.

According to Schermerhorn *et al.* (2012), decision-making techniques may be classified as either non-programmed or programmed. Non-programmed judgements are made to deal with one-of-a-kind situations, whereas programmed decisions are made regularly in response to reoccurring events and difficulties. Executives in organizations may use either a programmed or a non-programmed decision-making process when making choices (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 2012). It follows that both procedures are influenced by the culture of the society where the choice is being taken. For instance, CEOs in nations with a generally low tolerance for ambiguity, like Germany and Japan, try to minimize the use of non-programmed judgements by following standard operating procedures (Rodrigues, 2001). In countries like the United States and Norway that have a relatively high threshold for uncertainty, executives look for responsibility when making non-programmed judgements (Rodrigues, 2001).

3. Decision-Making Approaches

Before a final decision is made, a complicated process called decision-making may go through a lot of different stages (Linstead *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, there are a few methods for making decisions, which will now be covered.

3.1 Rational Decision-Making

The three processes of rational decision-making, according to Linstead *et al.* (2009), are identifying the issue, choosing an acceptable decision-making approach, and listing potential remedies. In this approach, participants first agree to follow the decision-making procedure and ensure that everyone is aware of the guidelines. The foundation of rational decision-making is the premise that decision makers are fully informed, completely objective, and unified in their pursuit of the best possible conclusion after carefully weighing all potential outcomes (Linstead *et al.*, 2009). According to Brooks (2003), this model is used to explain microeconomic behaviour, such as how, for all other things being equal, a rise in price is likely to result in a person opting to reduce his or her demand for a goods or service. Moreover, according to Ahmad *et al.* (2021), the model of rational decision-making does not account for any unfeasible elements in this regard. Any ethical issues raised by a choice have been completely disregarded. Additionally, it disregards the importance of a person's connections, commitments, or emotional sentiments. It makes the best decision possible while taking into account the limits (Ahmad *et al.*, 2021).

This paradigm, meanwhile, has several drawbacks. As a result, numerous decision-makers are constrained in the amount of information they can access owing to cost or time constraints, and they also experience issues

with their capacity to understand the information that is made accessible to them (Moorhead & Gryphon, 1995). According to McShane and Von Glinow (2005), this paradigm appears rational on the surface since it assumes that the designated decision-makers are the best equipped to make these choices and have access to all relevant data. Subsequently, they frequently struggle to identify issues since there is not enough knowledge to properly weigh all the potential consequences and select the best course of action. Additionally, another limitation is that the decision makers cannot possibly know all the probable consequences of a specific decision (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005).

3.2 Bounded Rationality

According to the constrained rational decision-making paradigm, people make choices based on limited information, including the cognitive and reasoning capacities of their brains (Ahmad *et al.*, 2021). For instance, there is a limited amount of time available for making a particular decision (Daft, 2015). Bounded rationality thus acknowledges that in certain situations, it is improbable that a comprehensive understanding of the situation would be achieved and that it is challenging to anticipate the effects of all possible options (Ahmad *et al.*, 2021). When managers approach decision making with restricted rationality, they make adequate rather than perfect decisions (Bloisi *et al.*, 2007). As a result, while utilising this technique, the decision maker's perspective has a big impact on the process and the other options discovered (Ahmad *et al.*, 2021). Administrators cannot evaluate each option carefully due to the little time available, which limits their ability to be sensible. An executive may have fifty ties to choose from, but due to time constraints, they should make a prompt decision (Daft, 2015).

3.3 The “Garbage Can” Model

The “Garbage Can” model focuses on making decisions in line with the various organizational decision-making styles (Bloisi *et al.*, 2007). According to Daft *et al.* (2010), this is one way in which the pattern of decision making inside organizations may be described. As a result, the “garbage can” model was created and can be used to generate and orchestrate the change that is wanted within organizations (Daft, 2015). Therefore, the process of decision making is not viewed as a sequence of steps that begin with a challenge and finish with a solution, but this model has its own special qualities (Bloisi *et al.*, 2007). The main drawback of this paradigm, however, is that it may be possible to identify an issue without necessarily producing a solution to it (Daft *et al.*, 2010). Consequently, this model's distinctive feature is that it does not rely on a conventional hierarchy to reach a choice (Daft, 2015). Consequently, certain issues are resolved by chance, and at times,

recommendations are offered in the absence of a specific problem, or decisions are made without achieving the desired outcome (Daft *et al.*, 2010).

4. Organizational Justice

According to Mengstie (2020), the concept of organizational justice is a recent phenomenon, while the inception of fairness dates back to ancient years. Scholarly interest in the area of organizational fairness emerged in the 1970s (Mengstie, 2020). The members of an organization's judgements of the fairness and justice of organizational procedures are referred to as organizational justice (Roy, 2022). Khan Sherwani (2006) argued that organizations are composed of individuals, and these individuals represent one of the most valuable assets of the organizations. Justice encompasses social transformation and the enhancement of human lives through socioeconomic quality, protection of human rights, and satisfaction of basic human needs (Roy, 2022). This goes beyond the confined confines of control, retribution, and punishment. Thus, organizational fairness is the individual's view and assessment of what is fair or unfair in the workplace (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2007). Additionally, Adam's equity theory (1963, 1965) was developed to first understand fairness in organizations based on the employee's impression of equal distribution of results and allocations (Zayer & Benabdelhadi, 2020). As a consequence, it might be claimed that justice and equity are closely related to each other.

4.1 Benefits of Organizational Justice

Justice typically includes the comparison process between two or more individuals (Cropanzano & Molina, 2015; Eberlin *et al.*, 2008). In general, when individuals perceive that they have been treated fairly, they respond more positively –both for themselves and for their employers. However, they respond less well when they perceive unfairness (Cropanzano & Molina, 2015). Fairness in this sense refers to giving people what they truly deserve (Bloisi *et al.*, 2007), and as such, it serves as a powerful employee motivator (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). In contrast to injustice, which drives people apart, justice may foster community and help groups come together (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2007). The fundamental lesson of justice is that people should always be treated fairly, especially when it comes to the distribution of organizational fairness. Hence, a sense of procedural or distributive injustice may have a significant negative influence on the firm and its workforce (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005). This is difficult, though, as it seems that everyone has a different perspective on what is reasonable and fair in certain situations, motivated by personal interests.

Furthermore, it should be noted that beliefs about justice or injustice directly affect workers and the organization (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005).

Injustice is something that everyone has surely experienced at some point, whether it be at work or school. Regardless of when or where the alleged unfairness occurred, the outcomes are typically the same: dejection, rage, and a desire to end the perceived injustice (Moorhead & Gryphon, 1995). Additionally, because it makes them feel good, everyone wants to be treated fairly in life, especially at work. According to Cropanzano *et al.* (2007), fairness actually has a significant impact since consistent justice enforces interpersonal ties.

According to Cropanzano and Molina (2015), employees respond favourably to equity because it encourages them to uphold the status quo in order to preserve the productivity levels of their company. Due to their disparate performance, even if two employees are the same gender, they should be compensated differentially (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2007). Compensation should be exactly proportionate to contribution. Moreover, an opposing viewpoint holds that disparities in contributions and performance between two individuals are frequently invoked as justifications for unfair treatment. Although inequity is the belief that someone is treated unjustly, equity practices lead people to believe they are treated fairly in comparison to others inside the organization (Bloisi *et al.*, 2007).

5. Organizational Justice Dimensions

Three components of organizational fairness—procedural, interactional, and distributive—are involved in producing solutions to cope with specific situations (Zayer & Benabdelhadi, 2020).

5.1 Distributive Justice

Distributive justice, as defined by Zayer and Benabdelhadi (2020), is the process of collecting and evaluating incentives and resource allocations inside an organization. The equitable allocation of organizational resources is a precondition of distributive justice. It influences how employees feel about salary, promotions, and other outcomes (Choudhry *et al.*, 2011). Distribution justice often refers to the equitable disbursement of compensation and other benefits according to merit, and its key tenet is "equal pay for work of equal value" (Linstead *et al.*, 2009: 370). Thus, distributive justice is concerned with the fairness of the results that employees experience. For example, during George H. W. Bush's 1992 visit, Japanese CEOs questioned the distributive justice of maintaining the high pay of American CEOs when some businesses were under strain and need to make layoffs (Nelson & Quick, 2013). The equality concept, on the other hand, is criticized by Pollock (1994) because it fails to take into account what is fair, such as when two employees with equivalent qualifications and promotion aspirations are involved. Similar to

this, McShane and Von Glinow (2005) claim that equity, not equality, is the fundamental idea guiding distributive fairness.

Distributive justice relates to how individuals assess what they get or, more broadly, how they believe an allocation to be fair. As a result, it was likely the first sort of fairness to catch the attention of organizational fairness specialists, and it still does (Cropanzano & Molina, 2015). Distributive fairness is also a method of making decisions in which every person is treated equally, regardless of their gender, age, or ethnicity (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 2012). According to the equity theory, people evaluate their accomplishments in relation to one another (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). The basic argument is that distributive justice is assessed according to referent standards. However, if people use various frames of reference, they may experience different degrees of fairness with the same results (Cropanzano & Molina, 2015).

5.2 Procedural Justice

Procedural justice can be defined as the decency of the actions, processes, and methods used to reach the ultimate judgement (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). According to Cropanzano and Molina (2015), procedural fairness is the process of making judgements or the collection of rules that are used when allocating resources. For example, in many countries, one means to decide disagreements is through trials. Choudhry *et al.* (2011) define procedural fairness as the feeling of equality with reference to the laws and procedures utilised in the process of rewarding or punishing. Employees are more likely to believe that incentives and punishments are distributed fairly when they feel that the approach is equitable (Cropanzano & Molina, 2015).

The concept of procedural justice states that all members of an organization should be subject to the same standards of conduct (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005). When attempting to explain employee motivation and conduct, distributive justice was long believed to be more significant than procedural fairness (Zayer & Benabdelhadi, 2020; Al-Douri, 2020). Since it was believed that individuals would seek fairness for its own sake rather than as a means of amassing riches, procedural justice, like distributive justice, appears to be essential in understanding individuals' conduct and attitudes (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005). Procedural justice, which focuses mostly on how justice is seen as well as the processes and procedures used to determine decisions, is therefore inextricably related to moral and ethical ideas.

According to Zayer and Benabdelhadi (2020), there are two aspects to justice via procedure. The ability to shape the process of decision making is the first, and the ability to modify the final result is the second. When employees believe they have the right to speak out and voice their ideas during

the decision-making process, procedural fairness is achieved (Cropanzano & Molina, 2015). The ability to voice individual's ideas and reasons throughout a procedure is known as process control (Al-Douri, 2020).

5.3 Interactional Justice

Interactional justice is defined as the social facet of procedural justice. This third element of organizational fairness is thought to be the most straightforward because it deals with how people are treated within the firms (Zayer & Benabdelhadi, 2020). Both Cropanzano and Molina (2015) argued that in spite of the formal results and actions, people assess justice through social or communication standards. That is, they look to how they were preserved by others. Similar to this, there is a considerable debate over the international judicial system (Al-Douri, 2020). Numerous academics mix interpersonal and informational justice, as noted by Cropanzano and Molina (2015). The first one has to do with how people are treated in terms of respect and decency. A transaction that is interpersonally just would avoid personal attachments, refrain from needless harshness, avoid intolerance, and so forth. When anything goes wrong, it is particularly important to provide relevant evidence and explanations as part of informational justice (Cropanzano & Molina, 2015).

When communication and implementation procedures are included in the process' conceptualization, interactional fairness is recognized as a component of the decision-making process (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). Thus, this show whether executives treat everyone with respect and honesty, distributes information fairly and equally, and communicates consistently with various individuals. The justice of the interpersonal treatment one receives from consultant is referred to as interactional justice (Byrne & Cropanzano, 2001). In addition, four pivotal criteria of interactional justice includes: rationale, veracity, deference, and appropriateness (Zayer & Benabdelhadi, 2020).

It is now important to move on to the topic of how justice influences decision making. Individuals should be treated fairly in businesses since it is believed that fairness significantly influences how employees feel and behave towards the business. The profound sense of justice and fairness held by employees should be a fundamental consideration in managerial decision-making (Eberlin & Tatum, 2005). McShane and Von Glinow (2005) stated that the organization's distribution criteria should be well understood by decision makers since, for instance, workers who perceive unfairness in the incentive structure may become less conscientious. On the other hand, given that most individuals have different perspectives on the importance of input and outcome, this might end up being one of the biggest obstacles (Eberlin & Tatum, 2005).

Nevertheless, it is essential for the creation and efficient functioning of an organization that all people be treated fairly and equitably, regardless of how complicated the organization may be (Pettinger, 2010). Thus, in certain places such as Taiwan, firms believe that the gender that is more essential to their work should obtain the most benefit, notwithstanding allegations that males are paid more than women for comparable labour (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005). However, employees cannot be held accountable for problems that are beyond their control since, in reality, these difficulties cannot be fixed because accountability is arbitrary and varies depending on the context (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2010). As a result, distributive fairness focuses on the concept that everyone should be treated equally and that the law should be applied uniformly to everyone.

6. Ethical Dilemma

Ethical dilemma is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as a circumstance in which a challenging choice has to be made between two ways of working, either of which involves contravening a moral standard (Nnamani & Stückelberger, 2019). According to Bloisi *et al.* (2007), ethical dilemma can be defined as a topic or condition faced by a person, including complex attitudes and perspectives towards ethical behaviour. The dilemma most of the time surrounding fairness deals with decision making when faced with numerous and contradictory ethical demands from persons, mainly when majority of the needs are not met (Tota & Shehu, 2012). In essence, an ethical dilemma is a challenging situation where an individual or organization must decide on the appropriate course of action to take (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005). It could be claimed that an ethical conundrum is a choice between two (or more) bad or between two (or more) good solutions (Nnamani & Stückelberger, 2019). Thus, an ethical conundrum is not a choice between bad and good solutions.

In addition, Bloisi *et al.* (2007) stated that individuals are frequently treated in a different way in business in respect of commitments and rewards. Hence, these changes are considered reasonable if based on rational standards such as fair dealings and performance. Additionally, a more multipart issue might occur, principally in global commerce, due to cross-cultural differences in what is considered reasonable, for example the issue of corruption and scandal (Tota & Shehu, 2012). Thus, this happens progressively in trades and governments, which influences and violates the whole economy. It becomes very challenging to resolve in certain states due to the unique cultural context and observation (Nnamani & Stückelberger, 2019).

Bloisi *et al.* (2007) stressed that whenever executives of an organization face contrary and inconsistent standards, ethical dilemmas happen. For instance, the sellers might face a problem due to their information

of the authenticity of a merchandise. As a result, he might tell a potential buyer the truth and accordingly lose the sale. Furthermore, other reason behind the rise of ethical problems belongs to a person's constitutional rights; any individual has the right to be preserved with respect and fairness (Nnamani & Stückelberger, 2019). A disapproval of this claim is that an employee's rights are not adequate to make ethical choices, as communal costs require to be measured; a person rights should not to be prioritized irrespective of sensible cost. Hence, it might be that a person's rights conflict with those of another (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005).

Tota and Shehu (2012) stated that the notions of right and wrong are increasingly being interpreted currently to comprise the more subtle and challenging questions of equity and Justice. In addition, the issue involving right and wrong may develop into an ethical conundrum since it is difficult to determine what is right or wrong under such circumstances. For instance, the value conflict for a beauty product salesman is between being truthful with customers and sticking to management objectives (Tota & Shehu, 2012). The issue may be that every action or decision frequently appears wrong (Daft *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, competing moral measures might likewise produce ethical problems. For instance, the manager of research for an electronics company indorses a woman to the post of chief of the design group, based on advanced information and better suitability in comparison with other members (Bloisi *et al.*, 2007). Nonetheless, the team's male members are serious about a female leader. It is reasonable to endorse the woman based on her advantages, but the organization's success is substantial to keep the reputation of the administrator (Tota & Shehu, 2012).

Conclusion

In summary, decision making is fundamental to the whole task of management, and it is strictly linked to the management processes of scheduling and problem solving. Decent decisions are dependent on good information. Thus, an active and well-organized management information system should improve the decision's quality at all levels of the organization. Likewise, making decision is concerned with those who make decision, the procedures towards getting reasonable and equitable results, and the exercise of power within organizations.

Decisions frequently made by executives, specifically at advanced level, might lead to affected and possibly harmful changes in an organization. Due to the vast influence that decisions can make, the ones who make decisions should possess the appropriate involvement and contextual, as they are very important for the ongoing presence of the organization in its corresponding scope. It has also been emphasized that supervisors and managers should be in charge of the results of the decisions and even those

decisions, which are different from their goals. In order to predict and effectively manage the likely attitudinal, behavioural and counterproductive feedbacks, decision makers should place a high priority on organizational justice perceptions. This allows them to understand and analyze the relevant influences of the employee's perception and evaluation of justice.

Organizational justice, which goes beyond being fair and doing the right thing to maintain a climate of competitive advantage and organizational success, is thus a wise strategic investment. It generates significant advantages for both organizations and employees. In addition, it can be argued that organizational justice is meaningfully vital. This is because it belonged to and influences the serious processes of an organization, such as performance and work approval.

Poor organizational fairness is an important reason of harmful feedback from workers, since they have a strong sense of unfairness. Nevertheless, it could be claimed that organizational fairness is not straightforward. Many decisions may be pragmatically made with the director's personal benefit in mind. However, if fairness is to be assessed, decisions should be grounded in a concept of what is reasonable. Nevertheless, such decisions may not satisfy everyone. Thus, workers are the most significant asset of organizations. This is because the long-term viability and effectiveness of each organization fundamentally depends on the competencies, skills, expertise and proactive behaviours, which include perception of organizational fairness.

Ethical dilemmas were also discussed, which typically come from complicated circumstances and divergent organizational principles. It could be highlighted that each aspect of business may become a possible area for ethical dilemmas. Thus, in order to solve ethical problems, organizations should develop ethical standards for their workers. As a result, it is thought that greater research in this field is necessary given the relevance of justice to organizations as a whole. Executives should be made aware of organizational justice due to their core responsibility to treat employees fairly.

Conflict of Interest: The author reported no conflict of interest.

Data Availability: All of the data are included in the content of the paper.

Funding Statement: The author did not obtain any funding for this research.

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Capacitación Financiera Inclusiva con Perspectiva de Género para Grupos Vulnerables en Zongolica, Veracruz, México

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p36](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p36)

Submitted: 30 January 2024

Accepted: 27 February 2024

Published: 29 February 2024

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OPEN ACCESS

Cite As:

Mejía-Ochoa F.J., Sánchez-Anastacio I., Rosas-Leyva M.A., Rojas-Martínez J.C. & Díaz-José J. (2024). *Capacitación Financiera Inclusiva con Perspectiva de Género para Grupos Vulnerables en Zongolica, Veracruz, México*. European Scientific Journal, ESJ, 20 (4), 36.

<https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p36>

Résumé

La Agenda 2030 de las Naciones Unidas destaca la importancia de la inclusión financiera en cinco de sus 17 Objetivos para el Desarrollo Sostenible. En el contexto mexicano, una responsabilidad fundamental del gobierno es impulsar acciones para asegurar la educación financiera de grupos catalogados como vulnerables, abarcando a niños, jóvenes en situación de calle, migrantes, personas con discapacidad, adultos mayores y población indígena. Este proyecto tuvo como objetivo desarrollar inclusión financiera con perspectiva de género dirigida a grupos vulnerables en la región de las Altas Montañas, Veracruz, México. La estrategia consistió en la implementación de capacitaciones focalizadas en temas de ahorro, crédito e inversión, con el propósito de fortalecer habilidades financieras de la población en situación de vulnerabilidad. La metodología comprende la

identificación de grupos vulnerables en la región, seguida de un diagnóstico de conocimientos financieros y el desarrollo de un programa de capacitación en educación financiera. Finalmente, el proyecto introdujo estrategias innovadoras para mejorar la toma de decisiones financieras de los participantes. Los resultados revelan avances sustanciales en la comprensión financiera de grupos vulnerables, con un aumento del 75 % en adopción de prácticas financieras saludables, evidenciando un cambio positivo en la toma de decisiones financieras. Se observó una respuesta adaptativa a las opciones financieras ofrecidas, con el 60 % de participantes optando por cuentas de ahorro y 40 % participando en programas de microfinanzas, respaldando así la diversificación en estrategias de ahorro.

Palabras clave: Educación Financiera, Grupos Vulnerables, Inclusión Financiera, Perspectiva de Género, Gestión del Conocimiento

Inclusive Financial Training with a Gender Perspective for Vulnerable Groups in Zongolica, Veracruz, Mexico

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Abstract

The United Nations 2030 Agenda underscores the significance of financial inclusion in five out of its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. In the Mexican context, a fundamental governmental responsibility is to propel actions that ensure financial education for groups classified as vulnerable, encompassing children, youth living on the streets, migrants, individuals with disabilities, the elderly, and indigenous populations. This project aimed to develop financial inclusion with a gender perspective targeted towards vulnerable groups in the Altas Montañas region, Veracruz, Mexico. The

strategy involved targeted training on savings, credit, and investment to enhance the financial skills of the vulnerable population. The methodology includes the identification of vulnerable groups in the region, followed by a diagnosis of financial knowledge and the development of a financial education training program. Finally, the project introduced innovative strategies to enhance participants' financial decision-making. Results indicate substantial progress in the financial understanding of vulnerable groups, with a 75% increase in adopting healthy financial practices, demonstrating a positive shift in financial decision-making. There was an adaptive response to offered financial options, with 60% of participants opting for savings accounts and 40% participating in microfinance programs, supporting diversification in savings strategies.

Keywords: Financial Education, Vulnerable Groups, Financial Inclusion, Gender Perspective, Knowledge Management

Introducción

La educación y la inclusión financiera son pilares fundamentales que fomentan las competencias necesarias para la toma de decisiones informadas y proporcionan herramientas para que los individuos defiendan sus derechos como consumidores financieros. Para los grupos vulnerables, la correcta utilización de productos de ahorro no solo mejora la productividad y empoderamiento, sino que también brinda mayor control y privacidad en la gestión de recursos. A nivel macroeconómico, estudios empíricos respaldan la correlación positiva entre inclusión financiera y diversos factores como: La procrastinación que se asocia con comportamientos financieros adversos, y el aumento de la responsabilidad financiera que tiene implicaciones en la salud, entre otros (Meyer & Hudak, 2016; Gamst *et al.*, 2019; Khan *et al.*, 2021). La educación financiera es un proceso mediante el cual los individuos mejoran su comprensión de productos financieros, conceptos y riesgos. A través de información, instrucción y asesoramiento objetivo, desarrollan habilidades y confianza para ser conscientes de riesgos y oportunidades financieras, tomar decisiones informadas y mejorar su bienestar económico. A pesar de estos beneficios, México enfrenta bajos niveles de inclusión financiera, en comparación con naciones de desarrollo similar donde mejorar la capacidad financiera, especialmente el acceso financiero que es crucial para reducir riesgos e incrementar aspectos positivos en la sociedad, con impactos en independencia económica (Huang, *et al.*, 2016; Coda & Kalwij, 2021; Riitsalu *et al.*, 2023).

La inclusión financiera, según la Red Internacional de Educación Financiera (INFE), se define como un proceso que promueve el acceso asequible, oportuno y adecuado a productos y servicios financieros, buscando

alcanzar a todos los segmentos de la sociedad, esto puede “hasta cierto punto” afectar el comportamiento financiero de las masas, generando menos deudas y mejores planificaciones de jubilación (DeHart *et al.*, 2016; West & Friedline, 2016; Poon *et al.*, 2022). Es imperativo desarrollar programas específicos para sectores excluidos, como la población rural, esto, debido a que la mayoría de las encuestas se centran en poblaciones urbanas con mayor educación y acceso financiero, asimismo, la educación y el asesoramiento financieros se presentan como estrategias para reducir el estrés financiero, mejorar la calidad de vida y los resultados de salud (White *et al.*, 2019; Birkenmaier *et al.*, 2022; Wang *et al.*, 2022).

En América Latina, las mujeres, jóvenes, pensionados, estudiantes, personas de bajos ingresos y población rural enfrentan mayores niveles de exclusión crediticia. La brecha de género, especialmente en el ahorro formal, persiste, afectando negativamente el bienestar económico. La educación financiera no solo facilita el uso eficaz de productos financieros, sino que también empodera a las personas para seleccionar productos que se adapten a sus necesidades, ejercer sus derechos y mejorar su calidad de vida (He & Zhou, 2022; Nguyen *et al.*, 2022; Bo *et al.*, 2023).

Transformación del Mundo y Empoderamiento Femenino en el Medio Rural

En un mundo en constante transformación, es esencial revalorizar las áreas rurales y fomentar la participación formal de las mujeres. A pesar de representar un pilar clave en el desarrollo rural, las mujeres en México presentan menores niveles de bancarización, independientemente del tamaño de la localidad. La educación financiera se vuelve esencial para empoderar a las mujeres, superar la falta de conocimientos financieros y mejorar la inclusión financiera en estas comunidades (White *et al.*, 2020; Ali *et al.*, 2021; Waters *et al.*, 2023).

En términos de seguridad alimentaria, la contribución de las mujeres en México y Centroamérica es crucial, siendo responsables de la producción de la mayoría de los alimentos para el autoconsumo. Su participación en actividades económicas, especialmente en la agricultura, ha aumentado debido a la migración masculina y la necesidad de diversificar los ingresos familiares. Es importante analizar la posición de la mujer en el sistema agrícola desde la perspectiva de la toma de decisiones y el control del ingreso (Vasile *et al.*, 2021; Sabri *et al.*, 2022; Xu *et al.*, 2022).

Inclusión Financiera como Herramienta Transformadora

La inclusión financiera se presenta como una herramienta con el potencial de impulsar la transformación en el medio rural (Liu & Lin, 2021). Iniciativas exitosas han demostrado que pueden contribuir a la estabilidad

económica y sistemas financieros más sólidos, movilizando recursos a través del ahorro y aumentando los ingresos de hogares y gobiernos (Watanapongvanich *et al.*, 2021).

La educación financiera, como proceso de desarrollo de habilidades y actitudes, es notable para capacitar a individuos en la toma de decisiones económicas y el uso efectivo de productos y servicios financieros. En México, es urgente impulsar un movimiento de gran alcance en educación financiera debido a lagunas significativas en conocimientos financieros, que resultan en endeudamiento excesivo y falta de ahorro para el futuro. Además, la complejidad de los productos financieros actuales requiere una mayor comprensión por parte de los usuarios para tomar decisiones informadas (Chen *et al.*, 2022). Los beneficios de la educación financiera son evidentes tanto a nivel individual como nacional, contribuyen a mejorar las condiciones de vida de las personas, fomentando un uso más efectivo de los productos financieros y estimulando el ahorro, lo que, en última instancia, impulsa la inversión y el crecimiento económico. Por tanto, la educación financiera se convierte en una herramienta esencial para alcanzar los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) y promover un desarrollo inclusivo y sostenible.

Con todo lo anterior, se buscó dar respuesta a la siguiente pregunta de investigación ¿Cómo impacta la implementación de un programa de inclusión financiera con perspectiva de género a grupos vulnerables en un municipio de la región de las Altas Montañas en el estado de Veracruz, México?

Método

Se adoptó un diseño de investigación cuasiexperimental con un enfoque pretest-postest. Este diseño permitió evaluar el impacto de un programa de inclusión financiera en la comprensión financiera y las prácticas económicas de los participantes antes y después de la intervención.

La población objetivo abarcó 300 participantes del municipio de Zongolica, Veracruz, México. La selección se llevó a cabo de manera estratificada, representando cuatro grupos demográficos específicos: niños(as), adultos mayores, madres solteras y personas con discapacidad.

Se diseñó y aplicó un cuestionario estructurado con 21 ítems para evaluar el nivel de comprensión financiera antes de la intervención, este, se aplicó a los cuatro grupos con el objetivo de propiciar una consistencia en su medición y así facilitar el análisis comparativo, esto permitió identificar patrones comunes y diferencias significativas en la comprensión financiera entre los diferentes grupos demográficos, lo que se traduce en un análisis profundo de las necesidades y desafíos específicos de cada grupo.

La naturaleza de las preguntas (abiertas, dicotómicas y escala Likert) se constituyó por:

1. Aspectos Teóricos: destinados a evaluar el conocimiento conceptual de los participantes sobre temas financieros específicos, como definiciones, principios y conceptos básicos relacionados con el ahorro, el crédito y la inversión. Ejemplos:

¿Qué es el interés compuesto?

¿Cuál es la diferencia entre una cuenta de ahorro y una cuenta corriente?

¿Qué significa el término "historial crediticio"?

2. Aspectos Prácticos: destinados a evaluar la capacidad de los participantes para aplicar sus conocimientos financieros en situaciones concretas y tomar decisiones financieras informadas. Ejemplos:

Supongamos que tienes \$100 y quieres ahorrar para comprar un regalo. ¿Cuál sería la mejor opción de ahorro a corto plazo?

Si estás considerando solicitar un préstamo, ¿qué factores deberías tener en cuenta antes de tomar esa decisión?

Imagina que recibes un bono inesperado de \$500 ¿Cuál sería una estrategia inteligente para invertir ese dinero?

En este orden de ideas, el instrumento abarcó las siguientes dimensiones:

- a) *Ahorro*: Este aspecto evaluó el conocimiento y las prácticas relacionadas con el ahorro de dinero, incluyendo la importancia del ahorro regular, los diferentes métodos de ahorro y la identificación de objetivos financieros a corto y largo plazo.
- b) *Crédito*: Se exploraron los conceptos básicos sobre el crédito, tales como la comprensión de préstamos, intereses y el impacto de las deudas en la salud financiera. Los participantes fueron evaluados en su capacidad para reconocer y evaluar las distintas formas de crédito disponibles.
- c) *Inversión*: Esta dimensión se centró en la comprensión de los principios básicos de la inversión, incluyendo conceptos como riesgo y rendimiento, diversificación de cartera y horizonte temporal de inversión. Los participantes fueron evaluados en su capacidad para tomar decisiones informadas sobre la gestión de inversiones.
- d) *Presupuesto*: Se evaluaron los conocimientos y habilidades relacionados con la elaboración y seguimiento de un presupuesto personal. Esto incluyó la identificación de ingresos y gastos, la priorización de gastos y la elaboración de un plan financiero acorde a los recursos disponibles.
- e) *Planificación financiera*: Esta dimensión abordó la importancia de la planificación financiera a largo plazo, incluyendo la jubilación, la educación y otras metas financieras. Los participantes fueron evaluados en su capacidad para establecer objetivos financieros claros y desarrollar estrategias para alcanzarlos.

Asimismo, se recopilieron datos sociodemográficos para caracterizar a la población participante. Antes de la implementación, el cuestionario fue sometido a revisión por tres expertos en educación financiera y uno en psicometría. Esta revisión garantizó la claridad, relevancia y precisión de los ítems incluidos, así como la adecuación del cuestionario para evaluar la comprensión financiera de los participantes en situación de vulnerabilidad. Previo a su aplicación definitiva, el cuestionario fue sometido a una fase piloto con un grupo reducido de participantes representativos de la población objeto de estudio. Los resultados de esta prueba piloto permitieron identificar posibles problemas de comprensión o ambigüedad en las preguntas, los cuales fueron corregidos y ajustados para mejorar la precisión, pertinencia, claridad y relevancia del instrumento.

El programa de inclusión financiera comprendió sesiones de capacitación personalizadas para cada grupo demográfico, focalizándose en temas específicos adaptados a sus necesidades particulares. Para las sesiones realizadas en colaboración con expertos en educación financiera, se implementaron estrategias participativas y lúdicas con la intención de garantizar la efectividad de la capacitación.

Procedimiento:

- I. Selección de participantes: Se identificaron y seleccionaron participantes de acuerdo con criterios de inclusión específicos para cada grupo demográfico. A) *Criterios para mujeres*: Se identificaron mujeres en situación de vulnerabilidad, considerando factores como ingresos bajos, falta de acceso a servicios financieros y pertenencia a comunidades marginadas. B) *Criterios para personas mayores*: Se seleccionaron participantes mayores de 60 años, priorizando aquellos con limitaciones económicas y poca experiencia en el uso de servicios financieros. C) *Criterios para personas con capacidades diferentes*: Se incluyeron individuos con diversidad funcional, adaptando los criterios de participación para garantizar accesibilidad y atención a sus necesidades específicas. D) *Criterios para niños*: Niños de la región de las Altas Montañas, Veracruz, México, considerando situaciones de vulnerabilidad, como bajos ingresos familiares y falta de acceso a servicios financieros.
- II. Evaluación inicial: Antes de la intervención, se administró el cuestionario de comprensión financiera para establecer una línea base de conocimientos.
- III. Intervención: A lo largo de un periodo específico de tres meses, se implementó el programa de inclusión financiera, y se adaptaron estrategias según las características de cada grupo.
- IV. Evaluación post-intervención: Tras la intervención, se aplicó nuevamente el cuestionario para evaluar cambios en la comprensión

financiera. Se recopilaron datos sobre la adopción de prácticas financieras saludables y la participación en actividades de ahorro y gestión de créditos.

Por otra parte, para analizar los datos, se empleó un análisis descriptivo para examinar características sociodemográficas. Para evaluar la mejora en la comprensión financiera, se realizó un análisis de diferencias de medias utilizando pruebas estadísticas como la t de Student. Además, se llevaron a cabo análisis de frecuencia para evaluar la adopción de prácticas financieras y la participación en actividades específicas.

Este método proporcionó una estructura robusta para evaluar la eficacia del programa de inclusión financiera en el municipio de Zongolica perteneciente a la región de las Altas Montañas en el estado de Veracruz, México, generando resultados significativos para cada grupo demográfico y contribuyendo al conocimiento en el área de educación financiera.

Para la caracterización sociodemográfica de los participantes, se contó con 104 individuos del sexo masculino y 196 del sexo femenino.

* *Niños(as)*: La población infantil abarcó un total de 71 participantes con edades entre 6 y 15 años, con una distribución equitativa en cada grupo (35 niños y 36 niñas). Mayoría en educación primaria, con un 18 % en educación secundaria. El 90 % provino de familias de bajos ingresos, con identificación de situaciones de vulnerabilidad, como hogares monoparentales o con carencias económicas.

* *Adultos Mayores*: 93 participantes mayores de 60 años (52 mujeres y 41 hombres), con distribución heterogénea entre 60 y 80 años. La mayoría con niveles educativos bajos, predominando educación primaria y secundaria incompleta. 22 % vivían solos, mientras que el 78 % compartían hogar con familiares.

* *Madres Solteras*: 105 participantes entre 25 y 40 años, en su mayoría por debajo de los 35 años, en promedio de 2 a 3 hijos, con casos de monoparentalidad y situaciones de apoyo familiar diverso. Variabilidad en niveles educativos, desde primaria hasta educación media superior y superior.

* *Personas con Discapacidad*: 31 participantes con discapacidades físicas, sensoriales e intelectuales (28 hombres y 3 mujeres). Grado de discapacidad: Mayoría con discapacidades leves a moderadas. Situación laboral: Casi el 50 % de los participantes con discapacidad se encontraba desempleada o con empleo informal.

Resultados

La evaluación reveló mejoras sustanciales en el conocimiento financiero. Hubo un aumento significativo en las puntuaciones medias pre y post-capacitación (Media pre: 50, Desviación estándar: 10; Media post: 75,

Desviación estándar: 12, $t(299) = 15.24$, $p < 0.001$), evidenciando un progreso en la comprensión financiera.

A continuación, se presenta la Tabla 1. *Resultados de la Capacitación Financiera Inclusiva con Perspectiva de Género.*

GRUPO	INDICADORES		
	Comprensión Financiera	Adopción de Prácticas Financieras	Participación en Actividades de Ahorro
Niños(as)	Se observó una mejora significativa en la comprensión financiera de los niños participantes. La puntuación media pre-capacitación fue de 45 (Desviación estándar: 8), mientras que la puntuación media post-capacitación aumentó a 70 (Desviación estándar: 10), $t(70) = 12.55$, $p < 0.001$.	Tras las sesiones, el 80 % de los niños demostró propensión a adoptar prácticas financieras saludables, como el ahorro regular de pequeñas cantidades de dinero, la planificación de gastos y comprensión del concepto “costos”.	Un 50 % de los niños comenzó a utilizar herramientas financieras, como cuentas de ahorro informal en casa, reflejando una mayor conciencia sobre la importancia del ahorro desde una edad temprana.
Adultos Mayores	Se registró una mejora notable en la comprensión financiera de los adultos mayores participantes. La puntuación media pre-capacitación fue de 55 (Desviación estándar: 12), mientras que la puntuación media post-capacitación aumentó a 80 (Desviación estándar: 15), $t(93) = 10.81$, $p < 0.001$.	El 70 % de los adultos mayores demostró propensión a adoptar prácticas financieras saludables, como la elaboración de presupuestos básicos y la gestión eficiente de sus recursos económicos a corto, mediano y largo plazo.	Un 45 % de los adultos mayores comenzó a utilizar herramientas financieras, como cuentas de ahorro para jubilación, demostrando una mayor conciencia sobre la importancia del ahorro a largo plazo.
Madres Solteras	Se observó una mejora significativa en la comprensión financiera de las madres solteras participantes. La puntuación media pre-capacitación fue de 48 (Desviación estándar: 9), mientras que la puntuación media post-capacitación aumentó a 75 (Desviación estándar: 11), $t(105) = 11.32$, $p < 0.001$.	El 75 % de las madres solteras demostró propensión a adoptar prácticas financieras saludables, como la elaboración de presupuestos familiares integrales y la planificación a largo plazo para la educación de sus hijos, así como,	Un 55 % de las madres solteras comenzó a utilizar herramientas financieras, como cuentas de ahorro para emergencias, mostrando una mayor conciencia sobre la importancia del ahorro como medida de seguridad financiera, para

	0.001.	planificación de enfrentar posibles acontecimientos de escenarios adversos inesperados en distintos contextos (enfermedades, riesgos y accidentes, entre otros).	(familiar, laboral, social).
Personas con Discapacidad	Se registró una mejora notable en la comprensión financiera de las personas con discapacidad participantes. La puntuación media pre-capacitación fue de 40 (Desviación estándar: 7), mientras que la puntuación media post-capacitación aumentó a 65 (Desviación estándar: 10), $t(31) = 9.76$, $p < 0.001$.	El 60 % de las personas con discapacidad demostró propensión a adoptar prácticas financieras saludables, como la elaboración de presupuestos adaptados a sus necesidades específicas y la búsqueda de empleo o actividades generadoras de ingresos (emprendimiento y autoempleo).	Un 40 % de las personas con discapacidad comenzó a utilizar herramientas financieras, como cuentas de ahorro con accesibilidad para personas con discapacidad, mostrando una mayor conciencia sobre la importancia del ahorro como parte de su planificación financiera en el día con día.

Fuente: elaboración propia (2024).

El estudio tuvo una participación del 35 % del sexo masculino y 65 % del sexo femenino, con una distribución desigual entre los grupos demográficos. En los primeros tres de los cuatro grupos, se observó una mayor participación de mujeres en comparación con los hombres, reflejando la tendencia de género en la distribución de la muestra.

Discusión

A continuación, se presenta un cuadro comparativo sobre tres estudios enfocados a la educación financiera, realizados por diferentes autores en versus la presente investigación:

Tabla 2. Cuadro comparativo con base en distintos estudios de educación financiera

Estudio	Autores Año	Enfoque Principal	Metodología	Hallazgos principales	Recomendaciones
Análisis de la necesidad de la educación financiera en la formación colegial	López, (2017)	Educación financiera en currículo de secundaria	Descriptiva y Analítica	Necesidad crítica de educación financiera, comprensión limitada	Implementar educación financiera como asignatura obligatoria
Pobreza e Inclusión Financiera en Montería, Colombia	Narváez <i>et al.</i> , (2020)	Incidencia de pobreza en inclusión financiera	Modelo Probit	Relación inversa entre pobreza y acceso al crédito	Abordar barreras específicas a la inclusión financiera
Educación y Capacitación Financiera	Carpinteyro <i>et al.</i> , (2023)	Educación financiera para inclusión en Puebla, México	Mixta Descriptiva-Correlacional	Conocimiento limitado sobre servicios, desconfianza hacia banca	Identificar necesidades educativas, comenzar educación financiera tempranamente
Capacitación Financiera Inclusiva con Perspectiva de Género	Mejía <i>et al.</i> , (2024)	Inclusión financiera con perspectiva de género para grupos vulnerables	Cuasiexperimental pretest-postest	Mejoras significativas en comprensión y prácticas financieras	Replicabilidad del programa para fomentar inclusión financiera y equidad de género

Fuente: elaboración propia (2024).

De acuerdo con la Tabla 2, cada estudio aborda la educación financiera desde perspectivas únicas: centrando en la inclusión financiera con perspectiva de género, la relación entre pobreza y acceso al crédito, o la implementación de la educación financiera en currículos escolares. Los hallazgos subrayan la importancia de la educación financiera adaptada a contextos específicos y sugieren estrategias como la inclusión curricular y programas específicos para mejorar la inclusión financiera y la equidad de género.

Por último, los resultados indican un éxito en la implementación del programa. La mejora en la comprensión financiera, la adopción de prácticas saludables y la participación en actividades financieras demuestran la efectividad del enfoque, especialmente al abordar las necesidades específicas de grupos vulnerables. La perspectiva de género integrada fue crucial, promoviendo la equidad de beneficios. La aplicabilidad del modelo en otras regiones similares sugiere su potencial replicabilidad, contribuyendo a los

Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible relacionados con la inclusión financiera y la equidad de género. Empero, se reconoce la necesidad de seguimiento a mediano y largo plazo para evaluar la sostenibilidad de los cambios observados y ajustar estrategias según corresponda.

Conclusion

Tras implementar el proyecto de inclusión financiera con perspectiva de género en un municipio de la región de las Altas Montañas en el estado de Veracruz, México, se evidenció un impacto significativo en la vida de trescientas personas en situación de vulnerabilidad. La capacitación integral en ahorro, crédito e inversión generó un cambio notable en la comprensión de conceptos financieros básicos, especialmente entre mujeres y comunidades vulnerables. La evaluación detallada permitió adaptar los programas de capacitación personalizados, revelando mejoras sustanciales en conocimientos financieros, confianza en la toma de decisiones y acceso a servicios financieros para mujeres y comunidades beneficiarias.

Se registró un incremento sustancial en las puntuaciones de las pruebas de conocimientos financieros después de la capacitación, indicando mejoras significativas en la comprensión financiera de los participantes. El 75 % de los participantes adoptaron prácticas financieras saludables, demostrando una respuesta positiva y la aplicabilidad práctica de los conocimientos adquiridos. La diversificación en las actividades de ahorro también se reflejó en los datos, con el 60 % de los participantes optando por cuentas de ahorro y el 40 % participando en programas de microfinanzas. Estos indicadores sugieren una respuesta adaptativa a las opciones financieras ofrecidas, respaldando la mejora en la comprensión y la aplicación práctica de estrategias de ahorro diversificadas por parte de los participantes.

Con todo lo anterior, el proyecto representa un avance fundamental hacia la mejora de la inclusión financiera en comunidades vulnerables. El diseño de extensionismo rural modificado demostró ser efectivo, respaldado por resultados que indican mejora en la comprensión financiera, adopción de prácticas financieras saludables, diversificación en las actividades de ahorro y un impacto positivo en grupos específicos. En conjunto, estos hallazgos respaldan la viabilidad y eficacia del diseño como estrategia para promover la inclusión financiera en contextos rurales y con poblaciones vulnerables. La combinación de capacitación específica, participación y estrategias adaptadas emerge como una fórmula efectiva para impulsar cambios positivos en el comportamiento financiero y empoderar a los participantes en la toma de decisiones económicas.

Reconocimiento

Los autores agradecen al Tecnológico Nacional de México, al Instituto Tecnológico Superior de Zongolica, y al Gobierno del Estado de Veracruz, México por las facilidades otorgadas para investigar.

Conflictos de intereses: Los autores no tienen ningún conflicto de intereses que revelar.

Disponibilidad de datos: Todos los datos están incluidos en el contenido del artículo.

Declaración de financiación

Esta investigación fue financiada por el Tecnológico Nacional de México con base en la Convocatoria 2023: Proyecto de Investigación Científica, Desarrollo Tecnológico e Innovación, y por el Gobierno de Estado de Veracruz, México.

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Obstacles to Development of Entrepreneurship in Pakistan

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p52](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p52)

Submitted: 14 June 2023

Accepted: 23 February 2024

Published: 29 February 2024

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OPEN ACCESS

Cite As:

Alam N., Shopovski J. & El Alaoui A. (2024). *Obstacles to Development of Entrepreneurship in Pakistan*. European Scientific Journal, ESJ, 20 (4), 52.

<https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p52>

Abstract

This paper aims to examine the obstacles to entrepreneurship in Pakistan. The study has adopted a qualitative and quantitative approach through descriptive approach. It conducted in-depth interviews and group discussions with mid and senior-level managements of SMEs and non-SMEs, as well as think tanks and students from relevant disciplines. Chi-square and Mann-Whitney U tests were followed by using Likert Scales for robustness in findings. A questionnaire was sent through e-mail to 150 Small or Medium Size Enterprises, SMEs, and 204 non-SMEs. 83 responses from SMEs and 135 responses from non-SMEs were obtained. The results show that the obstacles to entrepreneurship in Pakistan are multiple. Political instability, a deficient legal system, red tape-filled bureaucracy, and access to funding were registered as the main obstacles to entrepreneurship in Pakistan. The study recommends that the government adopt long-term objectives and strategies for SMEs and take a proactive stance.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Obstacles, Connivance, Cronyism, Pakistan

1.0 Introduction

Small and medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) are an important driver of economic growth and socioeconomic development. They play a crucial role in the global economy of today, have the potential to reduce poverty, create jobs, serve as supply chains for large companies, and foster economic expansion, making them a crucial component of any country's overall economic structure (Amir et al. [2020]; Naveed et al. [2022]). Leading international financial institutions including the IMF, World Bank, and Asian Development Bank have labeled and acknowledged this SME-focused growth model as a vital economic instrument. Undoubtedly SMEs in the industrialized world are a crucial source of economic dynamism for every country and a necessary component to achieving inclusive economic growth (Batrancea et al., 2022).

In Pakistan, SMEs are pervasive and growing in all economic sectors. They not only provide employment but also play a significant role in the nation's "large Scale Manufacturing" (LSM) and "Service Sector" supply chains. Generally, the informal sector and the small-scale sector in Pakistan have dominated employment in the construction, wholesale, retail trading, hotels, transport, communications, and storage industries in urban areas. In Pakistan, there are 5.2 million SMEs (Najeeb, 2021). The SMEs in Pakistan make up nearly 90% of exclusive private businesses containing manufacturing units, service suppliers, and startups working in different sectors, using 78% of the non-agricultural workforce, accounting for 25% of manufacturing exports and 30% of Pakistan's GDP (Shah, 2018). Hence, they can be the key factor in overcoming the economic woes of the country (Amir et al., 2020). Pakistan, since the 90s, had attempted to revitalize SMEs' growth by offering lucrative business opportunities and enacting the "Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority" (SMEDA)¹ and later by promulgating a coherent Policy Framework in 2007 to boost growth and expansion. Nonetheless, major policy and execution issues including business regulations, bureaucratic anomalies, a scarcity of qualified human resources, restricted investment, etc. have slowed down the expansion of SMEs and prevented Pakistan from fully using the genuine potential of SMEs (Amir et al., 2020).

Research confirmed the moral hazard issue among policymakers in Pakistan, especially in relation to their policies that focus on the interests of a single specific group, demonstrating connivance/collusion with cronies (Alam, 2023). Such connivance/collusion between civil servants and business

¹ SMEDA is the premium organization at the Federal level in Pakistan established in 1998 with major objectives to formulate policy in order to boost the growth of SMEs and to advise the Government on its fiscal and monetary issues and acts as a coordinator/facilitator in all matters of SMEs in Pakistan.

tycoons conceived a new definition of entrepreneurship in the country which was in contradiction with the norms of the established theories, and it was nothing but the misnomer of government's much more patronizing the investment at large industrial level with the belief of promoting entrepreneurship (White, 1947). This may be an obstacle for genuine entrepreneurship to flourish at a desirable level in Pakistan (Haque, 2007). Therefore, examine the factors that hinder entrepreneurship in Pakistan through a new research study will provide a solid ground for future strategies and policies to thrive Pakistani economy in general.

Contrary findings exist on whether bad governance and weak state institutions, which encourage rent-seeking, corruption, and cronyism impede economic progress, are frequently linked to poor economic outcomes (Murphy et al. [1991]; Acemoglu [1995]; Mauro [1995]; & Baumol [2004]). Entrepreneurship has typically been viewed as a beneficial phenomenon in communities since at least the 1930s when Schumpeter developed his creative destruction hypothesis and characterized it as actions that entail various sorts of inventions. The fundamental reason for this favorable attitude towards entrepreneurship is that it has been shown to have beneficial consequences on a nation's economic growth and prosperity (e.g., Reynolds et al. [1999]; Zacharakis et al. [2000]). Recent research has shown that entrepreneurship can also involve unproductive innovations, such as "innovations in rent-seeking procedures, for example, the discovery of a previously unused legal gambit that is effective in diverting rents to those who are first in exploiting it" (Baumol, 1990). Hence, under such a situation the phenomenon of cronyism becomes part of the game which is discussed in literature as "Crony Capitalism".

Soleiman (2016) contends that cronyism can be detrimental to productive entrepreneurship in society as a whole. However, he further upholds that his study does not reject scholars' general belief that having informal networks helps an entrepreneur to pursue his goals at the individual/organizational level, but it further clarifies that once having informal networks becomes an excessively important success factor for businesses in a country, then the level of productive entrepreneurship is influenced negatively at the national level. Similarly, El Alaoui et. al. (2016) confirmed that state policies towards SMEs, political instability/corruption, and tax legislation were recognized as the main obstacles to entrepreneurship in Albania, Georgia, Morocco, Nigeria, and Pakistan.

In the case of Pakistan, few studies have examined the role of governance and institutions in the macroeconomic outcomes. For example, Khawaja and Khan (2009), Hussain (2008), and Qayyum et al. (2008) have found that good governance and better institutional quality are necessary for better economic outcomes.

White (1974), documents that the government of Pakistan from the very beginning followed the policy of favoring tariff protection as a way to promote industrialization with special emphasis on the large-scale sector. Haque (2007) discusses that in Pakistan, the small-scale sector that can be characterized as entrepreneurship can be observed as an informal sector continually besieged by the state in its quest to protect its favorite child the large formal sector.

Today almost 40 percent of businesses take place in the informal sector and still as compared to the large-scale industry, the small-scale enterprise and industry continue to face unfavourable policies (White [1974]; Haque [2007]). Afraz et al. (2014) have shown that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Pakistan constitute 90 percent of all economic establishments, and therefore requires special attention. The majority of the studies on doing business in Pakistan discuss the stagnation of the manufacturing sector, low levels of productivity, and stunted firm growth (Afraz et al., 2014). Taking a broader approach, the literature explains how different factors i.e., political instability, insufficient judicial system, corruption, macroeconomic instability, the limited availability of skilled labor, credit market failures, weak institutions, infrastructural constraints, the shortage and high cost of energy, inadequate business management and strategy have, over the years, inhibited the growth of Pakistani firms (Munir & Khan, 2011).

This paper seeks to address the following question: What are the factors/obstacles that hinder the growth of entrepreneurship in Pakistan? The paper will attempt to achieve this by analyzing questionnaire responses and secondary data. The organization of this paper is as follows: section 2 covers a detailed literature review; section 3 explains methodology; section 4 includes analysis; and section 5 is on conclusion.

2.0 Literature Review

Dar et al. (2017) found that the knowledge, abilities, and competencies of the owner and personnel have an impact on the success of SMEs. Lack of tangible resources, such as human and financial capital, severely hinders the development of SMEs, but smart use of intangible resources might significantly accelerate growth. One of the biggest challenges for SMEs is access to funding, and many of the SMEs lack the indemnification of security required, making it appear exceedingly difficult to acquire a loan from banks and lending agencies.

The findings of Manzoor et al. (2021) have demonstrated the significance of SMEs to economic development in developing nations like Pakistan and recommend that policy be taken by the government and its agencies to improve investment conditions for SMEs and provide technological, financial, technical, managerial, and infrastructure support.

Shah (2018) also advocates for considerable government assistance and a strong enabling environment from both the public and private sectors. This is because SMEs are expected to be extremely productive and serve as a catalyst for economic growth and development in Pakistan.

According to Syed et al. (2012), SMEs in Pakistan have a variety of issues and institutional shortcomings. These obstacles have made it difficult for SMEs to fully take advantage of opportunities and the rapidly shifting global business environment. On this continuum, regulations for businesses, "constrained access to formal finance and other input resources," a lack of technology, a shortage of skilled labor, a relatively small base of value-added products, weaknesses in an effective business information culture and infrastructure, a lack of SME support services for anticipated entrepreneurship development and preferment, and a low level of integration in global value chains. Katua (2014) found constraints that typically thwart someone's ambition to start their own business are more commonly mentioned in literature as administrative challenges, banks' unwillingness to finance new initiatives, the shame associated with failure, risk aversion, views of friends and family, etc.

Afraz et al. (2014) conducted a thorough investigation of the obstacles to business growth in Pakistan utilizing the "World Bank's Enterprise Survey 2007" as a point of reference. Infrastructure, trade, finance, rules, taxes, and business licenses, as well as crime, corruption, informality, finance, innovation, and labor, are all included in this study as potential obstacles. However, their research indicates that the most pressing issues are the lack of energy supply, followed by crime and corruption, which were found to be more severe than in other nations in the area. They also noted the importance of access to land, tax rates, and financial resources.

Whereas Hussain et al. (2012) in a different survey, 7.9% of Lahore-based enterprises state political and macroeconomic volatility as one of their top three limitations, while nearly 46% regard it as one of their top two. For businesses that rely on imported raw materials, macroeconomic volatility is particularly significant since it drives up their production costs due to the devaluation of the rupee. Both inflation and currency rate fluctuation are considered to be obstacles to conducting business. While Qureshi et al. (2010) and Khan and Saqib (2011) conclude that Pakistan's political unrest has a favorable and substantial influence on inflation. According to Yang (2011), 20 percent of Pakistani businesses saw political unrest as their biggest obstacle to expansion in 2010.

Zaman et al. (2022) highlight the restrictions of financial assistance, low budget and income, lack of top management commitment, regulatory

framework, less or no SDGs² knowledge, lack of strategic planning for workers, and SDGs related to workers' rights implementation complexity in SMEs in Pakistan (as cited in Naveed et al.2022), all shareholders, employees, and customers expect a similar pledge to sustainability from all small and medium businesses regardless of size and income. Naveed et al. (2022) suggest that SMEs management can be improved by adopting SDGs 2030 for employees' betterment leading to a better working environment and job satisfaction for workers and enhancing SMEs productivity.

The absence of a specialized and standardized legal framework for SME development hinders their activities, creating a broken interaction between the government and SMEs. The administrative practices are marked by rent-seeking bureaucrats taking advantage of semi-literate entrepreneurs with low wages. The overall legal environment negatively affects all economic agents, and research indicates discrimination by large firms against small businesses. SMEs, due to their size, struggle to adapt and conduct business effectively, facing unfair treatment that impedes their ability to compete in the business environment. These challenges have economic implications, making it difficult for SMEs to navigate global markets and adjust to the liberalization policies implemented by the Pakistani government.³

3.0 Methodology

The study has adopted qualitative and quantitative approaches using primary and secondary data sources. It uses data built up from the replies of the questionnaires circulated during the years end-2022 to early-2023. Chi-square and Mann-Whitney U tests were followed by using Likert Scales for robustness in findings. The sample size was 354 which included 150 SMEs and 204 non-SMEs of Pakistan, to whom the questionnaires were sent through e-mails. However, only 83 responses from SMEs and 135 responses from non-SMEs were received back; the response rate against the total sample is 62%. The following table summarizes the results.

² The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity. <https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals?>. Retrieved on 27-05-2023.

³Developing SME Policy in Pakistan SME Issues Paper - for Deliberation by SME Task Force - Policy Planning & Strategy Department. Turn Potential into Profit Small & Medium Enterprise Development Authority Ministry of Industries & Production Government of Pakistan <http://www.smeda.org-.pk>. (Retrieved on 05-08-2023).

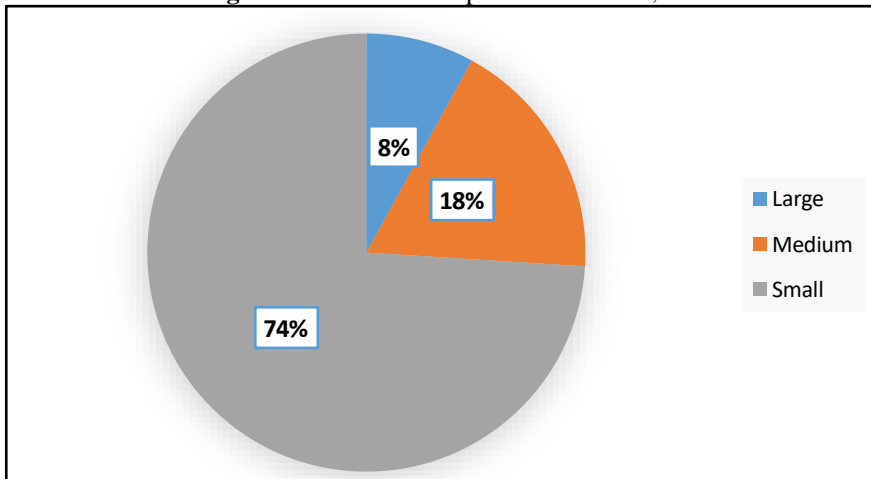
Table 1. Characteristics of sample

Sample	Initial size		Respondents		Non-respondents	
	Effective	%	Effective	%	Effective	%
SME	150	42%	83	38%	67	19%
Non-SME	204	58%	135	62%	69	19%
Total	354	100%	218	62%	136	38%

Source: Field data.

The 83 SMEs are small, medium, and large-sized businesses located in major cities (i.e., Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore & Hyderabad)⁴ of Pakistan. The size of SMEs is divided into the following categories based on the number of workers. The terms "small size" and "medium size" refer to businesses with fewer than 50, "more than 50 but fewer than 250," while "large size" refers to businesses with more than 250 workers. **Figure 1** portrays the ratio of various SMEs in terms of their sizes.

Figure 1. Size-wise composition of SMEs, %

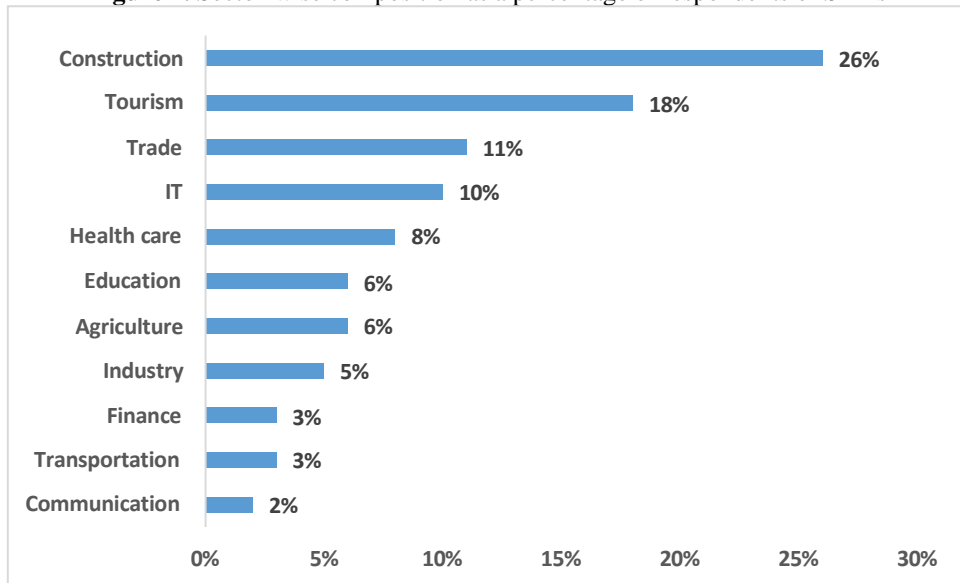


Source: Field data.

The 83 SMEs are involved in industries like agriculture, commerce, industry, communication, education, healthcare, tourism, transportation, construction, finance, and IT. Their composition as a percentage of SMEs respondents (83 SMEs) is revealed in Figure 2.

⁴ Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan; Karachi is the port and provincial capital city of Sindh province; Lahore is the capital city of Punjab province; and Hyderabad is the second big city of Sindh province.

Figure 2. Sector-wise composition as a percentage of respondents of SMEs



Source: Field data.

The composition of non-SMEs highlights professionals (65%) and students (62%) as the major components of non-SMEs, followed by think tanks (8%), the 135 non-SMEs are mid and senior-level officers of the federal (central), and provincial (state), local, autonomous, and semi-autonomous bodies as well as multinational corporations, commercial banks, think tanks, and Master/Bachelor students of business/public administration and other disciplines.

This study used a questionnaire that was structured as shown in Table 2.

Table-: 2 Structure of Questionnaire
<i>How would you rate the current environment in the country for growth of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Pakistan?</i>
<i>Does current environment facilitate SMEs for expansion of their business in the future in Pakistan?</i>
<i>Do you agree that the connivance/collusion between civil servants and business tycoons in Pakistan is one of the major hindering factors for the growth of SMEs in Pakistan at desirable level?</i>
<i>Do you agree that the misnomer of government's patronizing investment at large industrial level with belief of promoting SMEs in Pakistan signals a violation of the norms of established theories of SMEs?</i>
5(a). Rate the hindering factors for development of SMEs, listed below by a 5-point system (5 - the most important hindering factor, 1 - the least important hindering factor): (i) State policy towards small and medium sized companies (registration of new companies etc.) (ii) Tax legislation. (iii) Access to finances (Bank credits, grants etc.). (iv) Security of private property protection.

- (v) Standard of living in the country.
- (vi) Political instability/corruption.
- (vii) International trade barriers.
- (viii) Absence of qualified human resources (HR).
- (ix) Inefficient judicial system.

5(b). Rate the hindering factors for the development of SMEs:

- (x) List of future activities of SMEs in Pakistan you consider beneficial for the business (see below list), and (xi) Additional comments (if any) on SMEs in Pakistan.
 - (i) *Export/Import.*
 - (ii) *Innovative product/service creation.*
 - (iii) *Agriculture sector (dairy farming, and livestock), smart farming, the conditions of Mandies (farmers' market).*
 - (iv) *Small and large enterprises merger.*
 - (v) *Initially, online startups are beneficial for business.*
 - (vi) *Car tools, spare parts, cloth, and cotton.*
 - (vii) *Construction related.*
 - (viii) *Paper Industry.*
 - (ix) *Recycling industry.*
 - (x) *Education.*
 - (xi) *Health.*
 - (xii) *Financial services.*
 - (xiii) *Engineering.*
 - (xiv) *Mobile software/apps development.*
 - (xv) *Tourism.*
 - (xvi) *Salon.*
 - (xvii) *Household industries for petty items (e.g., stationary, wooden accessories, shoes making etc.).*
 - (xviii) *Cottage Industry/low-cost investment (hosiery, paper manufacturing, spices, food items, handicrafts and pottery, food, and related items Packing. Content writing, blogging, free-lancing, photography, textile, dietary supplements).*

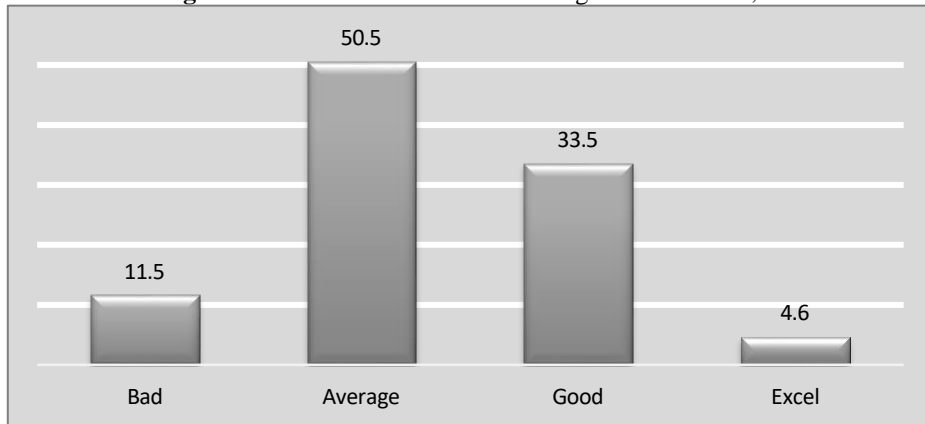
Interviews and group discussions were also held with mid and senior levels managements of Karachi and Hyderabad-based entrepreneurs, senior civil servants, senior officers of commercial banks, think tanks, Master/Bachelor students of economics, business/public administration, and other disciplines. The study runs SPSS technique and follows Chi-square and Mann-Whitney U test and it uses Likert Scales by a 3-point/5-point scales in its data analysis.

4.0 Results and Discussion

The response of the firms on question 1: "*How would you rate the current environment in the country for growth of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Pakistan*", the results show that the majority (50.5%) have favored for "average" meaning that current environment in Pakistan for growth of small and medium sized business is not too much conducive and it is running bit by bit. However, 33.5% responded in favor of "good" or 4.6% for "excellent" revealing that some of these businesses are experiencing

growth in a positive direction due to peculiarity in the nature of their businesses. Moreover, the opinion of respondents is not linked to categories of firms according to Chi-square test (0.532 with P-value=0.912).

Figure 3. Current Environment for the growth of SMEs, %



Source: Field data.

For instance, during the COVID-19 period, despite the world economy being in recession, the health care and online delivery industries continued to function admirably. In several industries, Covid-19 has a detrimental impact on SMEs and causes them to shut down during pandemics. Compared to other businesses, the tourism sector has been severely harmed by the pandemic. Worldwide economic issues are brought on by the massive volume of travel cancellations (Kreiner & Ram, 2020). On the other hand, numerous sectors were helped by this epidemic to survive, and internet shopping, in particular, helped companies like Amazon, Target, and Walmart become profitable. During the pandemic crisis, several agencies and SMEs worked to gather critical information for reviving the ideal economy. Agribusiness, private health care, medical services, and e-commerce are a few sectors that might boost the economy (Hadi & Supardi, 2020).

The response of the firms to question 2: "***Does the current environment facilitate SMEs for expansion of their business in the future in Pakistan?***", the results indicate that 43.1% of the respondents say "Yes", 41.7% say "No" and 15.1% "don't know". In addition, these responses are also not related to the categories of firms (Chi-square test is equal to 0.601 with P-value=0.741). In fact, Pakistan's present business climate is rather gloomy as a result of the country's protracted political unrest and resulting economic decline.

The response of the firms to question 3: "***Do you agree that the connivance/collusion between civil servants and business tycoons in Pakistan is one of the major hindering factors for the growth of SMEs in Pakistan at desirable level?***", the majority of respondents (61.5%) say "Yes," confirming the notion that one of the greatest challenges to the growth of SMEs in Pakistan is due to collusion/connivance between state personnel and business tycoons there against 19.7% say "No" and 18.8% "don't know". The results show also that the response is not linked to the categories of firms (The chi-square test is equal to 5.586 with P-value=0.061). According to conventional wisdom, cronyism between corporate tycoons and public policymakers ultimately comes from systemic corruption, which is the root cause of cooperation between civil servants and business tycoons in every nation. Therefore, the policies on the creation and expansion of SMEs are captured by the designated groups i.e., business tycoons and public policymakers, who are effectively the cronies (Haber [2002]; Guseva [2007]; Hellman et al. [2003]; Kaufmann & Kraay [2002]; Fligstein [2001]). Soleiman (2016) discusses that consequently, cronyism leads to unfair access of certain groups of people to resources and opportunities in a business context, at the expense of other people who cannot or do not participate in this favor-seeking/offering game. When cronyism is prevalent, crony capitalism, an economic system where corporate success is determined more by political ties than by market forces emerges (Holcombe [2013]; Sobel & Graefe-Anderson [2014]). Numerous studies have focused on the moral hazard problems among public policymakers as the root cause of these threats (Alam, 2023).

The response of the firms to question 4: "***Do you agree that the misnomer of government's patronizing investment at large industrial level with belief of promoting SMEs in Pakistan signals a violation of the norms of established theories of SMEs?***", the results indicate the negligible difference between "Yes" and "Don't Know", thus 39.9% and 40.4%, respectively; we ignore therefore the response on "Don't Know". Our assumption in this context is that 40.4% respondents saying "Don't Know" actually belonged to the non-SMEs which constitutes 62% of the total respondents (**Table 1**). Hence, it raises the question of their comprehension on the subject of SMEs consequently it seems plausible to treat their response as "Null" or "Zero response" in order to arrive at some conclusion. We note also that the responses to this question are not significantly linked to the categories of firms (Chi-square test is equal to 0.235 with a P-value equal to 0.889). Accordingly, we proceed to keep in view this assumption and treat 39.9% of respondents saying, "Yes" as the majority indicating that the government in Pakistan is patronizing investment at the large industrial level in the name of promoting SMEs signals a violation of the rules of accepted theories of SMEs.

The literature also supports our aforementioned criterion of assumption (see, Dar et al. [2017]; Khawaja [, 2006]).

To highlight the hindering factors for the development of SMEs, this study has listed a set of factors, as shown in Table 3. Each respondent indicates the magnitude of importance of these factors using the Likert scale, where 1 is the least important (scale 1) and 5 is the most essential hindering factor (scale 5). The findings are reported in Table 3.

Table 3. Rate the hindering factors for the development of SMEs (%)

Factors-2022 (Percentage-Term)	Scale 1	scale 2	scale 3	scale 4	scale 5	Standard Deviation
State policy towards small and medium sized companies (registration of new companies etc.)	11.0	27.1	25.2	18.8	17.9	1.272
Tax legislation	14.7	25.2	21.6	25.2	13.3	1.277
Access to finance (Bank credit, grants)	10.6	22.5	30.3	17.9	18.8	1.253
Security of private property protection	11.9	22.9	28.0	21.1	16.1	1.250
Standard of living in the country	14.7	27.1	25.7	22.5	10.1	1.214
Political instability/corruption	13.8	17.4	20.2	16.1	32.6	1.437
International trade barriers	8.7	24.8	27.1	23.9	15.6	1.204
Absence of qualified human resources	12.4	28.9	22.9	20.2	15.6	1.272
Inefficient judicial system	12.4	18.3	20.2	28.9	20.2	1.309

Source: Field data.

The results show that respondents' opinions are varied and that none of the identified impediments addressed in our surveys have a particularly significant effect. In terms of the overall reaction, the criterion "Political Instability" received the highest score on a 5-point scale (32.6%) and less than 20% of the replies went to the remaining components. It shows that no single issue is to blame for SMEs' difficulties in Pakistan. The political instability (in consonance with the findings of Quraishi et al. (2010) and Yang (2011) and insufficient judicial system are however the core hindering factors.

To highlight the perceptions of firms about the hindering factors for their development, the findings indicate that there is no significant difference in their opinion except for four factors: "Standard of living in the country", "Political instability/corruption", "International trade barriers" and "Absence of qualified human resources (HR)" (Table 4).

Table 4. Firms' perceptions about the hindering factors

Factors-2022	Mann-Whitney U Test	Conclusion
State policy towards small and medium sized companies (registration of new companies etc.)	0.485	Distribution of this factor is the same across categories of firms.
Tax legislation	0.079	Distribution of this factor is the same across categories of firms.
Access to finance (Bank credit, grants)	0.131	Distribution of this factor is the same across categories of firms.
Security of private property protection	0.335	Distribution of this factor is the same across categories of firms.
Standard of living in the country	0.006	<i>Distribution of this factor is not the same across categories of firms.</i>
Political instability/corruption	0.000	<i>Distribution of this factor is not the same across categories of firms.</i>
International trade barriers	0.000	<i>Distribution of this factor is not the same across categories of firms.</i>
Absence of qualified human resources	0.008	<i>Distribution of this factor is not the same across categories of firms.</i>
Inefficient judicial system	0.701	Distribution of this factor is the same across categories of firms.

Source: Field data.

In additional comments, the majority of respondents believe that the government is essential to the growth of SMEs in a nation. If barriers can be overcome, Pakistan has enormous potential for SMEs by offering a competitive atmosphere and taking strict/punitive action against counterfeit and inferior goods. Pakistan's SMEs have the capacity to expand despite an unstable and underdeveloped economy and a bad currency exchange rate. In Table 5 several significant ideas from the responders are reflected.

Table 5: Additional comments of respondents on SMEs in Pakistan

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The government must support business development and make specific allowances for SMEs. Long-term goals and policies, measures that encourage investment, open government, and a shift in the national attitude, support at the policy and regulatory levels, institutional and networking support.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A favourable atmosphere improved regulatory environment, simple process for registering SMEs. Process of decentralisation for establishing new SMEs. Business efficiency, such as a single point of contact for interacting with government entities, favourable tax legislation and tax breaks. Tax laws should be made better and levied at a single-digit rate, lowering import taxes on basic supplies, assisting with waivers for electricity.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A sound legal system with clear and convenient legal processes, enhancing the regulatory environment and backing for internet trading. Quick permit processing and financial access, obliteration of corruption within government agencies. Government</i>

<p><i>and regulatory agencies should adopt a focused strategy. The culture of license and trademark may be cultivated.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Digitalization, e-commerce, the IT industry, and software development (IT-based solutions) may be facilitated. Through consultation, a forum for innovative ideas is created.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Easy access to bank credit promotes a business-friendly climate. The banking industry should offer business loans to aid enterprises and be a partner rather than charging interest. It should also give proper counsel and convenient credit options. When arranging for cash, neither age nor gender is considered, and financing for the agriculture industry.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Cooperation between: (a) business and SMEs; (b) exporters and SMEs; (c) businesses and educational institutions.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>The formation and regulation of new legislation covering the security and stability of assets and enterprises and the recruitment of appropriate ideal fit, including HR, would greatly assist the future growth of SMEs in Pakistan. Hence, SMEDA requires significant adjustments as a result of numerous accusations about personnel inefficiency and corruption. In order to grow exports, SMEs should concentrate on domestic consumption, making Pakistan self-sufficient with little to no reliance on imports.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>Just as they must help other firms, SMEs should focus on long-term objectives. They should prepare to become major corporations. To grow their company, they must form alliances with other SMEs. If they fail, they must focus on their flaws. Instead of giving up on their enterprises if they fail, they must focus on their weaknesses.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● <i>The state of law and order and political stability, security for assets, money, and situations like thefts and robberies may be affirmed in letter and spirit.</i>

Source: Field data.

SMEs are essential to fostering economic growth, creating jobs, and limiting inflation, making them the foundation of the economy. In low and middle-income countries like Pakistan, this sector's significance is noticeably higher. As a result, SMEs ought to be established with the intention of establishing future businesses, and they ought to be run by experienced professionals rather than by families with inadequate business acumen. The government should develop a long-term plan and select a goal and area that calls for the engagement of SMEs since it is implausible to believe that a shift in governance and success would come immediately. Since it is unlikely to assume an adjustment in governance and success to occur quickly, the government should establish a long-term strategy and choose a goal and area that calls for the involvement of SMEs. The government must adopt a targeted strategy to provide the conditions for SMEs to gain momentum and power the economy. It should be used domestically to make the nation self-sufficient with little to no reliance on imports. The Pakistani government might follow the examples set by China, Japan, and Korea in this regard.

Regarding future activities that can help to promote the Pakistani economy through SMEs, (see Table 5), the government may announce special packages/respite especially for SMEs engaged in vegetables/fruits supply,

dairy and cattle farming, supply of auto parts/spare parts, making/distribution of clothing/garments, construction related activities, real estates, paper recycling industry, IT-based businesses like mobile software/apps development, online startups for business, salon, restaurants, household industries for petty items (e.g., stationary, wooden accessories, shoes making etc.), cottage industry/low-cost investment (hosiery, paper manufacturing, spices, food items, handicrafts and pottery, food, and related items packing, content writing, blogging, free-lancing, photography, textile, dietary supplements.

The study further notes that SMEs operating in the aforementioned industries lack R&D (Research & Development) activities. As the majority of these businesses are a part of Pakistan's informal economy, it thus urges more study to better understand the difficulties they encounter. This is especially intriguing because different industries and enterprises could have distinct challenges, necessitating independent research or studies for each.

Conclusion

The study's main finding is that multiple factors prevent the growth and expansion of the SMEs in Pakistan. The most important ones are the political instability, insufficient judicial system, government policy, legislation, regulation, red tape-filled bureaucracy, and access to funding were registered as obstacles to entrepreneurship in Pakistan. Furthermore, genuine entrepreneurship is not allowed to thrive at a suitable level due to the connivance/collusion between government employees and business tycoons, which is clearly against the theories of contemporary economics and business. The study recommends long-term goals and policies and suggests a proactive approach on part of the government. The government ought to develop regulations that make it easier for SMEs to access resources including funding, information, and infrastructure, and assist them by reducing their tariffs and promoting their goods on both home and foreign markets. There is a need to boost research and development (R&D) on the most recent technical advancements in a variety of disciplines for SMEs. The recommendations of respondents (see Table 5) also need attention of the public policy makers at federal and provincial governments' levels.

Conflict of Interest: Dr. Jovan Shopovski is a managing editor at the European Scientific Journal, ESJ. The other authors are reviewers of the ESJ. The ESJ Editorial Office was informed of this fact in order to take the necessary actions in providing an impartial peer review procedure.

Funding Statement: The authors declare that no funding was obtained for this study.

Data Availability: The data are available in the content of the paper.

Human Participants: This study was approved by the IOBM Review Board. The principles of the Helsinki Declarations were followed in the research process.

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Le Marketing Politique: L'art de Convaincre les Electeurs Etude de Benchmark entre la France et le Maroc

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p71](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p71)

Submitted: 28 October 2023
Accepted: 01 February 2024
Published: 29 February 2024

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OPEN ACCESS

Cite As:

Hniche O. & Amara A. (2024). *Le Marketing Politique: L'art de Convaincre les Electeurs Etude de Benchmark entre la France et le Maroc*. European Scientific Journal, ESJ, 20 (4), 71. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p71>

Résumé

Le marketing politique est un concept qui existe depuis la nuit des temps qui consiste à utiliser des pratiques inspirées du marketing commercial pour se construire une image et la promouvoir, cette pratique est généralement utilisée par les hommes et les partis politiques. Dans cet article nous avons effectué une étude comparative entre les pratiques du Marketing politique au Maroc et en France, pour voir à quel point ces deux pays proches géographiquement, historiquement et culturellement ont été imprégnés par cette pratique qui nous vient des états unis d'Amérique, et pour analyser les personnalités politiques les plus marquantes des deux pays. Dans cette étude nous avons procédé à une analyse comparative entre les deux pays et principalement leurs figures politiques emblématiques, nous avons analysé leur histoire, leur style communicationnel, les supports communicationnels qu'ils utilisent, et leurs pratiques du marketing politique, pour faire cela nous avons décortiqué leurs discours, leurs interviews, les articles de presses les concernant et toute informations susceptible de nous être utile. Il ressort de notre analyse que le marketing politique joue un rôle essentiel dans les campagnes électorales modernes. Au Maroc, un pays politiquement dynamique et en évolution constante, les leaders politiques ont adopté des stratégies de marketing pour atteindre et convaincre plus d'électeurs.

Mots-clés: Marketing, Marketing politique, Candidat, Produits, Électeur, Vote

Political Marketing: The Art of Convincing Voters Benchmark Study between France and Morocco

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Abstract

Political Marketing, a concept that has flourished since its inception, relies on practices inspired by commercial marketing to build and promote the image of individuals or organizations. It is often used by politicians and political parties. In this scientific paper, a comparative study was conducted to compare the approach of political marketing in Morocco and France. Through this analysis, their history, communication style, the communication media used, and their political marketing practices was reviewed. This study focuses on evaluating the extent to which these geographically, historically and culturally proximate countries have been inspired by the fast pace evolution of this concept imported from the United States of America. By analysing the most prominent political figures in both countries, it is evident that political marketing plays a vital role in modern election campaigns. While this practice has been employed in France for decades, in Morocco, a politically dynamic country, political leaders have recently adopted marketing strategies to engage and convince more voters.

Keywords: Marketing, Political Marketing, Candidate, Product, Voter, Vote

Introduction

Le marketing politique est une discipline en constante évolution qui vise à promouvoir et à vendre les idées, les candidats et les partis politiques. Dans un paysage politique de plus en plus compétitif, les politiciens comprennent l'importance d'utiliser des techniques marketing pour atteindre et convaincre les électeurs. Cet article explore les concepts clés du marketing politique, ses stratégies et son influence croissante sur les campagnes électorales modernes.

Le marketing politique est un domaine complexe et dynamique, qui diffère d'un pays à l'autre en fonction de divers facteurs, tel que la culture politique, le système électoral et les attentes des électeurs. Dans cet article, nous allons comparer le marketing politique en France et au Maroc, en mettant en évidence les similitudes et les différences entre ces deux pays.

Le marketing politique

Le marketing politique est l'ensemble des stratégies et des tactiques utilisées pour influencer l'opinion publique, mobiliser les électeurs et promouvoir un candidat ou un parti politique. Il s'inspire des principes et des techniques du marketing traditionnel, adaptés au contexte politique. L'objectif principal du marketing politique est de gagner des élections en créant une image positive du candidat ou du parti auprès des électeurs.

Les stratégies clés du marketing politique (Harfouche, 2012) :

- Analyse de l'audience : Comme dans toute campagne marketing, il est essentiel de comprendre l'audience cible. Les politiciens utilisent des études démographiques, des sondages d'opinion et des analyses statistiques pour identifier les problèmes qui préoccupent les électeurs et adapter leurs messages en conséquence.
- Positionnement du candidat : Le positionnement consiste à définir les valeurs, les caractéristiques et les promesses qui distinguent un candidat des autres. En identifiant sa proposition de valeur unique, le candidat peut se différencier de ses concurrents et attirer l'attention des électeurs.
- Communication efficace : Les politiciens utilisent divers canaux de communication pour transmettre leur message aux électeurs. Des discours inspirants aux publicités télévisées percutantes, en passant par les médias sociaux et les débats télévisés. Chaque interaction avec les électeurs est soigneusement conçue pour influencer leur perception et obtenir leur soutien.
- Gestion de l'image : L'image d'un candidat joue un rôle crucial dans sa perception par les électeurs. Les politiciens investissent dans des consultants en image et en relations publiques pour gérer leur apparence, leur langage corporel et leur présence médiatique. L'objectif est de créer une image positive et authentique.
- Mobilisation des électeurs : Le marketing politique ne se limite pas à convaincre les électeurs indécis mais s'étend également jusqu'à mobiliser la base électorale existante. Les politiciens utilisent des tactiques de mobilisation comme le porte-à-porte, les appels téléphoniques, les événements durant la campagne électorale.

L'objectif ultime est d'encourager les électeurs à voter et à soutenir leur candidat.

L'influence croissante du marketing politique (Chevrier-Pelletier, 2013):

L'influence du marketing politique est devenue de plus en plus significative dans le paysage politique contemporain. Les campagnes électorales et les efforts de communication des candidats et des partis politiques sont de plus en plus axés sur des stratégies de marketing politique afin de séduire et de mobiliser les électeurs. Voici quelques-unes des principales façons dont le marketing politique exerce une influence croissante :

- Gestion de l'image : Le marketing politique joue un rôle crucial dans la gestion de l'image des candidats et des partis politiques. Les politiciens cherchent à façonner une image attrayante, cohérente et positive afin de gagner la confiance des électeurs. Cela implique la création de slogans accrocheurs, de logos reconnaissables et d'une identité visuelle distinctive.
- Segmenter l'électorat : Le marketing politique permet une segmentation précise de l'électorat. Les stratèges politiques analysent les données démographiques, socio-économiques et comportementales pour identifier les segments clés de l'électorat et adapter les messages et les stratégies en conséquence. Cela permet de cibler des groupes spécifiques et de personnaliser les communications pour mieux répondre à leurs préoccupations.
- Utilisation des médias traditionnels et numériques : Les politiciens utilisent une variété de canaux de communication pour atteindre les électeurs. Outre les médias traditionnels tels que la télévision, la radio et la presse écrite, le marketing politique exploite également les médias numériques, tels que les réseaux sociaux, les sites web et les campagnes par courrier électronique. Ces canaux offrent une portée étendue et une interactivité accrue avec les électeurs.
- Utilisation des données et de l'analyse : Le marketing politique s'appuie sur l'utilisation de données et d'outils d'analyse pour évaluer l'efficacité des stratégies et des messages. Les sondages d'opinion, les études de marché, l'analyse des médias sociaux et d'autres méthodes permettent de recueillir des informations sur les préférences et les attentes des électeurs. Cela permet d'ajuster les messages et les tactiques de communication en temps réel.
- Mobilisation et engagement des électeurs : Le marketing politique vise à mobiliser les électeurs et à les engager de manière active. Cela peut inclure des appels à l'action, des événements de campagne, des campagnes de sensibilisation et des initiatives de participation

citoyenne. Les stratégies de marketing politique cherchent à créer une connexion émotionnelle avec les électeurs et à les inciter à soutenir activement les candidats et les partis politiques.

- Gestion de la réputation et de la crise : Le marketing politique est également utilisé pour gérer la réputation des candidats et des partis politiques, ainsi que pour faire face aux crises potentielles. Les équipes de marketing politique travaillent à maintenir une image positive et à gérer les problèmes de communication qui peuvent survenir pendant une campagne électorale ou pendant l'exercice du pouvoir.

Dans l'ensemble, le marketing politique a acquis une influence croissante en raison de son efficacité dans la création d'images attrayantes.

Objectif et méthodologie de travail

L'objectif de cette étude benchmark en marketing politique entre la France et le Maroc est de comparer et d'évaluer les stratégies et les performances des campagnes politiques dans ces deux nations. Ceci permet aux acteurs politiques de comprendre les meilleures pratiques, d'identifier les réussites et les échecs, et d'adapter leurs approches pour atteindre leurs objectifs.

Cette analyse comparative va englober divers aspects tels que la communication, la mobilisation électorale, l'utilisation des médias sociaux et les messages politiques. En résumé, le but est d'apprendre des expériences d'autres pays pour améliorer les stratégies du marketing politique des politiciens au Maroc.

Pour réaliser cette étude benchmark du marketing politique entre le Maroc et la France, nous avons suivi les étapes suivantes :

- La sélection des pays: Le choix des pays pour notre étude en fonction du contexte politique, proximité géographique, historique...
- La Mise en place d'objectifs clairs: La définition des objectifs de notre étude comme l'efficacité des campagnes électorales, l'utilisation des médias sociaux, etc.
- La collecte de données: Le réassemblage des données sur les campagnes politiques passées, l'engagement des électeurs, les tactiques utilisées, etc.
- L'analyse comparative: La comparaison des données entre les pays pour identifier les tendances et les différences significatives.
- Le focus sur les médias sociaux: L'analyse de l'utilisation des médias sociaux, la portée, l'interaction et les plateformes préférées dans chaque pays.

- L'étude des discours et des messages: L'analyse des discours des candidats, les messages clés, et évaluation de leur efficacité dans chaque contexte culturel.
- L'évaluation des résultats: l'analyse des résultats électoraux en lien avec les stratégies marketing utilisées.
- Les facteurs culturels et sociaux: La prise en considération des différences culturelles et sociales qui peuvent influencer la perception des campagnes.
- Résumé et Recommandations: La présentation des résultats de manière concise avec des recommandations pour améliorer les stratégies de marketing politique des politiciens au Maroc.

Marketing politique en France (Stenger & Picard, 2011)

Le marketing politique est une discipline essentielle dans le paysage démocratique français. En effet, les campagnes électorales sont devenues de véritables compétitions médiatiques, où les candidats rivalisent d'ingéniosité pour séduire les électeurs et remporter leurs voix. Cet article explore le monde complexe et fascinant du marketing politique en France, en examinant les stratégies utilisées, les outils de communication privilégiés et les défis auxquels les acteurs politiques sont confrontés.

Les enjeux du marketing politique en France :

Le marketing politique en France joue un rôle crucial dans la conquête et la conservation du pouvoir. Les campagnes électorales sont devenues des moments clés où les candidats doivent déployer des efforts considérables pour convaincre les électeurs de la pertinence de leur programme politique et de leur capacité à gouverner. Les enjeux sont d'autant plus importants dans un pays où le paysage politique est fragmenté et où plusieurs partis sont en compétition pour le pouvoir.

Les stratégies du marketing politique :

Les stratégies utilisées en marketing politique en France sont multiples et variées. Les candidats s'appuient sur des études d'opinion pour mieux comprendre les préoccupations des électeurs et adapter leurs discours en conséquence. Ils cherchent à créer une image de marque forte et cohérente, en mettant en avant leur expérience, leur crédibilité et leur proximité avec les préoccupations des citoyens.

Les outils de communication :

Le marketing politique en France s'appuie sur une large palette d'outils de communication pour atteindre les électeurs. Les meetings et les rassemblements populaires restent des moments privilégiés pour les candidats,

leur permettant de créer une dynamique et de mobiliser leurs soutiens. Cependant, les médias traditionnels et les nouveaux médias jouent un rôle de plus en plus important. Les candidats utilisent les réseaux sociaux, les sites web et les applications mobiles pour diffuser leurs messages, interagir avec les électeurs et influencer l'opinion publique.

Les défis du marketing politique en France :

Le marketing politique en France est confronté à plusieurs défis majeurs. Tout d'abord, l'évolution rapide des technologies de communication rend la tâche des candidats plus complexe. Ils doivent s'adapter en permanence aux nouvelles plateformes et aux nouvelles attentes des électeurs en matière de communication politique. De plus, la confiance des citoyens envers les politiciens est souvent mise à mal, ce qui rend la tâche encore plus ardue pour les candidats.

1- Charles De Gaulle

Communément appelé général de Gaulle (de Gaulle, 2014), ou simplement le général, il est président de la république française de 1959 à 1969, il a participé à l'élection présidentielle de 1958, qu'il a remportée, et à l'élection présidentielle de 1965, où il a été battu par François Mitterrand. Il a également organisé et remporté le référendum de 1962 sur l'élection du Président au Suffrage Universel Direct. Il est considéré comme étant le monstre sacré de la politique française, il a donné le coup d'envoi de la personnification de l'espace politique, il était externe au système des partis mais a pu jouer le jeu politique et le remporter.

Ayant participé à la première et la deuxième guerre mondiale, il a su se dessiner un profil d'héros de guerre ne craignant rien, leader des troupes, vainqueurs des adversaires, défenseur de la France.

Le général est un franc parleur qui a séduit la république par ses idées claires et a pu imposer la France dans l'échiquier mondial, fidèle à ses origines de militaires, il a travaillé avec une équipe réduite, structurée en dehors du pouvoir mais y trouvant des relais notamment militaires.

Sa vision du pouvoir était simple, un président est un chef directement approuvé par la nation et qui a les pleins droits, cette vision l'opposait aux partis communistes, socialistes et centristes pro-européens, ces derniers critiquaient un style de gouvernance trop personnel, voire un « coup d'État permanent », selon François Mitterrand, contre lequel de Gaulle est réélu en 1965 au suffrage universel direct — un mode de scrutin qu'il a fait adopter par référendum en 1962 à la suite de l'attentat du Petit-Clamart le visant.

1965 était la première présidentielle de la France contemporaine, elle était marquée par la recherche de la modernité, tant dans l'organisation que dans le style de la campagne, elle apparaît comme le début du le

présidentialisme initié, et la progressive restructuration du jeu politique bipolaire. La télévision joue pour la première fois un rôle important et ouvre la représentation imagée de la politique au pluralisme ; en tout, deux heures sont offertes au candidat, seuls ou en compagnie d'un journaliste, la télévision dessine le profil d'un candidat jeune et inexpérimenté face à un général, leader, expérimenté s'apparentant des fois à un vieux monarque.

Le style communicationnel de Charles de Gaulle était unique et distinctif. Voici quelques caractéristiques clés de son style :

- L'éloquence et la grandeur : De Gaulle était réputé pour son éloquence et son discours grandiose. Il utilisait des expressions solennelles et des phrases mémorables pour captiver son public. Ses discours étaient souvent empreints de nationalisme, de fierté et de vision à long terme pour la France.
- La force de la parole : De Gaulle croyait fermement au pouvoir de la parole et utilisait des mots choisis avec soin pour transmettre ses idées et ses convictions. Il avait une voix puissante et une présence charismatique qui lui permettaient de se faire entendre et de marquer les esprits.
- L'appel à l'autorité et à la légitimité : De Gaulle se présentait comme le défenseur de l'autorité et de la légitimité de l'État français. Il utilisait souvent des références historiques et se référant à la grandeur passée de la France pour renforcer son discours et son image de leader fort et crédible.
- Le patriotisme et l'indépendance : De Gaulle était profondément attaché à l'indépendance et à la souveraineté de la France. Il défendait ardemment les intérêts nationaux et promouvait l'idée d'une France forte et indépendante sur la scène internationale.
- La sobriété et la réserve : De Gaulle était connu pour son style sobre et réservé. Il évitait les effets de spectacle ou les discours populistes, privilégiant une approche plus formelle et digne. Sa communication était souvent teintée de sérieux et de gravité.
- La clarté et la précision : De Gaulle attachait une grande importance à la clarté et à la précision de son discours. Il était réputé pour sa capacité à formuler des idées complexes de manière concise et compréhensible. Son langage était souvent direct et sans fioritures.

Charles de Gaulle utilisait principalement deux supports communicationnels pour diffuser ses messages et interagir avec le public :

- Les discours publics : Les discours publics étaient l'un des moyens privilégiés par de Gaulle pour communiquer avec la population française. Il a prononcé plusieurs discours mémorables au cours de sa carrière politique, tels que son appel du 18 juin 1940, où il a exhorté

les Français à continuer la lutte contre l'occupation nazie, ou encore ses discours lors de la crise de mai 1958 qui ont conduit à son retour au pouvoir. Ses discours étaient soigneusement préparés, élaborés avec des phrases marquantes et une rhétorique puissante, et étaient souvent diffusés à la radio ou à la télévision pour atteindre un large public.

- Les livres et les écrits : De Gaulle était également un écrivain prolifique. Il a publié plusieurs livres, dont le plus célèbre est "Mémoires de guerre", une série de mémoires dans lesquels il raconte son expérience de la Seconde Guerre mondiale et sa vision politique. Ses écrits lui permettaient de développer ses idées de manière détaillée et de les diffuser au-delà des discours publics. Ces ouvrages étaient largement lus et ont contribué à forger son image d'homme d'État visionnaire.

En plus de ces supports principaux, de Gaulle a également utilisé d'autres moyens de communication, tels que les interviews télévisées et les déclarations officielles, pour transmettre ses messages politiques et répondre aux questions des journalistes et du public. Il était également connu pour ses lettres, qui étaient parfois utilisées pour annoncer des décisions politiques importantes.

Charles de Gaulle était un homme politique visionnaire et charismatique, et bien qu'il n'ait pas utilisé explicitement le terme "marketing politique", on peut identifier des éléments de cette discipline dans sa stratégie de communication et sa façon de mobiliser les électeurs. Voici quelques points qui mettent en évidence l'approche de de Gaulle en matière de marketing politique :

- Construction d'une marque politique forte : De Gaulle a réussi à se forger une marque politique forte en incarnant des valeurs telles que le nationalisme, la grandeur de la France et l'autorité de l'État. Son discours et son comportement reflétaient cette image de leader fort et crédible, ce qui a contribué à mobiliser et à fidéliser ses partisans.
- Utilisation de Discours Éloquents et Puissants : De Gaulle était réputé pour son éloquence et son habileté à prononcer des discours marquants. Il utilisait des expressions solennelles, des phrases mémorables et une rhétorique puissante pour captiver son public et transmettre ses idées. Ses discours étaient soigneusement préparés et diffusés à la radio ou à la télévision pour toucher un large auditoire.
- Communication directe avec le peuple : De Gaulle avait une approche directe et personnelle de la communication politique. Il cherchait à établir un lien fort avec les citoyens en s'adressant directement à eux et en utilisant des canaux de communication populaires, tels que les discours publics et les apparitions médiatiques. Il donnait l'impression

de parler directement au peuple, ce qui renforçait son image de leader proche des préoccupations des citoyens.

- Exploitation des médias traditionnels : De Gaulle reconnaissait l'importance des médias traditionnels dans la diffusion de ses messages politiques. Il utilisait les interviews, les débats télévisés et les apparitions dans les journaux pour atteindre le plus grand nombre de personnes possible. Il avait une présence médiatique importante et cherchait à contrôler l'image qu'il projetait dans les médias.
- Appel à l'autorité et à la légitimité : De Gaulle utilisait souvent des références historiques et se référant à la grandeur passée de la France pour renforcer son discours et son image de leader fort et légitime. Il se présentait comme le défenseur de l'autorité de l'État et de la souveraineté de la France, ce qui lui a valu une base de soutien solide.

En résumé, bien que le concept de marketing politique ne soit pas spécifiquement associé à Charles de Gaulle, sa stratégie de communication comportait des éléments qui s'alignent avec les principes du marketing politique, tels que la construction d'une marque politique forte, l'utilisation des discours puissants, la communication directe avec le peuple et l'exploitation des médias traditionnels afin d'atteindre sa cible d'électeurs.

2- George Pompidou

Georges Pompidou (Éric Roussel, 2012), qui a été Président de la République française de 1969 à 1974, était connu pour son style de communication calme, posé et pragmatique. Il se distinguait par sa capacité à présenter des arguments logiques et à défendre ses positions de manière claire et concise.

- Un ton éduqué et formel : Georges Pompidou utilisait un ton poli et formel dans ses discours et ses interactions publiques. Il avait tendance à s'exprimer avec une certaine retenue et une maîtrise du langage, ce qui lui donnait une image de sérieux et de respectabilité.
- Une rigueur et logique : Pompidou était réputé pour sa rigueur intellectuelle et sa capacité à analyser les problèmes de manière méthodique. Il était souvent perçu comme un homme d'État technocratique, mettant en avant des solutions pragmatiques basées sur des arguments rationnels.
- Une clarté et concision : Le style de communication de Pompidou était caractérisé par sa clarté et sa concision. Il était capable d'expliquer des concepts complexes de manière accessible et de transmettre ses idées de manière concise. Il évitait les discours longs et privilégiait des messages clairs et percutants.

- Une éloquence modérée : Bien que Pompidou ne soit pas connu pour son éloquence flamboyante, il savait choisir ses mots avec soin pour communiquer efficacement. Il préférait les discours sobres et factuels plutôt que les envolées rhétoriques.
- Un pragmatisme et une approche réaliste : Georges Pompidou était perçu comme un pragmatiste, axé sur la réalité politique et économique de l'époque. Il privilégiait les solutions réalistes et cherchait à trouver un équilibre entre les différentes forces politiques.
- Une accessibilité et proximité : Malgré son style formel, Pompidou avait une certaine capacité à établir une connexion avec le public. Il était apprécié pour sa simplicité et sa proximité lors de ses déplacements et de ses rencontres avec les citoyens.

En résumé, le style communicationnel de Georges Pompidou se caractérisait par sa rigueur, sa clarté, sa concision et son pragmatisme. Il était reconnu pour son approche posée et sa capacité à défendre ses idées avec calme et conviction.

Georges Pompidou, en tant que Président de la République française de 1969 à 1974, utilisait plusieurs supports communicationnels pour transmettre ses messages et interagir avec le public. Voici quelques-uns des principaux supports qu'il employait :

- Les discours officiels : Pompidou utilisait fréquemment les discours officiels pour s'adresser à la nation. Ces discours étaient souvent diffusés à la télévision et à la radio, leur permettant d'atteindre un large public. Il prononçait des discours lors d'occasions importantes telles que les vœux du nouvel an, les commémorations nationales ou les déclarations politiques majeures.
- Les conférences de presse : Pompidou organisait régulièrement des conférences de presse pour répondre aux questions des journalistes et fournir des informations sur les politiques gouvernementales en cours. Ces conférences étaient l'occasion pour lui de clarifier sa position sur des questions d'actualité et de communiquer directement avec les médias et le public.
- Les interviews télévisées et radiophoniques : Pompidou accordait des interviews à la télévision et à la radio pour discuter de sujets politiques et sociaux. Ces interviews lui permettaient de présenter ses idées, d'expliquer les décisions prises par le gouvernement et de défendre sa politique. Elles étaient souvent diffusées à une heure de grande écoute pour maximiser l'audience.
- Les meetings et rassemblements publics : Pompidou participait à des meetings politiques et à des rassemblements publics dans le cadre de ses campagnes électorales ou pour promouvoir des initiatives

gouvernementales. Ces événements lui offraient l'opportunité de rencontrer directement les citoyens, de recueillir leurs préoccupations et de partager ses idées.

- Les communiqués de presse : Des communiqués de presse étaient publiés pour informer le public des décisions gouvernementales, des déclarations officielles et des initiatives lancées par le président et son équipe. Ces communiqués étaient diffusés dans les médias imprimés et en ligne, ainsi que dans les agences de presse nationales et internationales.
- Les publications écrites : Georges Pompidou était également l'auteur de plusieurs ouvrages et essais politiques. Avant sa présidence, il avait publié des livres sur des sujets tels que l'économie, l'urbanisme et la culture. Ces publications contribuaient à sa crédibilité intellectuelle et lui permettaient de partager ses idées avec un public plus large.

Ces supports communicationnels étaient utilisés par Georges Pompidou pour informer, influencer et mobiliser le public autour de ses politiques et de sa vision pour la France. Ils lui permettaient de toucher différents segments de la population et de façonner son image publique en tant que dirigeant politique.

Georges Pompidou, en tant que président de la République française, n'a pas bénéficié directement des techniques de marketing politique telles qu'elles sont utilisées aujourd'hui. À l'époque, le concept de marketing politique n'était pas aussi développé qu'aujourd'hui. Cependant, on peut identifier certaines stratégies et approches qui, rétrospectivement, peuvent être considérées comme des éléments du marketing politique.

- L'image et le branding : Pompidou était conscient de l'importance de cultiver une image positive auprès du public. Il mettait en avant son sérieux, sa rigueur intellectuelle et son pragmatisme, cherchant à se présenter comme un homme d'État compétent et fiable. Bien qu'il n'ait pas utilisé les techniques de Branding modernes, il a développé une image de leader sérieux et réfléchi.
- La communication stratégique : Pompidou était attentif à la manière dont il communiquait avec le public. Il utilisait des discours officiels, des conférences de presse et des interviews pour transmettre ses messages politiques et expliquer les actions de son gouvernement. Il était reconnu pour sa clarté et sa concision, et il savait choisir ses mots avec soin pour communiquer efficacement.
- La présence médiatique : Pompidou comprenait l'importance des médias pour atteindre le public. Il accordait des interviews télévisées et radiophoniques, participant à des débats politiques et faisant des apparitions publiques pour se connecter avec les citoyens. Il cherchait

à utiliser ces plateformes pour façonner sa perception publique et promouvoir ses idées et politiques.

- Les campagnes électorales : Bien que les campagnes électorales de l'époque ne ressemblent pas aux campagnes modernes, Pompidou a participé à des rassemblements publics, a prononcé des discours politiques et a fait campagne pour être élu président. Il a utilisé des techniques de persuasion et de mobilisation pour convaincre les électeurs de soutenir sa candidature.
- Les contacts avec les électeurs : Pompidou était connu pour ses rencontres directes avec les citoyens. Il participait à des réunions publiques, visitait des usines, des écoles et des régions pour écouter les préoccupations des citoyens et montrer son intérêt pour leurs problèmes.

Pompidou, était le premier à se payer les services d'une agence de communication pour redorer son image, l'agence Havas Conseil, nouvellement créée a prodigué de valeureuses directives aux candidats, réalisa des affiches du candidat, il axa sa campagne autour de son image plus que son programme politique, c'était un scrutin affrontant les images et les personnages électoraux au lieu de programmes. Pompidou ancien député et premier ministre, était déjà connu des médias et citoyens, un vieux ténor très présent dans la scène politique et connu de tous.

Cette campagne était 'à l'américaine', certains l'ont qualifié de 'Kermesse' ou de 'cirque électoral', on a assisté pour la première fois aux badges stylos tricots... à l'image du candidat ou à son slogan.

Pompidou se définit une image d'homme énergique, compétent, modéré et proche des préoccupations quotidiennes des français, image d'une politique de continuité et d'ouverture. Le candidat de la continuité et du progrès, de la stabilité et de l'ouverture, de l'héritage et du changement, il ne renie pas ses échecs et ses erreurs pendant ses six ans comme premier ministre, il les assume et dit avoir appris ses leçons et trouver les solutions.

Bien que ces éléments ne correspondent pas exactement aux stratégies modernes de marketing politique, ils reflètent des aspects de la communication et de la relation avec les électeurs que l'on retrouve également dans le marketing politique contemporain. L'approche de Pompidou était plus traditionnelle, mais il avait conscience de l'importance de la communication politique et de l'image publique pour atteindre ses objectifs.

3- François Mitterrand

François Mitterrand, qui a été Président de la République française de 1981 à 1995, était connu pour son style de communication charismatique et éloquent. Il avait la capacité de captiver son auditoire et de transmettre ses

idées avec passion et conviction. Voici quelques caractéristiques du style communicationnel de François Mitterrand :

- Une éloquence et rhétorique : Mitterrand était un orateur talentueux, capable de délivrer des discours puissants et persuasifs. Il maîtrisait l'art de la rhétorique et utilisait des figures de style pour marquer ses discours d'une empreinte mémorable. Son style était souvent teinté de lyrisme et d'une certaine grandiloquence.
- Un charme et une présence : Mitterrand avait une présence charismatique qui captivait son auditoire. Il savait utiliser son charme personnel pour établir une connexion avec les citoyens et les médias. Son sourire et sa voix calme étaient des éléments clés de son style de communication.
- Une vision politique et idéologie : Mitterrand était reconnu pour sa vision politique et son attachement à ses idéaux socialistes. Il était capable d'articuler clairement ses convictions et de communiquer sa volonté de changement et de transformation sociale. Son discours était souvent teinté d'un appel à la justice sociale et à la solidarité.
- Une utilisation du symbole : Mitterrand avait une sensibilité pour les symboles et les gestes politiques. Il utilisait des symboles pour renforcer son message politique et donner de la force à ses discours. Par exemple, la célèbre "main tendue" symbolisant l'unité nationale était utilisée pour rassembler les Français autour de ses idées.
- Une présence médiatique : Mitterrand comprenait l'importance des médias et utilisait différents canaux pour communiquer avec le public. Il accordait régulièrement des interviews télévisées et radiophoniques, participait à des émissions politiques et utilisait les médias pour façonner son image publique.
- Un pragmatisme et un sens du compromis : Bien que Mitterrand ait été un fervent défenseur de ses idéaux socialistes, il était également pragmatique et capable de trouver des compromis politiques. Il utilisait son talent de négociation et son sens politique pour atteindre ses objectifs tout en naviguant dans un paysage politique complexe.

Le style communicationnel de François Mitterrand (Attali, 2016) était marqué par son éloquence, son charme, sa vision politique et sa capacité à mobiliser les foules. Il était un communicateur habile, capable de transmettre ses idées avec conviction et de captiver son auditoire. Son style a contribué à sa popularité et à son influence en tant que Président de la République française.

François Mitterrand, en tant que Président de la République française, utilisait divers supports communicationnels pour transmettre ses messages et

interagir avec le public. Voici quelques-uns des principaux supports qu'il employait :

- Les discours officiels : Mitterrand prononçait des discours officiels lors d'occasions importantes telles que les vœux du nouvel an, les commémorations nationales, les sommets internationaux et les rassemblements politiques. Ces discours étaient souvent retransmis à la télévision et à la radio, leur permettant de toucher un large public.
- Les conférences de presse : Mitterrand organisait régulièrement des conférences de presse pour répondre aux questions des journalistes et fournir des informations sur les politiques gouvernementales en cours. C'était l'occasion pour lui de clarifier sa position sur des questions d'actualité et de communiquer directement avec les médias et le public.
- Les interviews télévisées et radiophoniques : Mitterrand accordait des interviews à la télévision et à la radio pour discuter de sujets politiques et sociaux. Ces interviews lui permettaient de présenter ses idées, d'expliquer les décisions prises par le gouvernement et de défendre sa politique. Elles étaient souvent diffusées à une heure de grande écoute pour maximiser l'audience.
- Les meetings et rassemblements publics : Mitterrand participait à des meetings politiques et à des rassemblements publics dans le cadre de ses campagnes électorales ou pour promouvoir des initiatives gouvernementales. Ces événements lui offraient l'opportunité de rencontrer directement les citoyens, de recueillir leurs préoccupations et de partager ses idées.
- Les communications écrites : Mitterrand utilisait également des communications écrites, telles que des lettres, des communiqués de presse et des articles, pour transmettre ses messages et ses positions politiques. Ces documents étaient diffusés dans les médias imprimés et en ligne, ainsi que dans les agences de presse nationales et internationales.
- La présence médiatique : Mitterrand comprenait l'importance des médias pour atteindre le public. Il était présent dans les médias, participant à des émissions politiques, des débats télévisés et des interviews spéciales. Il cherchait à utiliser ces plateformes pour façonner sa perception publique et promouvoir ses idées et politiques.
- L'utilisation des symboles et des cérémonies : Mitterrand était également attentif à l'utilisation des symboles et des cérémonies pour renforcer ses messages politiques. Il organisait des cérémonies officielles, des inaugurations et des commémorations pour marquer des événements importants et symboliques.

Ces différents supports communicationnels étaient utilisés par François Mitterrand pour informer, mobiliser et convaincre le public de ses politiques et de sa vision pour la France. Ils lui permettaient d'atteindre différents segments de la population et de façonner son image publique en tant que leader politique.

François Mitterrand a été un précurseur dans l'utilisation de techniques de marketing politique en France. Pendant ses mandats présidentiels, il a mis en œuvre des stratégies de communication sophistiquées pour atteindre ses objectifs politiques et façonner son image publique.

Voici quelques éléments du marketing politique que l'on peut retrouver dans l'approche de Mitterrand :

- La construction de l'image : Mitterrand a travaillé sur la construction de son image publique en mettant en avant certains traits de sa personnalité et de son parcours politique. Il s'est présenté comme un homme d'État expérimenté, doté d'une vision politique claire et d'un engagement en faveur du progrès social. Il a également cherché à cultiver une image de proximité avec les citoyens, en se montrant accessible et en valorisant ses origines modestes.
- La segmentation l'électorat : Mitterrand a adopté une approche de segmentation de l'électorat, en s'adressant à différents groupes d'électeurs avec des messages ciblés. Il a reconnu l'importance de mobiliser les différentes catégories sociales et a adapté son discours en fonction de leurs préoccupations spécifiques. Par exemple, il a développé des messages pour les ouvriers, les intellectuels, les jeunes et les agriculteurs.
- L'utilisation des symboles : Mitterrand a utilisé des symboles et des gestes politiques pour renforcer son message. Il était connu pour sa "main tendue", symbolisant l'unité nationale et son désir de rassembler les Français. Il a également fait appel à des symboles forts tels que la rose, emblème du Parti socialiste, pour incarner ses idéaux politiques.
- La maîtrise des médias : Mitterrand était conscient du pouvoir des médias et de leur capacité à influencer l'opinion publique. Il a développé une relation étroite avec les médias et a utilisé différents canaux de communication pour diffuser ses messages. Il accordait régulièrement des interviews, participait à des émissions politiques et utilisait les médias pour créer une image positive de sa présidence.
- Les campagnes électorales structurées : Mitterrand a mis en place des campagnes électorales bien organisées, avec une stratégie de communication claire. Il a utilisé des outils tels que des spots télévisés, des affiches, des tracts et des réunions publiques pour mobiliser les électeurs et promouvoir ses idées. Il a également utilisé des techniques

de sondage et de recherche pour mieux comprendre les attentes des électeurs et adapter sa stratégie en conséquence.

- La mobilisation militante : Mitterrand a su mobiliser les militants de son parti politique, le Parti socialiste, en organisant des réunions, des rassemblements et des campagnes de porte-à-porte. Il a encouragé la participation active de ses partisans dans la diffusion de son message politique et dans la mobilisation de l'électorat.

Nous allons décrypter les campagnes électorales auxquelles a participé Mitterrand :

- La campagne électorale de 1981 était différente des autres, dans le mesure où les candidats ne se contentaient plus d'élaborer leurs campagnes respectives chacun de son côté, mais ils ont franchi le seuil d'une communication politique agressive, consistant à observer la stratégie de l'adversaire et tenter de la contrecarrer ou de la démolir.
- La stratégie marketing de Mitterrand s'est avérée très efficace et mieux orchestrée que celle de son adversaire, avec notamment la fameuse formule ' la France tranquille', une formule qu'il a essayé de représenter au maximum lors des débats télévisés qui ont montré un candidat serein et convaincant contre Valérie Giscard d'Estaing, candidat agité, nerveux et visiblement dépassé par les événements. Un autre fait qui a beaucoup marqué cette campagne, c'était le premier scrutin où un candidat ira jusqu'à essayer d'enjoliver son apparence physique, en travaillant sur sa dentition pour affiner sa bouche ayant des dents saillantes et pointues. Pompidou gagna alors ces élections et fut élu président de la France.
- La campagne électorale de 1988 était très spéciale, avec l'abolition de toutes les restrictions esthétiques et techniques précédemment imposées aux candidats dans leur utilisation de la télévision à des fins électorales, nous assistons alors à une explosion de créativité des experts en communications et conseillers en marketing politique.

Mitterrand a pu marquer les esprits avec sa publicité télévisée où il récapitule l'histoire française depuis la révolution jusqu'à sa présidence. Il s'offre aussi les services d'une agence d'étude qui avait pour mission de collecter et d'analyser l'opinion publique, pour connaître les traits du président français parfait et démontrer Mitterrand comme tel. Mitterrand est réélu président jusqu'à 1995, ce qui fait de lui l'un des présidents qui a eu le plus long mandat de 1981 jusqu'à 1995.

4- Jacques Chirac

Pendant le scrutin de 1995, Jacques Chirac était déjà à sa 3^{ème} tentative de devenir président de la France, mais ces élections étaient assez spéciales, puisqu'elles sont venues après l'adoption de la loi du 15 janvier 1990, qui a introduit une limitation considérable aux possibilités précédemment offertes aux candidats pour promouvoir leur image et convaincre, ainsi, il est interdit de s'enquérir d'un espace publicitaire payant (affichage mural, insertion publicitaire dans un journal...), toute communication de type commerciale est formellement interdite (spot à la télé, radio...).

Chirac (Laplace, 2019) qui n'était pas un grand amateur et expert en Marketing politique, d'où son échec trois fois face aux ténors de la communication tel que Mitterrand, il profite de cette situation, et avec l'aide de sa fille 'Claude' experte en communication, une monte une stratégie communicationnelle traditionnelle, en commençant les rencontres avec les électeurs (spécialement ceux en bon lieux) des moins avant les scrutins de 1995. Cette longueur d'avance sur ses adversaires lui a permis de penser sa stratégie et la tester bien avant les élections, il a tout misé sur le 'Unique-Selling proposition' en basant toute sa campagne sur un seul thème capteur 'la fracture sociale', cela a permis une mémorisation plus facile de sa position, un président qui pense au côté sociale, au bien-être des citoyens, un président très présent sur terrain parlant directement aux électeurs. Chirac est élu président de la France pour la première fois en 1995.

Tout comme ses prédécesseurs, Chirac se présente en 2002 pour un deuxième mandat, et fait appel pour la deuxième fois à sa fille Claude, qui a déjà fait ses preuves pendant les élections de 1995 et tout au long du mandat ou elle a accompagné son père comme conseillère spéciale du président.

Chirac garde la même stratégie qu'en 1995, en optant pour des meetings avec les électeurs, les bains de foule étaient ensuite retransmis au journal télévisé de 20h pour assurer une visibilité et audience maximale, en essayant de promouvoir une image d'un président sortant toujours populaire et sympathique, fier de son bilan. Chirac est réélu président de la France en 2002.

Jacques Chirac, l'ancien président de la République française (1995-2007), était connu pour son style communicationnel spécifique. Voici quelques caractéristiques de son style :

- La proximité et l'accessibilité : Jacques Chirac avait la capacité de communiquer de manière simple et accessible, ce qui lui permettait d'établir une proximité avec le public. Il utilisait souvent un langage informel, des expressions populaires et des anecdotes personnelles pour se connecter avec les gens.
- La conviction et la passion : Chirac était un orateur passionné, capable de transmettre ses convictions avec force. Il pouvait se montrer

énergique et engagé lorsqu'il défendait ses idées ou exprimait ses opinions. Sa passion se reflétait dans son discours et sa gestuelle.

- L'humour et la spontanéité : Jacques Chirac était également connu pour son sens de l'humour et sa spontanéité. Il n'hésitait pas à faire des blagues lors de discours publics ou à répondre de manière improvisée lors d'interviews, ce qui lui donnait un côté décontracté et sympathique.
- Le langage direct : Chirac était réputé pour son langage direct et franc. Il n'avait pas peur de dire ce qu'il pensait, même si cela pouvait parfois être controversé. Cette franchise pouvait être perçue comme un signe d'authenticité et de sincérité, mais elle pouvait aussi susciter des débats et des critiques.
- L'image de président protecteur : Chirac cherchait souvent à se présenter comme un président protecteur et bienveillant envers les citoyens français. Il utilisait des discours axés sur la solidarité et la défense des intérêts nationaux, mettant l'accent sur la nécessité de protéger les plus vulnérables de la société.
- La diplomatie et pragmatisme : Sur la scène internationale, Chirac était connu pour son approche pragmatique et diplomatique. Il pouvait se montrer ferme dans ses convictions, mais il était également ouvert au dialogue et à la négociation pour parvenir à des accords mutuellement bénéfiques.

Ces caractéristiques ont contribué à forger le style de communication de Jacques Chirac, en faisant un leader politique charismatique et apprécié par de nombreux Français, malgré les critiques et les controverses qui ont également entouré sa carrière.

Jacques Chirac a utilisé différents moyens de communication tout au long de sa carrière politique. Voici quelques-uns des principaux :

- Les discours publics : Chirac était un orateur talentueux et il utilisait fréquemment les discours publics pour communiquer ses messages et ses idées aux citoyens français. Il s'exprimait lors de rassemblements politiques, de cérémonies officielles, de conférences de presse et d'autres événements publics importants.
- Les interviews : Chirac accordait régulièrement des interviews aux médias français et étrangers. Ces entretiens lui permettaient de répondre aux questions des journalistes et de s'exprimer sur des sujets d'actualité. Il pouvait ainsi partager sa vision politique, clarifier ses positions et donner des explications sur les actions de son gouvernement.
- Les communiqués de presse : Pour faire connaître les décisions prises par son gouvernement, Chirac utilisait des communiqués de presse.

Ces documents étaient diffusés aux médias et contenaient des informations officielles sur les politiques, les réformes ou les déclarations importantes.

- Les conférences et débats : Jacques Chirac a participé à de nombreuses conférences et débats, tant en France qu'à l'étranger. Il utilisait ces occasions pour exposer ses idées, défendre ses positions politiques et échanger avec d'autres personnalités politiques ou intellectuelles.
- Les médias audiovisuels : Chirac avait recours aux médias audiovisuels, notamment la télévision et la radio, pour atteindre un large public. Il apparaissait dans des émissions politiques, des talk-shows et des interviews télévisées, où il pouvait présenter ses projets, répondre aux questions des journalistes et interagir avec les téléspectateurs.
- La communication institutionnelle : En tant que président de la République, Chirac utilisait également les outils de communication institutionnelle pour transmettre des messages officiels. Cela incluait les allocutions présidentielles, les messages du 14 juillet et les vœux du nouvel an, qui étaient diffusés à la télévision et à la radio.

Il est important de noter que ces moyens de communication ont évolué au fil du temps, et que Chirac a adapté sa stratégie de communication en fonction des avancées technologiques et des changements dans le paysage médiatique.

Jacques Chirac a utilisé diverses techniques de marketing politique tout au long de sa carrière pour promouvoir son image et ses idées. Voici quelques aspects du marketing politique associé à Jacques Chirac :

- L'image de proximité : Chirac cherchait à se présenter comme un homme politique proche du peuple. Il mettait en avant son parcours, ses origines modestes et sa capacité à comprendre les préoccupations des citoyens ordinaires. Cette image de proximité contribuait à sa popularité et à sa capacité à se connecter avec les électeurs.
- Le symbolisme : Chirac utilisait des symboles pour renforcer son message politique. Par exemple, il a souvent été photographié en train de se promener dans les rues de Paris ou de visiter des marchés, ce qui renforçait son image de président proche des gens et attentif à leurs besoins.
- La communication visuelle : La communication visuelle était un élément important du marketing politique de Chirac. Son équipe utilisait des affiches, des logos et des slogans accrocheurs pour véhiculer des messages clés lors de ses campagnes électorales. Par exemple, lors de sa campagne présidentielle de 1995, il utilisait le slogan "La France pour tous".

- L'utilisation des médias : Chirac était conscient de l'importance des médias dans la politique moderne. Il a su exploiter les médias traditionnels tels que la télévision, la radio et la presse écrite pour diffuser ses messages et atteindre un large public. Il accordait des interviews, participait à des émissions politiques et utilisait les conférences de presse pour communiquer ses positions.
- L'équipe de communication : Chirac s'entourait d'une équipe de communication compétente pour élaborer des stratégies et des messages efficaces. Ces professionnels du marketing politique l'aidaient à façonner son image, à cibler les segments électoraux clés et à élaborer des campagnes efficaces.
- La gestion de crise : Dans les moments de crise, Chirac mettait en œuvre des stratégies de communication pour gérer les situations difficiles. Par exemple, lors des manifestations massives contre le Contrat Première Embauche (CPE) en 2006, Chirac a utilisé des discours pour apaiser les tensions et tenter de trouver une solution.

Il est important de noter que le marketing politique de Jacques Chirac a été adapté à différentes époques et contextes politiques, et qu'il a fait appel à une combinaison de techniques pour atteindre ses objectifs de communication et de persuasion.

5- Nicolas Sarkozy

La campagne présidentielle de 2007 était marquée par plusieurs nouveautés, une femme accède au second tour (Ségolène Royale), les deux candidats finalistes se présentent pour la première fois, l'utilisation du net, le soutien des artistes aux candidats.

La stratégie électorale de Sarkozy était simple ' être très présent' et 'faire parler de lui', ainsi il était surnommé 'Monsieur un jour, un événement', vu qu'il multipliait les événements, et ne manquait jamais d'occasion pour faire des déclarations, des fois choquantes, des fois politiquement incorrectes, et des fois fausses, sa stratégie a réussi vu que les commentateurs politiques ne parlaient que de lui et de ses sorties fulgurantes. Ses positions très fortes et des fois choquantes ont fait de lui un candidat dont tout le monde parle : son indignation par rapport au fait que les riches payent 60% de leur revenu en impôts, sa position envers les immigrés 'la France tu l'aimes ou tu la quittes'.

Sarkozy est président de la France de 2007 à 2012.

Nicolas Sarkozy (strokeur, 2018), l'ancien président de la République française (2007-2012), avait un style communicationnel distinctif. Voici quelques caractéristiques de son style :

- L'énergie et le dynamisme : Sarkozy était connu pour son énergie débordante et son dynamisme lorsqu'il s'exprimait en public. Il utilisait souvent des gestes expressifs, une voix forte et une présence charismatique pour captiver son auditoire.
- Le langage direct et le franc-parler : Sarkozy était réputé pour son langage direct et sa tendance à s'exprimer de manière franche, parfois même provocatrice. Il n'hésitait pas à exprimer ses opinions sans détour, ce qui pouvait susciter des réactions passionnées et parfois controversées.
- La communication informelle : Sarkozy utilisait un style de communication informel pour se rapprocher du public. Il était connu pour son utilisation d'expressions familières, de références populaires et d'anecdotes personnelles pour établir une connexion avec les gens.
- La mise en scène médiatique : Sarkozy était conscient du pouvoir des médias et de l'image qu'il projetait. Il utilisait des événements médiatisés et des mises en scène soigneusement orchestrées pour renforcer son image de leader dynamique et déterminé.
- La communication émotionnelle : Sarkozy savait utiliser les émotions pour communiquer efficacement. Il était capable de susciter l'enthousiasme, la colère ou l'émotion chez son auditoire, en s'appuyant sur des discours passionnés et en utilisant des anecdotes personnelles pour rendre ses messages plus percutants.
- La communication directe avec les médias : Sarkozy entretenait une relation étroite avec les médias et accordait fréquemment des interviews. Il utilisait ces occasions pour présenter ses politiques, défendre ses actions et interagir avec les journalistes.
- L'utilisation des réseaux sociaux : Pendant son mandat présidentiel, Sarkozy a été l'un des premiers politiciens français à utiliser activement les réseaux sociaux, notamment Facebook et Twitter. Il s'en servait pour communiquer directement avec les citoyens, partager des informations et donner des aperçus de son travail.

Il est important de noter que ces caractéristiques du style communicationnel de Sarkozy sont générales et qu'elles peuvent varier en fonction des contextes et des événements spécifiques auxquels il était confronté.

Nicolas Sarkozy, en tant que président et homme politique, a utilisé différents supports de communication pour diffuser ses messages et interagir avec le public. Voici quelques-uns des principaux supports qu'il a utilisés :

- Les discours publics : Sarkozy était connu pour ses discours publics percutants et énergiques. Il s'exprimait lors de rassemblements

politiques, de meetings, de conférences de presse et d'autres événements publics pour communiquer ses idées et ses politiques.

- Les interviews et les conférences de presse : Sarkozy accordait régulièrement des interviews à la presse écrite, à la radio et à la télévision. Il participait également à des conférences de presse où il répondait aux questions des journalistes et exposait ses positions sur des questions d'actualité.
- Les médias audiovisuels : En tant que président, Sarkozy utilisait les médias audiovisuels pour atteindre un large public. Il participait à des émissions politiques, des talk-shows, des interviews télévisées et des débats pour partager ses idées et répondre aux questions des animateurs et des téléspectateurs.
- La communication en ligne : Sarkozy a également tiré parti des possibilités offertes par Internet et les réseaux sociaux. Il avait son propre site web officiel où il partageait des informations, des déclarations et des discours. Il utilisait également les réseaux sociaux, tels que Facebook et Twitter, pour interagir directement avec les citoyens et diffuser des messages.
- Les meetings et événements politiques : Sarkozy organisait des meetings et des événements politiques dans différentes régions de la France. Ces rassemblements lui permettaient de rencontrer les électeurs, de présenter ses politiques et de mobiliser son électorat.
- La communication institutionnelle : En tant que président, Sarkozy utilisait les outils de communication institutionnelle pour diffuser des messages officiels. Cela incluait des déclarations présidentielles, des vœux du nouvel an, des allocutions lors d'événements nationaux et internationaux, qui étaient diffusés à la télévision et à la radio.
- Les affiches et matériel de campagne : Lors des campagnes électorales, Sarkozy utilisait des affiches, des tracts et du matériel de campagne imprimé pour promouvoir son image et diffuser ses messages auprès des électeurs.

Ces supports de communication ont été utilisés par Sarkozy pour toucher différents publics, diffuser ses messages politiques et renforcer son image publique.

Nicolas Sarkozy était un homme politique qui a utilisé des stratégies de marketing politique de manière très active pour promouvoir son image, mobiliser les électeurs et atteindre ses objectifs politiques. Voici quelques éléments du marketing politique associé à Sarkozy :

- Une image personnelle : Sarkozy a soigneusement construit son image personnelle pour correspondre à l'image d'un leader fort, énergique et déterminé. Il a mis en avant son dynamisme, sa volonté de réforme et

son expérience politique pour se présenter comme un leader capable de prendre des décisions difficiles.

- Une stratégie de communication ciblée : Sarkozy a utilisé une stratégie de communication ciblée pour atteindre différents segments électoraux. Il a adapté son discours et ses messages en fonction des préoccupations spécifiques des différents groupes d'électeurs, tels que les chefs d'entreprise, les agriculteurs, les jeunes ou les personnes âgées.
- Une utilisation des médias : Sarkozy a tiré parti des médias traditionnels, tels que la télévision, la radio et la presse écrite, pour diffuser ses messages. Il a accordé de nombreuses interviews et a participé à des émissions politiques pour atteindre un large public. Il était également très actif sur les réseaux sociaux, utilisant Facebook, Twitter et d'autres plateformes pour communiquer directement avec les électeurs.
- Une communication de crise : Sarkozy avait une stratégie de communication de crise bien définie pour faire face aux situations difficiles. Il utilisait des techniques de communication pour gérer les crises politiques, répondre aux critiques et maintenir le contrôle de l'agenda médiatique.
- Un marketing visuel : Sarkozy a utilisé des éléments visuels tels que des affiches, des logos et des symboles pour renforcer son image. Il a veillé à ce que ces éléments soient facilement reconnaissables et associés à sa marque politique.
- Une mobilisation des partisans : Sarkozy a mis en place des campagnes de mobilisation de ses partisans pour susciter l'engagement et l'enthousiasme. Il a organisé des événements politiques, des meetings et des rassemblements pour mobiliser ses électeurs et les inciter à soutenir sa candidature.

Il est important de noter que le marketing politique de Sarkozy a suscité des critiques et des controverses, certains l'accusant d'utiliser des techniques de communication manipulatrices. Cependant, il est indéniable que sa maîtrise du marketing politique lui a permis d'avoir un impact significatif sur la scène politique française.

6- Emanuel Macron

Les élections présidentielles de 2017 étaient marquées par deux faits majeurs : le président sortant François Hollande a décidé de ne pas se présenter à sa propre succession, fait inédit pour un président de la Ve République en fin de premier mandat, l'élection présidentielle a lieu sous état d'urgence, décrété après les attentats du 13 novembre 2015.

Emmanuel Macron (Llorca, 2021) ministre de l'Économie de François Hollande en août 2014, gagne en popularité et fonde en avril 2016 son propre mouvement, qui se veut transparent. Il quitte le gouvernement en août avant de publier son livre Révolution et de se déclarer candidat, présentant la particularité de n'avoir jamais été candidat à une élection auparavant. Ce candidat dont le parcours est très spéciale a pu bénéficier d'un intérêt médiatique hors du commun, ainsi de nombreux observateurs soulignent ou s'interrogent sur l'intérêt médiatique dont il a fait l'objet, Mediapart relève que « presque une cinquantaine de couvertures de magazine » lui sont consacrées entre novembre 2016 et janvier 2017, contre « une poignée » pour Jean-Luc Mélenchon, généralement situé une position derrière lui dans les intentions de vote et qui rencontre un succès similaire dans les meetings et sur internet.

Emmanuel Macron est parfois présenté comme étant le « candidat des médias », parmi lesquels il bénéficie du soutien de Xavier Niel et Pierre Bergé, copropriétaires du groupe Le Monde, et de Claude Perdriel, ancien propriétaire du Nouvel Observateur. Divers documents et articles d'analyse montrent comment sa stratégie de campagne électorale est développée selon des méthodes marketing, le candidat étant lancé comme un produit commercial. Derrière la gestion de cette communication, est mis en avant le savoir-faire de Maurice Lévy, PDG de Publicis Groupe, qui compte parmi ses conseillers. Il recueille des soutiens y compris dans des titres de la presse américaine et britannique tels que le Financial Times ou Foreign Policy. Le magazine Marianne montre que BFM TV, dont l'un des actionnaires de référence est Patrick Drahi, diffuse au total autant de minutes de meetings du candidat Macron que de l'ensemble de ses quatre principaux concurrents réunis, ce qu'il qualifie de « véritable matraquage télévisuel ». Le fait que Bernard Mourad, ancien dirigeant du groupe de médias de Patrick Drahi, ait rejoint en tant que conseiller l'équipe de campagne d'Emmanuel Macron ont renforcé les interrogations sur ses liens avec les journalistes et les médias.

Beaucoup d'articles, d'émissions, de débats sont effectués/ont lieu lors de cette élection. Les audiences des médias traditionnels sont excellentes, mais le plus grand succès intervient sur les sites internet et cette élection marque une évolution des moyens de communication des politiques vers les électeurs, on note YouTube, Facebook et twitter tout comme Obama.

À travers cette campagne, l'attitude des médias est remise en cause. L'impression que ceux-ci ont influencé les résultats de l'élection règne en France, particulièrement chez les partis politiques défaits, qui se plaignent de la non-objectivité des médias, du lynchage médiatique qu'ils subissent, François Fillon va même jusqu'à accuser les médias de l'avoir « assassiné politiquement ».

Cette « bulle médiatique » ou « matraquage publicitaire massif » a permis à Macron de devenir président de la France en 2017.

Emmanuel Macron, le président de la République française depuis 2017, a un style communicationnel distinctif. Voici quelques caractéristiques de son style :

- Un discours articulé et sophistiqué : Macron est connu pour son style de discours précis et articulé. Il utilise un langage sophistiqué et structuré, ce qui lui permet d'exprimer ses idées et ses politiques de manière claire et détaillée.
- Une communication directe et accessible : Bien qu'il utilise un langage sophistiqué, Macron cherche également à être accessible et compréhensible pour un large public. Il tente de traduire des concepts complexes en termes simples, afin de toucher le plus grand nombre de personnes possible.
- Une communication visuelle : Macron met souvent l'accent sur la communication visuelle. Il utilise des gestes, des expressions faciales et des postures pour renforcer son message et engager son public. Il attache également une importance à sa tenue vestimentaire, adoptant un style formel et soigné.
- Une communication numérique : Macron est très actif sur les réseaux sociaux, notamment Twitter et Instagram. Il utilise ces plateformes pour communiquer directement avec les citoyens, partager des informations, promouvoir ses politiques et interagir avec les internautes.
- Une interaction avec le public : Macron cherche à établir une interaction directe avec le public. Il organise régulièrement des rencontres et des débats avec les citoyens, où il répond à leurs questions et prend en compte leurs préoccupations.
- Une communication internationale : Macron a développé un style communicationnel qui met en valeur la dimension internationale de son rôle en tant que président de la France. Il utilise des discours et des rencontres avec des dirigeants étrangers pour promouvoir ses politiques et défendre les intérêts de la France sur la scène mondiale.
- Une communication axée sur les résultats : Macron met souvent l'accent sur les résultats et les réalisations de son gouvernement. Il communique sur les avancées dans différents domaines, tels que l'économie, l'éducation, la sécurité et l'environnement, mettant en avant les mesures prises et les progrès accomplis.

Il est important de noter que le style communicationnel de Macron a évolué au cours de son mandat et peut varier en fonction des contextes et des événements spécifiques auxquels il est confronté.

Emmanuel Macron utilise une variété de supports de communication pour diffuser ses messages et interagir avec le public. Voici quelques-uns des principaux supports qu'il utilise :

- Les discours publics : Macron utilise régulièrement des discours publics pour présenter ses politiques, exprimer sa vision et communiquer avec le public. Ces discours sont souvent prononcés lors d'événements officiels, de rassemblements politiques ou de conférences internationales.
- Les interviews et les conférences de presse : Il accorde des interviews à la presse écrite, à la radio et à la télévision, ainsi que des conférences de presse, pour répondre aux questions des journalistes et partager ses positions sur les questions d'actualité.
- Les réseaux sociaux : Macron est très actif sur les réseaux sociaux, en particulier sur Twitter, où il publie régulièrement des messages pour communiquer avec les citoyens, partager des informations et promouvoir ses politiques. Il utilise également Instagram et Facebook pour toucher un public plus large.
- La communication institutionnelle : En tant que président, Macron utilise les outils de communication institutionnelle pour diffuser des messages officiels. Cela inclut les déclarations présidentielles, les communiqués de presse, les vœux du nouvel an et les discours lors d'événements nationaux et internationaux.
- Les visites sur le terrain : Macron effectue régulièrement des visites sur le terrain dans différentes régions de la France. Ces visites lui permettent de rencontrer les citoyens, d'écouter leurs préoccupations et de mettre en avant les initiatives gouvernementales.
- La communication internationale : Macron utilise les rencontres avec d'autres dirigeants internationaux, les sommets internationaux et les conférences pour promouvoir ses politiques à l'échelle mondiale. Il s'exprime lors de ces événements pour défendre les intérêts de la France et partager sa vision sur des questions internationales.
- Les médias traditionnels : Macron utilise les médias traditionnels tels que la télévision, la radio et la presse écrite pour diffuser ses messages. Il participe à des émissions politiques, des interviews télévisées et des débats pour présenter ses politiques et interagir avec les journalistes.

Ces supports de communication sont utilisés par Macron pour toucher différents publics, promouvoir ses politiques, mobiliser les électeurs et maintenir une interaction directe avec le public.

Emmanuel Macron est souvent considéré comme un expert du marketing politique. Il a utilisé différentes stratégies et techniques de marketing pour construire son image, mobiliser les électeurs et atteindre ses

objectifs politiques. Voici quelques éléments du marketing politique associé à Macron :

- Le branding personnel : Macron a construit une marque personnelle forte autour de son image. Il a mis en avant son parcours, son jeune âge, son expérience professionnelle et son discours novateur pour se présenter comme un leader politique moderne et dynamique.
- La communication ciblée : Macron a développé une stratégie de communication ciblée pour toucher différents segments électoraux. Il a adapté ses messages en fonction des préoccupations spécifiques des différents groupes d'électeurs, tels que les jeunes, les entrepreneurs, les classes moyennes, etc.
- L'utilisation des médias sociaux : Macron est très actif sur les réseaux sociaux, en particulier Twitter, où il a une forte présence. Il utilise ces plateformes pour communiquer directement avec les citoyens, partager des informations, promouvoir ses politiques et interagir avec les internautes.
- Les campagnes numériques : Macron a utilisé des campagnes numériques ciblées pour mobiliser les électeurs et susciter l'engagement. Il a utilisé des techniques de marketing en ligne telles que la publicité ciblée, le marketing par e-mail et la mobilisation des réseaux sociaux pour atteindre son public et promouvoir ses idées.
- La communication visuelle : Macron attache une grande importance à la communication visuelle. Il utilise des éléments visuels tels que des affiches, des logos et des symboles pour renforcer son image et créer une identité visuelle reconnaissable.
- La participation des citoyens : Macron a mis en place des plateformes de participation citoyenne, telles que le Grand Débat national, pour permettre aux citoyens de s'exprimer, de contribuer aux politiques publiques et de se sentir engagés dans le processus décisionnel.
- La communication internationale : Macron utilise sa présence sur la scène internationale pour promouvoir son image et défendre les intérêts de la France. Il met en valeur sa politique étrangère, participe à des sommets internationaux et utilise les médias internationaux pour projeter son message à l'échelle mondiale.

Il convient de noter que le marketing politique de Macron a été salué pour son efficacité, mais a également suscité des critiques, certaines personnes l'accusant de cultiver une image médiatique superficielle. Cependant, il est indéniable que ses stratégies de marketing ont joué un rôle important dans son ascension politique.

Nous pouvons conclure que, le marketing politique en France est un domaine en constante évolution, où les candidats rivalisent d'ingéniosité pour

convaincre les électeurs. Les stratégies, les outils de communication et les défis auxquels sont confrontés les acteurs politiques sont autant d'éléments qui témoignent de l'importance accordée à cette discipline. Le marketing politique est devenu un véritable enjeu démocratique, où la capacité à séduire et convaincre les électeurs est essentielle pour accéder au pouvoir.

Le Marketing politique au Maroc

Avant de s'attaquer aux personnalités du marketing politique au Maroc, il serait judicieux de commencer par un décryptage du terrain politique au Maroc.

Pour comprendre la communication politique au Maroc, il faut la situer dans le contexte sociopolitique dans lequel elle se déploie. En effet, le Marocain est de plus en plus sceptique concernant la participation politique et a moins confiance en les intuitions. Il est indéniable que la faiblesse des pouvoirs et des marges de manœuvre des institutions telles que le parlement et le gouvernement dans une monarchie ainsi que les rumeurs de la falsification des élections fondent les perceptions négatives du système. Au fil des années, une image ternie du politique est enracinée dans les esprits des Marocains.

Le marketing politique tel que pratiqué aux états unis ou en France est clairement inexistant au Maroc, récemment on a assisté à quelques tentatives de marketing politique à l'occidentale, qui à notre sens ont porté leur fruit, toutefois les politiciens marocains préfèrent s'en tenir aux anciennes méthodes : journal du parti, porte à porte, cependant le marketing politique reste très peu répandu pour des raisons à la fois culturelles, organisationnelles et financières.

Le système politique en place ne permettait pas aux politiciens de se surpasser en communication, ainsi, la communication a été monopolisée pendant une longue période du règne d'Hassan II par l'institution monarchique. Les réformes politiques des années 1990, surtout en matière des droits de l'homme et des libertés publiques, ont contribué à l'ouverture du champ de la parole et à l'émergence d'une médiatisation politique qui se veut indépendante.

Les législatives de 2007 ont marqué un tournant dans la vie politique marocaine, une des spécificités phares de ces législatives était la « campagne de communication » qui a eu lieu autour de la participation électorale. La monarchie, ministère de l'Intérieur, partis politiques et organisations de la société civile ont utilisé une panoplie de moyens de communication, aussi bien traditionnels que modernes, pour inciter les marocains à voter. Ainsi :

- Les discours de Mohammed VI n'ont pas manqué de rappeler aux citoyens leur devoir de vote.

- Le ministère de l'intérieur, quant à lui, a fait appel à une agence de communication pour la conception de sa stratégie et a consacré 14% du budget global de l'opération électorale à la communication.
- Les partis politiques ont contacté, dans leur majorité, des agences de communication pour les assister dans leur campagne électorale.
- La société civile a participé aussi, avec l'action 2007 « Daba », qui a élaboré et mis en œuvre tout au long de l'année précédant les élections, un programme/plan d'action en vue de sensibiliser les marocains au vote.

Les législatives de 2011 étaient autant intéressantes que celles qui ont précédées, étant donné qu'elles ont pris place au moment du printemps arabe, période pendant laquelle le monde arabe était bouleversé, des régimes ont été anéantis, des pays sont entrés en guerre civile, mais le mot d'ordre était le même 'le changement'. Le Maroc a pu en sortir indemne, et avec un gouvernement inédit constitué pour la première fois par le parti islamiste jusqu'ici considéré comme 'persona non grata'.

1- Abdelilah Benkirane

On ne peut pas parler de Marketing politique sans parler de Abdelilah Benkirane le ténor du Marketing politique au Maroc.

Abdelilah Benkirane est un politicien qui a débuté très jeune et qui s'est fait connaître dans le monde politique par son franc-parler et son audace, mais le grand public l'a connu et a été marqué par son charisme et son éloquence quelques mois avant les élections de 2011 dans une émission appelée 'Hiwar' diffusée sur la chaîne nationale marocaine, durant cette émission Benkirane s'est montré très différent des autres chefs de parti, pas de langue de bois, réponses directes à toutes les questions même les plus critiques et gênantes (comme le rapport avec la monarchie), clash des journalistes, et ce qui a surtout marqué les électeurs c'est le fait qu'il a adopté un discours facile compris par tous en parlant en dialecte marocain et non pas arabe littéraire et en utilisant quelques blagues pour alléger l'atmosphère, grâce à cette interview le public a fait connaissance d'un politicien pas comme les autres, un politicien simple, approachable et qu'on comprend.

Benkirane a été très critiqué durant la campagne électorale de 2011 pour deux principales raisons : la victimisation et l'utilisation de discours religieux mais ces critiques n'ont pas pu bloquer la montée en puissance du PJD qui remporta les élections de 2011 et créa le gouvernement. Puisque à l'instar d'autres pays arabes, le Printemps arabe s'est soldé au Maroc par l'accession des islamistes au pouvoir ; une victoire surprenante mais que la plupart mettent sur le compte de la capacité du PJD à surfer sur la vague des revendications populaires en prenant, à son propre compte, les doléances

phares des manifestants, et ce, notamment par le biais de stratégies d'influence et de manipulation politiques.

Lors de la campagne électorale de 2016, le PJD (Lariège, 2016) a mis tous les moyens financiers pour garantir une visibilité sans précédent pour son secrétaire général, ainsi, la vedette Benkirane ne faisait pas du porte à porte basique, tel que faisait les autres partis, mais il organisait des meetings grandioses qu'ils ont appelés '*mihrajane khatabi*' '*festival rhétorique*', organisé en général en plein air ou dans des salles de fêtes ou complexes sportifs en la présence de milliers de citoyens, Benkirane vient en Star et fait un discours, en utilisant à chaque fois les mêmes éléments : blague, références religieuses, et relation avec la monarchie, le trio magique ou la marque de fabrique de Benkirane. Ces meetings gigantesques ont été organisés partout au Maroc ce qui a poussé le parti à louer un Jet privé pour le secrétaire général. La grande nouveauté de cette campagne est que le PJD a créé une cellule de communication et une cellule digitale, mais à la différence des autres partis, ces cellules ont été créées par les partisans, sans avoir recours à une boîte de communication professionnelle, l'idée est que les partisans connaissent mieux le parti, croient en le parti, et donc pourront mieux communiquer et travailler sans compter les heures. Ainsi, en plus du journal du PJD, 'ATAJDID' très peu lu par les citoyens, les pages Facebook et twitter ont été créées pour le parti et le chef de gouvernement / secrétaire général du parti, ou les meetings sont diffusés en direct.

Pour la première fois dans l'histoire du Maroc, le PJD (Salgon, 2008) remporté les élections deux fois de suite, et Benkirane est nommé chef de gouvernement deux fois consécutives.

Abdelilah Benkirane, l'ancien Premier ministre du Maroc, est connu pour son style de communication direct et franc. Voici quelques caractéristiques de son style communicationnel (Chahir, 2020):

- Le langage direct : Benkirane utilise souvent un langage direct et sans détour pour exprimer ses opinions et ses convictions. Il est connu pour sa franchise et sa capacité à communiquer clairement ses idées.
- L'éloquence oratoire : Il est réputé pour sa capacité à s'exprimer avec éloquence et à captiver son public lors de discours publics et d'interventions médiatiques. Il utilise des techniques rhétoriques pour convaincre et persuader.
- L'humour : Benkirane est également connu pour son sens de l'humour et sa propension à utiliser des anecdotes et des blagues pour communiquer avec son auditoire. Cela contribue à rendre ses discours plus accessibles et à établir un lien avec les gens.
- L'expressivité émotionnelle : Il n'hésite pas à exprimer ses émotions lors de ses discours, ce qui lui permet de transmettre des messages avec

passion et engagement. Il peut manifester de la colère, de la frustration ou de l'enthousiasme, ce qui renforce l'impact de ses discours.

- L'accessibilité : Benkirane a la réputation d'être un homme politique proche des gens. Il utilise un langage simple et compréhensible pour s'assurer que ses messages sont accessibles à un large public, notamment aux populations rurales et urbaines moins éduquées.

Ces traits de communication ont contribué à l'attrait de Benkirane en tant que personnalité politique au Maroc. Cependant, il est important de noter que les perceptions du style communicationnel peuvent varier en fonction des opinions politiques et des points de vue individuels.

Abdelilah Benkirane (Abboudi, 2018) a utilisé divers supports communicationnels pour transmettre ses messages et interagir avec le public. Voici quelques-uns des supports qu'il a utilisés :

- Les discours publics : Benkirane est connu pour ses discours publics lors de rassemblements politiques, de meetings électoraux et d'autres événements. Il s'adresse directement à son public pour partager ses idées, exprimer ses opinions et mobiliser le soutien.
- Les médias traditionnels : Il a utilisé les médias traditionnels, tels que la télévision, la radio et la presse écrite, pour diffuser ses messages et participer à des interviews et des débats politiques. Il a accordé des entretiens à des médias marocains et internationaux pour communiquer ses positions et répondre aux questions des journalistes.
- Les réseaux sociaux : Benkirane a également utilisé les réseaux sociaux, notamment Facebook et Twitter, pour communiquer directement avec le public et diffuser des messages. Il a partagé des déclarations officielles, des vidéos et des mises à jour sur ses activités politiques.
- Les rencontres publiques : Il a organisé des rencontres publiques dans différentes régions du Maroc pour rencontrer les citoyens, écouter leurs préoccupations et discuter des questions politiques. Cela lui a permis d'établir un contact direct avec les gens et de renforcer sa présence sur le terrain.
- Les conférences de presse : Benkirane a tenu des conférences de presse pour répondre aux questions des journalistes et commenter les développements politiques. Cela lui a permis de communiquer ses positions et de clarifier sa politique en direct.

Il convient de noter que la liste ci-dessus n'est pas exhaustive et que Benkirane peut avoir utilisé d'autres supports de communication en fonction des circonstances et des besoins spécifiques.

Abdelilah Benkirane, a également utilisé certaines techniques de marketing politique pour promouvoir son image et son parti politique, le Parti de la Justice et du Développement (PJD). Voici quelques exemples de pratiques de marketing politique associées à Benkirane :

- La gestion de l'image : Benkirane a cherché à cultiver une image de dirigeant authentique et proche du peuple. Il s'est présenté comme un homme politique humble et dévoué, mettant en avant son expérience de militantisme et son engagement envers les valeurs islamiques et la justice sociale.
- La communication ciblée : Benkirane a adapté son message en fonction de son public cible. Il a cherché à mobiliser le soutien des populations rurales et urbaines en mettant l'accent sur des enjeux tels que l'éducation, l'emploi, la lutte contre la corruption et les inégalités sociales.
- L'utilisation des médias traditionnels : Benkirane a utilisé les médias traditionnels, tels que la télévision, la radio et la presse écrite, pour diffuser ses messages. Il a accordé des interviews, participé à des débats télévisés et publié des tribunes dans les journaux afin de faire connaître ses idées et de renforcer sa présence médiatique.
- L'utilisation des réseaux sociaux : Benkirane a également utilisé les réseaux sociaux, notamment Facebook et Twitter, pour communiquer directement avec ses partisans et le public. Il a partagé des messages politiques, des vidéos, des photos de ses activités et a encouragé l'engagement en ligne.
- La création de slogans et de symboles : Benkirane a utilisé des slogans accrocheurs et des symboles pour renforcer l'identité de son parti politique. Par exemple, le PJD a adopté le slogan "Justice et Développement" qui résume les principaux axes de sa politique.

Ces pratiques de marketing politique ont contribué à façonner l'image de Benkirane et du PJD, à mobiliser le soutien des électeurs et à influencer l'opinion publique en faveur de leur politique.

2- Aziz Akhannouch

Aziz Akhannouch, est un politicien et homme d'affaire marocain, sa carrière politique débute en 2003, où il est nommé président de la région Souss-Massa-Draa, en 2007 il devient Ministre de l'Agriculture, de la Pêche maritime, du Développement rural et des Eaux et Forêts, poste qu'il occupe 13 années consécutives, de 2007 à 2021. Il préside depuis 2016 le Rassemblement national des indépendants (RNI), parti de centre droit.

Il est aussi l'une des personnalités les plus riches du Maroc avec une fortune personnelle estimée à deux milliards de dollars d'après le classement 2019 du magazine Forbes, En 2021, il est l'homme le plus riche du Maroc

après le roi. Il détient via sa holding Akwa une soixantaine d'entreprises dont notamment Afriquia, Tissir Gaz, National Gaz, Ultra Gaz, Mini Brahim, Speedy, Oasis Café, Maghreb Oxygène... L'une des forces majeures de ce politicien est qu'il a compris l'intérêt des médias, il détient des actions dans la majorité des médias au Maroc, tel que : Nissa Min Al Maghrib, Femmes du Maroc, La Nouvelle Tribune, Aujourd'hui le Maroc, Le Courrier de l'Atlas, La Vie économique, L'Économiste... sans oublier les publicités qu'il place dans d'autres médias électroniques lui permettant d'avoir d'une visibilité incomparable aux autres politiciens.

Propriétaire de nombreux journaux, il est réputé extrêmement soucieux de son image. Si d'autres grandes fortunes comme Moulay Hafid El Alamy sont réputées accepter les enquêtes ou les critiques sans réagir, les relations d'Aziz Akhannouch avec la presse marocaine sont plus tendues.

Aziz Akhannouch, homme d'affaires marocain et homme politique, est le président du Parti du Rassemblement National des Indépendants (RNI) au Maroc. En tant que personnalité politique, il a un style communicationnel distinctif. Voici quelques caractéristiques de son style de communication :

- Le pragmatisme et l'orientation économique : Akhannouch met l'accent sur les enjeux économiques et le développement dans sa communication. Il met en avant son expérience en tant qu'homme d'affaires et souligne l'importance de la croissance économique, de la création d'emplois et de la prospérité pour le pays.
- Le langage mesuré et formel : Il utilise généralement un langage mesuré et formel lors de ses discours et de ses interventions médiatiques. Son style est plus axé sur les faits et les chiffres plutôt que sur l'émotion ou l'expressivité.
- La maîtrise des détails et des politiques : Akhannouch est connu pour sa connaissance approfondie des dossiers politiques et économiques. Il communique en détail sur les politiques qu'il propose, en expliquant les mesures concrètes et les objectifs visés.
- La présentation calme et posée : Son style de communication est souvent calme et posé, ce qui peut être perçu comme un signe de confiance et de maîtrise de la situation. Il cherche à transmettre une image de stabilité et de sérieux.
- L'utilisation des médias traditionnels : Akhannouch utilise les médias traditionnels, notamment la télévision, la radio et les journaux, pour diffuser ses messages. Il participe à des interviews et des débats politiques, où il expose ses positions et répond aux questions des journalistes.

Il est important de noter que ces caractéristiques sont basées sur les observations générales de son style de communication et peuvent varier en fonction du contexte et des circonstances spécifiques.

Aziz Akhannouch, en tant que personnalité politique, a utilisé différents supports de communication pour transmettre ses messages et interagir avec le public, tout comme son prédécesseur, tels que:

- Les discours publics : Akhannouch donne des discours publics lors de rassemblements politiques, de congrès et d'événements politiques. Ces discours lui permettent de présenter ses idées, de partager ses propositions politiques et d'interagir directement avec les citoyens.
- Les médias traditionnels : Il utilise les médias traditionnels, tels que la télévision, la radio et la presse écrite, pour diffuser ses messages. Il accorde des interviews, participe à des débats politiques et publie des tribunes dans les journaux afin de faire connaître ses positions et de toucher un large public.
- Les réseaux sociaux : Akhannouch est également présent sur les réseaux sociaux, notamment Facebook, Twitter et Instagram. Il utilise ces plateformes pour partager des informations sur ses activités politiques, diffuser des déclarations officielles et interagir avec ses partisans.
- Les rencontres publiques : Il organise des rencontres publiques dans différentes régions du Maroc pour rencontrer les citoyens, écouter leurs préoccupations et discuter des questions politiques. Ces rencontres lui permettent de nouer un contact direct avec les gens et de comprendre leurs préoccupations.
- Les conférences de presse : Akhannouch tient des conférences de presse pour répondre aux questions des journalistes et commenter les développements politiques. Cela lui permet de communiquer ses positions et de clarifier sa politique en direct.

Ces supports de communication permettent à Akhannouch de diffuser ses messages, de mobiliser le soutien et d'interagir avec le public. Il convient de noter que la liste ci-dessus n'est pas exhaustive et qu'Akhannouch peut utiliser d'autres supports de communication en fonction des circonstances et des besoins spécifiques.

Aziz Akhannouch, en tant que personnalité politique et président du Parti du Rassemblement National des Indépendants (RNI) au Maroc, a utilisé des techniques de marketing politique pour promouvoir son image et sa politique. Voici quelques aspects du marketing politique associés à Akhannouch :

- La gestion de l'image : Akhannouch met en avant son parcours professionnel réussi en tant qu'homme d'affaires et entrepreneur. Il se

présente comme un leader compétent, expérimenté et capable de stimuler l'économie et de créer des emplois.

- La communication ciblée : Akhannouch adapte ses messages en fonction de son public cible. Il met l'accent sur les enjeux économiques, tels que la croissance économique, l'investissement et l'emploi, pour attirer les électeurs sensibles à ces questions.
- L'utilisation des médias traditionnels : Akhannouch utilise les médias traditionnels, tels que la télévision, la radio et la presse écrite, pour diffuser ses messages. Il accorde des interviews, participe à des débats et publie des annonces politiques afin d'atteindre un large public et de se positionner comme un acteur politique majeur.
- L'utilisation des réseaux sociaux : Akhannouch est également présent sur les réseaux sociaux, où il partage des informations sur ses activités politiques, publie des vidéos, des photos et des mises à jour sur ses campagnes électorales. Cela lui permet de communiquer directement avec ses partisans et d'élargir sa base de soutiens.
- Les événements de campagne : Pendant les périodes électorales, Akhannouch organise des événements de campagne, tels que des rassemblements, des meetings et des visites sur le terrain, pour rencontrer les électeurs, présenter ses propositions politiques et mobiliser le soutien.
- Akhannouch a aussi beaucoup misé sur son identité Amazigh, même s'il n'est pas le premier chef de parti amazigh ni le premier chef de gouvernement amazigh, c'est le premier à jouer cette carte, à revendiquer cette identité, et à faire des promesses aux amazighs.

Ces techniques de marketing politique visent à accroître la visibilité d'Akhannouch, à susciter l'intérêt des électeurs et à promouvoir ses idées politiques. Il est important de noter que le marketing politique peut varier en fonction des cultures politiques et des contextes spécifiques.

En septembre 2021, Le RNI arrive en tête des élections législatives, et conformément à la Constitution, le roi Mohammed VI charge Akhannouch de former le nouveau gouvernement. Il a été également élu maire de la ville d'Agadir.

Conclusion

Le marketing politique joue un rôle essentiel dans les campagnes électorales modernes. Au Maroc, un pays politiquement dynamique et en évolution constante, les leaders politiques ont également adopté des stratégies de marketing pour atteindre et convaincre les électeurs. Dans cet article, nous avons exploré les aspects clés du marketing politique au Maroc et en France,

en examinant les stratégies utilisées par les politiciens et les enjeux auxquels ils sont confrontés.

- L'importance des médias traditionnels :

Tant en France qu'au Maroc, les médias traditionnels jouent un rôle crucial dans les campagnes politiques. Les politiciens des deux pays accordent une grande importance à la couverture médiatique des élections, utilisant des interviews, des débats télévisés et des apparitions dans les journaux pour transmettre leurs messages politiques. Cependant, il convient de noter que l'importance relative des différents médias peut varier d'un pays à l'autre. Par exemple, en France, les débats politiques télévisés sont souvent considérés comme des moments clés de la campagne électorale, tandis qu'au Maroc, la presse écrite joue un rôle plus central dans la diffusion de l'information politique.

- L'utilisation croissante des réseaux sociaux :

Les deux pays ont également vu une montée en puissance de l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux dans le marketing politique. Les politiciens français et marocains reconnaissent l'importance des plateformes telles que Facebook, Twitter et Instagram pour atteindre les électeurs plus jeunes et plus connectés. Les réseaux sociaux offrent une opportunité de dialogue direct avec les électeurs, permettant aux politiciens de partager leurs idées, de mobiliser leurs partisans et de répondre aux préoccupations des citoyens. Cette utilisation des réseaux sociaux a notamment été observée lors des élections présidentielles en France et des élections législatives au Maroc.

- Le ciblage des électeurs et la proximité avec la population :

En termes de ciblage des électeurs, les politiciens des deux pays reconnaissent l'importance de personnaliser leurs messages en fonction des préoccupations spécifiques de chaque segment de la population. Que ce soit en France ou au Maroc, les politiciens se concentrent sur des problématiques locales et régionales pour se rapprocher des électeurs. Par exemple, en France, les candidats peuvent adapter leurs discours en fonction des enjeux économiques, sociaux et environnementaux spécifiques à chaque région. Au Maroc, la proximité avec la population est également un élément clé du marketing politique, avec une attention particulière accordée aux problèmes liés au développement économique, à l'éducation et à l'accès aux services de base.

- L'importance de la marque politique :

La construction d'une marque politique forte est un aspect essentiel du marketing politique, que ce soit en France ou au Maroc. Les politiciens des deux pays cherchent à se présenter comme des leaders crédibles et compétents, capables de résoudre les problèmes du pays. Ils utilisent des symboles, des slogans et des discours pour créer une identité politique et se différencier de leurs adversaires.

Toutefois, la perception de la marque politique peut varier d'un pays à l'autre en raison de différences culturelles et politiques. En France, les électeurs peuvent accorder une grande importance aux programmes politiques détaillés et à la cohérence idéologique, tandis qu'au Maroc, la personnalité et la réputation du politicien peuvent jouer un rôle plus prépondérant.

À la fin de cet article on peut aussi conclure ce qui suit :

- Le système politique au Maroc -monarchie constitutionnelle- ne donne pas beaucoup de flexibilité aux politiciens, ainsi la marge de créativité en matière de Marketing politique est assez limitée, vu qu'ils ne doivent pas empiéter celle du roi.
- Les partis politiques faisant objet de cette étude sont le PJD, PAM, RNI PI, ces partis sont différents les uns des autres, par leur orientation, image, histoire, et stratégie ce qui nous a permis d'avoir une analyse assez riche.
- En analysant les stratégies de Marketing politique appliquées par quelques politiciens/ chefs de gouvernement marocains nous nous trouvons limités à Benkirane et Akhannouch, deux figures politiques emblématiques et complètement différentes qui se sont inspirés des stratégies communicationnelles occidentales et qui ont pu en tirer profit.
- Les médias traditionnels, tels que la télévision, la radio et les journaux, jouent un rôle central dans le marketing politique au Maroc. Les candidats cherchent à obtenir une couverture médiatique favorable en accordant des interviews, en participant à des débats télévisés et en publiant des communiqués de presse. Les médias offrent une visibilité importante pour atteindre un large public d'électeurs.
- Les rassemblements politiques, tels que les meetings et les discours publics, sont couramment utilisés pour mobiliser les électeurs au Maroc. Les candidats s'adressent directement à leurs partisans, présentent leurs idées politiques et cherchent à générer un sentiment d'enthousiasme et de soutien. Ces événements sont souvent accompagnés de musique, de drapeaux et de slogans pour renforcer l'impact visuel.
- Les médias sociaux, tels que Facebook, Twitter et Instagram, gagnent en popularité et sont de plus en plus utilisés dans le marketing politique au Maroc. Les candidats créent des comptes officiels pour partager des messages, des mises à jour et des vidéos, et pour interagir directement avec les électeurs. Les réseaux sociaux offrent une plateforme pour atteindre un public plus large et engager une conversation avec les électeurs.

- Le porte-à-porte est une stratégie courante dans le marketing politique au Maroc. Les candidats et leurs équipes se rendent dans les quartiers et les communautés pour rencontrer les électeurs individuellement, échanger des idées, répondre à leurs préoccupations et solliciter leur soutien. Cette approche personnelle est considérée comme un moyen efficace de toucher directement les électeurs et de renforcer les relations.
- Les symboles et les slogans sont utilisés pour créer une identité politique forte et mémorable. Les partis politiques et les candidats adoptent souvent des couleurs spécifiques, des logos et des slogans qui représentent leurs valeurs et leurs idées. Ces éléments visuels sont utilisés sur les affiches, les banderoles et autres supports de communication pour renforcer la reconnaissance et l'association avec le candidat ou le parti politique.

Il convient de noter que les stratégies de marketing politique au Maroc peuvent varier en fonction du niveau d'élection (nationale, régionale ou locale) et des spécificités de chaque campagne. Les candidats et les partis politiques adaptent leurs approches en fonction de la culture politique marocaine et des préférences des électeurs.

Conflit d'intérêts : L'auteur n'a signalé aucun conflit d'intérêts.

Disponibilité des données : Toutes les données sont incluses dans le contenu du document.

Déclaration de financement : Les auteurs n'ont obtenu aucun financement pour cette recherche.

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Effect of Parent's International Migration on the Educational Performances of Left-Behind Children in Morocco

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p112](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p112)

Submitted: 17 December 2023

Accepted: 05 February 2024

Published: 29 February 2024

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OPEN ACCESS

Cite As:

El Alaoui A. & Ahbala S. (2024). *Effect of Parent's International Migration on the Educational Performances of Left-Behind Children in Morocco*. European Scientific Journal, ESJ, 20 (4), 112. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p112>

Abstract

This paper focuses on examining the effects of parent's international migration on the educational outcomes of left-behind children. This, however, is with special emphasis on how family environment and school characteristics affects the educational achievements of left-behind children. A sample was selected from the survey conducted in Fkih Ben Salah, a small town in Morocco, within the Béni Mellal-Khénifra region. This survey, administered in 2020, included 407 children from 16 primary schools. The results of the propensity score matching method showed that the international migration of parents had a significant effect on the school performance of their left-behind children. Furthermore, the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition analysis showed that 36.34% of the differences in the children's school performance during the first semester of the year 2020 can be explained by factors such as student-teacher ratio, class size, and socio-economic index of class, accounting for 12.82%, 38.47%, and 31.35%, respectively. The empirical findings also revealed that left-behind children are at risk of social exclusion, especially in public schools. Targeted interventions should be adopted to improve the educational outcomes of left-behind children. In addition, these interventions

should assist immigrant parents in facilitating their children's first journey and enhancing the student-teacher ratio.

Keywords: Left-behind children, International migration, Educational outcomes, School quality

Introduction

Over the past decades, international migration of families has become a mainstream component, especially in rural areas, small towns, and villages in Morocco. A noteworthy aspect of this migration is the inability of families, due to various reasons, to accompany their children, leading to their classification as Left-Behind Children (LBC). This situation has many effects on these children, notably affecting their health and educational performance. The regions most affected by this phenomenon include rural areas, mountainous villages, and small towns within the Moroccan context examined in this study. The reason behind this is primarily rooted in social and economic exclusion.

In Morocco, the condition of LBC is unknown. However, based on the finding from the 2018 national survey on international migration conducted by the High Commission for Planning (HCP)¹, the position of left-behind children can be summarized as follows:

Firstly, there are 10 regions which have experienced international migration activity. This activity is geographically concentrated in three regions, namely Casablanca – Settat (23.3%), Beni Mellal-Khnifra (14.9%), and Rabat-Salé (12.4%)², collectively hosting more than half of the households with migrants.

Secondly, 41.1% of migrants were accompanied by at least one child when they first emigrated. This percentage was higher for women than for men, who often left alone and were later joined by their wives and children.

Thirdly, 7% of migrants were spouses of heads of households who remained in Morocco³, and 1.5% were fathers of heads of households who remained in Morocco.

¹ HCP is the moroccan institution responsible for the production and publication of official statistics in Morocco .

² See page 17 of the HCP publication entitled Results of the National International Migration Survey 2018-2019, July 2020.

³ See page 29 of the HCP publication entitled Results of the National International Migration Survey 2018-2019, July 2020.

Finally, with regard to financial transfers sent by migrants, it was specified that 17.5% of the beneficiaries of these transfers are spouses and 3.3% of the beneficiaries are children of these migrants⁴.

Studies conducted on this topic have shown mixed results about the effect of parental migration on the academic achievement of their children (Antman, 2012; Bai et al., 2018; Giannelli & Mangiavacchi, 2010; Lahaie et al., 2009; Sawyer, 2016; Senaratna, 2012). Some studies revealed positive effects on children's schooling (Antman, 2012; Bai et al., 2018), while others indicated negative or neutral effects (Arguillas & Williams, 2010; Dunusinghe, 2021; Giannelli & Mangiavacchi, 2010; Lahaie et al., 2009; Sawyer, 2016).

This paper aims to answer the following question: does the international mobility of parents have a positive or negative effect on the school performance of their children who remain in Morocco? And what part can the school play in improving academic performance of left-behind children?

The significance of this research lies in its investigation within a field characterized by numerous empirical studies examining both macroeconomic and microeconomic effects. In particular, scholars such as Karam and Decaluwe (2007), focus on labour market impacts, the OECD (2017) delves into developmental aspects, and others, such as Marzovilla and Mele (2015), Meyer and Shera (2017), as well as Tabit and Moussir (2017), explore effects on the foreign exchange market. However, limited attention has been given to assessing the influence of migration on the human capital of children in Morocco (Bouoiyour & Miftah, 2016; Ibourk & Bensaïd, 2014). Therefore, contributing to the discourse on the impact of migration on the educational quality for these categories of children would enhance the on-going debate. The main objective of this study is to identify how parent's international migration affects the educational performance of their LBC. Also, emphasis is placed on the relative importance of different contexts relating to children, including family and school characteristics. Furthermore, this paper provides important insights for governments, schools, and families regarding the implementation of appropriate interventions to improve children's academic performances, especially for African countries which suffer more due to parents' international migration and increasing number of LBC. There are eight sections in this article, which starts with a summary and a basic introduction. This is followed by an examination of relevant literature concerning studies that examined the impact of international parental migration on the educational outcomes of LBC. Subsequent sections include

⁴ See page 17 of the HCP publication entitled Results of the National International Migration Survey 2018-2019, July 2020

the methodology employed, the findings obtained, a detailed discussion, the overall conclusion, and finally, a list of the references cited during this study.

Background and Literature Review

Parents are forced to migrate due to the limited resources available in their areas of origin to search for a better standard of living. This migration may result in ambiguity regarding the overall impacts on children, including economic and social effects, due to parental separation. The literature addressing this issue is in fact complex and sometimes contradictory, whether in a positive, negative or neutral context. According to Antman (2012), there exists a positive effect on a child's education. This is explained by the fact that pushing the father's migration earlier in his child's life can lead to an increase in the level of education up to one year when compared to the delay in migration until later.

Stark and Bloom (1985) interpreted the result of the positive impact by the improvement of socioeconomics of LBC when their parents send money transfers. The most important explanation of this positive effect indicates that migration decisions are taken mostly collectively between members of families in order to raise the level of well-being and escape from poverty and vulnerabilities.

In Morocco, Ibourk and Bensaïd (2014) emphasised that the effect of remittances from parents' migrants on LBC has a significant contribution to support education fee and improve educational performances. Bouoiyour and Miftah (2016) found that remittances can increase investments in education, which improves various indicators of educational attainments among children receiving remittances.

However, some studies indicate a negative effect of international parental migration on left-behind children. This effect is explained by the absence of one parent, which in turn affects the well-being of the children, leading to a lack of affection and parental attention (Taylor et al., 1996). The individual who is in charge of the children may face other responsibilities surpassing their own capabilities due to the absence of the other party. This circumstance could restrict their engagement with the children who intrude on their supervision. Similarly, the children themselves may not only bear the psychological burdens of separation, but may extend their responsibilities to include domestic chores (Jones et al., 2004).

Methods

This section focuses on the survey and the models employed. The survey defines the participants, data, and variables used in this study, while the models include the regression basic model, propensity score matching, and the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition method.

Survey

Participants

This study used a paper questionnaire that was administered to students in primary schools located in the city of Fkih Ben Salah. A sample of 407 children (205 LBC, 202 NLBC) was selected. The following procedure for sample selection was applied:

Firstly, the rural areas in Fkih Ben Salah that are recognized by international migration were identified, and the schools in which they are located were randomly selected. This was followed by a random selection of one class in each school. Children from households of parent migrants were then selected, along with an equal number of their peers in the same class. The sample was made up of 55% boys and 45% girls. The average age of the children was 11.45 years (SD=1.135, Min=10, Max=15). The required instructions for completing the form were provided and the children were instructed to complete it at home after parental consent.

Procedure

In order to acquire permission to conduct a survey in their schools, the provincial directorate of the Ministry of National Education, primary education, and Sports of Fkih Ben Salah was contacted in the beginning of 2020. After obtaining the written consent, contact was established with the primary school directors to facilitate the completion of questionnaires. The survey was carried out in January and February of the same year.

Data

The Béni Mellal-Khénifra region is among the regions of Morocco, affected by international migration⁵. This paper selected Fkih Ben Salah, as a small town in this region, which presents the highest level of international migration. According to results of the national survey on international migration, the Béni Mellal-Khénifra region ranks first nationally in terms of geographic concentration of households attached to migrants, with a percentage of 14.9%⁶. Based on place of residence, the concentration is even higher, particularly in rural areas as opposed to urban areas, with the Béni-Mellal-Khénifra region constituting 41.7% of households with migrant origin. The survey, conducted in the year 2020, specifically targeted children who have parent migrants abroad. The sample included 407 children, with 205 classified as LBC and 202 categorized as non-LBC.

Variable Description

⁵ See page 17 of the HCP publication entitled Results of the National International Migration Survey 2018-2019, July 2020.

⁶ See page 17 of the HCP publication entitled Results of the National International Migration Survey 2018-2019, July 2020.

The dataset contains 3 parts: children characteristics, family characteristics, and school characteristics. However, this study utilized variables (Table 1).

Outcomes variables express the average of eight (8) academic components or subjects, namely French language, Arabic language, scientific activity, Islamic, physical education, geography and history, art, and mathematics.

Control variables include children characteristics, family characteristics, and school characteristics. Children characteristics include gender, depression, and environment satisfaction. The gender variable is defined as whether the child is a boy or a girl. The depression level is measured by 3 questions from children depression inventory (Aluja & Blanch, 2002). On the other hand, the environment satisfaction is an index consisting of three points from Huebner Multidimensional student's life satisfaction scale (MSLSS) (Schnettler et al., 2017). The gender value is 1 if the child is female and 0 if the child is male.

Family characteristics include mother's education, family investment, and environment satisfaction. Reading and writing ability is the measure of the mother's education. The family investment in their children's education is estimated through the variable known as "parental expectation". This variable is defined as the expectation of the parents regarding their child's attainment of a university degree or higher. School characteristics consist of the student-teacher ratio, socio-economic index of class, and the class size.

Table 1. Variables Description

	Variables description	Description	N/mean	%/SD
Children characteristics	Academic outcomes	The average obtained during the first session	6,98	1.15
	Gender	0: male 1: Female	224 183	55 45
	Depression index	3 items, each assigned a score ranging from 0 to 3 points, were selected from children depression inventory.	.2572	.22
	Status of parental migration	0: children from parent non migrant (NLBC). 1: children from parent migrant (LBC).	202 205	49.6 50.4
Family characteristics	Parental expectation	0: Other 1: Superior	25 382	6.1 93.9
	Mother's education	0:no 1: literate mother	191 216	46,9 53.1
	Environment satisfaction	6 items, each assigned a score ranging from 1 to 3 points, were selected from multidimensional	8.49	3.10

		student life satisfaction scale (MSLSS).		
School characteristics	Class size	0: other 1: less than 20 students	359 48	88.2 11.8
	Socio-economic index of class	0: other 1: poor	379 28	93.1 6.9
	Student–teacher ratio	Number of students in the school divided by the number of teachers in the school.	30.86	3.70

Source: Estimated by the author

Models

This paper employed the Regression model, Propensity Score Matching, and Oaxaca-Blinder Decomposition method.

Regression Model

The baseline model adopted is a simple OLS model as written below.

$$y_i = \alpha + \theta_{LBC_i} + x_i' B + \varepsilon_i \quad (Eq.1)$$

Where LBC is the status of a child left behind by their parents to work outside Morocco, and X includes all the control variables.

Propensity Score Matching

Rosenbaum and Rubin (1983) proposed this method, which is described as follows:

Let y_{LBC} and y_{NLBC} be the outcome of LBC and NLBC, respectively.

The average treatment effect can be calculated as:

$$ATT = E(y^{LBC} | D = 1) - E(y^{NLBC} | D = 1) \quad (Eq.2)$$

Where D =1 for LBC and 0 for NLBC.

Thus, the ATT can be estimated with conditional independence assumption as:

$$ATT = E[y^{LBC} | D = 1, P_r(D = 1|x)] - E[y^{NLBC} | D = 0, P_r(D = 1|x)] \quad (Eq.3)$$

Where Pr (D=1|X) is the probability of being treated, which is conditional on X.

Oaxaca–Blinder Decomposition

Oaxaca (1973) and Blinder (1973) proposed this method to determine how various factors contribute to gender income disparities. The OB decomposition can be explained as follows. First, the equations pertaining to academic performances are estimated separately for LBC and NLBC:

$$y_{ij} = x'_{ij}B_{ij+\varepsilon_{ij,j}} = LBC, NLBC \tag{Eq. 4}$$

Where X_{ij} , including all control variables, is the same as the final model in the previous OLS estimation. According to the usual assumption, $E[\varepsilon_{ij}|X_{ij}] = 0, j = LBC, NLBC$. Thus, the mean difference between these two groups is outlined below:

$$GAP = \bar{y}_{LBC} - \bar{y}_{NLBC} = \bar{x}_{LBC}\hat{\beta}_{LBC} - \bar{x}_{NLBC}\hat{\beta}_{NLBC} \tag{Eq. 5}$$

This decomposition is a three-fold decomposition, where β_{LBC} and β_{NLBC} are the estimated coefficients of left-behind and non-left-behind children samples, respectively. Equation (5) uses the coefficients for the NLBC sample as the reference coefficients. The primary focus lies in examining the contributions of family investments and school quality. Eq. (5) can also be written as follows.

$$GAP = (\bar{x}_{NLBCp} - \bar{x}_{LBCp})'\beta_{rp} + (\bar{x}_{NLBCf} - \bar{x}_{LBCf})'\beta_{rf} + (\bar{x}_{NLBCsch} - \bar{x}_{LBCsch})'\beta_{rsch} + unexplained\ part \tag{Eq.6}$$

Where p represents predetermined personal and family characteristics, f represents family investments, and Sch represents school characteristics.

Results

Descriptive Statistic

According to the data collected, **Figure 1** indicates the academic performances of LBC and NLBC, demonstrating differences in average educational outcomes for children by 0.43 points.

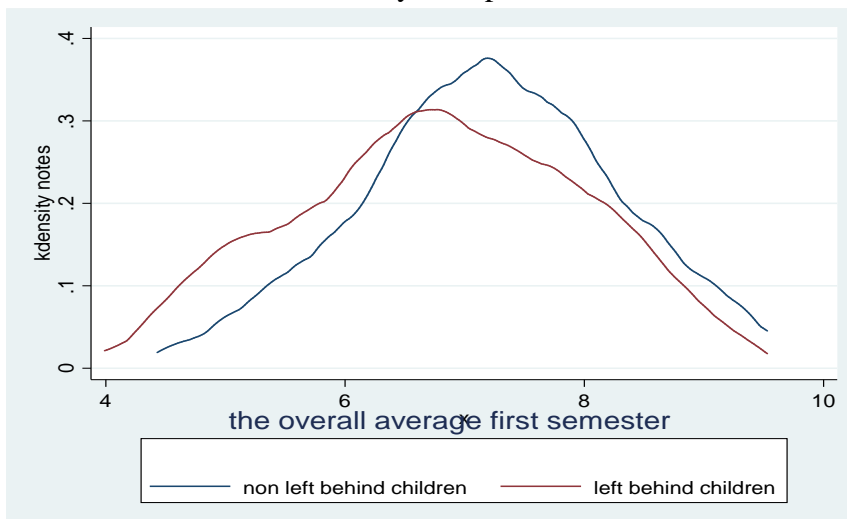


Figure 1. Distribution of children’s academic performance
Source: Field data

The results of the average comparison are shown in Table 2. It can be seen that, on average, NLBC and LBC have 6.99 points. At the same time, the NLBC significantly outperforms their LBC by approximately 0.43 points. Generally, the differences are about 6.15%.

Table 2 presents the results of the t-test between the two groups, showing that both are significantly different in all aspects. In terms of characteristics that would profit children’s educational outcomes, NLBC has more advantages.

The first category of variables reports the children characteristics. In contrast to LBC, NLBC exhibits a higher prevalence of females and greater levels of environment satisfaction, with a lower degree of depression.

The second category of variables presents the summary statistics of family characteristics. It is obvious that the literacy of the mother is significantly higher in LBC, with approximately 59% of literate LBC mothers, whereas only 47% of NLBC mothers are literate. In terms of family expectation, differences also exist. About 96% of NLBC parents expect their children to attend university, while the corresponding expectation among LBC parents is 92%. The third category reports the summary statistics of school characteristics. Evidently, the quality provided by NLBC is much higher than that of LBC. The student–teacher ratio in the LBC group is 31.45, while the NLBC group is 30.26. The percentage of the class with poor socio-economic index is 2% in NLBC, whereas that of LBC is about 11%.

Table 2. Comparison of Mean Characteristics of the Two Groups

	Two groups	LBC	NLBC	t-statistic
Academic outcomes	6.9878 (.057)	6.7788 (.083)	7.2000 (.075)	3.748***
Gender = Female	.45 (.025)	.40 (.034)	.50 (.035)	1.831*
Parental expectation = superior	.94 (.012)	.92 (.019)	.96 (.014)	1,827*
Mother’s education = yes	.53 (.025)	.59 (.034)	.47 (.035)	-2,436**
Class size = less than 20	.12 (.016)	.04 (.014)	.20 (.028)	5.095***
Socio-economic index of class = poor	.07 (.013)	.11 (.022)	.02 (.011)	-3.545***
Environment satisfaction	8.49 (.154)	8.17 (.224)	8.83 (.209)	2.154**
Depression index	.2572 (.01103)	.2832 (.014)	.2309 (.016)	-2.384**
Student–teacher ratio	30.8635 (.18363)	31.4537 (.262)	30.2646 (.250)	-3.276***

Standard errors are shown in parentheses

Significance codes: ***p<0.01, **p<0.05, and *p<0.1

Source: Field data

OLS Model

OLS estimation results are shown in Table 3, when more control variables are added into the regression equation. Columns (1-3) show estimates of children academic performance. Column (1) contains only left behind characteristics. Step by step, personal predetermined, family, and school characteristics were systematically integrated. According to Table 3, it is evident from column 3 that the migration status is significantly and negatively associated with the children’s school performance. Also, the following variables showed both positive and negative correlations with educational outcomes: gender, class size, mother’s education, parental expectations, student-teacher ratio, socio-economic index of class, and depression index. Girls are more likely to perform well at school. A class with less than twenty students increased the probability of better results in school. Children from home with educated mothers have a higher probability for obtaining high scores in school. Children whose parents expect them to attain higher education are more likely to perform well at school. There is a negative correlation between the student-teacher ratio and educational outcomes. Socio-economic index of class is also negatively associated with educational outcomes. In addition, depressed children are more likely to perform poorly at school.

Table 3. Results of OLS Estimation

	1	2	3
LBC	-.42117*** (.112)	-.3495185*** (.109)	-.2676761*** (.101)
Gender= Female		.4261588*** (.107)	.3230701*** (.094)
Depression index		-.7211026*** (.223)	-.7317311*** (.203)
Environment satisfaction		.0480103*** (.017)	.015564 (.016)
Mother’s education = yes		.3021261*** (.108)	.2338976** (.095)
Parental expectation = Superior			.4736201* (.265)
Socio-economic index of class = poor			1.519818*** (.164)
Class size = less than 20			1.018961*** (.119)
Student–teacher ratio			-.0455875*** (.013)
Constant	7.19995*** (.075)	6.589613*** (.198)	7.6470 *** (.523)
R-squared	0.0335	0.1452	0.3506
Observations	405	405	405

Robust standard errors are shown in parentheses
Significance codes: ***p<0.01, **p<0.05, and *p<0.1
Source: Field data

According to Table 4, it is evident that LBC cannot benefit more from mother’s education. In other words, mother's education does not significantly affect left-behind children. Family expectation also has no significant impact on left-behind children. Additionally, the characteristics of the school have significant benefits for NLBC, but not for left-behind children.

Table 4. OLS Results of Different Sample

	NLBC	LBC	Pooled
LBC			-.2676*** (.101)
Class size = less than 20	1.0715*** (.142)	.6848*** (.241)	1.0189*** (.119)
Socio-economic index of class = poor	1.7544*** (.222)	1.4250*** (.209)	1.5198*** (.164)
Gender = Female	.2190*** (.131)	.5055*** (.142)	.3230*** (.094)
Environment satisfaction	.0205 (.024)	.0028 (.023)	.0155 (.016)
Student–teacher ratio	-.0268* (.014)	-.0731*** (.023)	-.0455 *** (.013)
Parental expectation = Superior	.5184* (.160)	.4327 (.381)	.4736* (.265)
Mother's education = yes	.3086** (.122)	.2167 (.152)	.2338** (.095)
Depression index	-.9340*** (.278)	-.4324 (.314)	-.7317*** (.203)
Constant	7.0396***	8.2630*** (.849)	7.6470 *** (.523)
R squared	0.3408	0.3433	0.3506
Observation	202	205	407

Robust standard errors are shown in parentheses. Other variables are the same as those in previous tables

Significance codes: ***p<0.01, **p<0.05, and *p<0.1

Source: Field data

Results: Propensity Score Matching Method

From model 1 in Table 5, the result of the local linear regression matching was extracted. It is evident that LBC performs significantly less in school performance. Specifically, NLBC outperforms LBC in terms of their scores by 0.321 standard deviation.

Based on the family level variable, the differences in children’s score turned to 0.402. However, after adding school characteristics, the difference turned to 0.283.

Table 5. Results of Propensity Score Matching Method

Models	Kernel	Stratification Matching	One to one	Local linear matching
Model-1	-0.376**	-0.392**	-0.311**	-.3210**
Model-2	-0.439***	-0.422***	-0.434***	-.4022***
Model-3	-0.254**	-0.298 **	-0.374**	-.2830**

Significance codes: ***p<0.01, **p<0.05, and *p<0.1

Source: Field data

**Results: Oaxaca–Blinder Decomposition
Overall Decomposition**

Table 6. Oaxaca Blinder Decomposition Results

	LBC coefficient (1)	NLBC coefficient (2)	Pooled coefficient (3)
Group 1	7.19995	7.19995	7.19995
Group 2	6.7787	6.77878	6.77878
Observations	407	407	407
Gap ($y_{NLBC} - y_{LBC}$)	.4211***	.4211***	.42117***
Explained	.1165 (.089)	.1340 (.093)	.1534** (.073)
Unexplained	.3045*** (.110)	.2870** (.118)	.2676*** (.099)
Gender = Female	.0197 (.015)	.0455 (.028)	.0291 (.018)
Mother's education = yes	-.0370 (.021)	-.0259 (.020)	-.0280* (.016)
Index of depression	.0488* (.025)	.0226 (.020)	.0382** (.019)
student–teacher ratio	.0319 (.023)	.0869** (.035)	.0542** (.023)
Class size	.1703*** (.042)	.1088* (.060)	.1620*** (.036)
Socio-economic index of class = poor	-.1534*** (.056)	-.1246*** (.040)	-.1328*** (.040)
Environment satisfaction	.0136 (.016)	.0018 (.015)	.0102 (.011)
Parental expectation	.0224 (.018)	.0187 (.015)	.0205 (.015)

Standard errors are shown in parentheses

Significance codes: ***p<0.01, **p<0.05, and *p<0.1.

Source: Field data

Columns (1-3) from Table 6 show the result of the decomposition of school performance of left-behind children, non-left-behind children, and pooled model over both groups as the reference coefficient, respectively. The pooled model includes parental migration indicators as a control variable and

contains information from both groups. The results of column (3) are preferred for this study’s baseline discussion.

Additionally, the explained part amounts to 0.153 standard deviations, constituting 36.34% of the total difference. Student–teacher ratio, class size, and socio-economic index of class are essential contributors to the gain or loss of parental migration.

The contributions of student–teacher ratio, class size, and socio-economic index of class account for 12.82%, 38.47%, and 31.35% of the gap, respectively. The family expectation is neither an important or significant factor.

The OB decomposition results show that approximately 36.34% of the differences in scores can be explained by observed characteristics. The most important elements include student–teacher ratio, class size, and socio-economic index of class, which are the most significant and powerful explanations for the differences.

Contributions of Coefficient Differences

Table 7 presents the coefficient differences of three-fold decomposition. Results are reported using both groups as reference groups. Emphasis is laid on the role of student–teacher ratio, class size, and class social. From Table 7, it is seen that almost all differences in the coefficients of class size and socio-economic index of class are insignificant, except for the student–teacher ratio per student. Therefore, the differences are significantly positive. This implies that NLBC benefit more than LBC from the student–teacher ratio. This may indicate the potential social exclusion of left-behind children, preventing their equitable access to student–teacher ratio in rural public schools.

Table 7. OB Decomposition of Coefficients (Three-fold decomposition)

	Threefold	Threefold(reverse)
Group 1	7.1999	7.1999
Group 2	6.7787	6.7787
Observations	407	407
Gap ($y_{NLBC} - y_{LBC}$)	.4211***	.4211***
Endowments	.1340 (.093)	.1165 (.089)
Coefficients	.3045*** (.110)	.2870 (.118)
Interaction	-.0175 (.094)	.0175 (.094)
Gender = Female	-.1159 (.079)	.0197 (.015)
Mother's education = yes	.0542 (.117)	.0432 (.093)
Index of depression	-.1420	-.1158

	(.130)	(.106)
Student–teacher ratio	1.4559* (.830)	1.4008* (.799)
Class size	.0150 (.016)	.0765 (.079)
Socio-economic index of class = poor	.0369 (.053)	.0081 (.012)
Environment satisfaction	.1451 (.266)	.1568 (.288)
Parental expectation	.0786 (.386)	.0823 (.404)

Standard errors are shown in parentheses
Significance codes: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, and * $p < 0.1$
Source: Field data

Discussion

In recent times, parent migrants to other countries have greatly increased. In light of this, it is critical to ascertain the impact and degree to which parental migration influences the educational outcomes of children who are left behind in present-day Morocco. Using data from the survey, this study examines the effect of migration on children’s human capital accumulation. The Oaxaca–Blinder decomposition method is also applied to analyse the contributors to the loss from family migration. Given the transformative impact of parental migration on children’s surroundings, attention is directed towards examining the role of family characteristics and school characteristics. Nonetheless, these factors can be manipulated by families and governments. It was also found that NLBC children significantly outperformed their LBC counterparts in terms of school’s performances. The results of the OB decomposition method further show that the student–teacher ratio plays the most important roles in bridging the gaps.

The following is a detailed discussion:

First, as this paper demonstrates, migration has no positive effect on the educational outcomes of children left behind. The results are consistent with previous findings (Antia et al., 2022; Song et al., 2018).

Second, it has been observed that LBC performance is significantly impacted by school quality. The OB decomposition method revealed that the two components of school quality are important elements of the gaps. Given the controversial report of Coleman (1968) and Hill (2017), the findings of this study demonstrate the value of educational investments in children’s growth.

Finally, the results may suggest potential social exclusions being practiced in public schools. In the coefficient decomposition, it is evident that the difference between the coefficients of student–teacher ratio is positive and significant (Table 5). This may imply that LBC children cannot enjoy the full

range of school services. Therefore, eliminating all potential social exclusions appears logical for enhancing LBC outcomes.

Conclusion

In order to quantify the impact of parent's international migration on educational outcomes of left-behind children, this study examined a sample of 407 students enrolled in public primary schools in rural areas of the province of Fkih Ben Salah during the year 2020. In this analysis, the Regression Model, the Propensity Score Matching, and Oaxaca-Blinder Decomposition method were applied.

The main findings of this work include three aspects. First, PSM estimates indicate that children's academic performances are significantly associated with parental migration. Second, results from OB decomposition show that the contributions of student-teacher ratio, class size, and socio-economic index of class account for 12.82%, 38.47%, and 31.35% of the gap, respectively. LBC can lead to social exclusion in public schools. The results suggest that LBC may experience limited benefits, primarily due to receiving fewer opportunities for better school quality.

There are two important policy implications for left-behind children. First, since international family migration cannot benefit the academic outcomes of left-behind children, assistance should be provided to immigrant parents to ensure the inclusion of their children in the first journey. Second, Governments and public schools should try to eliminate social exclusion which children left-behind may suffer in schools through teacher-student ratio.

This article had two limitations. The primary constraint pertains to the calculation of the contributions of certain observed school investments, while the exclusion of other significant investments, such as per-student expenditure and extracurricular activities, remains unfeasible.

Future research should consider the causal relationship between student-teacher ratio and children's outcomes.

Human Studies

This study received approval from the Provincial Directorate of the Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education, and Scientific Research of Fkih Ben Salah, with adherence to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration.

Funding Statement: The authors did not obtain any funding for this research.

Data Availability: All the data are included in the content of the paper.

Conflict of Interest: The authors reported no conflict of interest.

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The Effect of Innovation on Competitiveness in the Food Processing Industry of Cameroon: A Mediating Effect of Quality Management

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p129](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p129)

Submitted: 18 December 2023

Accepted: 30 January 2024

Published: 29 February 2024

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OPEN ACCESS

Cite As:

Nicholas B., Sama M.C. & Emmanuel N. (2024). *The Effect of Innovation on Competitiveness in the Food Processing Industry of Cameroon: A Mediating Effect of Quality Management*. European Scientific Journal, ESJ, 20 (4), 129. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p129>

Abstract

With the intensification of national and global competition, the focus of companies is now on how to achieve competitive advantage. With globalisation, Cameroon's industry is facing specific difficulties such as unchecked competition from imports, internal weaknesses in output, low technology acquisition as well as poor links between industry and the institutional sector, making competition a problem for them. This led to the foundation of studies on innovation and competitiveness, but at this point, there are still inconclusive results. This paper focuses on examining the effect of innovation on competitiveness in the food processing industry of Cameroon, with a specific emphasis on the mediating effect of quality management. This study adopted the cross-sectional research design for its investigation. The primary source of data was used for this study, as it was current. This primary data was collected through the distribution of questionnaires to the respondents. Innovation in this study was captured in terms product, process, market, and organisational innovations. Quality management on the other hand was captured in terms of commitment to quality, employee involvement, customer focus, process monitoring,

incentives, and recognition. In relation to competitiveness, the study focused on productivity, output growth, and market share. Data was collected from 335 managers of food processing companies drawn randomly after stratification from a population of 2564 food processing companies operating in Cameroon. This includes Douala, Yaounde, Ngaoundere, Buea, Bafoussam, Maroua, and Bertoua with 201, 40, 34, 3, 30, 17, and 10 as corresponding sample proportions respectively. Inferential statistics was used during the analysis of the data, specifically using Baron and Kenny's approach of testing the mediation hypothesis. Based on the results, there were traces of positive and significant direct effects of product, process, and organisational innovations on competitiveness. On the other hand, market innovation was insignificant. In terms of the indirect effect, the study revealed a partial mediation of quality management in the effect of product innovation on competitiveness. Quality management, however, had no mediating role on other dimensions of innovation (process, market, and organisational) and competitiveness.

Keywords: Innovation, Quality Management, Competitiveness

1. Introduction

In today's world, globalisation has led to the magnification of competition in the business field. For companies and businesses to gain a competitive edge, they have to advance new products and strategies to attract new customers and satisfy existing ones as well as processes of production. With this in mind, businesses, companies, and industries have been in a continuous search for better ways of suitably facing the intense competition. According to Oleksandr and Kumanova (2021), innovative activities are a means of increasing the competitiveness of enterprises. Some of the ways of standing to competition devised by many businesses include solving customer's pain points, selecting a niche in the market, pricing, and changing business ideas. The trending strategy implemented by countless businesses around the world to increase competition is the adoption of innovation. Porter (1996) stressed the fact that a firm is able to compete effectively if it generates a specific and durable differentiating factor, and innovation is one of the key ways through which firms can create the differentiating factor. Innovation is widely acknowledged as a core factor in increased productivity and competitiveness. According to OECD (2005), innovation can be divided into four groups: product innovation, process innovation, organisational innovation, and marketing innovation.

Recently, there is still a great deal of focus on innovation as a means of improving firms' competitiveness. According to Efendi et al. (2020), the rapid technological change along with increasingly uncertain business and market globalisation that occurred in the last decade has had a great impact on

the competitive business environment. Innovation systems have been adopted differently by country, region, local, and in different sectors and technologies. According to Hendayana et al. (2019), innovation can be interpreted as a new discovery that is different from what already exists or that has been known before. Innovation is needed in a business because it can provide competitiveness for the company. Khyareh and Rostami (2021) in their investigation certified that the main concern of policy makers in developed and developing countries today is national competitiveness and how competitiveness can be improved.

It was observed that in the food processing industry of Cameroon, the signals with regards to competition could not be hidden. The study was motivated by the observation that the arrival of companies, such as Dolait and Royal Crown in Cameroon's food industry, made it quite competitive for the Cameroonian dairy company, Camlait, which in response decided to diversify its line of products, thus introducing soya-based products. However, this competition is something that Camlait was not use to in the industry. To this end, the firm invested 3 billion FCFA to set up a dedicated production line. Demand growth for yoghurt is so significant (25% per year) that rivals end up installing themselves in the long term (Business in Cameroon, 2022).

By reviewing trending literature on innovation and competitiveness, it was observed that a majority of the few studies on this topic were conducted in the developed world (Hendayana et al., 2019; Efrata et al., 2019; Syoum et al., 2019; Heira et al., 2020; Oleksandr & Kumanova, 2021; Shilei et al., 2020; Mohsen & Nasrin, 2021). Unfortunately, only a few existed in the case of the African continent (Kiveu et al., 2019; Kiveu & Muathe, 2019). A worst case scenario is that none of these studies was conducted in the Cameroon context. This gives room to a contextual gap (context of the study or geographical gap). In addition, most authors have explored the impact of competitiveness on innovation rather than investigating the effect of innovation on competitiveness (OECD, 2023). Hence, this has left an unexploited knowledge gap. Finally, none of the studies considered using a mediating variable to test the effect of innovation on competitiveness, which equally leaves a theoretical gap to be filled. It was equally observed that there are empirical studies linking quality management to competitiveness of firms (Mauro, Gheith & Tani, 2020; Sánchez, Fermín & Luz, 2021), which initiates the thought of indirect relationship.

In this light, this study has as its main focus to investigate if innovation has a significant effect on competitiveness in the Food Processing Industry of Cameroon. It also highlights if quality management may perhaps be a mediator in this relationship.

Theoretical Debate

In 1962, Everett Rogers introduced his Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT) which has been referenced often in case analysis since. It provides a groundwork for understanding innovation adoption as well as the factors that influence an individual's choices about an innovation. Also, Joseph Schumpeter in the year 1911 put forward the theory of Innovation and Entrepreneurship. According to this theory, innovations lead to economic growth and the entrepreneur is the one who innovates. To continue with, the resource based-view was originally put forward by Penrose (1959), but it was developed by others (Wernerfelt, 1984; Barney, 1991; Teece et al., 1997). The theory argues that firms own resources that they can be employ to become competitive. The theory posits that a firm can gain competitive advantage by owning distinctive resources or capabilities that are valuable, difficult to imitate, and are rare in the marketplace.

To crown it, the Dynamic capability theory was advanced by Teece and Pisano (1994) and explains how firms achieve and sustain competitiveness based on the processes that take place in a firm to match the dynamic and volatile environment. The emergence of this theory was necessitated by the shortcoming/deficiencies or limitations of the resource-based theory in addressing dynamic economies. The Dynamic capability paradigm embraces entrepreneurship, innovation, organisational learning, and knowledge and change management. The ability of a firm to adjust to changes in the market through innovation is crucial for the competitiveness of firms. It is argued that innovation, which is the fundamental impulse that drives capitalism, stems from the innovation of new products, new methods of production, new markets, and new forms of industrial organisation.

The theoretical debate here lies on the knowledge gap because a good number of studies focused and claim a relationship in which competitiveness affects innovation. However, some of the studies proved that innovation has a positive effect on competitiveness (OECD, 2023). As backed by the above mentioned theories, this study takes a stand and tries to clarify the role of innovation on competitiveness while considering quality management as intervening.

2. Methods

This paper adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. This research design was selected for this study as it helps to gather data from a cross section of many food processing companies in the food processing industry of Cameroon in a single time interval in 2023. This study adopted only the primary source of data because it was current and collected in the form required by the researcher. Consequently, this data was collected through

self-administration questionnaires to managers of food processing companies in Cameroon as they were at the right position to give the information required. A sample of 335 managers of food processing companies was drawn from a total of 2564 through a simple random sampling technique using the sample size determination table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Before using the random sampling technique, the study used the stratified sampling technique that permitted the further sub-division of the population into seven (7) sub-groups known as strata. This stratification was based on location as the criteria for grouping. This comprises of Douala, Yaounde, Ngaoundere, Buea, Bafoussam, Maroua, and Bertoua with 1538, 308, 256, 25, 231, 128 and 78 as corresponding figures. Based on these groups, the proportion of each of the stratum was calculated to determine the number of companies randomly selected from each stratum. It was stated that Douala, Yaounde, Ngaoundere, Buea, Bafoussam, Maroua, and Bertoua were to have corresponding proportions of 201, 40, 34, 3, 30, 17 and 10 respectively. Based on this, random sampling was applied to each stratum to select the proportions as enumerated based on the calculations. Data for the study was analysed inferentially with focus on the Baron and Kenny (1986) framework for testing mediation. To enhance the robustness of Baron and Kenny's approach, the mediation analysis employed the Hayes (2023) Process Macro Version 4.3, which was extended in SPSS.

Estimation Technique

A series of linear regression analysis were conducted in order to ascertain the relations amongst the three variables of this study as summarized by each of the equations.

Firstly, the effect of innovation on competitiveness in the food processing industry of Cameroon was tested for a significant effect. Multiple regression model was used during the estimation as it permitted the inclusion of multiple independent variables on the dependent variable as illustrated by Equation 2. Where Y is competitiveness and innovation was captured using product, process, market, and organizational innovations as denoted by X₁, X₂, X₃ and X₄ respectively.

$$Y = f(X_1, X_2, X_3 \text{ \& } X_4) \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_4 X_{4i} + \mu_i \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

Secondly, the effect of innovation on quality management in the food processing industry of Cameroon was tested for a significant effect using a multiple regression model as illustrated by Equation 4. Where M is quality management expressed as a function of innovation (X₁, X₂, X₃ and X₄).

$$M = f(X_1, X_2, X_3 \text{ \& } X_4) \dots \dots \dots (3)$$

$$M_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_4 X_{4i} + \mu_i \dots \dots \dots (4)$$

Thirdly, the effect of quality management on competitiveness in the food processing industry of Cameroon was tested for a significant effect using the univariate linear regression model for estimation as illustrated by Equation 6. Where Y is competitiveness expressed as a function of quality management (M).

$$Y = f(M) \dots \dots \dots (5)$$

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 M_i + \mu_i \dots \dots \dots (6)$$

Finally, the indirect effect (mediation) for this study was tested using Baron and Kenny's approach of mediation as they proposed a framework for testing mediational hypotheses through a four-stage approach as captured by Equations 7, 8, and 9 (Baron & Kenny, 1986). This was achieved by incorporating the Hayes Process Macro Version 4.3 for mediation analysis into SPSS, as suggested by Hayes (2023).

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \mu \dots \dots \dots (7)$$

$$M = \beta_0 + \beta_2 X + \mu \dots \dots \dots (8)$$

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_3 X + \beta_4 M + \mu \dots \dots \dots (9)$$

According to Baron and Kenny's framework, in the preceding equation, if:

- $b_3 < b_1$, nevertheless remains significant, then the mediation of M in the relationship between X and Y is partial.

- b_3 comes to be insignificant or null; then, there exist total or full mediation of the variable M in the relationship between X and M.

Based on this model, the indirect influence of the explaining variable X on the dependent variable Y, through the mediator M is illuminated or explained by the product of the coefficients ($b_2 * b_4$). In this light, the direct effect is represented by the coefficient b_3 .

The results obtained from the test of mediation using Baron and Kenny's approach of mediation was confirmed using the bootstrap test of indirect effects. Thus, this helps to overcome the limitations of the approach of Baron and Kenny (1986) through the use of confidence intervals to bypass the problems of statistical power.

3. Results

The results of this study are presented in terms of the direct effect between innovation and quality management as well as the indirect effect through the mediation of quality management. Innovation was captured in terms product, process, market, and organisational innovations. In terms of quality management, a composite index of commitment to quality, employee involvement, customer focus, process monitoring, incentives, and recognition was done. In the same light, a composite index of productivity, output growth, and market share was done for competitiveness.

3.1 The Effect of Innovation on Competitiveness

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_4 X_{4i} + \mu_i \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

Table 1. Effect of Innovation on Competitiveness

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	16.097*	1.134		14.192	0.000
Product Innovation	0.150*	0.051	0.158	2.953	0.003
Process Innovation	0.366*	0.074	0.264	4.972	0.000
Market Innovation	0.016	0.083	0.010	0.194	0.847
Organisational Innovation	0.186**	0.073	0.137	2.558	0.011

(*)Significant at 1% and (**)Significant at 5% Level of Significance

a. Dependent Variable: Competitiveness (Y)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Product Innovation (X₁), Process Innovation (X₁), Market Innovation (X₁) and Organisational Innovation (X₁)

Based on the results presented in Table 1, the coefficients of the variables (product = 0.150, process = 0.366, market = 0.016 and organisation innovation = 0.186) are positive implying a positive effect on competitiveness. Both product and process innovations are significant at 1% level of significance, organisational innovation is significant at 5% level of significance, while market innovation is insignificant (p>0.05). This practically implies that companies in the food processing industry of Cameroon could innovate in terms of product, process, as well as organisation in order to achieve a potential to compete with other companies in the industry.

3.2 The Effect of Innovation on Quality Management

$$M_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_4 X_{4i} + \mu_i \dots \dots \dots (4)$$

Table 2. Effect of Innovation on Quality Management

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	12.583*	1.118		11.252	.000
Product Innovation	.131*	.050	.149	2.610	.009
Process Innovation	.045	.073	.035	.616	.539
Market Innovation	.097	.082	.067	1.190	.235
Organisational Innovation	-.065	.072	-.052	-.907	.365

(*)Significant at 1%

a. Dependent Variable: Quality Management (M)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Product Innovation (X₁), Process Innovation (X₂), Market Innovation (X₃) and Organisational Innovation (X₄)

In line with the results presented in Table 2, the coefficients of the variables (product = 0.131, process = 0.045 and market = 0.097) are positive implying a positive effect on quality management except organisational innovation (-0.065). Only product innovation is significant at a 1% level of significance while process, market, and organisational innovations are insignificant ($p > 0.06$). Focusing on enhancing both effectiveness and efficiency in quality management, companies in Cameroon's food processing industry could turn to innovation as a key strategy for their product development.

3.3 The Effect of Quality Management on Competitiveness

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 M_i + \mu_i \dots \dots \dots (6)$$

Table 3. Effect of Quality Management on Competitiveness

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	19.170*	.834		22.993	.000
Quality Management	.274*	.058	.252	4.757	.000

(*)Significant at 1%

a. Dependent Variable: Competitiveness (Y)

b. Predictors: (Constant), Quality Management (M)

According to the results presented in Table 3, the coefficient of quality management (0.274) is positive, which implies a positive effect on competitiveness. Quality management has a significant effect on competitiveness at a 1% level of significance ($p > 0.01$). These results practically demonstrate that companies in the food processing industry of Cameroon could be more competitive if they are focused on managing their quality of which innovation could extend a helping hand.

3.4 The Mediating Effect of Quality Management in Innovation and Competitiveness

Table 4. The Mediating Effect of Quality Management in Product Innovation and Competitiveness

	R ²	F	B	SE	T	P
Effect of product innovation on competitiveness (Total effect) (b₁)	0.0568	20.0455	0.1949	0.0502	3.8843	0.0001
Effect of product innovation on quality management (b₂)	0.0238	8.1345	0.1355	0.0475	2.8521	0.0046
Effect of product innovation on competitiveness when quality management is	0.1043	19.3373	0.1949	0.0502	3.8843	0.0001

controlled (Direct effect) (b ₃)						
Effect of quality management on performance when product innovation is controlled (b ₄)	0.1043	19.3373	0.2401	0.0572	4.1986	0.0000
Test Of Significance Of Indirect Effect						
Bootstrap Test						
Effect	SE.	LL95CI		UL95CI		
0.0325	0.0112	0.0118		0.0561		

The results presented in Table 4 show that product innovation positively and significantly affect competitiveness ($b_1=0.1949$; $p<1\%$). Also, a positive and significant effect could be established between product innovation and quality management ($b_2=0.1355$; $p<1\%$). Also, the effect of product innovation on competitiveness controlled by quality management is positive and significant ($b_3=0.1949$; $p>1\%$). Furthermore, the effect of quality management on competitiveness controlled by product innovation is positive and significant as well ($b_4=0.2401$; $p<1\%$). These results were confirmed by a bootstrap test with a confidence interval of 5% with no zero found in the interval [0.0118; 0.0561]. Consequently, quality management has a mediating effect in the link between product innovation and competitiveness. This mediation is a partial mediation since the effect did not turn to a null (b_3). Thus, there seems to be a direct effect of product innovation on competitiveness.

Table 5. The Mediating Effect of Quality Management in Process Innovation and Competitiveness

	R²	F	B	SE	T	P
Effect of process innovation on competitiveness (Total effect) (b ₁)	0.1059	39.4375	0.4515	0.0719	6.2799	0.0000
Effect of process innovation on quality management (b ₂)	0.0034	1.1246	0.0740	0.0698	1.0605	0.2897
Effect of process innovation on competitiveness when quality management is controlled (Direct effect) (b ₃)	0.1605	31.7459	0.4327	0.0699	6.1908	0.0000
Effect of quality management on performance when process innovation is controlled (b ₄)	0.1605	31.7459	0.2547	0.0548	4.6490	0.0000
Test Of Significance Of Indirect Effect						

Bootstrap Test			
Effect	SE.	LL95CI	UL95CI
0.0188	0.0156	-0.0093	0.0523

The results presented in Table 5 show that process innovation positively and significantly affect competitiveness ($b_1=0.4515$; $p<1\%$). Also, there is a positive but insignificant effect between process innovation and quality management ($b_2=0.0740$; $p>5\%$) and the effect of process innovation on competitiveness controlled by quality management is positive and significant ($b_3=0.4327$; $p>1\%$). Furthermore, the effect of quality management on competitiveness controlled by process innovation is positive and significant ($b_4=0.2547$; $p<1\%$). The results indicate the absence of mediation as confirmed by a bootstrap test with a confidence interval of 5% because there is zero found in the interval $[-0.0093; 0.0523]$. Consequently, quality management has no mediating effect on the relationship between process innovation and competitiveness. However, there exists a direct relationship between process innovation and competitiveness ($b_3=0.4327$; $p>1\%$).

Table 6. The Mediating Effect of Quality Management in Market Innovation and Competitiveness

	R²	F	B	SE	T	P
Effect of market innovation on competitiveness (Total effect) (b₁)	0.0105	3.5300	0.1628	0.0867	1.8788	0.0611
Effect of market innovation on quality management (b₂)	0.0094	3.1565	0.0740	0.0698	1.7766	0.0765
Effect of market innovation on competitiveness when quality management is controlled (Direct effect) (b₃)	0.0698	12.4506	0.1251	0.0845	1.4800	0.1398
Effect of quality management on performance when market innovation is controlled (b₄)	0.0698	12.4506	0.2661	0.0579	4.5997	0.0000
Test Of Significance Of Indirect Effect						
Bootstrap Test						
Effect	SE.	LL95CI	UL95CI			
0.0377	0.0224	-0.0049	0.0832			

With regards to Table 6, the results depict that market innovation positively but insignificantly affect competitiveness ($b_1=0.1628$; $p>5\%$). Also,

a positive but insignificant effect between market innovation and quality management was depicted ($b_2=0.0740$; $p>1\%$). The effect of market innovation on competitiveness controlled by quality management is positive and insignificant ($b_3=0.1251$; $p>5\%$). Consequently, quality management has no mediating effect in the relationship between market innovation and competitiveness. Thus, there is no direct relationship between market innovation and competitiveness ($b_3=0.1251$; $p>5\%$).

Table 7. The Mediating Effect of Quality Management on Organisational Innovation and Competitiveness

	R²	F	B	SE	T	P
Effect of organisational innovation on competitiveness (Total effect) (b₁)	0.0605	21.4462	0.3332	0.0720	4.6310	0.0000
Effect of organisational innovation on quality management (b₂)	0.0000	0.0024	0.0034	0.0682	0.0494	0.9607
Effect of organisational innovation on competitiveness when quality management is controlled (Direct effect) (b₃)	0.1238	23.4553	0.3323	0.0696	4.7749	0.0000
Effect of quality management on performance when organisational innovation is controlled (b₄)	0.1238	23.4553	0.2737	0.0559	4.8974	0.0000
Test Of Significance Of Indirect Effect						
Bootstrap Test						
Effect	SE.	LL95CI		UL95CI		
0.0009	0.0178	-0.0391		0.0312		

The results presented in Table 7 illustrate the fact that organisational innovation positively and significantly affect competitiveness ($b_1=0.3332$; $p<1\%$). Also, there is a positive but insignificant effect of organisational innovation on quality management ($b_2=0.0034$; $p>5\%$) and the effect of organisational innovation on competitiveness controlled by quality management is positive and significant ($b_3=0.3323$; $p>1\%$). Furthermore, the effect of quality management on competitiveness controlled by organisational innovation is positive and significant ($b_4=0.2737$; $p<1\%$). The results indicate the absence of mediation as confirmed by a bootstrap test with a confidence interval of 5% because there is zero found in the interval $[-0.0391; 0.0312]$. Consequently, quality management has no mediating effect on the relationship between organisational innovation and competitiveness. Thus, there is a direct

effect between organisational innovation and competitiveness ($b_3=0.3323$; $p>1\%$).

4. Discussions of Results

4.1 Product Innovation, Quality Management, and Competitiveness

Based on the results of the test of mediation through the Baron and Kenny approach, product innovation affects the competitiveness of food processing companies in Cameroon through the partial mediation of quality management (Table 4). That is, through the partial mediation of quality management, there is a positive and significant effect on product innovation on competitiveness, making product innovation a predictor of competitiveness. The results demonstrate the fact that if food processing companies in Cameroon improve on their products, these products could lead to a corresponding improvement in quality management and, therefore, an improved ability to compete with other competitors in the market.

These results are in line with the work of Oleksandr and Kumanova (2021) who examined innovative activity as a means of increasing the competitiveness of enterprises' products. The study aimed to determine the impact and importance of innovation in improving the competitiveness of products of business entities. The study showed that the results could be applied to solve specific practical problems in industrial enterprises to form an effective program of innovative activity to ensure the competitiveness of the products they manufacture. Also, these results are in line with the work of Hendayana et al. (2019) who carried out a study on the effect of Innovation on Business Competitiveness of Small and Medium Enterprise in Indonesia. This study examined the effect of innovation on the competitiveness of the handicraft sector creative industries in Indonesia. The findings revealed that innovation has a significant positive effect on the competitiveness of SMEs.

4.2 Process Innovation, Quality Management, and Competitiveness

In line with the results of the test of mediation, process innovation does not affect the competitiveness of food processing companies in Cameroon through the mediation of quality management (Table 5). That is, it attests that through the mediation of quality management, there is a positive but insignificant effect of process innovation on competitiveness. Also, there is a positive and significant direct effect of process innovation on competitiveness. This practically demonstrates the fact that the competing food processing companies of Cameroon cannot rely on quality management to improve the effect of process innovation on competitiveness. This is because the results indicated in the first place that there is no relationship between process innovation and quality management.

The results of the direct effect are in line with the work of Efend (2020) who carried out a study on innovation and competitiveness for low technology manufacturing SMEs through imitating capability and learning: The case of Indonesia. The aim of this study was to examine relationships among organizational learning, imitating capability, innovation, and competitiveness advantage in the small and medium enterprise (SME). The results showed that innovation had a positive relationship with competitiveness and has a mediating role in the relationship between organizational learning and imitating capability to competitiveness advantage. These results contradicts the work of Godinho et al. (2017) who investigated the relationship between innovation and total quality management and the innovation effects on organizational performance. Their study concluded that there is a statistical significant relationship between innovation and the implementation of TQM practices.

4.3 Market Innovation, Quality Management, and Competitiveness

With regards to the results portrayed by the test of mediation through the Baron and Kenny approach, market innovation does not affect the competitiveness of food processing companies in Cameroon through the partial mediation of quality management (Table 6). In other words, it advocate the fact that quality management positively and insignificantly affect process innovation and competitiveness. These results exhibit the fact that if food processing companies in Cameroon improve on their market innovations, it will not be a fruitful endeavor to increase competitiveness of the companies.

These results are in contradiction of the work of Kipchumba et al. (2021) who conducted a study on the effects of production and market innovations on the level of competitiveness of Sorghum Small Scale Agri-enterprises in Kenya and they should integrate different innovations on product, process, and market in enhancing competitiveness. There is also no presence of a direct effect of market innovation on competitiveness which also contradicts the work of Kiveu, Namusonge and Muathe (2019), who assessed the effect of innovation on firm competitiveness: the case of manufacturing SMEs in Nairobi County, Kenya.

4.4 Organisational Innovation, Quality Management, and Competitiveness

Finally, the results of the test of mediation convey that organisational innovation does not affect the competitiveness of food processing companies in Cameroon through the mediation of quality management (Table 7). That is, through the mediation of quality management, there is a positive but insignificant effect of organisational innovation on competitiveness. There is a positive and significant direct effect of organisational innovation on

competitiveness. The results, as illustrated by Table 7, show that if food processing companies in Cameroon adopt organisational innovation as a strategy to compete, they will actually have an edge over competitors. At the same time, these results demonstrated the fact that they do not need to improve their quality management using organisational innovation with the aim being competitiveness.

The results of the direct effect are in line with the work of Loann (2023) who investigated Innovation Strategy and Firm Competitiveness: A Framework to Support the Holistic Integration of Eco-Innovation. The study had as main objective to examine the interactions between all the components of ecoinnovation strategy: holistic engagement, technological innovation focus, organisational adaptation, open innovation, peculiarities of firm size. These results contradict the work of Heira et al. (2020) on the effects of Innovation on Competitiveness and Performance: Empirical Evidence in the State of Guanajuato in Mexico. The obtained results show that innovation has a positive influence on competitiveness and performance of the manufacturing companies in Guanajuato.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper sorts to examine the effect of innovation on competitiveness in the food processing industry of Cameroon, with a specific focus on the mediating role of quality management. The objective is to determine whether quality management could mediate the effect of innovations (product, process, market and organisational) on competitiveness. The first objective was to assess the effect of innovation on competitiveness in the food processing industry of Cameroon. To this effect, the results show that innovations in terms of product, process, and organisational innovation were found to have a positive and significant effect on competitiveness. This was with the exception of market innovation, which happened to have an insignificant effect on competitiveness. The second objective of the study was to establish a link between innovation and quality management as it was the mediating variable. Based on this quest and the results obtained, it could be concluded that innovation (product innovation) could positively and significantly predict quality management.

In addition, as objective, this paper sorts to investigate the effect of quality management on the competitiveness of food processing companies in Cameroon. The test of hypothesis for this study shows that there is a positive and significant effect of quality management on competitiveness. Therefore, this further gave more strength to quality management as a mediator in this study. Finally, this paper sorts to establish a mediating role of quality management in the effect of innovation on competitiveness. This was made possible using Baron and Kenny's (1986) approach of mediation and the

Hayes (2023) Process Macro Version 4.3. Concerning the test of indirect effect, quality management was observed to have a partial mediation effect on product innovation and competitiveness. However, these findings indicated that quality management could not mediate the effect of process, market, and organisational innovations on competitiveness. Further research could be conducted while considering different mediators other than quality management.

Conflict of Interest: The authors reported no conflict of interest.

Data Availability: All of the data are included in the content of the paper.

Funding Statement: The authors did not obtain any funding for this research.

Declaration for Human Participants: This study has been approved by the ethical Research Committee of the Faculty of Social and Management Sciences of the University of Buea, and the principles of the Helsinki Declaration were followed.

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Potent Roles of Humor in EFL Classes in Higher Education: An Exploratory Study of Lebanese Perspectives

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[Doi:10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p146](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p146)

Submitted: 30 October 2023
Accepted: 30 January 2024
Published: 29 February 2024

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Cite As:

Joudi N.S. & Ayoub N.N. (2024). *Potent Roles of Humor in EFL Classes in Higher Education: An Exploratory Study of Lebanese Perspectives*. European Scientific Journal, ESJ, 20 (4), 146. <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2024.v20n4p146>

Abstract

This paper focuses on scrutinizing the attitudes and opinions of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors and learners on the use of humor in higher education in Lebanon as a pedagogical tool in classroom contexts. It is used in building a harmonious relationship between instructors and students, lowering affective barriers to learning, keeping students attentive to class activities, developing creativity and increasing instructional effectiveness as well as students' learning. It also aims to describe the instructors' experiences in employing it in their classrooms and to determine the students' perspectives on its potent roles in learning. In this exploratory study, a mixed-method design and a convenient sampling of participants were utilized. A total of 13 EFL instructors, working at 1 public and 4 private universities in Lebanon, and 86 EFL students participated in the study. To describe and quantify their perceptions of the potent roles of employing humor in EFL classes, two online surveys of two sets of questions each, including closed-ended and open-ended, and four focus group discussions were administered. The overall qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data indicated that Lebanese EFL instructors and students have positive attitudes towards integrating humor as a pedagogical tool and as a fundamental part of the teaching strategies in EFL higher education classes. This is because it creates an open communication climate, captures students' interest in the subject matter, boosts attention,

reduces anxiety, makes the instructor more approachable, and yields better instructor evaluation. The findings of this study also revealed the need to train teachers to use humor artfully.

Keywords: Humor, EFL, Lebanon, Higher Education

Introduction

The global nature of humor and its effect has been investigated and emphasized by various scholars in many fields such as sociology, philosophy, anthropology, psychology, linguistics, literature, and education (Attardo, 1994; Berwald, 1992; Wagner & Urios-Aparisi, 2011). Trachtenberg (1979) describes humor as a universal form of language throughout the world. Freud (1967) defines it as a sort of defense mechanism that allows one to face a different situation without becoming overwhelmed by unpleasant emotions. Leftcourt and Martin (1986) hold that it is a mechanism that allows people to encounter stress and anxiety in everyday life situations. In 1991, Booth-Butterfield developed the Inventory of Humor orientation to measure humorous traits across a variety of situations. Years after, based on incongruity theory, Wanzer, Frymier, and Irwin (2010) developed the instructional humor processing theory (IHPT) and claimed that learners need to perceive humor and then resolve the bizarre elements. They asserted that this strategy improves students' learning and increases instructional effectiveness. Goodboy, et al. (2015) extended their research and asserted that instructor humor in colleges remained a positive predictor for learner's cognitive learning, participation, and out-of-class communication.

Earlier studies conducted by Baysac (2017), Banas, et al. (2011), Lems (2011), Skinner (2010), Garner (2006), James (2004), and many others have documented the positive pedagogical effects of humor at a variety of educational levels.

The use of humor as a viable pedagogical tool has been on the rise in almost every discipline (Jones, 2014). Studies conducted on integrating humor in classrooms have revealed its positive impact on instructional efficiency and learners' psychological well-being. Chiasson (2002) contended that humor is a vital communicative attitude that characterizes effective teachers. McNeely (2016) reveals that humor fuels engagement and helps students learn. Some other studies indicated that humor also contributes in creating an open communication climate in the classroom (Fadel & Al-Bargi, 2018).

A study was conducted by Lu'mu, et al. (2023) on the effect of humor on teacher-student relationship quality (TSRQ) and student engagement. The results confirmed the mediating role of TSRQ and concluded that the sense of humor positively presided over the relationship between perceived related humor and TSRQ, as well as perceived related humor and student engagement.

Another study was conducted by Weisi and Mohammadi (2023) to investigate the effectiveness of the use of humor by EFL teachers in a private language institute in the context of Iran. The results indicated that using humor in classes acts as a relaxing, comforting, and tension reducing device. Also, it increases student interest and enjoyment, enhances learners' concentration and motivation, and improves the quality of learning.

Students appear to have a strong desire for entertainment, not just in their engagement with social media and technology, but also in their approach towards education (Dotson, 2016). Recently, Bahous, et al. (2011) have reported that motivating Lebanese EFL students to develop in the target language seems quite complex. In another study, Bacha and Bahous (2011) added that their motivation is highly affected by their different attitudes towards foreign language. Accordingly, instructors must strive to positively impact students' attitudes by providing learners with opportunities to interact freely (Ghaith, 2003) and to overcome anxiety since it may hinder their abilities to learn English (Krashen, 1987). Nonetheless, the related literature and research indicates that no studies have been conducted on the instructor's and the students' perception on the use of humor in higher education in Lebanon.

This study aims to scrutinize the attitudes of university EFL students and the opinions of EFL instructors on the use of humor in higher education in Lebanon. It also aims to describe the EFL instructors' experiences in employing different forms of humor and the students' perspectives on its potent pedagogical roles in EFL university classes in Lebanon.

Statement of the Problem

Learners in different contexts may face a swarm of academic stress and anxiety towards the subject matter being taught, and thus they may feel demotivated and resist active participation. A study, conducted in 2015 by the Center of Research and Development (CRDP) in Lebanon, indicated that students demonstrate lack of motivation when studying English and tend to graduate with minimal command of the English language. Later, Komayha, et al. (2018) investigated the factors that affected students' motivation in the Lebanese context in EFL classrooms and found that the teachers' instructional strategies and practices is one of them. They recommended that teachers should help their learners to find motivation in the areas where they do not expect. With due consideration of all previously noted factors, some instructors tried to overcome these challenges and spice up their lectures by exploiting many trends, of which humor is a part of. Despite the overall high level of agreement on the potent roles of integrating humor in classroom, there was a clear indication that the actual use of humor was somehow limited (Huss & Eastep, 2016). Thus, some perceive it as undesirable and ineffective.

Literature Review

Humor is a phenomenon that can be viewed from different points of view depending on its specific context of use. Banas, et al. (2011) considered it as an intentional message that yields laughter and amusement through incongruous meanings. Instructors' use of humor has been linked repeatedly to positive functions in general educational contexts, such as higher instructional effectiveness (Englert, 2010; Wanzer, 2002), improved perceptions of the teacher (Scott, 1976), higher teacher evaluations (Bryant, et al., 1980), enhanced quality of the student-teacher relationship (Welker, 1977), and affective learning (Wanzer & Frymier, 1999), including lower student anxiety and more relaxed classroom environment (Neuliep, 1991).

Humor is also identified as verbal and non-verbal or a combination of both. Verbal or word-based humor type that plays an important role in EFL classes includes wordplays, funny stories, puns, content related jokes, comic irony, metaphor, hyperbole, metonymy, riddles, funny examples/stories, etc. (Baysac, 2017). Examples of non-verbal or slapstick types of humor comprise funny facial expressions, gestures, and making faces. Combined verbal and nonverbal forms may include impersonation, parody, satire, monologue, and skit (Hativa, 2001). Numerous studies have investigated the types of humor and their potent roles when employed by teachers in the classroom (Aylor & Oppliger, 2003; Bryant & Zillman, 1988; Davies & Apter, 1980; Frymier & Wanzer, 1999; Frymier & Weser, 2001; Gorham & Christophel, 1990; Sadowski et al., 1994; White, 2001).

Gorham and Christophel (1990) asked learners to record a thorough journal of the humorous actions and words the teachers employed in class, and then sorted them out into 13 categories that range between appropriate and inappropriate humor. A year after, Neuliep (1991) explicitly examined the appropriateness of the humor categories identified by Gorham and Christophel, and confirmed the existence of humor categories. Also, Bryant et al. (1980) and Torok, et al. (2004) examined a group of college students' and teachers' perceptions of typology of classroom humor. They concluded that there are seven appropriate types of humor which range from funny stories, funny comments, jokes, to professional humor, pun, cartoon, and riddles.

A study conducted by St-Amand et al. (2023) used the instructional humor processing theory to find out how different humor subtypes are employed by teachers, such as course-related, course-unrelated, self-disparaging, other-disparaging pertain to students' well-being, sense of belonging, and engagement. Thus, it was concluded that humor in the classroom should be course-related since it supports students' emotional well-being, sense of belonging, and engagement.

Wanzer, et al. (2006), in line with the prior researchers by Bryant et al. (1980), Gorham and Christophel (1990), also asked students to recall and

construct examples of both appropriate and inappropriate uses of humor by their teachers. They identified four broad categories, namely: related humor, unrelated humor, self-disparaging humor, and unplanned humor. For the present investigation, there is an attempt to extend Wanzer's, et al. (2006) research by attempting to elicit instructors' and students' perceptions on appropriate types of humor that were employed and could be employed in EFL classes in a Lebanese university context.

How do university EFL students in Higher Education in Lebanon feel about the use of humor in EFL classes? What are the perceptions of the university students on the potent roles of employing humor in EFL classrooms in Lebanon? What are the university EFL instructors' opinions on the use of humor in EFL classes in Higher Education in Lebanon? How do EFL university instructors employ humor in their classes in Higher Education in Lebanon?

Methodology

According to Halcomb (2018) and Creswell et al. (2011), mixed-method research allows researchers to employ creativity in integrating quantitative and qualitative elements to have better answers to the research questions. In this study, a convergent parallel mixed methods research design was adapted. Hence, both qualitative and quantitative data were assembled and analyzed separately, but the findings were conjointly interpreted. The data for this study were collected from two teacher/student online surveys of two sets of questions each, including closed-ended and open-ended, and four focus group discussions.

1. Sample Selection

The work group of the present research was selected by using convenient sampling technique based on the willingness to participate. A total of 86 EFL students out of 200 and 13 EFL instructors out of 20 from the public university in Lebanon (The Lebanese University) and 4 other private universities (Lebanese International University, Beirut Arab University, Islamic University of Lebanon, and The University of Saint Joseph) enthusiastically participated in the study. They completed two online questionnaires of closed and open ended questions, making the response rate 45%. Willingly, 40 out of the 86 students who responded to the online questionnaire joined two online semi-structured focus group discussions which took place via ZOOM meetings on February 20 and March 1, 2022. Enthusiastically, on March 3, 2022, the 13 EFL instructors who responded to the survey also joined 2 other semi-structured focus group discussions conducted in an informal setting, outside any university premises.

2. Instruments

Comprehensive 3-point Likert-scale questionnaires were designed to elicit the attitudes and opinions of university EFL students and teachers on the use of humor in higher education in Lebanon. As Bolarinwa (2015) noted, it is highly important to validate an adapted questionnaire before making any claims. The development of the questionnaires employed in this study started with a comprehensive literature scan. Among the studies that used a humor questionnaire to investigate its potentials in EFL classrooms were Alduleimi and Aziz (2016), Askildson (2005), Gonulal (2018), Lucas (2005), Mantooth (2010), Wagner and Urios-Aparisi (2011), and Wanzer and Frymier (1999).

Necessary changes and edits were employed on these previously used questionnaires to cover a wide range of aspects of classroom humor in university EFL classroom. The final versions of the two questionnaires included a demographic profile part, 10 items for students, and 15 items for instructors. Here, respondents were given three levels of choice ranging from “agree” to “disagree” or “neither agree nor disagree”. The students’ questionnaire was piloted with 10 Lebanese EFL students, and the teachers’ questionnaire was piloted with 5 EFL instructors. To describe the EFL instructors’ experiences in employing different forms of humor and the students’ perspectives on its potent pedagogical roles in EFL university classes in Lebanon, another form of data collection was included. The researcher added to the questionnaires open-ended questions in 2 sets, 6 questions each: one set for instructors and one for students.

Subsequently, the survey questionnaires data were supported with 2 teachers’ focus group discussions which lead to great insights on how they employ the different forms of humor to illustrate any particularity of language in their EFL classes at a university level. Furthermore, two (2) students’ group discussions were held to tell more about their perspectives on the potent roles of humor in university EFL classes.

Data Analysis

For investigating EFL learners’ and instructors’ beliefs and experiences of humor in English language classroom, data generated from the qualitative and quantitative data were tallied, encoded, tabulated, and jointly interpreted using descriptive statistics/statistical analysis.

After conducting the questionnaire data collection phase, statistical analysis has been employed based on the analytical description that appears in the form of charts that Google forms instantaneously create according to the respondents' input on each item.

Additionally, the qualitative data obtained from the focus group discussions were analyzed by the researchers through a phenomenological lens in which descriptions for the common meaning for the participants’ lived

experiences of a concept or a phenomenon were considered (Creswell, 2011). The researchers paid attention to the participants' words and expressions, explored the experiences of each participant, and identified commonalities in the ways they made sense of the concept under investigation.

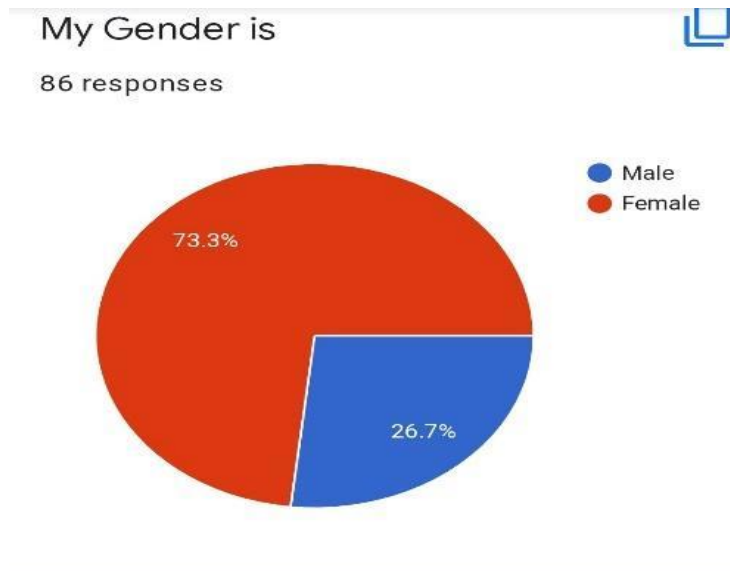
This methodology was quite appropriate since it provided an in-depth description and deeper understanding of Lebanese EFL learners' beliefs about the use of humor in English classes. Furthermore, a conversation analytic approach was used for the analysis.

Results and Findings

1. Students' Survey Analysis

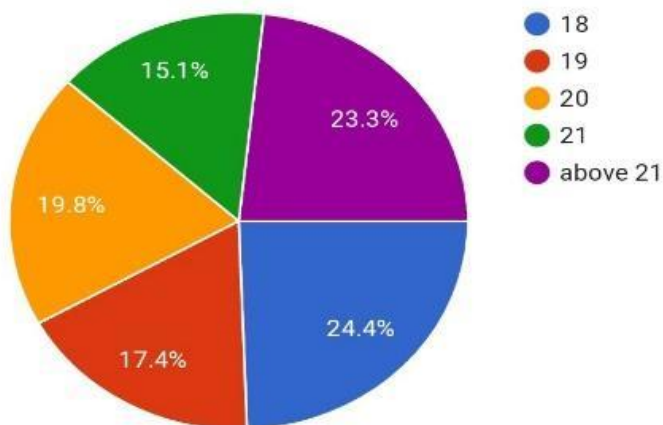
1.1 Demographics

The students' respondents are 73.3 % females and 26.7% males. The age of the students falls into the range of 18 and above: 24.4% 18 years, 17.4% 19 years, 19.8 % 20 years, 15.1% 21 years, and 23.3% above 21. Furthermore, the results show that 89.5% of the respondents are in private universities and 10.5% in the public university in Lebanon. The figures below depict the results.



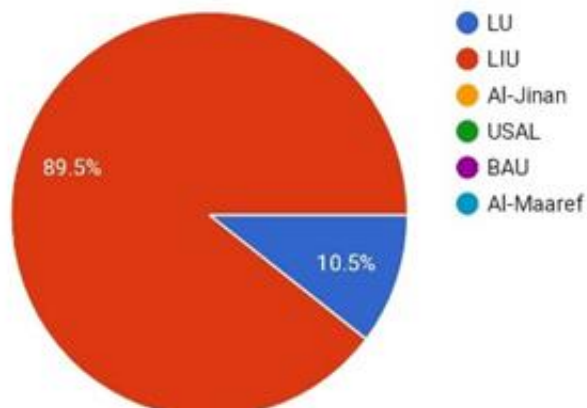
My age is

86 responses



I am a student at

86 responses



1.2 Roles of Humor in Language Learning

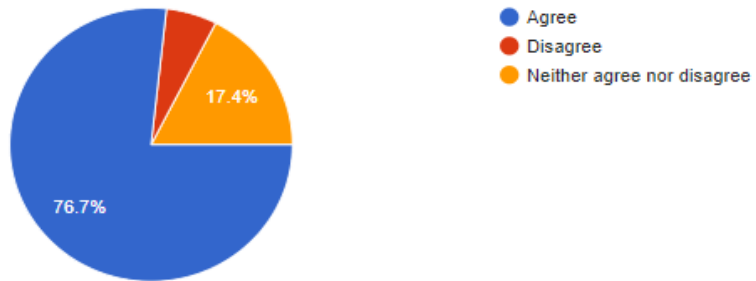
Respondents were asked if their stress level decreases or they feel less anxious when the English language instructor uses humor in class, and their responses were very close.

However, the overwhelming response of 76.7% of the respondents was that humor class decreases the stress level, while only 17.4% neither agree nor

disagree. Moreover, 16.3% disagreed that they feel less anxious when the English language instructor uses humor in class. Thus, these questions assert the importance of humor in reducing learners' anxiety. The figures below depict the results.

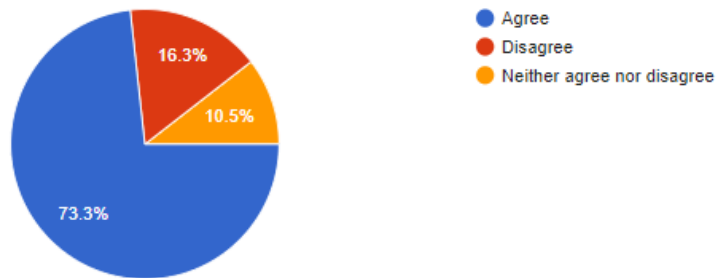
1. I feel my stress level decreases when the English language instructor uses humor in class.

86 responses



2. I feel less anxious when the English language instructor uses humor in class.

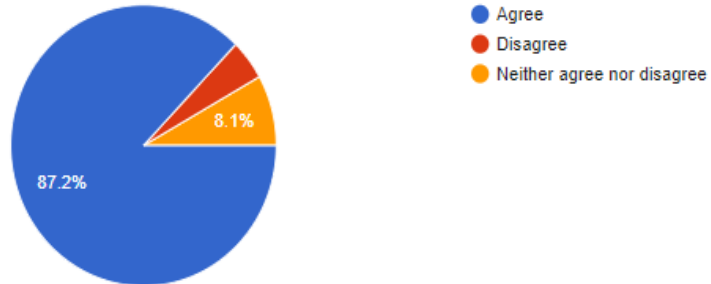
86 responses



When the respondents were asked if they feel more interested and attentive when the English language instructor uses humor in class, the results showed that majority agreed that humor makes them more interested (87.2%) and more attentive (77.9%). This is as opposed to 10.5% who confirmed that they feel more distracted when the English language instructor uses humor in classroom.

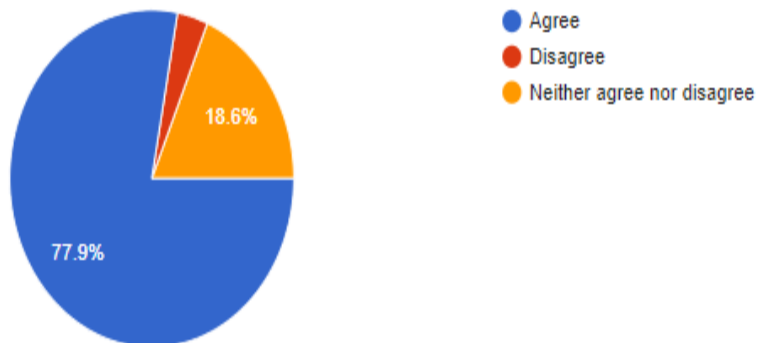
3. I feel more interested in learning English when the English language instructor uses humor in class.

86 responses



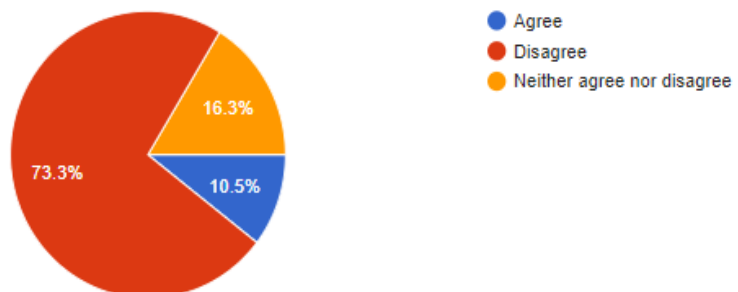
4. I am more attentive in class when the English language instructor uses humor.

86 responses



5. I feel more distracted when the English language instructor uses humor in classroom.

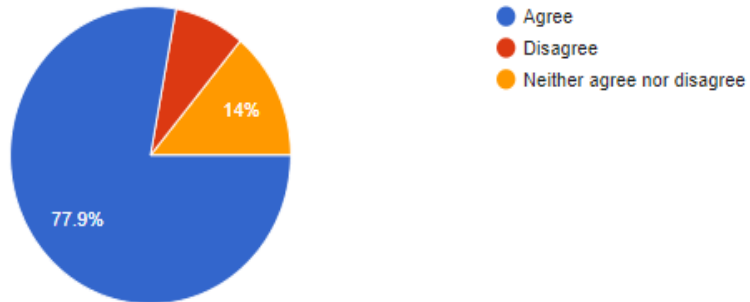
86 responses



Other results depicted the students' responses to the statement "I do not feel afraid to ask questions when the English language instructor uses humor in class". 14% provided a neutral stance to the statement, 8.1% disagreed, while 77.9% approved the claim.

6. I don't feel afraid to ask questions when the English language instructor uses humor in class.

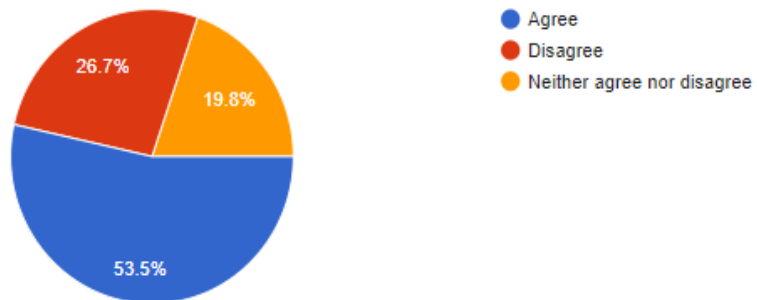
86 responses



While question 7 depicts the responses to the statement "I do not feel afraid of making mistakes in classroom where humor is used frequently", the minority of 19.8% provided a neutral response, followed by 26.7% who disagreed, and 53.5% who agreed.

7. I don't feel afraid of making mistakes in the classroom where humor is used frequently.

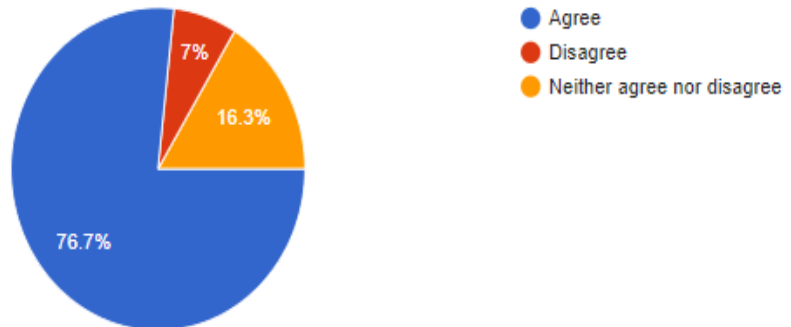
86 responses



When the students were asked whether they feel self-motivated to learn English and are encouraged to attend the class because of class humor, the overwhelming majority agreed. Therefore, this result confirms the potent roles of humor in learning.

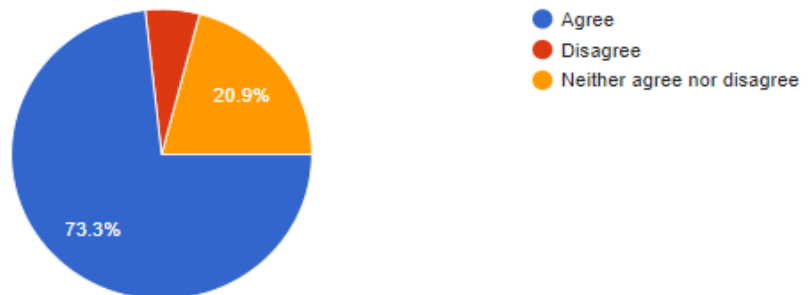
8. I feel encouraged on attending the class when the English language instructor uses humor in class.

86 responses



9. I feel self-motivated to learn English when the English language instructor uses humor in class.

86 responses



Respondents were also asked if they feel more likely to recall the lesson when the English language instructor uses humor in the classroom. 65.1% of the overwhelming majority agreed. Therefore, this result confirms the potent roles of humor in recalling.

10. I feel more likely to recall the lesson when the English language instructor uses humor in the classroom.

86 responses

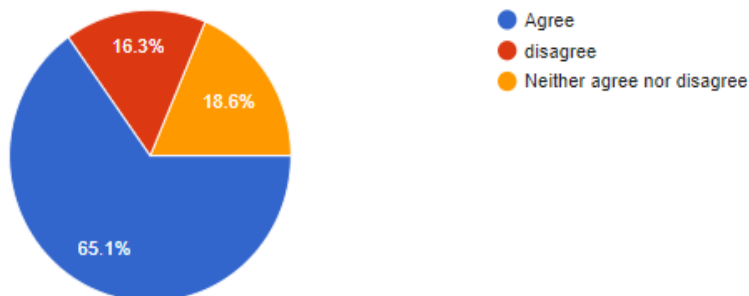


Table 1 shows the percentages of the students' responses regarding their feelings and opinions on the use of humor in EFL classes.

Table 1. Percentages of Students' Feelings and Opinions on the Use of Humor in EFL Classes

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1. I feel my stress level decreases when the English language instructor uses humor in class.	76.7	17.4	5.9
2. I feel less anxious when the English language instructor uses humor in class.	73.3	10.5	16.3
3. I feel more interested in learning English when the English language instructor uses humor in class.	87.2	8.1	4.7
4. I am more attentive in class when the English language instructor uses humor.	77.9	18.6	3.5
5. I feel more distracted when the English language instructor uses humor in classroom.	73.3	16.3	10.5
6. I don't feel afraid to ask questions when the English language instructor uses humor in class.	77.9	14	8.1
7. I don't feel afraid of making mistakes in the classroom where humor is used frequently.	53.5	19.8	26.7
8. I feel encouraged on attending the class when the English language instructor uses humor in class.	76.7	16.3	7
9. I feel self-motivated to learn English when the English language instructor uses humor in class.	73.3	20.9	5.8
10. I feel more likely to recall the lesson when the English language instructor uses humor in the classroom.	65.1	18.6	16.3

2. Students' Focus Group Discussion Analysis

For the qualitative data collection, willingly, 40 out of 86 who responded to the online questionnaire joined the 2 online semi-structured focus group discussions which took place via ZOOM meeting on February 20, 2022, and on March 1, 2022.

Through these focus groups, the researchers wanted to gather information about the students' knowledge, attitudes, and recommendations regarding the need for humor as a potent teaching strategy for university students in Lebanon.

Statements were collected from the questions asked to the 40 members of the two focus groups and were interpreted accordingly. The responses are combined in the following outcomes and a sample of what was stated, whether they shared consensus or disagreed, was reported.

Outcome 1. To understand what “Humor” means to them

What is humor? What does the term “class humor” mean?

- Humor is the use of some funny words or words to change the atmosphere of the class and give some energy to the students.
- Humor means making fun in the class, telling a joke, watching a funny video, or telling a funny story.
- Humor is the quality of being funny and amusing. Class humor is when a teacher who makes appropriate jokes during the lesson or relates a certain concept to something funny. Of course not in sensitive times like tests, but when the time is right. Also, and most importantly, class humor has its limits.
- It is a way to add a fun dimension to education so that the student is drawn to the course. Thus, he/she does not feel bored and falls in love with continuing the lesson until the end.
- Humor is a kind of fun that makes anyone attractive. Class humor is used to make one enjoy their class and subject.
- When the class is not as serious and when the instructor is funny and does not take it too seriously, this does not make students too shy to ask and participate.
- When the students or the instructor are not stiff or strict, and they allow themselves to throw a polite joke every now and then to make almost everyone laugh; in addition, to relieve some stress and anxiety that students may have.
- Humor is anything that causes amusement and makes sense of fun.
- Class humor means that the instructor uses humor in order to make the class more energetic with a calm atmosphere.

- Humor uses jokes as a means of getting hard information across. Also, it means to be sarcastic about the information that is hard, which makes it to be easily remembered.
- Humor involves using some funny notes, or telling funny stories related to the lesson, in addition to avoiding being strict or boring.

Outcome 2. To check if humor in class promotes better understanding
Which class environment promotes better understanding: humorous or serious? Why?

- Humorous because students do not pay attention all the time; they need some time for a break to laugh and then they continue studying. The instructor will be loved when they use humor in the class, and students will not be afraid of anything in the class. They will say, “it is ok if I make a mistake; the teacher is very good with us.”
- I think humorous because students feel stress-free. When the environment is serious, students focus on trying not to make any mistakes, thus pressuring themselves too much. Learning does not have to be serious and boring.
- Of course, humorous, because it relieves stress.
- Humorous because it creates a positive classroom atmosphere and it breaks down barriers.
- Both should be presented because at some point some students get bored and need a funny moment to recharge.
- Both promote learning, but a humorous environment may help the students feel more comfortable in the class and makes them like the course which leads them to attending, participating with the instructor, and feeling more comfortable when asking or answering questions.
- Both at the same time, because seriousness keeps us on track, and humor relieves stress and anxiety
- A class should be a mixture of both. If a class is totally humorous, then students might not take the class seriously or they might focus on jokes more than the lesson; yet, if the class is only serious, it might become so boring. So a bit of both worlds is the best choice.
- Serious. While a bit of humor never hurts but seriousness in class aids in class activities, learning, understanding, and detecting problems if present, in addition to saving time.
- Being serious makes the class more organized by warning students to the limits of the class they are attending.

However, the majority agreed that there is a need to use humor in classes to have better understanding. Few reported that being serious aids in learning,

delivering class activities, and saving time. Thus, it fulfills the purpose of organization and management.

Outcome 3. To find out if humor is a communicative and learning device or a disturbing tool that leads to a waste of time

From your experience, is humor a communicative and learning device or a disturbing tool that leads to a waste of time?

- According to my experience, I feel interested in the course when the instructor uses humorous communications because it removes the stress and anxiety of the students and improves their participation, creativity, and memory.
- I think that humor is a communicative and learning device since it allows the students to feel more comfortable in the class; thus, they can concentrate more.
- In my opinion, I think that humor is a communicative and learning device since it enhances the students' confidence, so they would ask more questions about the subject without any hesitation.
- It can help in drawing the attention of the students and making them concentrate with the teacher knowing that there is time for both humor and studying. Sure it needs to be controlled by the teacher so he/she will not lose control over the class.
- It is a communicating and learning device that takes the student away for a few seconds from the "normal studying scene" into a safer environment where communication with the teacher is enhanced.
- It is a communicative and learning device that improves the concentration and learning in class.
- In my opinion, humor is a communicative and learning device because when the students are happy during the session, this will encourage them to pay more attention.
- No, I think that humor is a communicative and learning device because I see that being serious will break my concentration and block my thinking.
- Humor is a communicative and learning device. It soothes the relationship between the teacher and the students. It is a win-win situation.
- It is a communicative and learning device because, simply back in school, the classes that were humorous were my favorite and I did well in those classes unlike the classes that were strict.

- Our instructor knows exactly when to put her humorous sense, and that made me love the session and have a main cause to improve in English language.
- For me, humor is a communication tool that breaks down barriers and obstacles between the teacher and the students; thus, the students feel comfortable in asking questions instead of feeling shy. This helps in transmitting all the ideas to all the students. In addition to that, the students' love for the teacher adds to their love for the subject, and this is what jokes and humor make where they strengthen the relationship between them. So, humor is a communicative and learning device.
- For me, humor is a device to break the boredom of the individuals and restore their focus. Many times, people get strayed if they receive a lot of information at once. A small joke from time to time brings them back to talk and focus.

Few reported that humor sometimes is a disturbing tool since it hinders the concentration of students and blocks thinking. It might become like a habit for them, and everything the teacher says might be perceived as a joke. Consequently, this will hinder them from learning.

**Outcome 4. To check if humor increases self-motivation and engagement
Do you feel self-motivated and more engaged to learn English when the English language instructor uses humor in class? Why?**

- It can encourage an atmosphere of openness, develop students' divergent thinking, improve their retention of the presented materials, and garner respect for the teacher.
- Yes, of course. Humans tend to be attracted to whatever lightens them up, so I believe I would feel self-motivated if the instructor uses humor but again to a certain extent; the instructor should not overdo it.
- Of course! Especially when it comes to language learning where we are trying to adapt to a foreign accent. I myself do not like boring people and routine or even sitting in places for a long time. As such, when the teacher uses humor in teaching, he/she adds some fun and attraction to the course, allowing us to follow to the end without any boredom. We make a lot of mistakes, so we need a cool environment.
- Actually, yes, I feel comfortable and confident when asking and discussing in class. The English language is highly important. For instance, it contains rich information and grammar, making it a bit complicated. Therefore, it should be taught in a simple and smooth manner. Additionally, there should be discussions and interactions with the instructor and classmates. If the instructor is too serious,

students may not engage in learning English and might prefer not to talk because they fear making mistakes while speaking. However, on the topic of making mistakes while speaking, instructors who use humor sometimes make fun of these mistakes, which can be considered as bullying. Students who made mistakes may feel bullied and sad.

- When students start learning a new language, the teacher should employ various methods to connect them with the material. One of these approaches involves using humor. However, it is not necessary to use it all the time. This method attracts students to learn the language because they perceive the teacher as approachable, rather than constantly serious. This signifies the teacher's pride in their students.

Therefore, the majority agreed that humor increases self-motivation and engagement.

Outcome 5. To find out if humor improves the ability to retain/remember information

Does humor improve your ability to retain/remember information?

Explain.

- Humor will help me, as a student, to remember the information better. The jokes or funny notes used during teaching will stick in my mind alongside the information, making it more memorable compared to traditional and boring teaching methods.
- Yes, when I recall the funny moments from a class with a humorous atmosphere, the entire information explained during that class comes back to my mind.
- Yes, it does. Humor is more easily recalled by students than the learned information itself. So, students may unconsciously use this to remember the given information by recollecting that moment or remembering what was happening at that time.
- Yes! Jokes are easier to remember than a theory. Thus, if a theory is presented in a fun way, the chances of forgetting it are almost nil.
- Yes, of course, since we remember funny situations easily.
- Yes, sometimes. When I am studying, I start remembering what the instructor said, so I never forget it. In addition, I share a joke or something funny that happened in class with my friends or parents.
- Yes, humor improves our ability to remember information and certain situations. For example, I remember what we learned in that situation.
- Yes, because the humor effect is a cognitive bias that causes people to remember information better when they perceive it as humorous. For

example, when students are taught a new concept in a humorous way, such as through a funny story, they are generally more likely to remember that concept compared to when it is taught in a non-humorous manner.

- Humor activates the brain's reward system, stimulating goal-oriented motivation and long-term memory. This means that humor can enhance retention in students of all ages.

Outcome 6. To explore the humorous activities that university instructors employ in EFL classes

Think of a teacher whom you find funny and amusing. Recall surprise communication/ inconsistencies / spontaneous humor/humorous questions/humorous examples/humorous games/riddles/comics/content related jokes/ humorous video clips/wordplays/funny examples, stories, or experiences or any action that occurred in EFL classes and provoked amusement.

- I can recall a teacher named Maryam. She was young and funny, always incorporating bits of humor into her PowerPoint presentations to keep the students engaged. She also frequently referenced lines from English and Arabic movies, and she had a flexible personality that could handle a light-hearted joke without feeling offended.
- In an English class, the teacher once shared a true story from her private life, which made me more immersed in the class and the story. She told us that her husband, one day before leaving the house, accidentally took the first dose of medicine for his illness (a non-serious illness). As a result, he felt nauseous on his way home and got lost on the way. He had to call his wife to come and pick him up because he couldn't open his eyes properly.
- There's an instructor who always begins every class with a riddle. Additionally, when someone appears distracted or daydreaming, he calls their attention in a way that makes them laugh. He does not shout at students or scare them; he simply uses humor at the beginning, during, and at the end of the class.
- I had a teacher who consistently started each session by presenting a fun riddle for us to solve. Another teacher encouraged us to act out the actions and facial expressions of characters in a story we were reading. Yet, another teacher would share content-related jokes to capture our attention.
- The famous pun involving the numbers 789: "Why is six afraid of seven? Because Seven Eight (sounds like 'ate') Nine." This was also used as an example of homophones in linguistics.

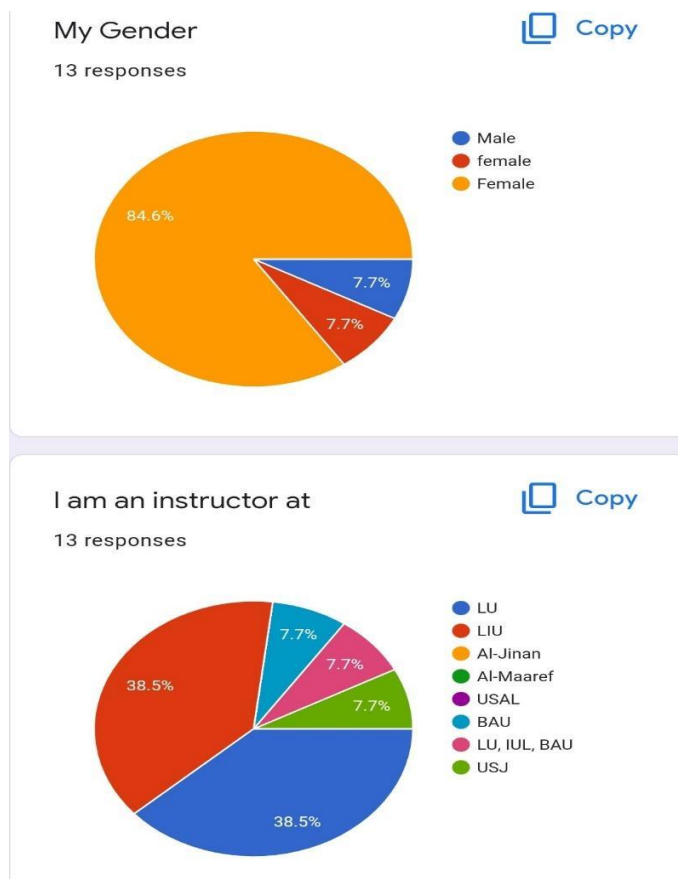
- While reading the question, the concept of the "burger" bumped into my mind. Dr. Nadine's explanation was structured like a burger, with supporting details and a thesis statement, and so on. I will always remember this "burger" analogy in every piece of writing I create, and it will bring a smile to my face.

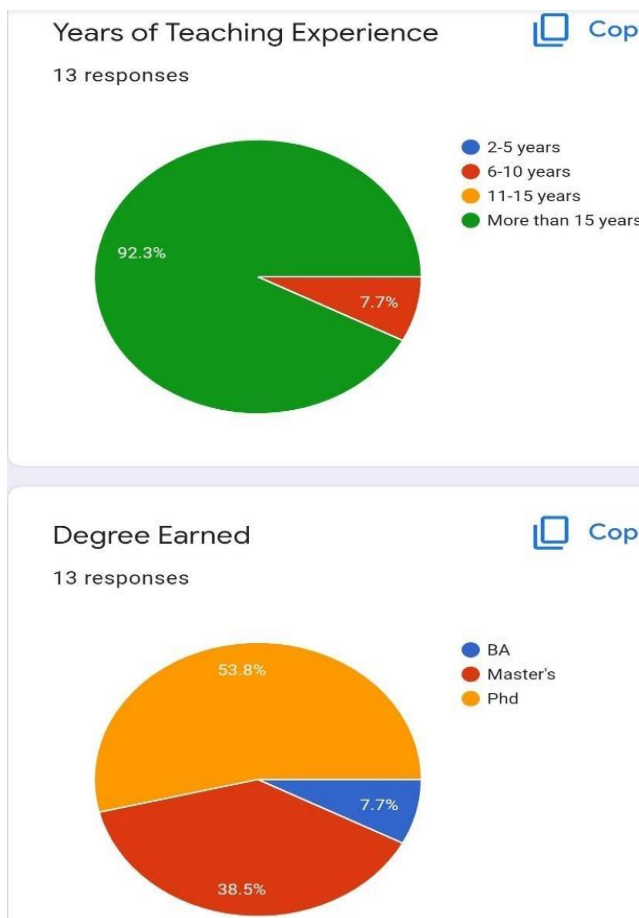
Consequently, almost all participants are well aware that teachers try to infuse humor when teaching.

3. Instructors' Survey Analysis

3.1 Demographics

The results show that the respondents are 84.6% female instructors and 7.7% male instructors. 38.5% instruct at a public university, while 45.12% instruct at private universities in Lebanon. 53.8% are PhD holders, 38.5% earned their master's degree, and 7.7% are BA holders. 92.3% have been instructing for more than 15 years, while only 7.7% have 11 to 15 years of experience.





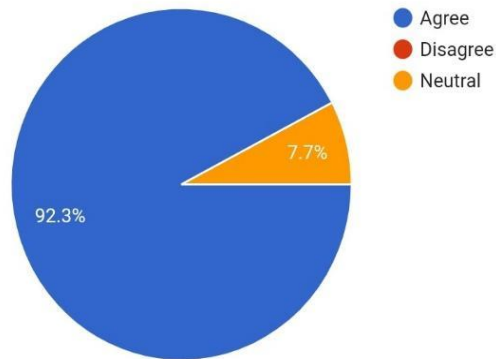
3.2 Roles of Humor in Language Learning

Respondents were asked to state if humor is a fundamental part of their teaching strategy in EFL classes and to state if humor is a vital communicative attitude that characterizes an effective teacher. The results show that 92.3% agree that humor is a fundamental part of the teaching strategy in EFL class and is a vital communicative attitude that characterizes an effective teacher, while 7.7% have neutral responses. The figures below depict the results.

1. Humor is a fundamental part of my teaching strategy in EFL class.



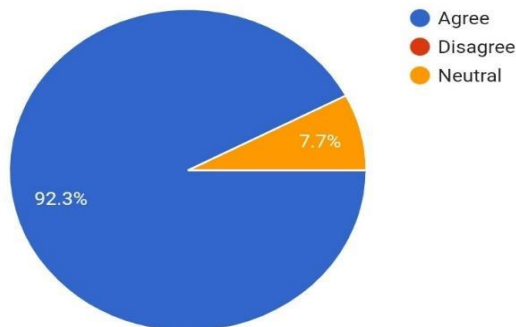
13 responses



2. Humor is a vital communicative attitude that characterizes effective teacher.



13 responses



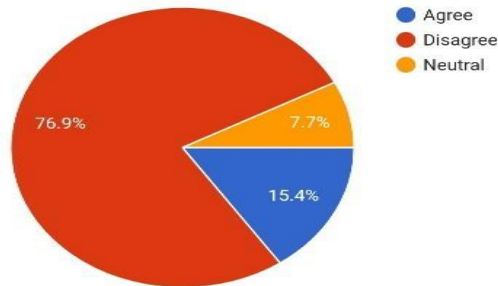
When the respondents were asked if humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education is virtually a waste of time and a form of distraction that if used too frequently or inappropriately might cause learners to think that an important topic is trivial, only 15.5% agreed that it wastes time and 7.7%

considered it as a form of distraction. However, the majority agreed that it neither wastes time nor distracts students. The overwhelming majority of 84.6% affirmed that if it is used too frequently or inappropriately in the EFL class, it might cause learners to think that an important topic is trivial.

3. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education is virtually a waste of time.



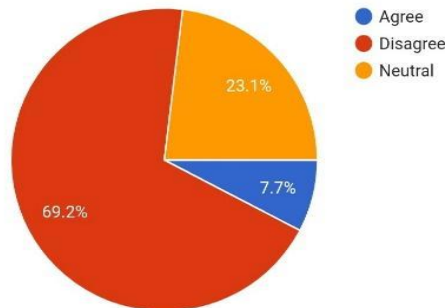
13 responses



4. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education is a form of distraction.



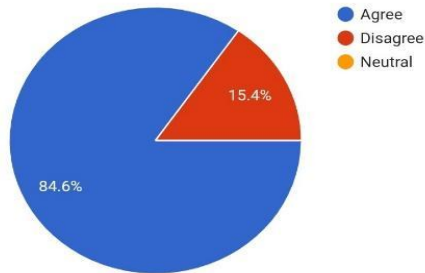
13 responses



5. Humor that is used too frequently or inappropriately in EFL class might cause learners to think that an important topic is trivial.



13 responses

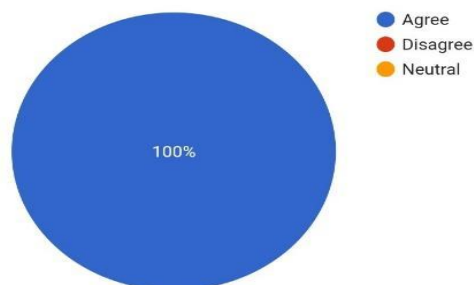


Respondents then were asked if humor in EFL classrooms in higher education creates an open communicative climate for students that increases cohesion, captures interest in subject matter, increases students' attention, and reduces anxiety and tension. Hence, the overwhelming response of 100% agreed that it aids in creating a communicative climate, increases cohesion, and reduces anxiety and tension while dealing with difficult material. Moreover, the majority of 92.3% affirmed that it increases students' attention, while 76.9% agreed that it captures interest in subject matter.

6. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education creates an open communicative climate for students.



13 responses



7. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education increases cohesion and leads to a more meaningful relationship.



13 responses

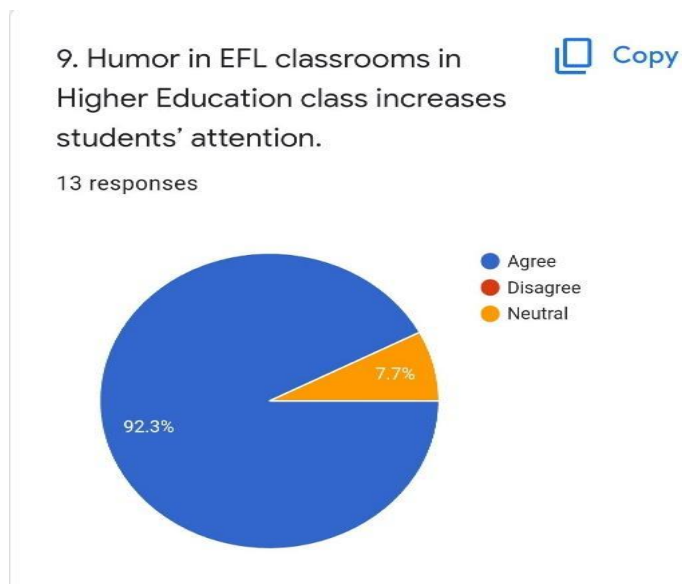
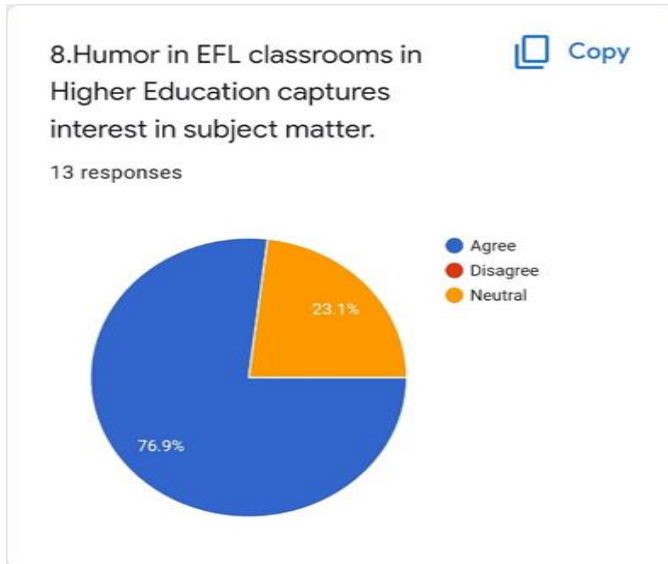


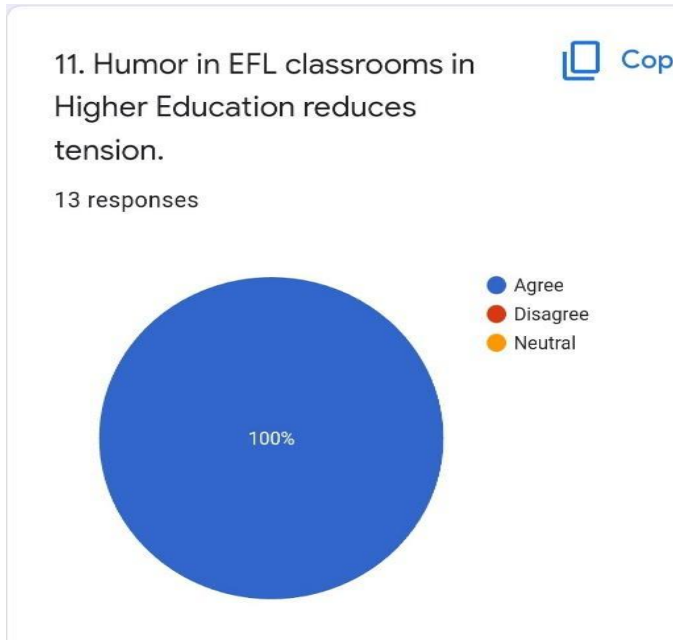
10. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education reduces anxiety in dealing with difficult material.



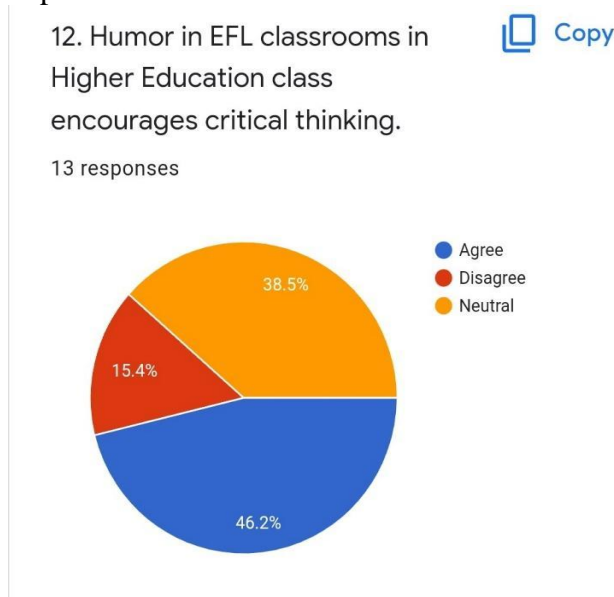
13 responses







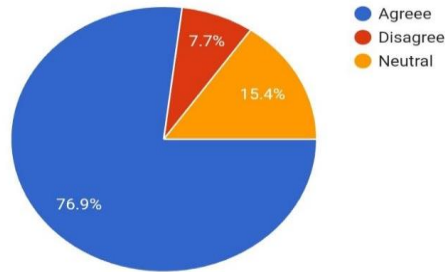
Subsequently, other results depicted the instructors' responses to the assumption that humor in EFL classrooms fosters the students' critical thinking and assists in retention. Only 46.2% agreed that it encourages critical thinking, while 38.5% provided a neutral stance to the statement. Regarding the impact of humor on retention, the majority of 76.9% agreed that it assists in memorizing the information being presented, while 7.7% disagreed. The figures below depict the results.



13. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education class assists in retention.



13 responses



Furthermore, when asked if the use of humor in higher education class makes the instructor more approachable to students and yields higher evaluation to the instructor, 61.5% agreed, while 38.5% provided a neutral stance. However, none disagreed. Surprisingly, 92.3% affirmed that they have not received any training on how to use humor in EFL classes.

14. The use of humor in higher education EFL class makes me more approachable to students and yields higher instructor evaluation.



13 responses

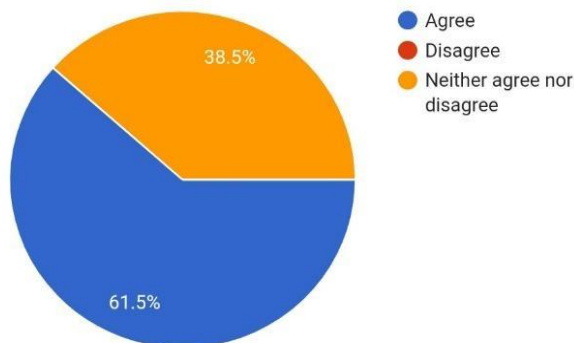




Table 2 shows the percentages of the students' responses regarding their feelings and opinions on the use of humor in EFL classes.

Table 2. Percentages of Instructors' Perspectives on the Use of Humor in EFL Classes

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1. Humor is a fundamental part of my teaching strategy in EFL class.	92.3	7.7	0
2. Humor is a vital communicative attitude that characterizes effective teacher.	92.3	7.7	0
3. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education is virtually a waste of time.	76.9	7.7	15.4
4. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education is a form of distraction.	69.2	23.1	7.7
5. Humor that is used too frequently or inappropriately in EFL class might cause learners to think that an important topic is trivial.	84.6	0	15.4
6. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education creates an open communicative climate for students.	100	0	0
7. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education increases cohesion and leads to a more meaningful relationship.	100	0	0
8. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education captures interest in subject matter.	76.9	23.1	0
9. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education class increases students' attention.	92.3	7.7	0

10. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education reduces anxiety in dealing with difficult material.	100	0	0
	100	0	0
11. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education reduces tension.	100	0	0
	46.2	38.5	15.4
12. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education class encourages critical thinking.	76.9	15.4	7.7
13. Humor in EFL classrooms in Higher Education class assists in retention.			
14. The use of humor in higher education EFL class makes me more approachable to students and yields higher instructor evaluation.			

4. Instructors' Focus Group Discussion Analysis

For the qualitative data collection, willingly, 13 instructors who responded to the online questionnaire joined the 2 online semi-structured focus group discussions which took place via ZOOM meeting on February 20, 2022, and on March 3, 2022.

Through these focus groups, the researchers wanted to gather information about the instructors' knowledge, attitudes, and recommendations regarding the need for humor as a potent teaching strategy for university students in Lebanon.

Statements were collected from the questions asked to the 13 members of the two focus groups and were interpreted accordingly. The responses are combined in the following outcomes and a sample of what was stated, whether they shared consensus or disagreed, was reported.

Outcome 1. To understand what "Humor" means to the instructors What does humor mean to you? Are you familiar with the term classroom humor or instructional humor? Elaborate.

- Humor is a way to break the ice with students, and it should be used in specific contexts.
- Humor is the act of drawing the student's attention by using funny expressions.
- Humor creates positive vibes and reduces tension.
- Humor means finding amusement and the ability to enjoy funny things, as well as seeing the humorous side of a situation.
- Humor is a dynamic context that utilizes fun words/ expressions between students and teachers.
- It is a way to make students enjoy learning. It could reduce anxiety and capture student's attention.
- Humor allows one to turn tension into relaxation.

- You might smile if a student says something funny, and if something in the text relates to a humorous situation, you can share it with students if appropriate.
- Incorporating gamified elements into lessons, such as simulations and role-play, and personalizing topics.
- Humor in language classes can be employed but not excessively. Yes, it is a means of capturing students' attention and reinforcing information because when used appropriately, it helps students remember important concepts.
- Humor is a way that leads to a positive class room environment.
- I admire humorous teachers from whom I have learned a lot. I used to enjoy their classes, so I took them as role models and followed their footsteps. Also, from my experience, I noticed that students pay more attention as humor draws their focus back to the discussion. Laughter serves as a stress reliever and fosters metonymy...
- Making a convenient class atmosphere for learning

Outcome 2. To understand their evaluation of “Humor”

Based on your experience, do you consider the use of humor in higher education as a disturbing tool that leads to a waste of time or disrespect? Provide examples of instances where you believe humor was inappropriately used in your EFL class.

- I have not encountered such a case.
- Humor is inappropriate in case it changes to sarcasm.
- The use of inappropriate or offensive humor can lead to disrespect and a waste of time.
- It does not lead to distraction if the instructor is in control and is capable of redirecting the class.
- It should be appropriately used in the right place for the right objective.
- Humor is important to change the serious mood in the class.
- When used appropriately and in a relevant context, humor is not a distraction. However, if a student uses impolite language to elicit laughter from their peers, it is considered inappropriate.
- This depends on the type of learners.
- When used appropriately, humor is not considered a waste of time. On the contrary, it fosters a classroom environment with a low affective filter, and its proper usage positively influences the relationship between students and teachers.
- No, it is not.

- Indeed, it does. If humor is used ineffectively or becomes uncontrollable, it can be disruptive. I have had teachers who overdid it, making excessive jokes and wasting time on trivial matters, which was truly annoying. When students become excessively humorous, it can also lead to distractions. An instructor should employ humor effectively and with a clear purpose.
- Humor has nothing to do with disrespect.

Outcome 3. To understand their attitude of “Humor” in creating a conducive learning environment

From your experience, do you consider humor in higher education EFL classes a communicative strategy that creates a more conducive learning environment? Why?

- Humor breaks the ice and pushes students to express themselves freely.
- Yes, it is a good tool to break the ice.
- Of course, it facilitates communication and breaks the ice.
- Yes, it would enhance students' learning.
- Students require a comfortable classroom environment in every course, especially in English classes, where maintaining a low affective filter is essential for facilitating higher language acquisition.
- It depends on how humor is utilized and incorporated into the teaching and learning process.
- Yes, it helps students to feel relaxed.
- Yes, because students see you as a human being sharing with them jokes and funny personal experiences.
- Yes, because it encourages students to be involved as they share real life experiences.
- Absolutely, I refer to this as 'hot cognition.' Using humor effectively and at the appropriate moment can help convey specific ideas to students and make them more memorable. However, when overused, it can become a hindrance. Additionally, not all teachers know when or how to employ humor, which can be a concern. The teacher's personality is part and parcel.
- Of course. Students will feel that their instructors are close to them.
- Sure. It opens up opportunities for more discussion in a more comfortable way. This improves communication.
- It highly does.

Outcome 4. To understand their attitudes towards “Humor” as a strategy in promoting students’ learning

From your experience, do you consider humor in higher education EFL classes a strategy that aids in learning and promotes your students’ understanding and performance? Why?

- Incidents with funny encounters are more memorable, and humor motivates students to participate more and take risks.
- Yes, it aids in making the lesson less stressful.
- Yes.
- Yes, because when students find that the ambiance is funny, they tend to pay more attention to the subject and remember it in the long run.
- While it may have some influence on a small scale, it is not a decisive factor.
- It is possible. It could enhance learning and make it more engaging for students. While I don't necessarily do it intentionally, I strive to make learning enjoyable by incorporating games that allow students to experience humor.
- It may vary as students have different learning styles.
- When you make them laugh and feel relaxed, they will learn much better.
- Again, not necessarily. It might not work all the time with all learning styles.
- I would not call it a strategy. It is rather a means to break the routine. It makes some ideas memorable.
- Yes, as it eases the process of teaching and learning.
- Yes, I do. It is a strategy to draw attention, to involve students, to kill boredom, etc...
- It does as it is an ice breaking tool.

Outcome 5. To understand how they explain the lesson in a humorous way

What do you do in your class to explain the course material in a humorous way?

- Reflect it to daily life situations
- Jokes
- I smile and make students feel that I care for them. We even laugh at certain matters.
- I tell a joke related to the topic under study.
- Short stories, anecdotes and/or light jokes.

- I start with a riddle that is based on a funny story or hilarious cards (Why if...).
- Give funny examples.
- Sometimes, I ask tricky questions or tell them about a funny answer an ex-student had given.
- Anecdotes, jokes, riddles, images and stickers, relevant humorous movies, cartoon strips and captions
- I might share a humorous incident from my own life to illustrate that the theory I am explaining is meaningful and relevant to real-life experiences. My purpose in using humor is to capture their attention and make the concept more memorable so that they can easily recall it later.
- Maybe I can tell them a joke or something funny.
- At times, I spontaneously take on the role of a character from a novel or real life to engage students. I may share a funny personal experience, encourage students to share theirs, make a relevant joke, or provide a humorous comment. Sometimes, it happens by accident.
- I encourage students to take on the role of explaining, and eventually, some of them may become teachers themselves. This, in itself, fosters a humorous atmosphere.

Outcome 6. To know whether they use humorous examples in their classes
In your class, have you used humorous examples, humorous games, riddles, content related jokes, humorous video clips, funny stories, or any action to illustrate grammar, vocabulary, or any other particularity of the language. Provide examples.

- I have utilized humorous videos and prompted students to use the present continuous tense to describe actions taking place in those videos.
- Riddles
- Yes, especially funny stories as an introduction
- Funny stories and jokes
- Not really
- Yes, I have used cards with humorous questions like: 'Would you rather be too short to hide in holes or too tall to see everything from above? Would you rather lick the bathroom floor or eat from rotten garbage...?'
- I have a list of humorous 'Would you rather' scenarios.

Discussion and Conclusion

The study findings, along with the academic references, strongly support the idea of using humor effectively as a tool to aid learning in the classroom. Consistent with studies published by Weisi and Mohammadi (2023), Lu'mu et al. (2023), Baysac (2017), Banas, et al. (2011), Lems (2011), Skinner (2010), Garner (2006), and James (2004), the overall qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data indicated that Lebanese EFL instructors and students have largely positive attitudes towards integrating humor as an operative pedagogical tool. Hence, they affirmed that it is a fundamental part of the teaching strategies in EFL higher education classes that characterizes effective teachers.

In line with Chiasson (2002), who argued that humor is a crucial communicative aspect defining effective teachers, and McNeely (2016), who asserted that humor enhances engagement and aids student learning, the findings support the notion that humor is not a trivial communicative element but rather vital, as it neither wastes time nor distracts. Nonetheless, it creates an open communication climate, increases cohesion, captures students' interest in the subject matter, boosts attention, and reduces anxiety and tension. Furthermore, the study showed that the use of humor makes the instructor more approachable and yields better instructor evaluation. In addition, the findings also revealed the need to train teachers to use humor artfully.

It is anticipated that the outcomes of this study will fill in the gap and provide teachers, educators, and training program designers with a well-informed basis for understanding the potentials of using humor in Lebanese university EFL classrooms from the instructors' and the students' perspectives. The study is also expected to encourage teachers at the university level to reconfigure the ways they interact with students and, thus, undergo a shift from the instruction paradigm to the learning paradigm that includes instructional humor. By so doing, curriculum developers and material designers have to provide materials which include some humorous elements.

Conflict of Interest: The authors reported no conflict of interest.

Data Availability: All of the data are included in the content of the paper.

Funding Statement: The authors did not obtain any funding for this research.

Human Studies: Appropriate approvals were obtained from the participants of the relevant educational institutions and the ethical guidelines were followed.

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