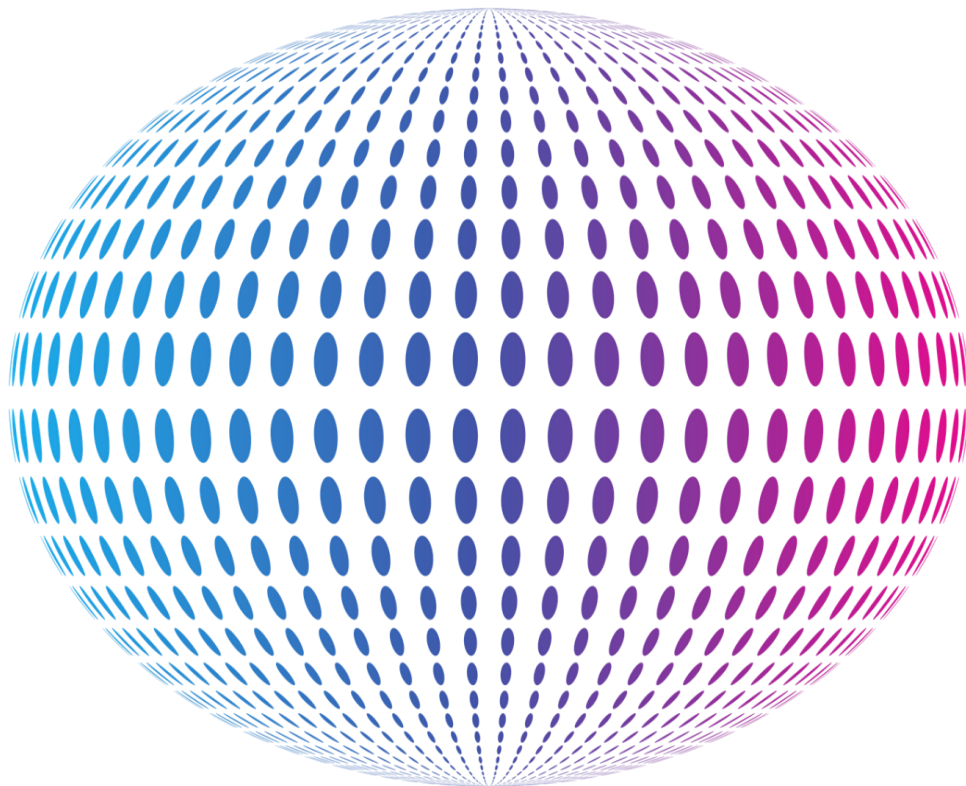


Interdisciplinary Journal of Humanities, Media, and Political Science (IJHMPS)

Vol.1 No.2 December 2024



Editor in Chief
Prof. Reda A. Amin



THE SCIENCE
PUBLISHING HOUSE

© 2024 The Science Publishing House

The Interdisciplinary Journal of Humanities, Media, and Political Science (**IJHMPS**) is a peer-reviewed, open-access journal that publishes high-quality, innovative research at the intersection of the humanities, media studies, and political science. The journal welcomes submissions exploring complex relationships and interactions between these diverse disciplines.

IJHMPS is published online; our publisher is **The Science Publishing House in the USA** www.scipubhouse.com. TSPH is an academic publisher of prestigiously peer-reviewed journals covering many academic disciplines.

Editor in Chief

Professor Reda A. Amin

Email: IJHMPS@scipubhouse.com

Editorial Board

- **Prof. Reem A. Adel**

Faculty of Mass Communication, Cairo University, Egypt

Email: reemadel2012@hotmail.com

- **Dr. Fatimah I. Piracha**

Lecturer in Law, York St John University, UK

Email: fipiracha@gmail.com

- **Dr. Mona Ali**

Media & Mass Communication College, American University in the Emirates, UAE

Email: mona.abdelrahman@aue.ae

- **Prof. Kadri Ali Abd Elmaged**

Head of Department of Humanities and Social Science, Police Academy, Cairo, Egypt

Email: drkadriali@gmail.com

- **Dr. Taha Aseda**

College of Arts and Science, Ahlia University, Bahrain

Email: muhammedaseda@gmail.com

- **Dr. Ferhat Cagri**

Department of International Relations, Karadeniz Technical University, Turkey

Email: ferhatcagriaras@ktu.edu.tr .

- **Dr. Moatamer Amin**

Department of Political Science, The British University in Egypt, Egypt

Email: moatamer.amin@bue.edu.eg

- **Dr. Zainab Dahham**

College of Law, American University in the Emirates, UAE

Email: zainab.dahham@aue.ae

- **Dr. Thouraya SNOUSSI**

College of Communication, University of Sharjah, UAE

Email: tsnoussi@sharjah.ac.ae

- **Prof. Hani Alyas Khadher**

Former Visiting Professor at Friedrich Schiller University Jena- Germany

Email: hani_hadeethe@yahoo.com

- **Dr. Shima Samir**

Managing Editor

PhD, Faculty of Economic and Political Science, Cairo University, Egypt

Email: shimaasamir424@gmail.com

Contents

The Phenomenon of Addiction to Electronic Shopping in Iraqi Society: A Sociological Study

Sarmad Jassim Muhammad Al-Khazraji76-89

Cybersecurity and Political Warfare: The Weaponization of Information in the Digital Age

Aml Anwer 90-97

Fortifying Intercontinental Relations: A Diplomatic Endorsement and Rejuvenation of Iran in Africa: An Economic Analysis

Tekang P. Kwachuh 98-118

Greening Sovereignty: Europe's Drive Toward a Sustainable Future

Hadeel Abozaid119-129

The Role of Media in Alliance of Civilizations and Dialogue of Religions

Nada Naji130- 157

Mizoram - Fresh Faces Herald A New Dawn

Ishaan Arora & Vibhuti Singh Shekhawat.....158- 170

From South China Sea to Gwadar Port: Conflict Management in Asia and Broader Global Implications

Mariam Bensaoud171- 184

The Influence of Political Advertising on Voter Behavior: A Study on How Targeted Ads Shape Voter Preferences and Engagement

Ghadier M. Abbas.....185- 193

The Phenomenon of Addiction to Electronic Shopping in Iraqi Society: A Sociological Study

<https://www.doi.org/10.56830/IJHMPS12202401>

Sarmad Jassim Muhammad Al-Khazraji 

Tikrit University, Sociology Majoring in Anthropology, Iraq

Email: Se55rm66ad@gmail.com

Received: 1 Nov, 2024 Revised: 02 Dec, 2024 Accepted: 25Dec 2024 Published 30 Dec, 2024

Abstract:

E-marketing is considered a field of modern marketing knowledge, as its strategy is to provide electronic services through the international network of the Internet as a new marketing communication channel that has its unique characteristics that distinguish it from other communication channels, as it is characterized by fast performance and low costs. Transformed from a local market to a space market, and e-marketing relies on the Internet to increase and improve its traditional functions and influence the attitudes and trends of customers. The research aims to clarify people's addiction to electronic shopping and its impact on individuals, and the causes and treatment of electronic shopping, A problem revolves around identifying the electronic market and explaining that addiction that wastes a lot of money without prior planning or without a desire to buy. The research aims to clarify people's addiction to electronic shopping and its impact on individuals, and the causes and treatment of electronic shopping

Keywords: Addiction, Shopping, Online shopping

Introduction:

Electronic marketing is the key to achieving the goals of the organization and includes defining the needs and desires for the target market and obtaining desirable satisfaction with more efficiency and efficiency than the competitors, and if the electronic characteristic of marketing is added, we are talking then about an environment and tools that the Internet space brings together with all its technology to communicate between human beings, both from During e -mail or other electronic tools, the term e -marketing means the management of customer interaction via Internet, Internet and Extrant networks to achieve common benefits, regardless of the type of electronic business, It may be used to market services such as electronic education or marketing electronic government services, and electronic marketing works in light of the digital economy that consists of three main sections: the infrastructure supportive of the organization, operations and electronic activities such as the processes of managing the production chain and supply chain, resource planning and customer relationship management, and the third component is trade Electronic and electronic money transactions. The research dealt with four investigations that dealt with the first

topic, the axis of the first axis, the components of the research.

First: the general framework of the study

1.1 Research elements

1.1.1 The problem of the study: A problem revolves around the electronic market identification and the statement of that addiction, which wastes a lot of money without prior planning or without purchasing desire.

Questions of the study: By studying this important topic (electronic marketing phenomenon) there are several questions and are as follows:-

- 1- What is addiction?
- 2- What is electronic shopping?
- 3- What is addiction to electronic shopping?

1.1.2 The importance of the study: The importance of this study is reflected in describing the concept of electronic shopping and the details related to it, the role played by e -shopping, the impact of e -shopping on individuals, and the effect of e -shopping on individuals.

1.1.3 The goal of the study: The research aims to clarify people's addiction to electronic shopping and the effect of individuals, and the reasons and treatment of electronic shopping

1.1.4 Research methodology: The research used the descriptive approach to study the phenomenon of addiction to electronic shopping in Iraqi society, a sociological study, that this study can be included within the framework of descriptive studies, it depends on collecting and analyzing facts and interpreting them to extract their significance.

1.2 The concepts and terms of research

1.2.1 Addiction: Language: Damn on the thing: it is obligatory, and the drink is addicted to the drink and others: its Adwah and did not take off from it, and it is said that the matter is addicted, and it is kept on it (Dictionary, 1985:308) .

Addiction as a term: maintenance on the habit of taking certain materials A 9 performing a specific activity for a long time with the intention of entering into a state of euphoria and excluding sadness and depression (Hammouda, 2015:214).

Addiction is the inability of a person to dispense with something, regardless of this thing as long as the rest of the addiction conditions are fulfilled from the need for more this thing continuously in order to satisfy his need when he is forbidden from it (Ali Falah Al-Zoubi, 2010) .

Addiction was known to be the frequent use of a psychological substance, to the extent that the addict reveals a severe concern for abuse, as it reveals a deficit, a refusal to interruption, or to amend his abuse, and he often shows withdrawal symptoms (Muhammad, 2011:33) .

Where addiction was defined as an urgent desire to spend the largest possible time in front of the electronic device, which is a kind of sensory research for stimuli or many activities in order to achieve satisfaction, which is generated by

mental preoccupation with these stimuli or activities even if the Internet is not available to the individual, the individual's psychological, behavioral and social condition is affected And the academy (Madani, 2018:10) .

1.2.2 Marketing: Marketing is defined as business activities for directing and paying goods and services from the product to the consumer or user (rich, 2021:1) , (where marketing is known as a management, it is the science and art of choosing targeted markets and preserving customers through training, delivery, receipt of a distinct value to the customer (Abdullah) .

Marketing is the group of human activities that aim to facilitate the exchanges (Khalil, 2017:76) . Marketing was defined as an economic, social and cultural process aimed at meeting the needs of consumers for acceptable products and services at acceptable prices (HOWIDI, 2010:73). The marketing is also defined as a set of operations or activities that work to discover Customer desires and develop a set of products (Al-Zoubi, 2010:55) .

1.2.3 Electronic marketing: E-marketing knows one of the main factors that are not underestimated in achieving the required marketing goals, and this means is one of the most achieved means, and the lowest cost of traditional marketing, we will not be able to say that e-marketing is greatly different from traditional marketing, as The real difference lies in the form and the method in which the implementation process is carried out. It defines the correct use of the Internet, the networks of the extr It is the process of establishing and preserving customer relationships through electronic activities directly with the aim of facilitating the exchange of ideas, products and services that achieve the goals of the two parties.

Where electronic marketing was also defined as managing the interaction between the organization and the consumer in the sake of the virtual environment in order to achieve common benefits (-Alaq, 2019:17) . E -marketing was defined as "the use of all available technologies to raise the profit of the institution by working to satisfy personal desires for each customer and with a total recipe Interactive permanent (Ahmed, 2014:28). He was also known as the use of the strength of direct communication networks, computer connection and digital interactive means to achieve marketing goals (Youssef, 2009:58) .

Second Determinants, advantages and disadvantages of electronic marketing

2.1 E-marketing determinants:

E -marketing was distinguished from traditional marketing with several properties and has fought several areas that can only be achieved by creating a website.

2.2 The advantages of electronic marketing

E -marketing can be given to the Internet features, and these features must be

understood for the success of the marketing process. Among these features (- Ayashi, 2016:21).

1. Wave transmission: The Internet enabled the institutions to identify their customers, even before the purchase, because digital technology makes it possible for visitors to the web site to identify themselves and provide information about their needs and desires before purchasing.
2. Interactive: It means the ability of customers to express their needs and desires directly to the institution, in response to the marketing communications carried out by the institution.
3. Memory: It is the ability to access the rules and warehouses of data that includes information about the specific customers and the date of their past purchases and their preferences, which enables the institution marketed on the Internet to use this information in real time for its customers marketing offers.
4. Control: It is the ability of customers to control the information they provide, so that they only declare what they want, without forcing them to provide secret information between them or do not want to authorize them.
5. The ability to reach: It is the ability to make customers have broader and more information about the institution's products and values, with the possibility of comparing the products and other competing prices, so the institution strives to provide its products with improvements and developments according to the desires of its customers who have previously purchased its products, in order to reach loyalty Her customers for her. As the majority of statistics indicate that most of the institutions lose approximately 50 of their customers, after the first dealing with them, therefore the cost of keeping the loyalty of the old customers is more profitable and less expensive than attracting new customers (Ahmed, 2009:22) .

2.3 Electronic marketing properties: The e -marketing process has its distinctive properties through traditional marketing methods and the reason is due to the following matters (Najm, 2004:326-327) .

1. Wave transmission: The Internet enabled the institutions to identify their customers, even before the purchase, because digital technology makes it possible for visitors to the web site to identify themselves and provide information about their needs and desires before purchasing.
2. Interactive: It means the ability of customers to express their needs and desires directly to the institution, in response to the marketing communications carried out by the institution.
3. Memory: It is the ability to access the rules and warehouses of data that includes information about the specific customers and the date of their past purchases and their preferences, which enables the institution

marketed on the Internet to use this information in real time for its customers marketing offers.

4. Control: It is the ability of customers to control the information they provide, so that they only declare what they want, without forcing them to provide secret information between them or do not want to authorize them.

5. The ability to reach: It is the ability to make customers have broader and more information about the institution's products and values, with the possibility of comparing the products and other competing prices, so the institution strives to provide its products with improvements and developments according to the desires of its customers who have previously purchased its products, in order to reach loyalty Her customers for her. As the majority of statistics indicate that most of the institutions lose approximately 50 of their customers, after the first dealing with them, therefore the cost of keeping the loyalty of the old customers is more profitable and less expensive than attracting new customers (Hassan, 2001:373) .

2.4 Electronic marketing properties: The e -marketing process has its distinctive properties through traditional marketing methods and the reason is due to the following matters (Kammaki, 2001:109) .

1. Low cost: The marketing process for the product was very expensive in the past, as the announcement of the product was done by traditional means, but now it can be marketed via the Internet at a very small cost.

2. Overcoming the borders of the state: that the media used in e -marketing does not know the geographical borders, as the company was dealing with local customers only for the past, and if you wanted to reach international customers, they were incurring large and unparalleled expenses, but now the company can ensure that everyone is informed of Its products are without any additional cost, especially since the Internet is available in all countries.

3. Wide spread: In the sense that e -commerce is present everywhere and at all times, and you do not need a concrete market and through which the customer can enter this unsuccessful market at any time and from anywhere, the rates of increase in Internet users were accompanied by development and the development of content The sites operating on the Internet, by adding electronic services and entrances to e -mail and communicating with the site.

4. Rich information resources: Electronic commerce, in terms of which enables them to reach all consumer artists around the world, provides the consumer with many information, by using companies for all digital technology media, such as audio, readable and visual media, and it is known that the Internet has made information dense and with excellent

and modern quality. And similarly, the e-commerce reduced the mechanism of searching for information and storage and the cost of communications on the one hand, and on the other hand, this technology increased the appropriate time for information and its accuracy (Fadil, 2009:38).

E-commerce also achieves ease and ease in communicating the company's information to the dealers with it, and it is possible on websites to inform customers with all the developments that occur in new products for payment methods and delivery of the commodity, and thus the customers and all the dealings with the company become permanently with the variables that occur in the market (Shaheen, 2000:13).

5. Effective communication: Continuous communication with the customer through the postal lists, and reduce spending on paper and visual ads that cover only a simple group of customers, where e-commerce is a mechanism of communication with very high effectiveness, based on that it is a two-way communication between the customer and the merchant, where the traditional trade of this type of communication lacks, if one of the companies declared its goods on TV, it is not possible for the customer to communicate with the advertiser through the device, but this communication has become possible through e-commerce (Hussein, 2010:124).

6. Personal targeting: In terms of e-marketing, the marketer enables the product to target a specific group of individuals and a special segment of consumers, by modifying ads via the network, by determining the information of the individual desirable to inform the product such as determining age, sex, the nature of his work and any other things. The marketer sees it necessary from the various demographic factors.

7. Multiple options: As e-commerce offers a lot of options to consumers, due to the ability to access products and companies that were not available near consumers, so that they can comply between many exhibitors from all parts of the world quickly and low cost, buying on the Internet and paying often through this network (Zibuea, 2001:69).

8. Available to everyone: This network provides an opportunity for all small and large companies to enter global markets and increase sales opportunities and profits, and e-marketing contributes to opening the way for everyone to market their goods or experiences without distinguishing between the giant company with a huge capital and between the average individual or the small company with limited resources (Altaayiy, 2010:73).

9. Improving the quality of purchasing decisions: I have the sectors and segments of consumers and customers, as a result of the Internet marketing process from searching through the electronic website spread and choosing the best of them in a way that suits and its ability to meet the

desires of consumer according to the price, quality, characteristics, and required specifications.

E -marketing has been characterized by certain characteristics, the most important of which are:

- Automatic feature of marketing functions, especially in functions that are repetition and quantitative measurement, such as marketing research, product design and sales, and stock management.
- The integration feature between marketing functions with each other and with the authorities concerned with preserving customers, which is called the curriculum of customer relationships, which developed to what is known as interactive marketing.

2.4 Advantages and disadvantages of electronic marketing

Performing marketing activities via the Internet provides the institution with many advantages, but it is not without some defects that always consider the use of modern technology. One of the most important advantages of electronic marketing for the institution is to mention:

- An unparalleled information marketing system in terms of speed in obtaining data, transferring and information, which has good quality of the marketing process (salman, 2005:75).
- The diversity of products offered for sale: The institution can display a wide variety of its products with the least amount of stock.
- The interaction of the best customers: enables the Internet to interact with customers, with the lowest costs and interactive communication, helps persuade and achieve the customer's satisfaction.
- Expanding the customer base: It helps the Internet to reach potential customers anywhere in the world and deal directly with them without the need for brokers.
- significantly reduce marketing costs compared to the traditional processes between both sides of the marketing process (-Bakri, 2006:264), despite the institution's need for additional investments to design the site and provide some other material facilities, but these costs are few when compared to the costs associated with traditional marketing activities, and the institution decreases its costs by reducing the cost of using the phone, regular mail, low employment, and lack of time to support, support and customers.
- The ability to measure and calculate the number of people who visited the Foundation's website on the Internet, and measuring the period they spent wandering inside the site and what are the areas

that attracted their attention inside the site, and these matters can be provided through special software.

- The possibility of obtaining a great deal of response (consumer positions) quickly, which enables the institution to adapt to the changes in consumer and real-time behavior.

As for the disadvantages of this type of marketing, it can be summed up in the following:

- Limited use and purchase: Despite the huge growth in electronic transactions, the share of electronic marketing from the total market is still limited and many network users only see the products than buying them.
- Most customers on the network are relatively high-income groups and high education level, which makes the electronic market for one section of consumers, and some products are marketing and electronically more effective than other products, for example computer products, ready-made programs, banking services and electronics (Idris, 2005:465).
- Disturb and congestion: The Internet provides millions of sites and unlimited quantities of information products, which affects the customer's psyche and feels bored and annoyed.
- The security problem on the network: Many users are still afraid of their money and their information and exposed at any time for piracy and hacking.
- The spread of deception and fraud sites on the network, which constitutes an obstacle to increasing consumer confidence.

Third Goals and problem of electronic marketing

3.1 E-marketing goals:

One of the goals of electronic marketing is the following:

- Reducing the cost of products due to the referendum on advertising in traditional audio and visual means.
- Ease of access to the consumer anywhere worldwide.
- Increase the ability to negotiate purchasing.
- The lack of unnecessary costs and expenses to create traditional stores.
- Ease of obtaining the necessary information and comparing the products the subject of competition.
- Improving the level of the facility's general performance.
- Take advantage of the previous experiences of the facilities that operate within this system.

- Ease in distribution and promotion activities (eabid, 2016:26).
- The marketers also sought the following basic goals:
- Improving the mental image of the company or the organization.
- Providing services and improving customer care.
- Searching for the consumer new and creating new marketing opportunities.
- Increase the rate of access to the largest number of consumers at the local or international levels and increase the scope of the local and global market.
- Reducing costs and achieving speed in business performance.
- Provide an added value and a real interest to consumers (Yusef, 2004:142).

3.2 E -marketing forms

Any organization usually needs to plan various marketing activities in the long term in the form of strategies known as marketing strategies and the goal of course is to try to achieve long -term goals set for the marketing function.

We can simplify matters to the maximum degree when we say that the strategy is a long -term plan and thus a set of goals to be reached in the long run as well as the capabilities necessary to achieve them and the schedule necessary to reach this.

Any marketing strategy in general consists of four main components:

Segmentation.

Targeting.

Positing.

Differntiatin.

In the case of electronic marketing, the market fragmentation is made more deepening, and the collection of information is available and therefore the development of the marketing strategy is done more quickly. E -marketing and the use of internet technology allows more follow -up and monitoring of marketing efforts, and finally electronic marketing can be more integrated between marketing strategies and the general strategy established and their operations.

As for e -marketing, it has been the custom to distinguish between a group of forms by relying on the quality of relations that link the two parties to the exchange process, because the nature of the marketer, especially the nature of the buyer (facility - final consumer - industrial buyer - government) that affects the marketing strategy (amjadal, 2014:65).

1. E -marketing for the final consumer.
2. E -marketing between business facilities.
3. Double electronic marketing (consumer - business).
4. Government electronic marketing directed to business facilities.

3.3 E -marketing for the final consumer.

In this case, electronic marketing is directed to the final consumer, which is very similar to the retail trade in traditional marketing, but it depends here on electronic means, including the name of electronic commercial trade. There are now thousands of electronic shopping centers scattered via the Internet, including the small grocery store (food store) and large called Mall Mall, each of which specializes in marketing a commodity/ service or a group of goods of services ranging from the sale of flowers or porchi cars to barber shops and agencies travel (matali, 2016:110).

Among the forms of this type of marketing can be mentioned the following:

Marketing by electronic public auction is called.

Marketing via a web store that owns its owners a traditional store.

Marketing via an electronic store only.

Marketing through the news group.

Marketing as a result of an advertisement to the consumer by e -mail.

Marketing by regular mail or by phone after searching for a commodity or service by the consumer via the Internet.

E -marketing for the final consumer can be defined on the basis that it is the type of marketing on electronic means that targets the final consumer.

3.3.1 E-marketing for business facilities

In this case, the commercial exchange relationship related to two organizations of business organizations, as most of the latter can be considered sellers and buyers at the same time by virtue of their needs of raw materials, equipment, production means, and others that you need to achieve their productive or service goals (alzughbi, 2019:63) In fact, electronic marketing has provided significant opportunities for business organizations, so that they can link partnership and exchanging relationships and profit a lot of time and effort in their dealings, whether they represent the client party, the supplier party or the service with the service.

Examples of this type of electronic marketing include a company using the Internet to obtain its orders from suppliers and receive electronic bills (online) and the ability to settle it in the same way.

Among the methods used for several years in this type of marketing is the so - called electronic data exchange (EDI) through private networks that link companies between them.

Electronic marketing directed to business facilities can be defined on the basis that it is the type of marketing dependent on electronic means that links business facilities between them in order to magnify their common benefits (rabih, 2013:40).

The most important objectives of electronic marketing can be summarized between business facilities in the following elements

- Providing products at lower costs.

- Improving the general performance of the facility, enabling it to obtain data, analyze it, and make decisions quickly, accurately and effectively.
- Take advantage of the facilities that work within this system in improving their activities.
- It has a better negotiating capacity.

3.3.2 Double electronic marketing

In this case, as evidenced by his name, this type of marketing is directed at the same time to the final consumer and industrial buyer (organizations/institutional), meaning that the products (goods or services) can be sold to the final consumer (fragmentation) and installations (sentences and a half).

It is noticeable that many commercial activities are suitable for double electronic marketing, and then the electronic seller distinguishes between two types of customers and thus two types of marketing for the same product, whether it is a commodity or service. Other than that, double electronic marketing is not different from the previous two types of electronic marketing, and therefore we will be limited to what we have said above in this regard.

3.3.3 Government electronic marketing directed to the business facility

This type of e -marketing covers all government transactions with business facilities. Although this type of electronic marketing is still in its beginnings, it knows a remarkable development, for example in the United States of America, we find that most government purchases are in the form of tenders or others whose details are published on the Internet through secure sites and therefore the business sector can contract directly or that It ends the details of the deals with these government agencies (altaayiy, 2019:99).

Of course, this type of electronic marketing is dealing with huge deals linking business facilities equipped with large government agencies such as the ministries of defense, education, health, etc.

Some have become called by the government electronic supply, in addition to government purchases, new electronic transactions such as paying tax returns such as VAT (TVA) and other areas have become the formation of what is called the electronic government.

Fourth: Addiction to electronic shopping

4.1 the causes of addiction to electronic shopping

In general, most of the reasons for shopping addiction are psychological reasons that are produced primarily from the feeling of loneliness and depression, which leads the addict to avoid stress, anxiety and negative feelings by spending money and shopping, and these are some psychological reasons related to shopping addiction: shopping can result from emotional deprivation at the stage Childhood, Likewise, shopping addiction can happen as a means of dealing with or avoiding difficult feelings and the inability to endure negative feelings and

seek to escape from reality, when the person is busy shopping, this keeps him away from thinking about these feelings automatically and is busy spending money, the need to fill the internal void where the person who is addicted to shopping feels shopping. That the purchase blocks this vacuum, the feeling of excitement, the shopping can provide a feeling of excitement that may be missing in the life of a person, as one of the common reasons for shopping is too bored and the desire to fill the time, for many women shopping is a way to communicate with others, especially Family and friends, in some relationships, shopping is the main or only joint activity between them, Lack of self-confidence may contribute to the emergence of addiction to shopping, as the person believes that when wearing new clothes daily, he gets admiration and acceptance from others, which increases his self-confidence (www.verywellmind.com).

4.2 Symptoms related to addiction to electronic shopping

It is difficult in some halls to differentiate between shopping addiction and those who love shopping within the natural boundaries, as going on a tour of shopping from time to time does not mean that you are a shopping addict necessarily, so there are many signs and symptoms that may be caused by addiction and these symptoms are the following (psychguides.com).

1. Feeling a strong desire to shop and inability to stop thinking about it.
2. Shopping as a reaction to feelings of anger, depression or anxiety.
3. Shopping as a reaction to the feeling of guilt towards the previous shopping process.
4. Compensation for negative feelings by buying things.
5. Feeling excitement and extreme pleasure while doing the shopping experience.
6. Loss of control of shopping and purchase and spending money.
7. Feeling anger or discomfort when not being able to shop.
8. Buy things that you do not need or unnecessary, even when you cannot afford their expenses.
9. Hide things that are for fear that others think they are a waste of money.
10. The objects purchased while shopping are often stored directly without using them.
11. Theft or lying in order to continue shopping.

4.3 Treating electronic shopping addiction and getting rid of the purchase obsession

Shopping addiction is not a disease in itself, but rather a reflection of psychological problems that the addicted person suffers from, and accordingly, the psychological or pharmaceutical treatment that the addicted person is subject to treating its causes by (projectknow.com).

- You can search for the problems and psychological pressure that the addict suffers from and try to treat them.

- Try to fill the void that the addicted person may suffer and causes him to shop to fill the time.
- If shopping addiction is caused by depression, doctors can prescribe antidepressants for the addicted person.
- In the event that shopping addiction is caused by anxiety or psychosis, it is also possible to use the appropriate medicines to treat them

Conclusion

- 1- Electronic shopping is a modern means that takes place through the web, in which demand and payment are electronically.
- 2- Shopping is done through the use of electronic devices such as the phone and the computer.
- 3- Electronic shopping results in spending a lot of money without any need.
- 4- Resorting to electronic shopping to overcome a painful position, problem, lack of self-confidence and self-esteem.

Recommendations:

- 1) Not rushing to electronic shopping except after knowing the details of the specifications required for not being exposed to fraud.
- 2) Not to be drawn behind the false ads that call for shopping without motives or purchasing desire
- 3) Spreading an electronic shopping culture in the correct way through the regulatory and community authorities.

References

- "Shopping Addiction Symptoms, Causes, and Effects" published on psychguides.com
- Abd Rabbo, Muhammad Abd, Electronic Marketing, *Dar Al-Manhal Publishing and Distribution*, 2013.
- Abu Alaa Ahmed Youssef, Electronic Marketing, *Wael Publishing House*, Jordan, 2004.
- Alayachi, Assistant, Electronic Marketing and its Role in Achieving Competitive Advantages for the Institution, *University of Algiers, Faculty of Economics, Commerce and Management Sciences, Department of Commercial Sciences*, 2016.
- Ali Al-Zaghbi and Ahmad Saleh Al-Nasr, Electronic Marketing, *Dar Al-Yazouri Scientific Publishing and Distribution*, 2019.
- Ali, Muhammad Al-Nubi Muhammad, Internet Addiction in the Era of Globalization, 1st ed., Amman, *Dar Safaa Publishing*, 2010
- Al-Taie, Hamid, Personal Selling and Direct Marketing, *Dar Al-Yazouri Scientific Publishing and Distribution*, 2019.
- amin eadi aleaziz hasan: astiratijaat altaswiq fi alqarn 21, *dar qaba' liltibaeat walnathr*, liqahirata, 2001.
- Amjdel, Ahmed, Electronic Marketing Principles, Taibah University, College of Business Administration, Department of Marketing, *Dar Al Manhal for Publishing and Distribution*, 2014.
- Anis Ahmed Abdullah, Marketing Department according to the customer's value perspective, *Dar Al -Jinan for Publishing and Distribution*, 2016.

- Baha' shahin: aleawlamat waltijarat al'iiliktruniati-ruyat 'iislamiatun, alfaruq alhadithat liltibaeat walnashri, alqahirata, masr, ta1, 2000, sa13.
- Bin Madani, Munira, Electronic addiction and its relationship to psychological pension, *University of Boudiaf, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Psychology*, 2018.
- Bshir Alealaqi, altaswiq alalktruniu, dar alyazurii aleilmiat llnashr waltawzie, 2019, sa17.
- Corinne Okeefe Osborne "Could You Have a Shopping Addiction?" *published on projectknow.com*.
- Elizabeth Hartney "Shopping Addiction Overview" *published on verywellmind.com*.
- Ghani Al-Fara, Pharmaceutical Media and Marketing Course, *Hama University, Faculty of Pharmacy*, 2021.
- Hamid Al -Taie and others, Modern Marketing, Al -Yazouri Scientific *Dar for Publishing and Distribution*, Amman 2010.
- Hammouda, Selim, online addiction turning up, *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, Merbah University, Ouargla, No. 21, 2015.
- Imad Safar Salman, Modern Trends in Marketing, *Maaref Establishment*, Alexandria, 2005.
- Kafi, Mustafa Youssef, Electronic Marketing, *Dar and Raslan Foundation for Printing, Publishing and Distribution*, 2009.
- Kenneth C. Laudon & Carol Guericio Traver: *E-commerce by Eyewire*, USA, 2001.
- Mahmoud Haridi, The Art of Contemporary Marketing, *Egyptian Publishing and Distribution*, 2014.
- Matali, Laila, A Brief Introduction to Electronic Marketing, *Dar Al-Kotob Al-Ilmiyah*, 2016.
- Mohamed Ramadan Ahmed Ad El Fadil: Factors affecting the adoption and application of the e-commerce method in foreign trade companies in the Arab Republic of Egypt, unpublished master's thesis, *Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Commerce for Boys, Al-Azhar University*, Egypt, 2009.
- Mohamed Samir Ahmed, Electronic Marketing, *Dar Al-Masirah for Publishing and Distribution*, Amman, 2009.
- Mohamed, Mohamed Fathy, Drug and Alcohol Addiction, *Anglo Egyptian Library*, 2011.
- Najm Oud Najm: Electronic Management - Strategy, Functions and Problems, *Dar Al-Marikh for Publishing*, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2004.
- Nevin Hussein Hat, Electronic Marketing, *Dar Al-Taalim Al-Jami'i*, Alexandria, 2010.
- thabit eabd alrahman adiris wakhrun, altaswiq almueasiru, aldaar aljamieiatu, al'iiskandiriata, 2005
- thamir albikri, altaswiq 'usus wamafahim mueasarati, dar albaruzii llnashr waltawziei, eaman, al'urduni, 2006.
- The Arabic Language Academy, Al-Mu'jam Al-Wasit, Vol. 1, 1985 edition, Article (D.M.N), Cairo.
- Wael Refaat Khalil, Marketing Management, *Dar Al-Manhal for Publishing and Distribution*, 2017.
- Ziad Zaboua: Marketing Strategies in Light of Economic Crises and Contemporary Challenges, Faculty of Economics, *Tishreen University, Lattakia*, Syria, 2001.
- Zuhair Abdul Latif Abed, Principles of Media, *Dar Al-Yazouri Scientific Publishing and Distribution*, Amman, 2016.

Cybersecurity and Political Warfare: The Weaponization of Information in the Digital Age

<https://www.doi.org/10.56830/IJHMPS12202402>

Aml Anwer 

Faculty of Economics and Political Science, the British University in Egypt, **Egypt**

Email: Amlanwer18@gmail.com

Received: 4 Nov, 2024 Revised 05 Dec, 2024 Accepted 26 Dec, 2024 Published 30 Dec, 2024

Abstract

In this digital age, cybersecurity has become imperative to protect political stability and public trust. The paper examines weaponized information as a strategy in modern political warfare, where cyber tactics like disinformation campaigns, social media manipulations, and data breaches shape public opinion over destabilizing political entities. This paper highlights the undue influence wielded by information weaponization in national security, public perception, and global diplomacy through such incidents as the U.S. 2016 election interference, Brexit referendum, and humanitarian crisis in Myanmar. In response, the development of cybersecurity policies, public media literacy, and use of AI in countering digital threats are underway by respective governments and organizations. However, the rapidly evolving nature of cyber tactics presents continuous ethical and strategic challenges that demonstrate the need for international cooperation on responsible AI use. This paper argues for the need for taking a comprehensive, proactive approach in cyber-political warfare, including policy, education, and technology, in order to protect the integrity of democratic systems around the world.

Keywords: Cybersecurity – Political Warfare – Weaponization – Digital Age

Introduction

With digitization, the new domains of cyber warfare and digital manipulation have reshaped the very character of political conflict. Political warfare has been conducted through means such as propaganda and espionage, but now it boasts a potent new tool: the weaponization of information in cyberspace. Digital tactics in disinformation campaigns, deepfakes, social media manipulation, and cyber espionage now empower state and non-state actors to affect election outcomes, polarize public opinion, and destabilize governance globally (Chesney & Citron, 2019); (Ferrara, 2016). While differing from traditional warfare, these tactics bypass physical borders, using the interconnectedness that characterizes modern societies to achieve political ends with unprecedented reach and precision (Rid, 2020).

Interference in democratic processes through cyber means, as seen in the 2016 U.S. presidential election and Brexit referendum, has highlighted the vulnerability of even the most institutionalized democracies to the risk of manipulated information and cyber tactics used in manipulating public sentiment, disrupting elections, and undermining the institutions of governance (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017); (Bastos & Mercea, 2018). A lot of attention has

been drawn to cyber-political warfare in the context of national elections; however, it has also been associated with humanitarian crises, for example, more targeted social media campaigns inciting ethnic violence in Myanmar (Mozur, 2018). These cases demonstrate how digital manipulation not only impacts national security and public trust but also international relations and ethical standards in digital spaces (Pomerantsev, 2019).

Given the sophistication and increasing prevalence of such tactics, cybersecurity and countermeasures have become imperative in democratic institution safeguarding. While governments and organizations are developing policies and technologies to detect and counter digital threats, rapid threat evolution poses continuous challenges (Schwartz, 2020). This paper is an assessment of the multivariate impacts the world has experienced because of cyber-political warfare, strategies used in the weaponization of information, and the global response to this rising threat. The democratic processes of any country, in a time when information is a weapon and a shield, need a well-coordinated and proactive cybersecurity strategy to ensure the integrity of the democratic process and guarantee political stability across the world.

To address this issue, this paper employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative analyses of case studies with quantitative assessments of digital threats. These methodologies facilitate a comprehensive exploration of the multivariate impacts of cyber-political warfare, the strategies employed in the weaponization of information, and the global responses to these rising threats. Ultimately, the democratic processes of any country, in a time when information serves as both a weapon and a shield, require a well-coordinated and proactive cybersecurity strategy to ensure the integrity of democracy and guarantee political stability across the world.

Literature Review

- **Disinformation and Electoral Outcomes**

(Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017) investigate the role of social media in spreading fake news during the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Their findings illustrate how misinformation campaigns significantly influenced voter perceptions and decisions. This study underscores the vulnerability of democratic processes to digital manipulation.

- **Social Media Manipulation Techniques**

(Ferrara, 2016) explore the rise of social bots and their role in amplifying divisive narratives on social media platforms. Their research demonstrates how automated accounts can distort public discourse, which aligns with the concept of information weaponization in political contexts.

- **Ethics of Disinformation**

(Pomerantsev, 2019) discusses the ethical implications of disinformation campaigns in modern political warfare. He argues that the manipulation of information undermines trust in democratic institutions and highlights the need for ethical frameworks to address the challenges posed by weaponized information.

- **Case Study on Brexit**

(Bastos & Mercea, 2018) analyse the impact of automated accounts on the dissemination of hyper partisan content during the Brexit referendum. Their work reveals how targeted misinformation can manipulate public sentiment and disrupt democratic processes, supporting the argument that information weaponization poses significant risks to political stability.

- **Humanitarian Consequences of Digital Manipulation**

(Mozur, 2018) examines the role of social media in inciting violence against the Rohingya minority in Myanmar. This case highlights how unregulated digital platforms can facilitate the spread of hate speech and misinformation, demonstrating the broader implications of information weaponization beyond electoral contexts.

- **National Security and Cyber Tactics**

(Clarke & Knake, 2019) emphasize that cyber threats have become integral to national security strategies. Their analysis of cyber-political warfare illustrates how states are increasingly recognizing the importance of cybersecurity in protecting democratic institutions from manipulation.

- **AI and Information Warfare**

(Chesney & Citron, 2019) discuss the emergence of deep-fake technology and its potential to erode trust in media. Their research indicates that advanced AI tools can be weaponized to create misleading content, further complicating the landscape of information warfare.

International Implications of Cyber Interference

(Rid, 2020) provides a historical perspective on disinformation and political warfare, illustrating how cyber interference has reshaped international relations. His work underscores the need for global cooperation to address the threats posed by weaponized information.

The Rise of Digital Political Warfare

Historically, political warfare included propaganda and psychological operations, but the internet amplified these strategies into a particularly potent, instantaneous cyber form. Cyber tactics can range from phishing to hacking and even cyber espionage, allowing bad actors to gather intelligence and undermine political opponents. One notable example is the impact of information leaks and online disinformation campaigns during the U.S. 2016 election (Romm, 2018). These activities are a shift from traditional political manipulation to cyber interventions that can alter any field in politics everywhere around the world.

Techniques of Information Weaponization

Digital political warfare employs several key techniques:

- **Misinformation or disinformation campaigns:** Actors disseminate false or misleading information through social media to manipulate public perceptions, thus influencing

political results. The diffusion of "fake news" is normally targeted toward voters to polarize public opinion (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017).

- **Cyber Espionage:** The government or private information leakage may expose sensitive political data through unauthorized access to databases. This may then be used to delegitimize or create disarray within political entities (Nakashima, 2016).
- **Deepfakes and AI Tools:** AI can create hyper-realistic fake content used in sophisticated disinformation. Deepfake technology has the potential to erode trust since audiences may find it increasingly difficult to distinguish between real and manipulated media (Chesney & Citron, 2019).
- **Botnets and Troll Farms:** Automated bot accounts and organized troll farms amplify divisive or false content, seeking to influence online political discussions (Ferrara, 2016). Numerous such efforts are very well-orchestrated to support agendas and disrupt public discourse.

Case Studies of Information Weaponization

1. Election Interference in the U.S. 2016 Election

The 2016 US presidential election is one of the most-documented cases of foreign cyber-interference; Russian operatives, as outlined in the Mueller Report, hacked into the Democratic National Committee—DNC—and sensitive data was then leaked through actors such as WikiLeaks. A disinformation campaign accompanied the hack, as divisive and often untrue materials directly targeted the US voters (Mueller, 2019).

Social media giants, such as Facebook, reported more extensive efforts by the Russian Internet Research Agency to sway public opinion by creating fake accounts and pages that contained content on controversial issues such as racial tension, immigration, and gun rights (Romm, 2018). This interference showed the effectiveness of foreign cyber tactics within domestic elections and just how susceptible digital platforms can be to coordinated manipulation.

2. Social Media Manipulation in Brexit Referendum

The 2016 Brexit vote in the United Kingdom was also an example of how social media and manipulation of data could influence political results. According to (Bastos & Mercea, 2018), a large part of the Brexit-related material that spread came from automated accounts or bots, which shared hyper partisan news and frequently questionable information regarding the European Union. Moreover, it came to light that Cambridge Analytica and similar organizations harvested and exploited the data from Facebook for creating targeted psychological profiles of voters, to shape political advertisements that would ensure more support for Brexit. The planned nature of these tactics raised ethical questions on data privacy issues while revealing vulnerabilities in the democratic process.

3. Information Leaks via WikiLeaks

WikiLeaks became one of the prominent channels in the publication of confidential and usually classified information, with major leaks affecting public opinion and transparency

within governments. For instance, WikiLeaks' release of the DNC emails during the 2016 U.S. election influenced opinions about the Democratic Party and its inner workings. This tactic of releasing hacked information as a weapon of political warfare interrupts traditional media filters, allowing information—accurate or not—to directly impact the public. Julian Assange, WikiLeaks' founder, characterized these releases as a form of "radical transparency," although critics argue they can be harmful to national security and individuals involved in government operations (Assange, 2014).

4. Social Media Manipulation and Ethnic Violence in Myanmar

Inciting ethnic violence against the Muslim Rohingya minority in Myanmar, Facebook became a tool for Myanmar's military to create fake accounts and pages that spread inflammatory content against the Rohingya—a crucial ingredient for making violence widespread and implementing forced migration (Mozur, 2018). This kind of ethnic and political manipulation of social media showed what humanitarian consequences could emerge from unregulated platforms. The case prompted Facebook to introduce stronger content moderation policies in vulnerable regions, underscoring the platform's responsibility in preventing the spread of hate-fuelled misinformation.

Impact on Global Politics

- National Security Risks

The direct threats posed by cyber-political warfare to national security include attacks on critical infrastructures, electoral processes, and sensitive government information. By hacking into governmental systems or infiltrating political data, actors can manipulate or destabilize governance. Such incidents have degraded trust in political systems, and democratic outcomes are often distrusted by the public. With these scenarios, nation-states increasingly view cybersecurity as a central pillar of national defence (Clarke & Knake, 2019) .

- Polarization and Public Perception

Weaponized information directly influences public opinion, often leading to increased polarization within societies. Disinformation campaigns or "fake news" create echo chambers, pushing people toward extreme ideological stances (Pomerantsev, 2019). As a result, social cohesion erodes, and it becomes more challenging to foster constructive political dialogue, impacting the effectiveness of governance and international relations.

- Diplomatic Tensions and Geopolitical Alliances

Cyber interference in another nation's political processes can also strain diplomatic relations, bringing about sanctions, cyber retaliation, and diplomatic fallout. For instance, the issue of election interference has ratcheted up tensions between the U.S. and Russia, with a bearing on long-term geopolitical outcomes. States may switch alliance partners based on cyber-defensive arrangements, establishing a new layer of "digital diplomacy" and thereby shifting global power configurations (Rid, 2020).

- Economic Impact

Political warfare in cyberspace can have economic consequences. For example, cyber-attacks against infrastructure—energy, transportation—cause economic disruption, and the leak of sensitive trade information affects stock markets. The economic impact is global, as digital attacks do not respect borders; hence, all connected nations are exposed to the economic ripple effects when major cyber incidents occur.

Countermeasures and Future Challenges

- **Strengthening Cybersecurity Policies**

In governments around the world, strong cybersecurity frameworks are being established to protect the underlying digital infrastructure, such as the European Union's GDPR for data protection and the U.S. CISA (Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency). Such policies, among others, seek to secure electoral systems, critical infrastructure, and personal data. However, international coordination has proven quite challenging, given that cyber threats transcend national borders (Schwartz, 2020).

- **Public Education and Media Literacy**

Public media literacy and critical thinking education will go a long way in significantly decreasing the effectiveness of disinformation campaigns. By empowering citizens to identify and challenge false information, governments can create a far more resilient citizenry, less susceptible to manipulation. Programs aimed at the younger generation, such as those encouraged in schools and universities, look to develop long-term countermeasures against disinformation (Mihailidis & Viotty, 2017).

- **AI and Machine Learning in Cyber Defence**

Advanced AI tools can find deep-fakes, bot activity, and patterns in disinformation that allow officials to proactively act against them. Cybersecurity systems, driven by AI, will find abnormal activity on networks that show breaches before they can cause any further damage. The development of new defensive technologies in this cat-and-mouse struggle always faces the challenge of offensive technologies evolving (Vaccari & Chadwick, 2020).

- **International Cyber Norms and Cooperation**

There is an urgent need for international norms and treaties on cyber behaviour in order to avoid escalation into cyber wars. Organizations like the UN are working toward cyber norms that outline acceptable behaviour in cyberspace, but it has been difficult to gain consensus among the nations with differing priorities. This lack of cohesion makes it difficult to hold actors accountable or to prevent retaliatory cyber actions (Taddeo & Floridi, 2018).

- **Ethics of AI and Cyber Offense**

With AI increasingly used in both cyber defence and offense, ethical questions emerge around its deployment. For example, should governments use AI to pre-emptively disrupt potential cyber threats, or does this risk escalating conflicts? Ethical frameworks guiding AI's use in warfare, both physical and cyber, are essential to prevent unintended

consequences and ensure its use aligns with international human rights standards.

Conclusion

The weaponization of information has changed the face of political warfare and challenges conventional notions of national security, diplomacy, and public engagement. Democratic processes are under critical threat from increasing sophistication of cyber tactics, further resulting in polarized societies, weakened governance, and increased diplomatic tensions. Examples of election interference, social media manipulation, and data leaks expose how the weaponization of information disrupts political systems and raises ethical issues within this digital conflict.

This will be done by the adoption of strong cybersecurity frameworks, media literacy promotion, and the use of AI in defence by governments and any entity. Countering cyber-political warfare requires more than just technical solutions; it requires international cooperation, a clear set of ethics, and a public that is literate, alert, and resilient to misinformation. An evolving threat landscape requires a proactive and adaptive approach, whereby principles of transparency, accountability, and cooperation would guide both offensive and defensive cyber measures.

The bottom line is that digital space security is a central issue in safeguarding democratic values and political stability. Without concerted global action, the effect of cyber-political warfare will only continue to rise and deteriorate public trust in the integrity of the world's governance institutions. In their efforts to balance innovation with regulation, states should work in tandem toward creating a safe and trusted digital environment that will uphold democratic values against the rising threats to cybersecurity.

References:

- Allcott, H., & Gentzkow, M. (2017). Social Media and Fake News in the 2016 Election. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 31(2), 211-236.
- Bastos, M. T., & Mercea, D. (2018). The Brexit Botnet and User-Generated Hyperpartisan News. *Social Science Computer Review*, 37(1), 38-54.
- Chesney, R., & Citron, D. (2019). Deepfakes and the New Disinformation War. *Foreign Affairs*, 98(1), 147-160.
- Clarke, R. A., & Knake, R. K. (2019). The Fifth Domain: Defending Our Country, Our Companies, and Ourselves in the Age of Cyber Threats. *Penguin*.
- Ferrara, E. e. (2016). The Rise of Social Bots. *Communications of the ACM*, 59(7), 96-104.
- Mihailidis, P., & Viotty, S. (2017). Spreadable Spectacle in Digital Culture: Civic Expression, Fake News, and the Role of Media Literacies in "Post-Fact" Society. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 61(4), 441-454.
- Mozur, P. (2018). A Genocide Incited on Facebook. With Posts from Myanmar's Military. *New York Times*.
- Nakashima, E. (2016). Russian Government Hackers Penetrated DNC, Stole Opposition

- Research on Trump. *Washington Post*.
- Pomerantsev, P. (2019). This Is Not Propaganda: Adventures in the War Against Reality. *PublicAffairs*.
- Rid, T. (2020). *Active Measures: The Secret History of Disinformation and Political Warfare*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Romm, T. (2018). Facebook Identifies New Political Influence Campaign Ahead of Midterm Elections. *Washington Post*.
- Schwartz, J. (2020). U.S. Election Security Is More Secure Than Ever. *Here's Why*. *Time*.
- Taddeo, M., & Floridi, L. (2018). How AI Can Be a Force for Good. *Science*, 361(6404), 751-752.
- Vaccari, C., & Chadwick, A. (2020). Deepfakes and Disinformation: Exploring the Impact on Democracies. *Social Media + Society*, 6(1).

Fortifying Intercontinental Relations: A Diplomatic Endorsement and Rejuvenation of Iran in Africa: An Economic Analysis

<https://www.doi.org/10.56830/IJHMPS12202403>

Tekang P. Kwachuh 

Department of Political Science and International Relations, Anadolu University, **Turkey**

Email: ptkwachuh04@gmail.com

Received: 4 Nov, 2024 Revised 05 Dec, 2024 Accepted 26 Dec, 2024 Published 30 Dec, 2024

Abstract

In an era of unprecedented display of diplomatic force and geopolitical novelty, Iran's recent diplomatic voyage to Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe indicates a decade of Tehran's inaction on the diplomatic front with the continent. Relations between Iran and African states have a strong footing from the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) in addition to the fact that they all are members of the UN and other international institutions. Iran, rich in oil wealth and seeking to peacefully use its nuclear program, has been under sanctions from the West for a long time now. This paper examines the diplomatic affirmation and renewal of Iran's government engagement in Africa from an economic perspective, dwelling on three key questions. What are the key historical contexts in Iran-Africa ties? what factors are responsible for the recent driving force behind Iran's renewed entente with the continent? And what are the economic effects on Africa? The overall goal of the article is to analyze the economic dimensions responsible for Iran's engagement with Africa. The article revealed that Tehran's recent engagement with the continent is because of Western economic sanctions and the need for Tehran to propel its economy by engaging economically with the continent despite Western states courting Africa.

Keywords: Africa, Continents, Economic Effects, Iran, Motivations

A. Introduction

From the look of events in the field of international relations, south-south cooperation took a backbench with most research works focusing on Global North pitting Global South ties. The rise of States from the Global South the likes of China, India, Brazil, South Africa, Iran, Nigeria, Qatar, etc. cooperating among themselves has culminated in a new breed of research between states of the Global South, what influence, and the power they have in global politics. This claim is supported by Neuman (1998) who opined that ‘the role of the Third World in international politics remains relatively unexploited in the literature, a tendency that took several decades to diagnosed with contemporary scholarships offering studies on south-south ties with the presence of international organizations like BRICS+. (Hisham, 2009) wrote that The Islamic Republic of Iran and its nuclear ambitions remain at the center of American diplomatic attention. In 2009 Iran was the focus of President Obama’s first television interview as president of the United States. The branding of Iran, alongside Iraq, and North Korea as an “axis of evil” by George Bush, ushered in tough moments for Tehran-vis-à-vis the world.

With the overthrow of the Shah of Iran in 1979, who was a Western/American puppet, Iran’s foreign policy has undergone a monumental shift based on religious grounds. (Chimarizeni, 2017) held that nonetheless, only after it came into existence as an Islamic Republic, the situation transformed. By this time, the foreign policy of Iran took an autonomous direction. It was clearly defined in its Constitution and noted through Iran’s actions towards the US. Indeed, it was only after the establishment of an Islamic Republic, that Iran’s foreign policy took a U-turn. The new Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran was essentially a reflection of a novel view of the new leaders governing Iran’s politics. As such, based on Article 152 of the new Constitution new principles upon which the country was to be governed, were laid down. Picking on this and from clear observations, Iran’s closeness with Sudan, Nigeria, Eritrea, and Senegal can be tight to religious aspects.

The nexus between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the African continent has been achieved historically as a testament to the forging spirit of diplomacy and partnership. It is one of trade, cultural exchange, and mutual respect that dates back to millennia. The 21st century witnessed a recent historical revival, Iran an oil-rich state, with nuclear/military

capabilities, a thriving economy though facing Western sanctions, and an innovative foreign policy, is reverberating its links across Africa, paying attention to economic collaboration. The diplomatic reaffirmation and renewal of ties usher in a hopeful age of collaboration, set to open new opportunities for both Iran and Africa. Under former Iranian president Ahmadinejad, Iran operated a proactive foreign policy towards Africa with numerous visits made across the continent. However, the departure of Ahmadinejad (2005-2013) from office and following Iran's nuclear program sanctioned by the West, pushed the country into isolation thus culminating in a discontinuity of relations with Africa with little or no economic fruits to be talked about.

Iran's strategy, however, is broader than Western policymakers' focus on its nuclear program and its activities in the Middle East or perhaps Latin America. American strategists might describe Iran as a "regional power," but in recent years, Iranian officials have described the Islamic Republic as an "extra-regional power." They see Iran as a pivotal state able to exert its influence not only in the Middle East, but also in South Asia, and not only in the Persian Gulf but also in the Indian Ocean. Tehran's diplomatic ambitions, however, may be considerably broader: Iran increasingly appears to be looking at Africa as a fertile ground for expanding its influence. Iranian outreach takes many guises and is geared toward specific purposes, some diplomatic and others military (Rubin, 2013) Szrom posits Iran's four-pronged approach to courting African allies: through diplomacy, economics, culture, and defense.

Over the years, Iran's diplomatic strategy toward Africa has been threefold. First, with additional aid, Tehran has cultivated relationships with countries voting in important international bodies, such as non-permanent members of the United Nations (UN) Security Council or term members serving on the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Board of Governors. Additional targets for Iranian largesse have been African states active in the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Union. Second, beyond the diplomatic quid pro quo, Iranian officials appear to be prioritizing outreach to those African countries that are mining or prospecting for uranium deposits. Lastly, senior Iranian officials have sought to cement partnerships that they could leverage to gain access to strategic bases (ibid). (Lefebvre, 2019). Held that the IRI's 'offensive' foreign policy stems from a sense of insecurity (not unreasonable given Western and Arab support for Baghdad during the 1980-

1988 Iran-Iraq Wars, past and current international sanctions on Iran, and frequent talk of supporting regime change in Tehran), not from a position of power.

This article focuses on the historical and contemporary development of Iran-Africa relations with the core focus on assessing the economic impact it has on the continent of Africa. It looks at how Tehran's diplomatic and economic might benefit those African states that forge closer ties with Iran to elevate the economic burden on them. Most research works have been based on Iran-Africa relations in the areas of security and military. Ever since Iran's nuclear program came to the lamplight, Tehran has been unable to concretize the economic largess in Africa.

B. Historicity of Africa-Iran Relations

Though Iran gained independence in 1921 and the majority of sub-Saharan African states gained theirs by the early 1960s, the two regions have deep historical ties. Before European colonialism, Persian-African relations were primarily based on trade. As early as the 9th century migrants from the Persian Gulf settled in urban areas in East Africa, and Iranian merchants had visited East Africa by the 16th century (Chaudhuri, 1985). Basically, the rise of Iran's deep engagement with Africa was witnessed in 2005. Affirmatively, the rise of President Ahmadinejad to power between (2005-2013) transformed the dynamics of that relationship (Rubin, 2013). Iran's policies in sub-Saharan Africa have been driven through the years by a variety of interests that have varied from the days of the Shah's regime to the current Islamic Republic. However, over the past decades of the existence of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the intensity and nature of the IRI's policies in the region have changed and not remained static. Besides the impact of Iranian domestic politics (especially the regime changes in 1979 from a monarchy to an Islamic Republic), regional and international conflicts have also shaped Iran's policies (Lefebvre, 2019).

After the wave of African independence in the late 1950s and early 1960s, African relations with Iran were characterized as ideological, with a moderate undercurrent of Iranian patronage. In the aftermath of the global oil boom of 1974, Tehran's treasury was inundated with cash, which Iran declared it would use to help African states develop. In addition, Cold War politics led Iran to provide support for African insurgent movements fighting regimes it perceived to be supporters of Western imperialism. When Mao Zedong, a supporter of what would become Nelson Mandela's African National Congress, died in 1976, leaders of the

South African movement quickly turned to Iran and Libya for assistance (Jason & Carol, 2013). The Iranian Revolution of 1979 signaled a shift in Iranian foreign policy, not least toward Africa. The Revolution—which saw the overthrow of the US-supported Shah and the installation of the Ayatollah Khomeini paved the way for anti-US and anti-imperial rhetoric, and the desire to export the Revolution’s conservative version of Islam. For Africa, the Iranian Revolution signaled both continuity and change. Unchanged was the pro-South, anti-imperial language of solidarity, but a new dimension, which resonated with many African states, was Iran’s promotion of Shi’a Islam (ibid).

As a result of this stand taken by Iran, she was awarded observer status at the African Union (AU). Through this position, Iran secured the support of some of the member states of the AU as it can interact with many of these states (Kobi., 2011) cited by (Chimarizeni, 2017). The consequences of those interactions are reflected in the observable alliance between Iran and some African states and their endless support to Iranian ventures in other organizations such as IAEA other than UN (Chimarizeni, 2017). Under the leadership of Ahmadinejad due to his rampant visit to the continent, he successful championed the 2008 Iran-Africa Conference that took place in Tehran. Following in the footsteps of his predecessor, former Iran leader Ibrahim Raisi inaugurated in March 2023 the Economic Cooperation Summit between West African States and Iran. During this economic gathering, the Iranian leader reiterated The Islamic Republic of Iran’s willingness and dedication to deepening cooperation across the different spheres.

With the end of the Iran-Iraq War and the end of the Cold War, Iran’s foreign policy toward Africa between 1988 and 2005 continued to be ideologically based on pro-Third World rhetoric. Iran remained friendly with African states diplomatically through the discourses of Third Worldism and Islamism, quietly dropping the anti-imperial tinge in its unsuccessful attempts to befriend the West. In the end, Africa continued to play a marginal role in Iran’s international calculus. Western hostility toward Iran was no longer to be tolerated once Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the ultra-conservative former mayor of Tehran, was elected President in 2005. Under Ahmadinejad, Iranian foreign policy has been described as ‘muddled’, ‘badly fragmented’, ‘far from monolithic’, and lacking consensus’, all leading to ‘inadequate implementation’. With limited ties with the continent by the West between the period of 2003-2013, seemingly Iran exploited this by extending its influence on the

continent. During this period, the former Iranian president and Cabinet members made yearly visits to Africa as compared to successive US governments. The visit to Benin, Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Ethiopia, was made by former Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi in 2013 where he declared Africa as a priority for Iran in Ghana and attended the AU summit that year (ibid).

Iran's desire to break out of its international isolation by penetrating sub-Saharan Africa extends beyond Tehran's strategic outreach to Eritrea, an African political outcast. In September 2010, Tehran hosted a two-day Iran-Africa Forum attended by 40 African countries (Valanka, 2016) as cited by (Lefebvre, 2019). Tehran hoped to use the summit to win African support to oppose future UN-imposed sanctions. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad also underlined Iran's desire to boost cooperation with Africa and host a summit of African Union (AU) heads of state in Tehran, especially in the areas of technical, engineering, and medical expertise (Lefebvre, 2019) 5 citing Wikileaks, 2012).

C. Why was there a Discontinuity in Iran-Africa Relations under President Rouhani

During the reign of Former Iranian President Ahmadinejad Africa furthered so much in Iran's foreign policy marked by numerous visits to African states and top Iranian officials took rounds visiting the continent for political, diplomatic, economic, and military reasons. By 2011, Ahmadinejad's diplomatic voyages had taken him to Senegal, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Mali, Nigeria, Djibouti, the Comoros, Kenya, Sudan, Algeria, and Gambia. In addition, Tehran also dispatched and embarked on diplomatic voyages by dispatching ministerial-level delegations to improve relations with other strategic partners on the continent such as Ghana, Angola, and South Africa. It was during Ahmadinejad's presidency, that Iran made two smart and strong bonds that sought African friendship, the first in 2005 and the second in 2010. Iran moved ahead to sign several Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with African countries in a variety of areas, including education, agriculture, scientific research, and energy.

However, under President Rouhani, relations with Africa were not given due preference since he favored relations with the West to ease tension on the nuclear deal and economic setbacks on Iran. According to (Chimarizeni, 2017), reacting to the low level of relations with Africa by Iran, he stated that resultantly, the new standing coming from the current Iranian leadership (Rouhani) has undermined the existing Iran-Africa relations. Recently the "third world" principle transformed into action has been weakened as more focus has been given to

the Iranian nuclear deal with the West. Nonetheless, the strategic relevance of Africa for Iran has not changed. Essentially, though the relationship between Iran and the African states has registered a considerable improvement during the Ahmadinejad era, the same involvement has not been witnessed during the current Rouhani presidency. Although Rouhani has expressed his willingness to keep Iran-Africa relations on the same path, the previous flexible relations between both are yet to come back to the previous stage or even gain a new dynamic (Hammond, 2013); (PressTv, 2014) as cited by (Chimarizeni, 2017).

Accordingly, Rouhani has so far reaffirmed his commitment to Africa. Nonetheless, that commitment is witnessed mostly in terms of political speeches. Rouhani's practical focus has been, instead, mostly on the nuclear issue rather than on concrete actions envisioning extending Iranian bonds with African states. Moreover, Rouhani's "engagement" with the West, instead of Africa, unlikely Ahmadinejad's, puts Africa behind concerning Iran's current foreign policy priorities (ibid). As the United States and the European Union invest in reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, the Iranian leadership has chosen to strengthen its non-Western foreign policy stance. In line with this approach, Former President Ibrahim Raisi embarked on a three-country trip to Africa in mid-July 2023, marking the first time an Iranian president has undertaken such a visit in over 11 years. Earlier in the month, Iranian officials reported that the Islamic Republic's exports to the continent had increased by 100% over the past year. It is now clear that engagement with Africa will be a major foreign policy focus under Raisi's administration. This raises the question of whether, a decade on, Raisi's Africa policy will prove any more successful (Amin, 2023).

To summarize, to comprehend the discontinuity of Tehran in Africa during the tenure of Rouhani's foreign policy towards Africa, four points indicate these disruptions.

1. Less emphasis on the Third Worldism in the speeches of Iranian leaders.
2. Rouhani did not travel to Africa.
3. His support for the reestablishment of ties with the West was based on uplifting the economic sanctions and negotiations on the nuclear program.
4. Iran's economic reduction in terms of economic engagement with Africa.

It was during the leadership of Ahmadinejad that Iran-Africa relations were at their best marked by numerous diplomatic, economic, and political visits. Under Rouhani, Tehran in Africa was at its lowest point with little or no engagement to be written about and finally, it

was this low-key for close to a decade that saw the reuniting of Iran-Africa relations ignited by former Iranian leader Ibrahim Raisi. What becomes of Iran-Africa relations in the future over the sudden death of Ibrahim Raisi and with President Masoud Pezeshkian as the new president in 2024 is unknown.

D. Global South Worldism

Global South Worldism is a dynamic and transformational idea that crosses geographical boundaries to bring together nations and regions that have been marginalized by the existing global power structure. This paradigm, which arose in response to the historical dominance of the Global North, symbolizes a reworking of the world's sociopolitical and economic order. It focuses on solidarity and collaboration among countries in the Global South, which includes Africa, Latin America, Asia, and portions of the Middle East. According to (Berger, 2004) after decolonization began and after the Second World War, states in the global South often engaged with one another through a bridge of 'Third World speeches' or 'Third Worldism' a 'discourse that presaged the emergence of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Third Worldism was primarily concerned with resistance to both hegemonic powers during the bipolar order of the Cold War, a stance in which states refused to side with either pole.

Global South Worldism emphasizes these various nations' shared concerns and goals, emphasizing the necessity for collaborative action in tackling issues such as poverty, inequality, and the effects of colonialism and imperialism. It advocates for a more equitable allocation of resources, technology, and global power, ultimately promoting a more inclusive and just global order. This notion questions traditional power structures and envisions a world in which the Global South plays a significant role in influencing the future of international relations and global development. Meanwhile, Warner and Gallo (2013: 397) held that this terminology is characterized by a discursive focus on several ostensibly uniquely Southern issues, including opposition to Northern hegemony; South-South solidarity; the sovereign equality and independence of nations; non-interference in internal affairs; and recognition of the perceived neo-colonialist underpinnings of global affairs. This did not, however, prevent states from instrumentalizing the ideology of the Third Worldism while also manipulating Cold War politics.

Since the landmark 1955 Bandung Conference that set its discursive tone, Third Worldism has gone through several changes. Morphing from the early anti-colonial nationalist movements of the 1950s and 1960s into the NAM of the Cold War era, it has more recently been manifesting in the new transnational anti-Bretton Woods and anti-neo-liberal movements of the 1990s and 2000s. Regionally, Third World speeches have been incubated in the intellectual paradigms of Négritude, Pan-Africanism, African socialism, and Afro-Marxism in Africa and the Caribbean, and in pan-Arabism and Maoism in the Middle East and Asia. Bilateral relations have also been based on such rhetoric. The People's Republic of China and Africa have had an understanding of sovereignty based on the equation of self-determination and anti-imperialism, while states in the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa have rooted their solidarity in a pro-black pan-African nationalism. Leftist leaders in Latin America have also evoked pro-South solidarity as the basis of their friendship, with countries across the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. (Warner and Gallo, 2013: 397-298 citing Washington Times, 2009).

Nevertheless, states across the developing world tend to frame their relationships in terms of equality. The result has been that power differentials within the global South are glossed over as stronger states seek to consolidate political power and diplomatic capital by playing to Third Worldist proclivities. This tendency is particularly visible in Iran, which today uses the rhetoric of global South speech to advance its geopolitical goals in Africa, and in African states that use similar language in an attempt to secure various kinds of external support (ibid). In this light, in forging south-south relations, these states often in unison condemn the economic and draconian laws for loan acquisition by the World Bank and other lending sister organizations especially African states which have been trapped in the debt web of Northern states via these organizations, especially from the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP) that handicapped their economies till date.

China, Brazil, India, Turkiye, South Africa including Russia have often used the south-south rhetoric when pushing forth for an economic, and political agenda at global gatherings. But this has not gone well lately with the fractioning of these states when it comes to taking a uniform stand at the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council matters such as the ongoing war between Israel-Palestine (Hamas), Russia-Ukraine, the conflict in the Cameroons, Sudan, etc. The existence of BRICS+ has given room for speculations that it seeks to represent the southern voices that have been ostracized by the north in the realm of global political and economic arrangements.

E. Motives for Tehran's Renewed Interest in Africa

Iran's reproachment in Africa indicates a diplomatic (political and military) and economic objective. Tehran seeks to diversify its relationships and expand its worldwide influence in the face of international trials. To comprehend Iran in Africa and the reasons behind Tehran's move into the continent particularly Sub-Saharan Africa, (Lefebvre, 2019) posited four key episodes i) the Shah and containment, 1953-1979; ii) the Islamic Republic of Iran's diplomatic 'offensive,' 1980-2001; iii) the Islamic Republic of Iran seeking to 'escape' international isolation, 2002-2010; and iv) the Saudi Iranian Cold War, 2011-2018. In contemporary times Tehran is sailing through tough geopolitical terrain in search of economic possibilities and diplomatic relations in Africa, restructuring its presence with strategic goals in mind. These motifs for Tehran's re-uniting in Africa consist of:

1. Quest to win Friends and reduce/end International Isolation

Tehran's renewed interest in Africa is in line with her strategic goal of opening novel alliances and breaking international isolation in the face of sanctions and diplomatic setbacks. Now Tehran brainstorms on reigniting alliances throughout the continent, the recent visit of former Iran's statesman Ibrahim Raisi to Africa is a solemn testament to this. Tehran believes that engaging in Africa after 11 years will help ease the consequences of Western isolation in the light of re-energizing economic and diplomatic relations. Considering expanding its economic potential and geopolitical significance, Africa is fertile soil for Iran's re-orientation plan in forging partnerships and offset Western dominance. To redeem Iran's image and reinforce its status in the face of global constraints within the podiums of the United Nations General Assembly and Security Council and not leaving out the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran pursues a calculus and holistic approach by engaging African states that have seats in these bodies to lessen the pressures and condemnations which includes economic cooperation in the form of economic promises, cultural exchanges, and diplomatic ententes.

On this same lane, (Rubin, 2013) stated that the Iranian diplomatic strategy toward Africa has been threefold. First, with additional aid, Tehran has cultivated relationships with countries voting in important international bodies, such as non-permanent members of the United Nations (UN) Security Council or term members serving on the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Board of Governors. Additional targets for Iranian largesse have been African states active in the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Union. Second, beyond the diplomatic quid pro quo, Iranian officials appear to be prioritizing outreach to

those African countries that are mining or prospecting for uranium. Lastly, senior Iranian officials have sought to cement partnerships that they could leverage to gain access to strategic bases. Iran's attempts to leverage its relationship with South Africa into support on the UN Security Council and the IAEA Board of Governors paid dividends. Despite the February 2008 IAEA report that found that the Islamic Republic continued to enrich uranium in violation of its safeguard agreement and two Security Council resolutions, the South African government used its position on the Security Council to oppose further sanctions against Iran (ibid).

Both the UN Security Council and IAEA normally have African representation. Togo and Rwanda served as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council (between 2010 and 2011, Gabon and Nigeria served in this position). South Africa held a security council seat between 2007 and 2008 and again between 2010 and 2011, with Uganda serving in the interim. Nigeria, South Africa, and Tanzania also currently serve on the IAEA Board of Governors, and in recent years, Niger and Kenya have also served there. The countries listed largely coincide with the emphasis of Iran's African outreach. Iranian diplomats have long sought to cultivate ties with South Africa. The Islamic Republic's opposition to Apartheid set the foundation for warm ties after the restoration of diplomatic relations in 1994. Iranian supply of oil to South Africa has heightened economic relations. For Tehran, however, trade is not the only factor in Iran's desire to have good relations with South Africa. "South Africa is a key member of the Non-Aligned Movement, a bloc of developing countries that has resisted the efforts to force Tehran to halt uranium enrichment," a commentary in the official Tehran Times explained (Rubin, 2013).

Due to the inaction of Iran's Foreign policy towards Africa at both the UNSC and IAEA for 11 years, the deficiencies were felt by Iran which precipitated the change of policies leading to the visit of Ibrahim Raisi to Africa this year before his demise. In this light, Raisi will have to engage South Africa with a seat on the Board of Governors of IAEA, Kenya, and Niger who got the UNSC non-permanent seat in 2022. Mindful of the fact that these international institutions are subjected to change based on elections and rotations, these seats occupied by Nigeria, Kenya, and Niger are expected to be filled by other states in the future, which will propel Tehran to rush closer in knitting ties with the states to assume these seats.

Iran Leaders	Countries Visited	Years of Visit
Ibrahim Raisi (Former Iranian President)	Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe	2023
Iranian Foreign Minister Amir-Abdollahian and Deputies for Economic and Political Diplomacy	Mali, Tanzania, South Africa, and Niger	2022
Ali Akbar Salehi (Former Iranian Foreign Minister)	Benin, Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Ethiopia	2013
Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (Former Iranian President)	Benin, Niger, and Ghana	2013
Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (Former Iranian President)	Gambia, Senegal, Sudan, Algeria, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Mali, Nigeria, Djibouti, Comoros, and Kenya	2011
Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (Former Iranian President)	Burkina Faso, Ghana, Togo, and Benin	2010

Countries in Africa Iran has visited from 2010-2023

Source: Author's compilation

2. Quest for Uranium

A significant element that stands as a driving force for Iran's interest in Africa is connected to Africa's rich uranium deposits needed for the burgeoning of Tehran's nuclear program. Previous and present Iranian regimes have indicated that its 16 nuclear reactors are solely for civilian purposes. In this light, Iran has resorted to engaging Uranium-rich African states like Niger, Gambia, Malawi, Namibia, Uganda, Nigeria, South Africa, and a host of other countries. Whatever Tehran's nuclear playback might be, previous and present Iranian regimes have made it plain to the world that it won't abandon its nuclear program which angers the West. With an appetite for Uranium, Tehran is chasing alternative avenues of uranium that Africa can provide so that it makes up for the deficit. According to (Gregor, 2010) in 2003 Iran announced its plans to develop facilities that could produce enriched uranium.

The ((IAEA), 2008) International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) paid several visits to the country and insisted all details be revealed. Ahmadinejad's refusal to allow inspections by the IAEA led to four sets of international sanctions against Iran in 2006 and 2007. These sanctions have led Iran feverishly to seek out international allies: 'Iran is always trying to expand its areas of diplomacy and economic influence on counterbalance against its isolation. As it has done in various international forums, Iran tends to talk about its nuclear program with African states in peaceful terms, claiming that its program poses no real threat to international security. African states are by and large in support of Iran's right to peaceful development of nuclear technology for civilian purposes. Djibouti has come out as an advocate of Iran's right to peaceful nuclear technology, going far as to praise Tehran for its determination to access it (Wellman, 2009). Kenya, which faces enormous energy security challenges, has shown support for Iranian nuclear technology in the hopes of receiving assistance in potentially developing its nuclear power.

African Countries with Uranium, UNSC, and IAEA seats Iran has Courted.
Niger
Guinea
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Zimbabwe
Namibia
Malawi
South Africa
Gambia
Uganda
Gabon
Togo
Central Africa Republic
South Africa
Kenya

Source: Author

3. Need to expand Trading Ties

The need to foster close ties with the African continent rests on forging genuine economic and trading ties by Tehran has become a novel strategic dimension meant to cement and deepen economic rapprochement. With a geopolitical obligation as a geopolitical player, Tehran's will to forge economic contacts with the continent rests on the need to prove to its critics that it has been ostracized economically. The mutual pros in deepening trade, economic interconnection, and building markets are part of Tehran's economic expansion to lobby for certain natural resources particularly uranium for her nuclear program. With the reinforcement of business contacts, Iran and African states can reap complementary resources, market accessibility, and technical know-how. Iran's proactive foreign policy is amplified by a proactive economic scheme that shows its devotion to equal economic growth and development. The establishment of continental alliances is a central objective of Iran in Africa which is achievable by establishing trade and economic ties all geared at reducing dependence on specific market products.

(Rubin, 2013) in line with trade ties with the African continent held that while visits by Iranian officials to the West African country of Guinea were relatively scarce a decade ago, Tehran has taken more interest in Conakry since the discovery of commercially viable uranium deposits in 2007. In 2010, Mottaki announced a 140 percent increase in Iran-Guinean trade, for which the mining sector accounted for the greatest proportion. According to (Gyezaho, 2009), Uganda announced its uranium discovery in 2004. While commercial relations between Iran and Uganda remained dormant under the presidencies of Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani (1989-97) and Mohammad Khatami (1997–2005), this changed in subsequent years. Visiting Tehran in 2009, Uganda President Yoweri Museveni met not only with his counterpart but also with Iran's minister of mining. The Kampala-based Daily Monitor reported, "a strong indication that the two leaders discussed prospects of exploiting Uganda's uranium resources, which Mr. Museveni has often said would only be used for "the generation of energy."

The recent visit of Bakary Yaou Sangare, the Foreign Minister of Niger's military government to Tehran after the Raisi visits to three African states and the expulsion of France from Niger is an indication of Tehran's cementing economic interest in the country driven by the huge Uranium deposits. According to Iranian State news agency (IRNA), 'As Niger's

Foreign Minister is in Tehran, the European Union has introduced sanctions targeting individuals and entities linked to the military junta that seized power in July. Foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said, "The EU has from the very beginning condemned the coup d'état in Niger in the strongest terms." The newly established framework empowers the EU to impose sanctions on those responsible for actions that it deems 'jeopardize Niger's peace, stability, and security, undermine its constitutional order, or involve severe violations of human rights and international humanitarian law'. In doing so, the EU seeks to align and reinforce the actions taken by the West African regional organization ECOWAS (<https://www.iranintl.com/en/202310249083>). According to the website of Iran Primer wrote that "President Raisi signed 12 cooperation agreements with Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa after his three-country African tour.

The agreements covered energy, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, and scientific research projects. On the 14th of July 2023, former President Raisi returned to Tehran from his African tour and outlined his desire to "increase strategic depth" in the continent. He specified that Iran would trade petrochemicals for raw materials, including food. "We share common views with these African countries on opposing unilateralism, defending human rights, protecting family values, and fighting against moral corruption and organized crime,".

4. Need for Military Bases

In a purported quest for a military base that might be used to counter Iran's rivalries on the continent and build an outreach military might, (Rubin, 2013) held that Iranian outreach to Africa may be a quest to establish Iran's own "string of pearls" that is, if not de facto bases that could provide Iran logistical support and allow it to extend its naval reach, then pivotal states upon which it could rely to advance strategic and ideological objectives (the role that Venezuela plays for Iran in South America). Initially, Iranian authorities cultivated a relationship with Senegal. There is no indication that the two states ever openly discussed formal bases, but the Islamic Republic did develop closer relations with Senegal than it did with other African states. Abdoulaye Wade, president of Senegal between 2000 and 2012, met repeatedly not only with Ahmadinejad but also with Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.

The building up of military installations/bases could be a strategic significance for Tehran-Africa relations channeled for geopolitical sway and securing economic corridors. The erection of any military unit on the continent by Iran will guarantee vital shipping routes, safeguard investments, and override presumed threats just as other powers have done across the continent, projecting their status, fostering alliances, and wielding roles across the different regions of the continent. If Iran sets up a military installation in countries like Senegal, Sudan, or Eritrea which unconfirmed reports have insinuated will culminate in geopolitical tensions leading to loggerheads with other powers that have settled long on the continent and neighboring states. Successful Iranian regimes especially the present one are running a foreign policy that seeks to assert influence by avoiding the destabilization of the African continent as it forges diplomatic, economic, and military alliances in Africa.

F. The Economic Effects on Africa

In a political world triggered by all sorts of alliances, Iran has sought the exercise of its power to defend itself from economic sanctions imposed upon it by the United States of America and Europe. To do away with this, she has resorted to Africa as a way out under Ahmadinejad's strategies to overcome the negative economic impact caused by these sanctions. Nonetheless, the rise to power of a pragmatic leadership paved the way for solving the nuclear deadlock directly with the Western states putting the Iran-Africa relationship in a fragile condition considering Iran's foreign policy priorities ((Chimarizeni, 2017).

In terms of the economic effects reaped by African states with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The closeness and temporal seats occupied by certain African states at the UNSC and IAEA indicate what dimension of the economic package Tehran is ready to deliver to these states. However, things have not gone well with Tehran's interest in Africa and African states have not benefited fully from the economic packages promised by Iran because of Iran's discontinuity of ties with the continent for over 11 years and Donald Trump's withdrawal from the 2015 Nuclear Deal, officially known as Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) hence shattering the significance of this deal which President Biden has been unable to fully revive with Tehran as he faces leaves the White House come January 2025.

Warner and Gallo (2013, 440) held that Iran has been cultivating trade relations across the continent. It has made notable inroads in promoting economic development, investing

across in the domain of energy, transportation infrastructure, information and communications technology, agriculture, rural development, and technological training in the Comoros, Gabon, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Uganda, Ghana, Niger, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Zambia, Mali, and Mauritania. More so, with the creation of new ‘air links, transportation and the founding of joint banks’ in some 48 African countries the opening of car manufacturing plants, and offers of oil for South Africa, Kenya, and oil-refining expertise to Uganda. In Harare, Tehran signed an MoU promising to overhaul Zimbabwe’s oil refinery and offer long-term fuel supplies in exchange for exclusive mining rights of ‘strategic’ minerals, including uranium (Wellman, 2009).

(Lefebvre, 2019) held that from 2013 onward, Iranian officials repeatedly commented about Tehran’s desire to expand various forms of cooperation with the region. Iran and Africa could boost bilateral economic and trade relations, especially given their national technical and engineering potential and capabilities. Iranian officials argued Iran should be seen as a strategic partner of the African Union along with India, Japan, China, and Turkey. To help African states benefit from Iran’s petroleum resources oil refineries could be built in the region, especially in West Africa. Iranian officials have reiterated that cooperation with Africa had been assigned a top priority by Tehran. Iran’s former Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, speaking at a ceremony marking the 51st anniversary of the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in May 2014, reiterated that the current Iranian Administration of President Hassan Rouhani (elected in 2013) was committed to expanding Iranian diplomatic relations with sub-Saharan Africa.

Iran has been reaching out to African countries promising to take initiatives that are positively received by the African countries. Iran’s actions in Senegal focus largely on the economy, with pledges geared at the opening of factories and various projects (Chimbelu, 2010 as cited by (Chimarizeni, 2017). Essentially, it includes the extension of a 120-million-dollar line of credit from the Export Development Bank of Iran to Senegal for the purchase of Iranian tractors (Kobi., 2011) as cited by (Chimarizeni, 2017). According to Taylor (2010), those measures reflect the economic interests of the Senegalese elite. Nevertheless, Senegal has recently served as “Iran’s gateway to Africa” as the USD 16 million in exports to Senegal

in 2009 constituted a greater volume of trade than that of Iran and all other West African countries combined (Kobi., 2011); (Rubin, 2013); as cited by (Chimarizeni, 2017).

One of those African countries that was able to reap from Iran-Africa relations has been Eritrea which saw the signing of agreements and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in 2008 between Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki and former Iranian President Ahmadinejad. (McAnenny, 2014) writing on Eritrea-Iran ties based on these agreements and MoU purported that the scope of those agreements lay in the increasing of trade ties between Eritrea and Iran and expanding and encouraging Iranian investment in Eritrea's agricultural, mining, and energy sectors. Resultantly, in 2008, the Iranian Bank for Export Development gave Eritrea \$35 million in credit to promote trade relations between the two countries. As gratitude, the Eritrean foreign minister expressed support for Iran's nuclear program when the Iranian minister visited the UN (ITIC, 2009).

Moreover, worthy to note is the difference in existing degrees of interaction between Iran and the African states. As such, compared to other African regions, the East and the West African states are the ones that have recently interacted mostly with Iran. Apart from the sharing of historic ties with Iran, the East African states have recently shared political relations with it. States originating from those two African regions such as Eritrea, Sudan, Nigeria, Senegal, and so on, have economic as well as military ties with Iran (McAnenny, 2014). Sometimes, the religious component is also incorporated into those interactions (Kobi., 2011). Unlike them, the Sub-Saharan states such as Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Malawi, Malawi, and Namibia have been interacting with Iran mostly in economic areas. Hence, the seeking of uranium in the latter state Iran, to supply its nuclear venture, constitutes its main interest therein (Onderco, 2012). The exchange of uranium deposits, thus, has been the condition put by Iran upon some African states to concede to them economic or even military resources (Solomon, 2015). Resultantly, the outreach of the African mining states stands as one of the Iranian strategies towards the continent ((Chimarizeni, 2017).

According to (Amin, 2023), in March 2023, the inaugural Economic Cooperation Summit between Iran and West African countries which took place emphasized Iran's willingness and commitment to substantially expand cooperation with African countries across various sectors. There has already been significant progress on the commercial front,

with Iranian exports to Africa reaching \$1.28 billion last year, up from \$579 million in 2020. The growth in some targeted areas has been even greater, with Iran's exports of technical and engineering services to Africa increasing by 700% in 2022. According to Iranian media reports, the Islamic Republic aims to achieve a tenfold increase in trade with African countries, reaching \$12 billion, with the initial target set at \$5 billion in two years. During Raisi's July visit to Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, he signed a total of 21 agreements in of domains of oil and energy, telecommunication and information technology, agriculture, and medicine, calling the continent a "land of opportunities." In the Iranian domestic sphere, recent developments suggest that the emphasis on Africa can now be regarded as part of a long-term strategic approach.

(Lefebvre, 2019) held that Iran's economic problems increased after the imposition of new economic sanctions by Washington, aimed at the Iranian oil sector (with further U.S. sanctions to be imposed at the beginning of November 2018), after the Trump Administration in May 2018 withdrew from the July 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)-Iran nuclear deal. Tehran has found it increasingly difficult to get into a 'cold war' with Saudi Arabia for the "hearts and minds" in sub-Saharan African states. This is due to Iran's ongoing military-financial commitments in Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, and Hamas. Iran's actions under her foreign policy towards certain places and regions have proven to be antagonizing the West and the recent closeness of Iran-Niger relations is a plus to anti-French sentiments on the continent and in that region.

G. Conclusion

Iran-Africa relations date back centuries ago and Iran's support for certain African countries during colonialism offered Tehran a place in the continent's post-colonial history. Under President Ahmadinejad, Tehran was actively involved in Africa in the economic, political, diplomatic, and military domains. But under the tenure of President Rouhani, Africa was relegated in Iran's Foreign policy as he lessened economic engagement with Africa, actively engaged the West, and non-visit to Africa. Since in the West, Iran is viewed as a 'pariah state' facing economic sanctions, former Iranian President Ibrahim Raisi's administration has reignited the footsteps of Ahmadinejad by re-engaging African states. By visiting the continent in July 2023 despite the hurdles surrounding the 2015 JCPOA on the Nuclear deal. Despite these, the economic records of Iran in Africa are not felt or exposed as

compared to states like that of Türkiye, China, etc. Thus, African states will not want to only feature in speeches, NAM discourse, Third Worldism, and courting African states at the UNSC and IAEA but wish to reap succinct economic benefits from Tehran. As Iran seeks to deepen its relations with states across the world and especially with Africa, President Pezeshkian's administration is tasked to continue in the footsteps of former president Raisi in winning friends in Africa culminating in Iran's international isolation and sanctions by the West.

References:

- (IAEA). (2008). Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement and Relevant Provisions of Security Council Resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007) in the Islamic Republic of Iran: Report by the Director General (Febr).
- Amin, N. (2023). Iran's Renewed Africa Policy: Raisi's Ambition and the Perception of Western Decline. . *Middle East Institute*, <https://www.mei.edu/publications/iran-renewed-africa-policy-raisis-ambition-and-perception-western-decline>.
- Berger, M. T. (2004). 'After the Third World? History, Destiny and the Fate of Third Worldism'. *Third World Quarterly* 25:1, 9–39.
- Chaudhuri, K. N. (1985). Trade and Civilization in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750, New York. *Cambridge University Press*, 44.
- Chimarizeni, F. (2017). Iran-Africa Relations: Opportunities and Prospects for Iran. *Brazilian Journal of African Studies* , e-ISSN 2448-3923 | ISSN 2448-3907 | v.2, n.3 | p.36-49 | Jan./Jun. 2017 Accessed on 12.11.2023.
- Gregor, D. (2010). 'Nigeria Voices Concern on Iran Before Assuming UNSC Presidency'. *Réalité EU*, www.realite.eu.org/site/apps/nlnet/content3.aspx? (accessed 10.11.2023).
- Gyezaho, E. (2009). "Museveni, Iran Leader Hold Talks,". Daily Monitor (Kampala): May 18, 2009, http://web.archive.org/web/20090521131952/http://www.monitor.co.ug/artman/publish/news/Museveni_Iran_leader_hold_talks_85022.shtml (Accessed on 20.11.2023).
- Hammond, J. (2013). Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's African Safari. <http://thediplomat.com/tag/iran-africa-relations/>.
- Hisham, M. (2009). "Obama Speaks to the Muslim World,". *Washington Post*, January 28, 2009. , <https://iranprimer.usip.org/resource/timeline-irans-foreign-relations>.
- ITIC. (2009). .Iran's Activity in East Africa, the gateway to the Middle East and the African continent. Available at: <http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/en/article/18244>.
- Jason, W., & Carol, J. G. (2013). Iran-Africa relations from Handbook of Africa's International Relations Routledge Accessed on: 26 Oct 2023. <https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9780203803929-39>.
- Kobi. (2011). Iran in Africa – Broken Promises, Terrorism and Drugs. Available at: <http://archive.irandailybrief.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Iran-in-Africa.pdf>.
- Lefebvre, A. J. (2019). Iran's Scramble for Sub-Saharan Africa. *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 133-150.
- McAnenny, A. (2014). Iran in Africa: A Tutorial Overview of Iran's Strategic Influence in Africa. *Center for Security Policy*, Available at: <http://www.centerforsecuritypolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Iran-in-Africa.pdf>.

- Onderco, M. (2012). "South Africa's Iran policy: "Posterchild" Meets Renegade". *South African Journal of International Affairs*, Available at: <http://www.tandfonline.com/action/ShowCitFormats?Doi=10.1080/10220461.2012.740179>.
- PressTv. (2014). Iran Seeks Closer Ties with African States: Rouhani.
- Rubin, M. (2013). Africa: Iran's Final Frontier? *American Enterprise for Public Policy Research*, No. 2 Middle Eastern Outlook, 1150 Seventeenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 202.862.5800 www.aei.org.
- Valanka, A. (2016). "Iran's Awkward Diplomacy in Africa," . *The National Interest*, (March 23, 2016), retrieved from <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/irans-awkward-diplomacy-africa-15571>.
- Wellman, A. F. (2009). 'Djibouti-Iran Foreign Relations'. *Iran Tracker*, 5 May 2009, www.irantracker.org/foreign-relations/Djibouti-Iran-foreign-relations (accessed 25 August 2024).

Greening Sovereignty: Europe's Drive Toward a Sustainable Future

<https://www.doi.org/10.56830/IJHMPS12202404>

Hadeel Abozaid

Ministry of youth and Sports, Cairo, Egypt

hadeel1ashraf@gmail.com

Received: 8 Nov, 2024 Revised 08 Dec, 2024 Accepted 28 Dec, 2024 Published 30 Dec, 2024

Abstract

As climate challenges intensify, the European Union (EU) has embarked on an ambitious journey to integrate sustainability into the heart of its sovereignty, redefining governance, energy policy, and economic strategy. This paper examines the EU's "Greening Sovereignty" agenda, with a particular focus on flagship initiatives such as the European Green Deal, the Fit for 55 package, and complementary measures like the Renewable Energy Directive (RED II), the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), and the Emissions Trading System (ETS) reforms. Special attention is given to the transformative potential of green hydrogen as a cornerstone of Europe's energy transition, advancing the decarbonization of industries and fostering energy independence. By analyzing these legislative packages and directives, the paper explores how the EU balances ecological imperatives with economic growth, competitiveness, and geopolitical autonomy. The study also addresses the broader implications of Europe's leadership in sustainability for global climate efforts and regional integration. Ultimately, it illustrates how the EU is shaping a sustainable future by aligning sovereignty with environmental innovation and resilience.

Keywords: Greening Sovereignty, European Green Deal, Fit for 55, Green Hydrogen.

Introduction

Europe is making significant advancements in addressing climate challenges. Since the EU established its original climate goals, there has been notable progress in reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. As of 2005, the EU had successfully reduced emissions by 20% from 1990 levels, largely due to improvements in renewable energy adoption and greater energy efficiency. However, this progress has not been consistent across all sectors. While the energy supply sector has seen considerable reductions, emissions from the transport sector, particularly in international aviation, have continued to rise (Zavyalova & Popkova, pp. 87, 174, 181). In recent years, the EU has introduced a series of strategic climate policies to advance its sustainability agenda. The European Green Deal, which was launched in 2019, serves as a major step in the EU's commitment to achieving climate neutrality by 2050. This overarching policy is backed by the Fit for 55 package, which sets a target to reduce GHG emissions by 55% by 2030 in comparison to 1990 levels. Furthermore, EU climate strategies are focused on channelling public

investments into green sectors, fostering the growth of sustainable technologies. These efforts not only prioritize the decarbonization of critical industries but also tackle the economic and social challenges that arise from the transition to a low-carbon economy, enhancing the EU's long-term environmental and economic sustainability (Cerniglia & Saraceno, 2022). Additionally, the EU has introduced innovative policy measures such as the Renewable Energy Directive (RED), reforms to the Emissions Trading System (ETS) (Solorio & Jörgens, 2017), and the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), demonstrating its strong commitment to driving significant and measurable progress in climate action (Park, 2016). Building on these significant climate policies, the European Union (EU) has identified green hydrogen as a crucial component in its broader strategy for achieving climate neutrality by 2050. As part of the European Green Deal and the Fit for 55 package, green hydrogen is seen as a key solution for decarbonizing energy-intensive industries and reducing reliance on fossil fuels. By integrating this innovative energy source, the EU aims not only to meet its climate goals but also to enhance energy security and promote economic growth through technological advancements. This alignment of green hydrogen with the EU's existing climate initiatives reinforces its commitment to a sustainable, low-carbon future ((IRENA)., 2022). This paper delves into the concept of "Greening Sovereignty," tracing its historical roots, current applications, and future potential. By examining Europe's leadership in sustainability and its broader implications, the study highlights how the EU's efforts serve as a model for addressing the interconnected crises of climate change, energy security, and economic resilience.

Navigating Climate Challenges: The EU's Path to Unified Action:

The European Union encounters significant climate challenges, such as striking a balance between mitigation efforts and adaptation strategies, accommodating the varied priorities of its member states, addressing economic costs and competitiveness concerns, and tackling uneven emissions reductions in sectors like transport. Aligning climate initiatives with broader EU objectives, fostering international collaboration, and navigating uncertainties in climate forecasts further add to the complexity. These issues underscore the difficulties in pursuing cohesive and impactful climate action across the EU (Jordan, 2023).

The European Green Deal (2019): A Pillar of Europe's Greening Sovereignty:

The European Union's climate strategy, outlined in the European Green Deal (2019), sets a clear path to achieving climate neutrality by 2050. This ambitious plan focuses on cutting greenhouse gas emissions, promoting renewable energy,

and strengthening energy security. A key element of the strategy, the Fit for 55 package, aims for a 55% reduction in emissions by 2030, introducing measures such as the Renewable Energy Directive (RED II), the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), and reforms to the Emissions Trading System (ETS). These actions are designed to improve the EU's energy resilience and diversification, while enhancing its economic and technological competitiveness (Oberthür, 2021). A pivotal aspect of this transition is the EU Hydrogen Strategy, which positions green hydrogen as a critical tool for decarbonizing industries with high energy consumption, such as heavy industry and transportation. The strategy includes a goal to deploy 40 GW of electrolyzers by 2030, enabling the production of 10 million tonnes of renewable hydrogen (Quitow, 2021). The EU's green transition aims to address the socio-economic challenges of transitioning to a low-carbon economy, particularly in regions heavily reliant on fossil fuels and high-emission industries. To support these regions, the Just Transition Mechanism (JTM) has been established. Its primary objectives are to reskill workers, create new job opportunities in emerging industries, and revitalize areas affected by the shift. The JTM is expected to mobilize approximately EUR 17.5 billion in investments, with a significant portion coming from the Just Transition Fund (JTF). These funds will be directed toward projects focused on energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable transport, the circular economy, and biodiversity conservation. By funding these initiatives, the EU seeks to ensure a fair and inclusive transition, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, promote technological innovation, and enhance energy security. Additionally, the funds will focus on creating sustainable job opportunities, reskilling the workforce, and revitalizing regions impacted by the decline of fossil fuel-based industries (Heffron, 2022), so the investments will complement additional EU funds targeting energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable mobility, the circular economy, and biodiversity. Through these efforts, the EU aims to ensure an inclusive and fair transition, leaving no region or person behind while advancing its broader goals of reducing fossil fuel dependence, driving technological innovation, and enhancing energy security. Moreover, the European Union's renewable energy strategy emphasizes the integration of various renewable technologies, such as offshore wind and solar power, to achieve its mandatory targets. The EU is committed to improving energy efficiency and encouraging technological advancements to establish a sustainable and diversified energy portfolio. By channelling investments into innovative green technologies, including cutting-edge solar panels and advanced wind energy systems, the EU aims to solidify its position as a global leader in renewable energy. These initiatives align with the Renewable Energy Directive's goal of reaching a 20% share of renewables in final energy consumption while simultaneously fostering economic growth and lowering greenhouse gas emissions (European Renewable Energy Council, 2010

(pp. 58, 254). In essence, the European Green Deal not only addresses climate challenges but also fortifies the EU's sovereignty and global competitiveness. By prioritizing energy independence, sustainable industries, and technological innovation, it positions the EU as a leading force in the transition to a sustainable future.

Enhancing EU Sovereignty Through the Fit for 55 Package:

Another key step Europe has taken toward sustainability is the launch of the Fit for 55 package in 2021, which is central to enhancing the EU's sovereignty in terms of both energy independence and economic autonomy. Aiming to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 55% by 2030, the package strengthens the EU's self-reliance by addressing energy vulnerabilities and advancing industrial leadership. A key element is the extension of the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) to sectors such as road and maritime transport and buildings, which helps reduce reliance on external energy sources and ensures a more resilient domestic economy. The Fit for 55 package also supports the EU's energy sovereignty by promoting the adoption of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency measures. Through revised directives like the Renewable Energy Directive and Energy Taxation Directive, the EU increases its reliance on domestic renewable energy, reducing dependence on imported fossil fuels. The introduction of new alternative fuels infrastructure and energy efficiency standards ensures that the EU becomes less susceptible to global energy market fluctuations, empowering it to take control of its energy future. The EU also leverages the Social Climate Fund to ensure that the transition to a green economy is just and equitable, maintaining internal cohesion as it shifts away from reliance on external energy markets. The expansion of the EU ETS across multiple sectors, including transport and industry, raises carbon prices, encouraging the adoption of cleaner technologies while also strengthening the EU's competitive edge in the global market. These initiatives position the EU as a sovereign entity in the fight against climate change, with the capacity to set its own energy and industrial policies free from external pressures, fostering long-term economic stability and security. Moreover, the Fit for 55 package plays a crucial role in reinforcing the EU's energy sovereignty and industrial strength, in addition to its emissions reduction targets. By extending the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) to sectors like aviation, maritime transport, buildings, and road transport, it broadens the scope of emissions cuts across several industries. Additionally, new, independent emission trading systems will be implemented for areas such as agriculture and waste, ensuring compliance with national emissions goals. The introduction of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) seeks to safeguard European industries from the risk of carbon leakage by levying tariffs on

imports from outside the EU that have high carbon footprints, helping to maintain the competitiveness of EU businesses during the transition. Aiming to alleviate the social and economic impacts of the green shift, The EU is also creating a Social Climate Fund to assist affected businesses and households (Dyrhaug & Kurze, 2023). The European Union (EU) is advancing a wide-ranging climate policy framework that includes targeted measures for transforming the transport sector into a more sustainable one. The REFuelEU Aviation and FuelEU Maritime initiatives are central to promoting sustainable fuel use in the aviation and maritime industries. Furthermore, a crucial goal is set to eliminate the sale of CO₂-emitting vehicles by 2035. The EU also plans to update key directives, such as the Energy Efficiency Directive and the Renewable Energy Directive, aiming to lower overall energy consumption and ensure that renewable sources contribute at least 45% to the EU's energy mix by 2030. These actions are essential to the EU's ambition to reach climate neutrality by 2050, enhance energy self-sufficiency, and secure economic resilience against global energy market fluctuations. In addition, proposed reforms to the Energy Taxation Directive (ETD) and the second Emissions Trading System (ETS-2) are expected to have a significant impact on households across Europe. The ETD reform includes a reduction in electricity taxes, which benefits lower-income households. However, if the EU raises fossil fuel taxes to compensate for the loss in electricity tax revenue, rural, peri-urban, and middle-income households could face higher fuel costs. Additionally, the ETS-2 pricing for CO₂ emissions in sectors like buildings and transport may put additional financial strain on households, particularly those in rural regions more reliant on fossil fuels. To alleviate these impacts, the Social Climate Fund (SCF) has been established to redistribute revenues from carbon pricing, focusing on the poorest 50% of households. The fund aims to ensure an equitable transition to greener energy, with particular attention to vulnerable communities in rural and peri-urban areas. In the maritime sector, the EU's Fit for 55 package introduces significant reforms to cut greenhouse gas emissions. The revised ETS now includes ships of 5,000 gross tonnage or more, covering emissions from intra-EU voyages, emissions at berth, and parts of emissions from extra-EU voyages. Shipping companies will be required to purchase emissions allowances, with compliance gradually increasing from 2023 to 2026, and penalties imposed for non-compliance, including restrictions on access to EU ports. Additionally, the FuelEU Maritime initiative sets progressive reductions in the greenhouse gas intensity of onboard energy, aiming for a 75% reduction by 2050. Passenger and container ships will also be required to adopt onshore power or zero-emission technologies when docked. The revised ETD includes phased fuel taxes for intra-EU voyages, with exceptions for sustainable alternatives like ammonia and advanced biofuels. The Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Directive mandates the provision of shore-side electricity for

passenger and container ships by 2030, along with LNG refueling infrastructure at core maritime ports by 2025. These measures are key components of the EU's broader climate strategy to ensure long-term sustainability and reduce emissions across all sectors. These measures operate under the "polluter pays" principle, allowing shipping companies to allocate compliance costs to entities making fuel and operational decisions. Collectively, these reforms aim to align maritime transport with the EU's broader environmental objectives (Jordan, 2023) package drives the EU's path to climate neutrality by expanding emissions trading, promoting renewables, and ensuring a just transition through initiatives like the Social Climate Fund. These measures bolster energy independence and economic resilience while solidifying the EU's climate leadership.

The Renewable Energy Directive (RED II) and the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM):

The Renewable Energy Directive (RED II)

As the EU works to enhance its energy independence and economic self-sufficiency, the Renewable Energy Directive (RED II) plays a key role in advancing its commitment to a sustainable energy future. Building on the previous RED I, which aimed for a 20% renewable energy share by 2020, RED II, enacted on July 1, 2021, establishes a legally binding target of at least 45% renewable energy in the EU's overall energy mix by 2030. This goal aligns with the EU's broader climate ambitions under the European Green Deal, which strives for climate neutrality by 2050. The directive focuses on expanding the use of renewable energy across various sectors, including transport, heating, and industry, and encourages the adoption of electric vehicles, renewable fuels, and hydrogen. To facilitate this transition, the directive simplifies permitting processes, making it easier and faster to implement renewable energy projects. It also reinforces sustainability criteria for bioenergy, ensuring all renewable sources effectively contribute to the clean energy shift. This revised framework is essential for reducing the EU's reliance on external fossil fuel supplies while boosting energy security and competitiveness within the global renewable energy market (Commission, European, 2021). Technical Assistance for the preparation of guidance for the implementation of the new bioenergy sustainability criteria set out in the revised Renewable Energy Directive).

The European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)

Building on these efforts, the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) addresses a critical concern: carbon leakage, as the European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) is designed to combat carbon leakage, which occurs when EU-based companies move their production to countries

with less stringent climate policies or when EU goods are replaced by more carbon-intensive imports. The CBAM aims to ensure that imports face the same carbon costs as EU-produced goods, preventing unfair competition while encouraging cleaner industrial production globally. The CBAM will be fully implemented in 2026, following a transitional phase from 2023 to 2025. During this period, importers will be required to report the carbon emissions embedded in their products but will not yet need to purchase CBAM certificates. The CBAM initially applies to high-risk sectors such as cement, iron, steel, aluminium, fertilisers, and electricity. This gradual implementation allows businesses to adjust and helps refine the system's methodologies before full implementation. By 2026, importers will need to purchase and surrender certificates based on the carbon emissions embedded in their goods, aligning the carbon costs of imports with those imposed by the EU's emissions trading system (Commission, 2023). Ultimately, the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism is a key tool in ensuring a level playing field for European industries while promoting global sustainability and advancing the EU's climate goals.

Green Hydrogen as a Cornerstone of the EU's Green Transition:

Hydrogen is also central to the EU's efforts to decarbonize energy-intensive sectors and transition to sustainable energy. Despite accounting for less than 2% of Europe's energy consumption in 2022 and being mostly derived from natural gas, the EU has set ambitious targets to produce and import 10 million tonnes of renewable hydrogen annually by 2030, aiming for hydrogen to meet 10% of its energy needs by 2050. This effort is bolstered by the 'Fit for 55' package, which enforces renewable hydrogen adoption and supports infrastructure development. Key investment programs, such as the Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEIs), drive innovation in production, infrastructure, and applications (Cerniglia & Saraceno, 2022). Additionally, initiatives like the Clean Hydrogen Partnership and the European Clean Hydrogen Alliance accelerate research, manufacturing, and deployment. The EU also provides guidance on funding opportunities through the Hydrogen Public Funding Compass, ensuring comprehensive support for stakeholders. These efforts establish hydrogen as a cornerstone of Europe's pathway to a net-zero future. Together, these initiatives position hydrogen as a vital component of the EU's strategy to achieve climate neutrality, driving both technological innovation and economic growth while reducing dependency on fossil fuels (Quitow, 2021).

Global Partnerships Driving Green Hydrogen Development: Europe's Collaborative Strategy:

To further enhance Europe's green energy strategy, these international collaborations, particularly in the green hydrogen and renewable methanol

sectors, are vital to achieving its ambitious climate and energy transition goals by tapping into valuable resources and expertise. These partnerships aim to leverage abundant renewable energy sources, develop robust supply chains, and address critical challenges such as production scalability, certification standards, and infrastructure readiness, all while accelerating the global transition to clean energy. For example, in North Africa, Morocco, Algeria, and Egypt play crucial roles. Morocco's inclusion in the H2 Med project—a proposed hydrogen pipeline linking Spain, France, and Germany—could enable the transport of solar-powered green hydrogen (Quitow, 2021). Italy collaborates with Tunisia, exploring ways to convert existing gas pipelines for hydrogen transport while also building new infrastructure. Egypt, a major player since COP27, has signed agreements with European entities to become a regional hub for green hydrogen. However, many of Egypt's memoranda of understanding still require significant investment to move from planning to execution. The Gulf States, particularly Saudi Arabia and the UAE, have also partnered with Europe, utilizing their abundant renewable energy resources and advanced infrastructure. Germany has actively pursued agreements to secure hydrogen imports, focusing on meeting Europe's growing energy needs. These partnerships also emphasize producing low-carbon hydrogen using renewable technologies. At the global level, these alliances aim to scale up production, standardize hydrogen certification, and integrate renewable hydrogen into global value chains. Together, these partnerships aim to secure a steady supply of green hydrogen, enable Europe's energy transition, and accelerate international decarbonization efforts. Achieving these objectives requires substantial investments, regulatory frameworks, and innovations to overcome barriers related to cost, transportation, and infrastructure (Prontera, 2024). As Europe moves towards achieving its ambitious climate and energy transition goals, a key component of its strategy involves securing partnerships with various countries for the development and importation of green fuels, including methanol. These international agreements play a crucial role in shaping Europe's energy future, particularly in its push for cleaner, renewable alternatives to fossil fuels. One of the most notable efforts in this regard is the focus on e-methanol, which is being developed as part of the EU's Renewable Fuels of Non-Biological Origin (RFNBO) initiative. In this context, Europe has signed multiple treaties with countries such as Japan, South Korea, the United States, and Australia (European Court of Auditors. 2024. Special report 11/2024: The EU's industrial policy on renewable hydrogen – Legal framework has been mostly adopted – time for a reality check). The Japan-EU Green Alliance fosters collaboration between Europe and Japan in advancing green hydrogen, methanol production, renewable energy, and sustainable finance. This partnership emphasizes joint research, aligning decarbonization policies, and developing infrastructure to support the clean energy transition. Europe benefits by leveraging Japan's cutting-edge

technology to enhance its energy security and broaden its clean energy market. Japan gains access to Europe's extensive renewable energy networks and opportunities to expand its green hydrogen market, while reinforcing its leadership in clean energy technology. Together, the two sides work toward their mutual goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 and driving the global shift towards sustainable energy solutions (Ministry, (n.d.)).

These partnerships and initiatives are aimed at reducing global greenhouse gas emissions, promoting the use of renewable fuels, and facilitating the development of a sustainable energy market. With these agreements, the EU and its international partners seek to meet stringent climate targets while creating a robust framework for the production, certification, and use of renewable methanol in the transportation and industrial sectors. These treaties not only emphasize emission reduction but also address the need for technological innovation, carbon capture, and global collaboration in clean energy transitions.

Sustainable Progress: How the EU Aligns Ecological Goals with Economic Growth:

All the measures, initiatives, and partnerships Europe has undertaken align seamlessly with its economic growth, reflecting the European Union's commitment to balancing ecological imperatives with economic advancement. The EU exemplifies a comprehensive approach to fostering sustainable development, integrating climate neutrality goals with economic innovation. Through initiatives like the European Green Deal, the EU integrates climate neutrality goals with economic innovation, targeting a decarbonized future by 2050. Mechanisms such as the Emissions Trading System (ETS) and the Renewable Energy Directive ensure that industries adopt cleaner technologies and renewable energy, reducing environmental impact while driving competitive advantages. Additionally, significant investments under programs like Horizon Europe and the Next Generation EU recovery plan fuel research and innovation in green technologies, promoting job creation and economic resilience. By incorporating social equity through the Just Transition Mechanism, the EU addresses disparities, supporting regions and workers affected by the green transition. Globally, it champions sustainable trade and carbon regulation through mechanisms like the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, ensuring that its ecological goals align with economic competitiveness. These efforts illustrate how the EU harmonizes environmental sustainability with robust economic growth, positioning itself as a leader in the global green economy.

Integrating Sustainability, Economic Growth, and Geopolitical Autonomy in the EU's Agenda:

To further solidify this approach, the EU is not only focusing on internal policies but also enhancing its global position through strategic partnerships and initiatives that align with both its ecological goals and economic objectives. By fostering international collaborations, the (Union, 24) effectively navigates the balance between ecological responsibility and economic growth. Through the adoption of policies that integrate environmental sustainability with competitiveness, the EU exemplifies a forward-thinking approach. Initiatives like the European Green Deal, for instance, are designed to not only reduce carbon emissions and promote clean energy but also to stimulate economic growth through green innovation. This dual focus fosters the development of green technologies, creating new industries, generating jobs, and enhancing economic resilience, all while reducing dependency on fossil fuels. However, the balance between ecological imperatives and economic growth presents its challenges. The EU is addressing these through strategic investments, partnerships with the private sector, and incentivizing sustainable practices across industries. Moreover, the integration of environmental considerations into policy frameworks—such as carbon pricing, emissions reduction targets, and circular economy models—ensures a gradual and just transition to a low-carbon economy. At the same time, by nurturing innovation and competitiveness in green technologies, the EU aims to demonstrate that sustainability and economic prosperity are not mutually exclusive but rather mutually reinforcing, paving the way for long-term economic and environmental resilience.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, Europe's commitment to greening sovereignty through comprehensive and forward-thinking initiatives is reshaping its environmental, economic, and geopolitical landscape. The European Green Deal, the Fit for 55 package, and complementary measures like RED II, the CBAM, and the ongoing reforms to the Emissions Trading System collectively illustrate the EU's resolve to confront climate challenges while enhancing its autonomy. These policies not only accelerate the decarbonization of industries but also foster innovation, strengthen energy security, and bolster the EU's competitive position on the global stage. Green hydrogen, as a cornerstone of this transformation, promises to play a pivotal role in decarbonizing heavy industries and further reducing Europe's dependence on fossil fuels. Through these efforts, the EU is not only aligning its sovereignty with environmental resilience but also setting a precedent for global climate action. By integrating sustainability into the very fabric of its governance, the EU is positioning itself as a leader in both climate action and sustainable economic development, proving that ecological responsibility and economic growth can go hand in hand. This multifaceted approach serves as a model for other regions striving to reconcile

economic development with environmental stewardship, highlighting the potential for a sustainable future driven by innovation, cooperation, and forward-thinking governance.

References:

- (IRENA)., I. R. (2022). *Renewable Energy and Jobs: Annual Review 2022*. IRENA: United Arab Emirates: Available at: https://www.google.com/eg/books/edition/Hydrogen_A_renewable_energy_perspective/qB0DEAAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0.
- Cerniglia, F., & Saraceno, F. (2022). *European Public Investment Outlook*. https://www.google.com/eg/books/edition/Greening_Europe/AnaiEAAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0.
- Commission, E. (2023, August 17). *Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/1773*. Retrieved from Official Journal of the European Union: Retrieved from: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023R1773>
- Commission, European. (2021). *Technical Assistance for the preparation of guidance for the implementation of the new bioenergy sustainability criteria set out in the revised Renewable Energy Directive. REDIIBIO – final report*. Retrieved from Retrieved from: <file:///C:/Users/Lenovo/Downloads/technical%20assistance%20for%20the%20preparation%20of%20guidance-MJ0221512ENN.pdf>
- Dyrhaug, H., & Kurze, K. (2023). *Making the European Green Deal Work*. Taylor & Francis, United Kingdom: EU Sustainability Policies at Home and Abroad.
- Heffron, R. J. (2022). *Achieving a Just Transition to a Low-Carbon Economy*. Germany: Springer International Publishing.
- Jordan, A. J. (2023). *Handbook on European Union Climate Change Policy and Politics*. United Kingdom: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Ministry, o. F. ((n.d.)). *Japan-EU Green Alliance operational work plan - Toward further co-operation*. Retrieved from Retrieved from: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/100533226.pdf>
- Oberthür, S. (2021). *European Foreign Policy in a Decarbonising World: Challenges and Opportunities*. United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis.
- Park, D.-Y. (2016). *Legal Issues on Climate Change and International Trade Law*. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Prontera, A. (2024). *Green Superpowers: China, the European Union, and the United States in the Global Energy Transition*. United Kingdom: OUP Oxford.
- Quitow, R. (2021). *The Geopolitics of Hydrogen: European Strategies in Global Perspective*. Germany: Volume 1. Springer.
- Solorio, I., & Jörgens, H. (2017). *A Guide to EU Renewable Energy Policy: Comparing Europeanization and Domestic Policy Change in EU Member States*. United Kingdom: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- Union, E. (24). *Special report 11/2024: The EU's industrial policy on renewable hydrogen – Legal framework has been mostly adopted – time for a reality check.* . Retrieved from European Court of Auditors: Retrieved from: <https://www.eca.europa.eu/en/publications?ref=SR-2024-11>

The Role of Media in Alliance of Civilizations and Dialogue of Religions

<https://www.doi.org/10.56830/IJHMPS12202405>

Dr. Nada Naji 

Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University-Fez, Morocco

Email: Nadanaji666@gmail.com

Received: 4 Nov, 2024 Revised 05 Dec, 2024 Accepted 26 Dec, 2024 Published 30 Dec, 2024

Abstract:

In an era where media serves as a cornerstone for knowledge dissemination, opinion formation, and communication, its exploitation by violent extremist groups has reached unprecedented levels. This underscores the urgent need to explore how various media and communication platforms can be harnessed to promote awareness and foster constructive dialogue. This paper will examine the dual role of media in both peacebuilding and the propagation of hatred, presenting concrete examples that illustrate its potential to strengthen alliances among civilizations and enhance interreligious dialogue, solidarity, and peace initiatives. Furthermore, we will identify instances of media misuse that exacerbate divisions and incite animosity. In conclusion, we will provide foundational principles of media literacy designed to cultivate critical thinking skills, empowering individuals to engage with media and new media more responsibly and effectively, to promote peace, dialogue and alliance, and counter extremist dialogue and hate speech in the digital space – which often times, trespasses the digital sphere to the offline world.

Keywords: Media-Communication- Alliance- Dialogue- Media Literacy.

Introduction:

Today, our world is experiencing a new golden age of technological and technical development, bringing countries and peoples closer together and transforming our vast planet into a small village. We even find ourselves discussing a new virtual population, the Facebook people, who reside in the blue world of social media. This proximity has changed the interests of many, making the understanding and acquisition of world languages essential for communication through social media, for benefiting from foreign programs and applications, or for traveling to new places and exploring them physically after first experiencing them virtually or electronically.

This closeness and shared living in a virtual world have also brought individuals from different communities together. Each user now has a list of foreign friends with whom they only communicate via modern means of communication: phone, social media (Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Snapchat...), in addition to staying updated on world events through live broadcasts or original content, without needing traditional communication methods that are subject to censorship or transmission through national channels.

While globalization has turned countries into a single economic market, global media has united various societies and peoples into one community. Communicating via social media may seem easy at first glance, lacking a cultural aspect, yet it has created a virtual society with its own culture, customs, traditions, language, and norms. Engaging with this society requires specific rituals, many of which pertain to technical aspects (accessing the network, logging into a site (username and password), or an application), followed by reviewing messages and notifications before considering sharing a post or status update, and moving on to real-time communication with virtual friends using a special language (abbreviations, emojis, GIFs).

In addition to creating a new culture, media plays a significant role in shaping public opinion and disseminating information. The diversity of media outlets, their orientations, and editorial lines contribute to forming a comprehensive picture of events through critical analytical reading of the media content, especially online newspapers, news posts on social media, and various video content on YouTube across different topics and fields.

Before discussing modern media and its relationship with intercultural dialogue, it is essential to distinguish between two fundamental terms: media and communication, due to their interconnectedness.

Communication is the exchange of meaningful messages between two or more parties. According to Shannon and Weaver, the communication process requires transmitting a message from one place to another, from a sender to a receiver. Roman Jakobson emphasized the importance of investigating language (or discourse) in all its diverse functions, which he classified into six categories (Jakobson, 1987):

1. **Expressive Function:** Pertaining to the sender's signals expressing themselves, their personality, and psychological state.
2. **Conative Function:** Related to the receiver's gestures aimed at influencing the sender.
3. **Phatic Function:** Involves words aimed at maintaining communication between the sender and receiver, like phrases such as "hello" and "yes".
4. **Referential Function:** Refers to what is understood from the general context.
5. **Metalinguistic or Descriptive Function:** Appears in meaning and lexical significance.
6. **Poetic Function:** Relates to the aesthetic aspect of the message (choice and arrangement of words).

From Shannon's definition and Jakobson's classifications, we can derive several essential conditions for effective communication, including:

- Presence of a sender.

- Presence of a receiver.
- Existence of a message carrying meaning.
- Shared general context.
- Communication via language (verbal and non-verbal).
- Interaction or feedback.

In this context, Jakobson outlined the stages of the communication process and the importance of key participants, stating that the sender sends a message to the receiver. For the message to be effective, it requires a 'context/reference' that the receiver can perceive, either verbally or expressible verbally, a 'code' shared entirely or at least partially between the sender and receiver (i.e., between the encoder and decoder of the message), and finally a connection, a physical channel, and psychological/psychological communication between the sender and receiver that enables them to connect and maintain communication (Jakobson, 1987)

Jakobson summarized this communicative process in a diagram as follows (Jakobson, 1987).



This concerns communication, its conditions, and the process that enables the establishment of a communication bridge between the self and the other. But what is the relationship between communication and media?

If communication is the exchange of messages between two or more individuals, in a generally agreed-upon context, understood through language and words, and involves interaction with each message in a process of give-and-take between sender and receiver, then media encompasses all means, techniques, and both official and unofficial entities, in their various forms and developments, which are used to convey messages, symbols, and meanings to groups or categories of individuals, to pass on news and disseminate information. It is a process of communication using technical or technological tools, which are often directed at the public, without seeking immediate feedback and without direct communication with the recipient. Media is divided into two types: traditional media and modern media.

Traditional media refers to the various means and techniques that have been circulated in the past and are still in use, which include:

- Audio Media: This refers to radio, named audio because it relies on the

sense of hearing to convey messages and auditory symbols to the listener.

- **Visual Media:** This is manifested in newspapers and magazines, which are visual because they rely on the sense of sight to convey their messages. The reader must engage with the media product and decode it to understand and grasp the message or analyze a particular image, relying mainly on readable texts, articles, or images.
- **Audiovisual Media:** This refers to television, which combines both image and sound, using readable texts, images, video clips, and live event coverage, alongside reliance on audio messages, thus engaging the recipient through both auditory and visual means.

Modern media, or what is commonly referred to as digital media or new media, refers to the internet or the World Wide Web. This medium is characterized by its integration of all previous media forms; it contains a vast number of symbols, including auditory, visual, readable, watchable, and hearable content. Its significance lies not only in its rapid spread and ease of access but also in its engagement of the audience in the media process itself, through the ability for users to publish their own news and content, or share messages and media they have received, on a broader scale. This transition allows the audience to move from consumption to interaction and then to production, which is referred to as "active reception" (as opposed to "passive reception").

Despite all being forms of media, there are significant differences between traditional and modern media. Some of the distinguishing features can be outlined as follows:

- **Interaction:** Interaction with traditional media is difficult, whereas interaction with modern media is immediate, achieved through pressing the "like" button, "dislike" button, sharing content, or leaving comments on the publishing page or the content creator.
- **Censorship:** Traditional media is subject to regulation by specialized entities that scrutinize the content of media or entertainment materials, playing a role in social, moral, and religious oversight, ensuring that nothing contradicts state principles or societal norms. In contrast, modern media does not face these restrictions, offering more freedom and openness.
- **Anonymity:** While traditional media often requires individuals to disclose their identity, such as on television or other traditional platforms, modern media ensures greater anonymity, allowing the use of pseudonyms, account hiding, and control over viewership.
- **Flexibility:** In traditional media, individuals are often required to be present in front of a television screen or radio at a specific time to access particular media content. In contrast, modern media allows users to access any media content at any time and in any space of their choosing,

enabling them to save or download the media to their devices and control what they wish to view.

After exploring what media is, its types, and its developments between traditional and modern forms, as well as some characteristics of modern media, a question arises: What is the nature of the relationship between modern media and cultural dialogue? Do these modern media tools play a role in creating a bridge between the diverse cultures of the world? If so, how does this dialogue occur? What mechanisms are relied upon? What are its prospects?

These questions likely stem from the modern era dominated by globalization and characterized by tensions in international crises, particularly regarding economic, ecological, political, and religious aspects. Focusing on culture is considered the first step in building an international community where security and peace prevail, as culture encompasses language, beliefs, customs, traditions, literature, arts, and heritage. It forms the foundation of an individual's intellectual structure, convictions, practices, and principles. Understanding the culture of others and establishing a cultural and civilizational dialogue among different cultures is essentially the establishment of a dialogue among various members of the international community, ensuring equal opportunities and respecting and valuing differences, considering this diversity a wealth and richness for humanity and a direct contribution to human progress.

Given the importance and urgency of intercultural dialogue in the current era—especially in light of civil, ethnic, and religious wars, as well as terrorist and racist attacks, most of which are direct results of the inability to accept the other, misunderstandings of their culture and values, or ignorance of them—various international organizations, human rights bodies, and educational and cultural institutions in both Western and Arab countries have initiated efforts to encourage the establishment of a civilizational dialogue between cultures and religions, encompassing all peoples of the world without exception. Due to the multitude of these initiatives, I will mention only a few examples:

- The United Nations Declaration in 1995 as the Year of Tolerance (United, 1998).
- The Japanese initiative for a dialogue of civilizations between Japan and the Islamic world, launched by then Japanese Foreign Minister Yohei Kono in 2000.(Abdenasser, 2006)
- The United Nations Declaration in 2001 as the Year of Dialogue Among Civilizations.
- The United Nations Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, adopted by the General Assembly on November 2, 2001, in Paris. (UNESCO, 2001)
- The establishment of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in 2005 (initiated by Turkey and Spain).

In this regard, media is a double-edged sword; while it aids in the development of peoples and the growth of their awareness, some exploit it to disseminate misinformation, hate speech, or fanaticism. Intellectuals utilize media to raise awareness and uplift society, while civil society uses it to mobilize for protests, as witnessed globally during the "Arab Spring". Politicians also leverage it to promote their positions. Social media has been employed to address the reading crisis in Morocco, notably through public reading initiatives like "Aji Nqraw" (Let's Read), "Sa'a lil-Qira'a" (An Hour for Reading), and "Dakhala bi-Kitab" (Entrance with a Book), as well as being utilized by scholars to normalize scientific discourse in everyday life and disseminate research to the public. However, extremists also exploit these platforms to propagate radical and intolerant ideas.

Statistics indicate that the number of websites associated with terrorist organizations rose from four in 2001 to nearly twenty thousand by 2011 (Al-Safi, 2016). A study by the Brookings Institution showed that between October 4 and November 27, 2014, forty-six thousand (46,000) accounts on the social media platform Twitter were used by supporters of the terrorist organization known as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) (Berger & Morgan, 2015).

However, in our engagement with modern media, unlike traditional media, we interact with a virtual, intangible world where everyone plays the role of producer, and consumer simultaneously. The user determines when, where, how, and what to engage with; they assess the quality of the content presented and critique it, then produce their own material.

This virtual and non-material nature of the internet leads some users to be skeptical about the credibility of interactions through this medium and its effectiveness. Meanwhile, others view it as a trap to be wary of or a whirlwind eager to draw users into an endless abyss, far from reality, a sentiment echoed by many thinkers.

In this context, we mention the thinker Jean Baudrillard, who is considered one of the prominent contemporary theorists on media and modern communication. He focuses on semiology, the study of signs and symbols, and argues that digital media have created a vast array of symbols saturated with subjective meanings, leading to a world where the relationship between the signifier and the signified has disappeared, and reality has become lost in a virtual technological maze (Baudrillard, 1976).

In contrast to those cautious about modern media, many thinkers and intellectuals have observed the proliferation of modern media and its invasion of daily life through social networks and the internet, whether on computers, phones, or other modern technologies. They have recognized the role of media in shaping culture and national and international awareness. This realization has prompted them to consider harnessing technology to find solutions to the crises faced by countries and societies in various fields. Moroccan scholar Abdelmalek

Achaboun emphasized during a seminar titled "Reading and Culture in Morocco" (Symposium, 2018) the necessity of uniting print media with the internet to overcome the reading crisis in Morocco and Arab countries. Meanwhile, the internet has been utilized to create job opportunities and combat unemployment and economic crises through e-commerce platforms and electronic protest campaigns using hashtags.

The increasing reliance on social media to voice opinions, protest, or address social issues such as harassment and the oppression of women, or to tackle economic crises (e.g., YouTube, filling out forms, product testing, e-commerce), or to address political and human rights crises through petitions or sending messages to governments (as exemplified by Amnesty International's "Write for Rights" campaign), and the significant international engagement and success of these campaigns, raises questions about the role of media in intercultural dialogue and the promotion of values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

As Marshall McLuhan points out, media should not be viewed in isolation from the technologies employed, the topics discussed, and the target audience. The media used in each era helps shape society, creating new surrounding conditions that influence the way individuals think, thus becoming an extension of humanity. McLuhan also highlights the importance of the symbols and meanings used by media and their impact on the audience (McLuhan, 1964).

Does media play a role in promoting peaceful dialogue between different cultures? Does it help reinforce values of acceptance, coexistence, and mutual respect? Or does it propagate contrary values? How can media be harnessed in favor of the principles of shared living, international solidarity, and peaceful dialogue among the world's various cultures and religions?

The Austrian writer Karl Kraus said: "One ought to acknowledge the significance for mankind of the simultaneous invention of gunpowder and printer's ink".

This quote encapsulates humanity's capacity for both good and evil, as well as for invention, innovation, and creativity, whether in ways that benefit humanity and contribute to its progress or in ways that destroy and sow anxiety, war, and threaten the stability and continuity of human existence.

Just as nuclear power has been utilized in inventions that advance humanity in science, unravel the mysteries of existence, and discover distant planets and galaxies, it has also been harnessed to develop weapons and nuclear reactors, referred to as "weapons of mass destruction". Their use would mean the destruction of more than half the planet, and their proliferation could lead to human extinction. This is without mentioning the wars and international conflicts that have arisen because of or under their pretext, as seen in the Iraq War and conflicts with Iran.

Similarly, as I mentioned earlier, modern media also has two sides, and

engagement with it can take different directions. While it can be harnessed for humanitarian issues, it is also a platform for promoting violence. Just as intellectuals and human rights advocates use it to promote peace and human values, extremists exploit it to spread their racist, fanatical, or terrorist ideologies. However, in this paper, we will focus on the positive aspects of media in fostering dialogue between cultures and creating a bridge among the diverse spectra of global societies, despite their differing backgrounds, traditions, languages, and religions.

Given the diversity of modern media in its forms and colors, as well as the broad concept of culture that encompasses many aspect of individual and societal life, I have decided to focus on three specific areas in this paper. These are the key components of a person's culture and central themes in the conflict between individuals and societies:

1. Language.
2. Belief.
3. International cooperation and solidarity.

What are the significant contributions of modern technological media in bringing communities closer together in the face of language differences? What avenues has it created to transcend religious and ideological divides and moral or value frameworks? Have these avenues and mechanisms facilitated the establishment of a genuine dialogue between communities? If this new means of communication has successfully created a bridge between individuals and communities separated by natural seas and human borders, what forms does this dialogue take? What are the manifestations of a united virtual community, despite the presence of individuals from geographically distant areas? Conversely, if modern media has failed in this endeavor, what obstacles hinder achieving this unity, and what strategies can be employed to overcome them in order to foster a cultural and civilizational dialogue aimed at creating an international community that coexists in safety and peace and embraces diversity?

Section One: Modern Media and Linguistic Diversity

Language is the most significant evidence of human development and sophistication, marking a transition from primitive stages. It is one of the key characteristics that distinguishes humans from other living beings. While animals rely on their senses to gather information and use sounds to communicate, these sounds do not reach the level required for detailed information exchange. According to scientists, the sounds emitted by animals—such as those used by monkeys to warn of imminent danger—constitute a form of communication, but they lack the specificity needed to describe the nature and location of the threat, among other details. Thus, they cannot be considered language in the full sense. (Macwhinney, 2005).

In contrast, human language, which researchers argue arose as a biological necessity for survival through natural selection, is richer and allows for more precise and detailed information exchange.

Humans communicate in two primary ways: the first is non-verbal communication, often referred to as body language, and the second is through the verbal language that has evolved over time. Non-verbal communication encompasses various bodily and vocal manifestations, often spontaneous and instinctual, such as:

- Tone of voice.
- Speech rate.
- Delivery style and pronunciation.
- Eye contact.
- Facial expressions.
- Hand gestures.
- Body posture and movements.

While analyzing movements and expressions is crucial—given that body language constitutes about 55% of the messages we convey (Workplace Strategies for mental Health, n.d)—this part of the research will focus on verbal language, which primarily relies on words for communication, whether spoken or written. This focus is due not only to the conscious nature of verbal communication but also to its diversity and its role as a fundamental factor contributing to ignorance of others and the rich cultural and civilizational diversity of humanity, which can be one of the main obstacles to dialogue between cultures.

Research conducted by the American Summer Institute of Linguistics, published in a dictionary of all the world's languages in 2009 (the Ethnologue), recorded approximately 6,909 languages spoken worldwide (Anderson, 2010). Subsequent updates by the center, after it changed its name to SIL International, revealed in the 21st edition of the dictionary in 2018 that there are over 7,097 living languages around the globe (Ethnologue., (n.d)).

It is important to note that language is not limited to currently spoken languages; it is categorized into several types. According to SIL International, languages can be divided into five types (International, (n.d)):

- Living Languages: These are languages still considered in use by a group of individuals.
- Extinct Languages: This category includes languages that have disappeared in recent centuries.
- Ancient Languages: These are languages that became extinct thousands of years ago, and it is required that there be documents or scientific evidence proving that the language was once spoken by a people at a certain time.
- Historical Languages: These languages must differ from the modern languages that descended from them, and evidence must exist showing

that these languages were spoken by a particular people at a certain time.

- **Constructed Languages:** Also known as artificial languages, these must have a community of speakers and must be passed down to at least the second generation, with the purpose of facilitating human communication and having literature that demonstrates their use. Computer programming languages and revived languages are excluded from this category.

As observed, the world is home to a linguistic diversity of no less than 7,000 living languages, along with many other linguistic classifications, each comprising a lengthy list of languages. What role does modern media play in this diversity? What impact does it have in fostering cultural and civilizational dialogue based on linguistic aspects? Has modern media succeeded in creating a communicative bridge between speakers of different languages? If it has succeeded in this endeavor, what methods and mechanisms have enabled it to do so? Conversely, if it has failed, what obstacles and constraints have hindered the establishment of a cultural dialogue among the diverse tongues of the world?

Language is a means of expressing the self and society. It conveys individual experiences and emotions, reflects the culture, customs, and traditions of a people, as well as the environment in which one was raised and the mentality of their community. Through our manner of communicating with others and defining symbols and social roles, we also express the ethical system embraced by society or the individual. By unifying language, we enhance the sense of belonging and nurture the need for social and psychological security. UNESCO sums this up by stating: “Languages are not just a means of communication but represent the very fabric of cultural expressions, the carriers of identity, values and worldviews.” (UNESCO, 2009)

Thus, linguistic diversity reflects cultural diversity, and interaction with individuals speaking different languages constitutes cultural dialogue. In this context, in addition to developing its own digital language and culture, as mentioned in the introduction, modern media has contributed to the linguistic aspect through various experiences and mechanisms, some of which can be viewed positively while others may be considered negative to some extent. I will first present the key contributions of digital media to cultural dialogue from a linguistic perspective before exploring the negative impacts of some of these mechanisms.

Empowering Users to Learn Languages:

Modern media, particularly the internet, allows users to explore various fields and discover new worlds. It also provides opportunities to learn different languages through numerous available mechanisms, such as:

- E-books.
- Mobile applications.
- Educational videos.

- Online learning sessions.
- Educational websites.

Additionally, it facilitates the translation of texts from one language to another, enhancing users' understanding through popular translation tools like Google Translate and other translation sites and dictionaries. The internet also allows users to listen to foreign songs and follow their programs with translations in various languages, making it easier to understand and acquire new vocabulary, as well as enabling conversations with foreigners to practice and utilize the learned language.

Utilizing Visual Media:

Modern media relies heavily on images and videos, enabling messages to reach a wider audience without requiring an understanding of the language or text. This feature helps disseminate messages across different populations, fostering interactions among individuals from various cultures and language backgrounds, thus creating discussions and interactions around the issues presented in the message.

These mechanisms, along with others not discussed here, have contributed to bringing individuals and communities closer together despite their differences, fostering international discussions on various topics—political, economic, social, etc.—without the necessity of learning all the languages of the world, while also facilitating the learning of distant languages. However, despite these positives, irresponsible use by some individuals has negatively impacted the linguistic landscape in various ways, including:

- The emergence of hybrid languages resulting from the mixing of multiple languages within the same sentence (e.g., "Frarabic").
- The reliance on abbreviations (considered by linguists as a "linguistic disease") at the expense of standard languages.
- The spread of linguistic errors and the contribution to their proliferation.

These general observations, along with others specific to each language, have attracted the attention of certain extremists from various regions, leading them to reject the use of any language other than their mother tongue and to oppose dialogue in foreign languages. For instance, Arabs accuse those who use French of being loyal to colonialism, and anyone using other languages is seen as serving foreign agendas and conspiring against Arabic and Arabs. Such views are often justified as a defense of the mother tongue or Arabic, regarded as the language of the Quran, the holy book for Muslims. This stance is usually framed under the banner of "it's majestic; the Arabic language" (Shahrour, (n.d)), advocating for its preservation against the perceived threat posed by the spread of other languages (Anwar & Jamal, 2015). Dr. Mohamed Amara, a lecturer at Beit Berl Academic College and a researcher at the Arab Center for Rights and Policy Studies, states in this regard:

“Language has two dimensions: functional and emotional. The emotional dimension of language is crucial because it is linked to national, cultural, religious, and many other factors. At the same time, language serves practical functions; it thrives and flourishes through use. If we want a language to remain vibrant and alive, we must utilize it across its various levels in all aspects of our daily lives.” (Symposium, 2018)

Certainly, these practices are not exclusive to Arabs and the Arabic language. Some French language extremists consider the language of "Molière" to be the mother of all languages, asserting that there is no need to learn other languages, especially since most foreign research is quickly translated into French. They argue that learning anything else is not worth the time, effort, and money. Similarly, English speakers may view learning another language as a waste of time, given that English has become a dominant global language economically and scientifically.

Many academics and researchers have noted the spread of "linguistic diseases" through various social media and modern communication channels, which affect living standard languages, especially among children. This manifests in their writing and creative expression, where they mix standard language with colloquial forms and online chat communication. This has led experts to emphasize the importance of using modern media rationally and to advocate for the preservation and proper use of standard languages. They have also recognized the rise of language extremists and their aggressive behaviors, prompting a call to clarify the advantages of modern media, the benefits of linguistic openness, and to outline strategies for interacting with foreign languages without undermining the mother tongue. Others have worked to counter the claims of language extremists with scientific arguments and a call for humanity and coexistence (Khalidi, 2018).

They have stressed the necessity of maintaining a critical spirit before navigating the complexities of modern media and the importance of using it positively and effectively through "media literacy" programs. While these programs have become widespread in schools and universities in Western countries, they are still in a developmental phase in underdeveloped and developing societies. Additionally, there is a need for pedagogical plans to integrate modern media into educational processes, with educational institutions and teachers supporting students throughout this experience (Melo Rosa, 2001).

Despite the actions of language extremists who reject linguistic diversity—who remain a minority—linguistic pluralism is an undeniable reality. The phenomenon of multiple languages has become global due to the increasing awareness of the importance of languages and the cultures of other societies, along with the ongoing allure of modern media through several mechanisms, including:

- Free access.

- Flexibility in choosing time and place for learning.
- Diverse learning methods, including music, games, reading and listening lessons, and lectures.
- The ability to engage with native speakers through dedicated educational sites or social media.
- Connecting languages to the countries that speak them and their cultures, with opportunities for virtual travel to those countries (through films, documentaries, programs, images, etc.).

Now that we have explored the contributions of modern media to the linguistic sphere and its successes, as well as the challenges it faces in promoting a culture of linguistic diversity and intercultural dialogue, we will turn our attention to another essential component of culture: the religious or doctrinal aspect. If language serves as an expression of culture or a mirror to it, religion is one of its determinants and contributes to shaping its norms and customs, including practices related to festivals, community and religious rituals, social behavior, attire, and the delineation of social roles and taboos.

What role does modern media play in this domain? Has it succeeded in dispelling misunderstandings between different religions? Has it built a bridge for civilizational dialogue among them? If it has succeeded, what mechanisms has it employed? If it has failed, what obstacles have prevented its success? And how can these challenges be overcome?

Section Two: Modern Media and Religious Diversity

The organization of Religious Tolerance, a Canadian group that promotes religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence, stated in an article in 2015 that there are approximately 19 major religions in the world, divided into about 270 large religious groups and many smaller ones. It estimates that there are around 34,000 Christian groups globally, along with over 5,000 living deities worshiped daily, and more than 3 million deities specific to Hinduism alone, considering the ancient Hindu gods that are no longer worshiped in our current era (Organization, 2015)

These religions and beliefs vary among the Abrahamic, Asian, Hindu, and African religions, as well as between monotheistic and polytheistic faiths, or those that believe in sanctity without a belief in a creator, like Buddhism, for example. Each of these religions has its own concepts of the sacred and the profane, carrying unique meanings and representations of the world and humanity. They offer existential answers that fall outside the realm of scientific inquiry, making it impossible to definitively assess their validity. This distinction sets scientific research apart from spiritual or doctrinal faith. Science seeks answers that can be universally agreed upon, while faith relies on spiritual conviction and belief without the need for evidence. In the absence of the ability to prove or disprove the existence of deities or the truth of a religion, each

believer of a particular faith or deity considers themselves to possess the truth and the secrets of existence, believing they are on the path of guidance and righteousness. They regard their religion as the correct one, and their deity or deities as the most worthy of reverence.

Blind adherence to various religious texts and the belief in the superiority of one belief over another are among the key factors that drive some believers to assert their legitimacy and feel the need to spread their beliefs, even resorting to violence, fighting, and killing. They justify this as a humanitarian duty, believing they are saving followers of other religions or non-believers from inevitable punishment. This mindset leads others to refuse to engage with those who hold different or non-religious beliefs, as if this difference were contagious and could impact their own faith.

Such fanaticism and extreme behaviors are not new nor are they confined to one religion or belief system; they are as old as religion itself. The consequences of these attitudes extend beyond what we currently witness in the actions of groups like ISIS (the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) or in the kidnappings and mass killings orchestrated by the Christian group "The Army of God" (AOG). They also encompass the numerous wars and violent conflicts carried out historically under the guise of religion, which often share the same criteria employed by contemporary extremist organizations. These criteria can be summarized in three main points (BBC, (n.d)) achieving a religious objective, 2) permitting war or fighting by a religious leader, and 3) promising a reward (spiritual, within the religious context) to those who participate in the battles.

Given the lengthy list of these wars, which number in the thousands, I will limit myself here to mentioning the most significant of these religious wars in the following points:

Wars of Apostasy: This series of wars took place between 632 and 634 AD, initiated by Caliph Abu Bakr following the death of the Prophet Muhammad, targeting the tribes that had renounced Islam (Jawarna, 2014). One of the main reasons for their departure from the faith was the belief that with the death of the Prophet, the religion itself had died. Additionally, there was a lack of acceptance regarding Abu Bakr's appointment as the caliph, as well as disagreement with some Islamic legal provisions. Eleven armies were mobilized to combat the apostates, as detailed in the "Atlas of the Wars of Apostasy" in the following table (Al-Mughlouth, 2008):

Sequence	Islamic Army	Direction of the Army	Leaders of the Apostates
1	Khalid ibn Sa'id ibn al-As	Borders of Greater Syria	Instilled fear among the wavering Bedouins
2	Amr ibn al-As	Dumat al-Jandal	Qudā'a, Wadi'a, al-Harith
3	Khalid ibn al-Walid	Buzakha, al-Bathā, al-Yamama	al-Taliḥa al-Asadī, Malik ibn Nuwaira, Musaylima the Liar
4	Ikrima ibn Abi Jahl	al-Yamama – Oman – al-Mahrah – Hadramaut – Yemen	Musaylima the Liar
5	Sharhabil ibn Hasana	al-Yamama – Hadramaut	Musaylima the Liar
6	al-Ala' ibn al-Hadrami	Bahrain (Jawatha) – Darin	al-Gharur (al-Mundhir ibn al-Nu'man al-Nu'mani)
7	Hudhayfa ibn al-Muhsin al-Ghifari	Daba from Oman	Dhū al-Tāj; Laqit ibn Mālik al-Azdī
8	Arfaja ibn Harthama al-Barqi	Oman – al-Mahrah – Hadramaut – Yemen (completed by Ikrima)	al-Amir al-Muṣbiḥ
9	Tareefah ibn Hājez	East of Hijaz – Banu Sulaym	Iyās ibn Abd Allah ibn Abd Yalil
10	al-Muhajir ibn Abi Umayya	Yemen – Kinda – Hadramaut	al-Aswad al-Ansī (killed a day before the Prophet's death), al-Ash'ath ibn Qays, Qays ibn Makshūḥ
11	Suwayd ibn Muqrin al-Muzani	Tihama, Yemen	—

The Crusades: These were a series of campaigns that extended from the 11th to the 13th century, with a publicly declared objective of recapturing the Holy Land from Muslim invaders and aiding the Byzantine Empire .

French Religious Wars : The French Religious Wars were a series of conflicts that took place in France during the 16th century, primarily between Catholics and Protestants. These wars lasted from 1562 to around 1598 and can be divided into eight separate wars (Protestant, (n.d)):

- **First War:** 1562 to 1563.
- **Second War:** 1567 to 1568.
- **Third War:** 1568 to 1570.
- **Fourth War:** 1572 to 1573.
- **Fifth War:** 1574 to 1576.
- **Sixth War:** 1576 to 1577.

- **Seventh War:** 1579 to 1580.
- **Eighth War:** 1585 to 1598.

Thirty Years' War : The Thirty Years' War lasted from 1618 to about 1648 (Manière, 2016) and erupted between the Protestant Union and the Catholic League in the historic region of Bohemia (which largely corresponds to present-day Czech Republic). The conflict then spread to other parts of Europe and passed through four phases:

- **Bohemian War:** 1618-1625.
- **Danish War:** 1625-1629.
- **Swedish War:** 1630-1635.
- **Swedish-French War:** 1635-1648.

Islamic Jihadist Operations : Islamic jihadist operations have manifested in a series of terrorist acts, which can be either individual or attributed to extremist Islamic groups (such as Al-Qaeda, Taliban, ISIS). These operations target either Muslim groups or states that terrorists consider to be apostate (for example, the events of May 16, 2003, in Casablanca, Morocco, and the January 1, 2017, nightclub attack in Istanbul, Turkey), or they are directed against Western countries that extremists view as hostile to Islam or as responsible for spreading corruption and strife (such as the September 11, 2001, attacks in the United States and the March 11, 2004, events in Madrid, Spain).

In this context, Robert Spencer, the director of the "Jihad Watch" at the David Horowitz Freedom Center, noted in an interview with journalist Saurav Dutt published on Medium that there have been over 30,000 jihadist operations worldwide since September 11 (Spencer, 2018).

What role has modern media played in promoting a culture of interfaith dialogue and peaceful coexistence? Has it truly been able to confront or mitigate religious extremism?

Undoubtedly, the media has indeed brought closer together different countries of the world and their cultures. It presents events in multiple languages and through images that require no linguistic commentary, thereby clarifying what is happening in various parts of the world and enabling individuals to engage in collective interaction and dialogue despite physical distances and possible differences.

In addition to bridging gaps linguistically, the media also fosters religious connections through a range of mechanisms that are distinctive to modern media compared to traditional communication methods. Among the key tools that allow users to initiate religious dialogue based on mutual respect are:

Digital Books : When dealing with religious matters, reliance has often been placed on what the prevailing religion in society conveys about other faiths and beliefs, or what is published by religious leaders. In countries with dictatorial regimes, particularly in many Arab nations, a number of books are banned from entering the country, and their publication or circulation is prohibited, often under the pretext of security reasons or maintaining societal stability and values. In some cases, biased or misleading translations of Western books have been published without proper review, either intentionally or unintentionally.

However, the internet has changed this dynamic by facilitating the publication of digital books in their original languages and providing multiple translations in various languages. This opens up the possibility for everyone to research reliable references and return to original sources.

Regarding religions, users now have the opportunity to explore what other faiths present by accessing their sacred texts and related intellectual productions from their adherents. Thus, modern media allows researchers to conduct their studies independently, forming their own positions and opinions based on their understanding of the original texts without needing an intermediary to convey biased representations.

Forums : Forums are a distinctive feature of modern media, allowing the creation of public discussion spaces where various topics and opinions can be addressed, and references can be cited. This rational discourse is built on the principles of dialogue and acceptance of differences and diversity.

In this context, forums dedicated to interfaith dialogue are established, enabling the exchange of religious views and beliefs on various issues, without infringing on users' rights to express themselves or make judgments.

Specific forums for particular religions exist, such as Islamic and Christian forums, providing users the opportunity to engage with various discussions, issues, and viewpoints, as well as to pose questions to forum members and interact with them.

Religious and Educational Websites : One of the most important mechanisms used by modern media to introduce religions is through religious or educational websites. These sites are affiliated with religious organizations or groups and are managed by specialists in the field, including researchers and religious leaders. Their goal is to promote a particular religion, provide information about it, and answer questions from interested followers.

These websites allow for communication with the page administrators via phone, email, or site messaging, addressing posed questions with reliance on evidence and reasoning. They utilize a variety of techniques to reach a broad audience, from children to young adults, and from men to women. Some of the key techniques include:

- Articles
- Video clips

- Audio recordings
- Pamphlets
- E-books
- Research papers
- Lessons
- Games
- Competitions
- Conferences
- Opportunities for employment by joining the site's team or writing articles

Networking Among Individuals : Modern media, particularly through social media platforms (such as Facebook, Twitter, apps, and chat rooms), facilitates the establishment of connections among various individuals in the global community. It allows users to communicate with virtual friends from foreign countries, different cultures, and diverse religions. This opens the door for cultural and religious dialogue and direct knowledge exchange with adherents of world religions, fostering familiarity and normalizing interactions. This helps to eliminate the sense of strangeness and unreality perpetuated by the absence of representation of these religions in societies.

While these mechanisms primarily aim to promote religions and increase their followers, rational and conscious use of them can further bridge gaps between the world's religions and establish a peaceful dialogue among them.

As with all aspects of modern media, its uses vary according to the goals and values of its users. While the internet can be employed for dialogue, discussion, and the promotion of tolerance and peaceful coexistence, it can also be exploited to spread extremist ideas, instill fear in others, and threaten those who do not align with radical groups. This is evident in the horrifying images of violence, murder, beheading, and intimidation that ISIS publishes daily. Such media strategies have become integral to the terrorist plans of extremist organizations, a phenomenon referred to as "media jihad".

Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of al-Qaeda, articulated this in a message to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi dated July 9, 2005, stating: « However, despite all of this, I say to you: that we are in a battle, and that more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. And that we are in a media battle in a race for the hearts and minds of our Umma. And that however far our capabilities reach, they will never be equal to one thousandth of the capabilities of the kingdom of Satan that is waging war on us. And we can kill the captives by bullet. That would achieve that which is sought after without exposing ourselves to the questions and answering to doubts. We don't need this » (ODNI, 2005)

The use of cyber jihad and other extremist actions by various religious and ethnic radicals can be attributed to the increasing use of social media, the rapid

spread of electronic publications, and the ability to globalize content easily. Additionally, the powerful impact of visual media can either attract sympathizers and gain their support or instill fear in opponents while showcasing strength against them.

This dual nature of modern media highlights the challenges it poses in fostering understanding and tolerance while simultaneously being a tool for division and violence. For these reasons, there is a continuous emphasis on the importance of critically engaging with everything promoted on social media and avoiding passive consumption in the face of the overwhelming amount of information and posts presented to users daily. There are also efforts to automatically block certain images and scenes on social media to mitigate their psychological impacts on viewers.

To address these concerns, special services have been provided for parents, allowing them to control what their children view and the content they receive on websites and pages. Additionally, various laws have been enacted to protect children from violence and exclusion on social media, criminalizing digital violence in several countries, such as Canada, the United Kingdom, and Hawaii. Meanwhile, the struggle to enact similar laws in other countries continues.

This ongoing effort highlights the need for a balanced approach to media consumption, ensuring that users, especially children, are shielded from harmful content while promoting a safer online environment.

Section Three: Modern Media and International Solidarity

In the era of globalization, where the world has become a small village due to economic and technological openness and modern media, the terms cooperation and solidarity have transcended their local or national meanings. We now speak of international solidarity among peoples and international cooperation among countries, organizations, and transcontinental bodies.

Virginia Dandan, the independent expert on international solidarity at the United Nations Human Rights Council (appointed in June 2011) (OHCHR, n.d), defines solidarity as the conviction that connects differences and opposites, uniting them in a heterogeneous manner, while enriching them with universal human rights values. Consequently, international solidarity does not seek uniformity but aims to be a bridge for these differences and opposites, connecting diverse peoples and countries with varying interests in an atmosphere of mutual respect and mutually beneficial relations, infused with principles of human rights, equity, and justice. (Puvimanasingh, 2013)

International cooperation refers to the collective efforts of countries to assist weaker nations across various fields, including economic, security, developmental, social, and cultural areas. This cooperation aims to reduce disparities between nations, achieve parity and international security, and uphold human rights values. Currently, international cooperation is considered a

component of human rights and a principle of international human rights law. Like many rights included in this framework, international solidarity is a recent concept, integrated into the development and humanization of international charters. The United Nations General Assembly explains this development and the stages it underwent before being recognized and incorporated into charters and international relations, stating that the idea of collective human rights was first proposed in the 1960s by the Non-Aligned Movement. The recognition of the right of peoples to self-determination changed the fate of the international community of states, international law, and relations. The intention was to broaden the scope of people's rights to include more groups by elevating the duty of cooperation to achieve the goals of the United Nations Charter, alongside the emerging principle of solidarity. In this way, the implicit duties inherent in human rights were to be transformed into concrete obligations. These initiatives peaked in the 1970s when several peoples' rights were included in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, which contains various relevant and legally binding duties. Subsequent efforts led to the recognition of several rights, including those related to development, peace, the environment, minorities, and indigenous peoples. The emerging principle emphasizes recognition of additional rights, some of which have been incorporated into treaty texts and have continued to evolve, as seen in laws, policies, and practices. Consequently, the principle of international solidarity itself has become an established principle.(UN, 2009)

One might ask after reading these lines: How can this principle be applied? Are countries genuinely obliged to engage in international cooperation initiatives? What are the consequences of failing to do so? If so, what are these consequences? Do these penalties interfere with the sovereignty, decisions, and characteristics of states? And if there are no penalties or consequences for refusing to assist a particular country, what is the significance of formalizing international cooperation?

The memorandum presented by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights addresses these questions, stating that legal instruments and policies that encompass international solidarity and cooperation are practically applied through numerous actions within the framework of international cooperation, demonstrating that state practice aligns with their convictions or legal opinions and that States collectively contribute within various global, regional, and non-regional organizations with multilateral and bilateral arrangements, once again evidencing their solidarity in principle and practice. And that additionally, many practices undertaken by other stakeholders, alongside state actions, form a remarkable array of actual practices consistent with the recognition, either implicit or explicit, of international solidarity as a principle of international law.(UN, 2009)

Thus, the (Nations, (n.d)) does not limit the process of international

solidarity and cooperation to the formal practices of states and their laws or initiatives but extends to the efforts of organizations, associations, and civil society, whether international, regional, or local, and whether multilateral or bilateral. The memorandum then defines the legal nature of the principle of international solidarity as a principle of international human rights law, confirming its non-binding nature, stating that while most arrangements guiding cooperative practices fall within the realm of non-binding law (aspirational law and international public policy rather than existing law), there is clearly a higher value of solidarity and a relevant system of values that can guide the gradual development of international law, and the legal domain at the regional and national levels, toward establishing a principle of international solidarity characterized by integration and consistency, as well as an emerging right for peoples and individuals to international solidarity. (UN, 2009)

After exploring the concepts of international cooperation and solidarity in international charters, as well as their importance in achieving international security, justice, and ensuring human rights across various fields—economic, social, environmental, etc.—we have clarified the non-binding nature of international solidarity for states and the reasons behind states' insistence on its activation despite this. We also examined the stakeholders involved in realizing it. The remaining questions are: What is the role of modern media in the field of international solidarity? How does it contribute to activating international cooperation and solidarity? What mechanisms does it rely on? Has it succeeded in bringing individuals together and enhancing international solidarity? If not, what obstacles hinder modern media from unifying international public opinion and motivating states and organizations to work together?

As previously mentioned, modern media possesses a unique characteristic that distinguishes it from traditional media: rapid and widespread dissemination. This feature is leveraged by human rights advocates around the world to raise awareness of violations perpetrated by states or certain entities against specific groups in society. They use social media to call for translations into various languages and broad dissemination to generalize solidarity, expose violations, and hold responsible parties accountable.

Although international solidarity is not a recent phenomenon, modern media has simplified and expanded its reach. While those interested in human rights issues used to write letters—such as campaigns to write solidarity letters for political prisoners and human rights defenders or letters to governments requesting the repeal of specific laws, particularly those organized by Amnesty International over 60 years ago (Amnesty International Australia, 2015)—now, thanks to social media, news can spread across the internet with the click of a button, reaching a much wider audience.

As technology has evolved and societies have adapted their methods of influence, human rights defenders have also developed their strategies. They

now rely on, in addition to traditional methods, more modern approaches that align with societal developments and lifestyles. To advocate for human rights, legal advocates—individuals and organizations, whether international, regional, or local—employ various mechanisms, including:

Emails: This is a direct evolution of the traditional paper letters that were previously used. Instead of sending physical letters with associated costs and waiting weeks or months for them to arrive, text messages can now be sent to a specific account, which volunteers then print out and deliver to the relevant authorities in bundles.

These emails are considered one of the most significant means of public pressure on decision-makers and one of the most effective forms of psychological support for those in need of solidarity. Among the many successful campaigns, most of which were led by Amnesty International, we can mention (Amnesty International UK):

- The case of **Albert Woodfox**, who was released after spending over 44 years in solitary confinement.
- The rescue of **Moses Akatugba** from Nigeria, who was sentenced to death for stealing three phones at the age of 16 after spending 10 years in prison.
- The release of human rights lawyer **Gao Zhisheng** in China, **Esraa al-Taweel** in Egypt, **Phyoe Phyoe Aung** in Burma, and **Yorm Bopha** in Cambodia.

These campaigns, which spread across social media and garnered international support from various parts of the world, remind governments that they are being monitored and that they must adhere to human rights charters and ensure fair trial conditions for all, regardless of race, religion, or political ideology. They also remind those who are suffering injustice that there are advocates for their rights, restoring hope to those arbitrarily detained for political reasons, and showing them that there are others fighting for justice and human dignity. Here are some testimonials from those who benefited from solidarity campaigns:

"Those messages kept us alive... Thank you to everyone who had the courage to speak against injustice". — **Nadezhda Tolokonnikova** and **Maria Alekhina** (arrested during a protest against Putin's regime).

"It's uplifting to think that there are still people who care about the rights of others". — **Yecenia Armenta** (detained after making some confessions to a priest and subjected to over 15 hours of torture).

Online Petitions: In this technique, a specific issue faced by a particular group in a certain geographical area is highlighted, detailing its circumstances and impacts on the online public opinion. People are then invited to sign the petition by entering their full name and email address, along with their country of origin, as a form of support and unconditional solidarity. There is also space for comments and suggestions to justify the signing. Once a certain number of signatures is reached, the petition is closed and submitted to the relevant authorities. The purposes and goals of these campaigns vary widely, including, for example, petitions advocating for animal rights and protection from laboratory testing, saving dolphins, promoting education for children with autism, reducing the cost of school supplies, saving olive trees in Turkey, and halting executions.

While pressing a button to sign an online petition in a virtual world may seem ineffective—due to its ease and non-material nature—these signatures, when combined and given their international character, can exert significant pressure on the relevant authorities and compel them to heed the collective international decision.

Given the numerous successes achieved through this technique, I will mention only a few representative examples:

- The release of journalist **Jason Rezaian** by the Iranian government on January 20, 2016, after receiving 541,229 signatures on the petition posted by his close friend **Charles-Antoine JOLY**. (Change.org., 2015)
- The success of Amnesty International's campaign in securing the release of **James Gatdet**, a former spokesperson for the Sudan People's Liberation Army (opposition), and **William Endley**, a South African citizen and former advisor to South Sudan opposition leader **Riek Machar**, while also having their death sentences overturned on November 2, 2018. They had been charged with treason and sentenced to death since their respective arrests on February 12 and February 23 (Amnestu International USA, n.d).
- The imposition of a halt on the exploitation of marine resources in the **Chagos Islands** in the Indian Ocean by the United Kingdom. This area is regarded as one of the most important marine reserves today. Despite the area being larger than both Germany and Italy combined, over 221,000 signatures from more than 223 countries compelled the Foreign Secretary to respond to the public demand for marine resource protection in 2010. A few years later, the campaign was expanded to urge the U.S. to protect marine resources in Hawaii and establish environmental reserves to prevent extinction. This request was answered by President Barack Obama in 2016 with the establishment of the **Papahānaumokuākea** Marine National Monument, the largest marine reserve in the world (Avaaz, (n.d)).

The director of the Global Ocean Legacy project, Matt Rand, acknowledged the importance of signing the online petition in a comment on the success of these environmental petitions, stating:

"The voice of people around the world is critical to showing our leaders that the time to protect our oceans is now. The 1.3 million people who signed... were a big part of getting this done". (Avaaz, (n.d))

Hashtag Campaigns: The hashtag technique (#), as mentioned earlier, enables interaction with a specific issue across the globe. All users need to do is use the hashtag symbol to join a virtual community focused on a particular matter. By using the same tag, individuals from different geographical locations can be identified.

The hashtag technique has gained widespread popularity, becoming almost a reflex response from citizens whenever an incident occurs in a community. Due to its various applications—both serious and trivial—I'll highlight only three notable examples:

- **#Not_All_Men (#الرجال_كل_ليس_#):** This campaign was launched by advocates for women's rights, both men and women. The slogan emerged ironically in response to those who justify violence and discrimination against women. Feminists noticed that whenever women's issues were raised in patriarchal societies, proponents of male-dominated thinking would respond with "Not all men". While advocates recognize that "not all men" are rapists or sexual harassers, the slogan emphasizes that the issue pertains to women as a whole and warns against the dangers of crafting justifications for the violations women face worldwide. It calls for a focus on the current state of women rather than getting sidetracked by marginal discussions about "not all men".
- **#Pride:** This campaign was launched by advocates for LGBTQ+ rights, calling for the right to live freely and reduce the violations they face in parts of the world that have yet to recognize their sexual identities. By simply writing the hashtag "Pride", one can find a collection of images documenting the physical and psychological violence inflicted upon them, merely for being genetically different (at the chromosomal level).
- **#WeAreAll... (#كلنا_...):** This general model expresses solidarity with individuals or places around the world. By using the hashtag "We Are All" and adding a word indicating a person's name or a location, one can join a vast army of supporters locally, nationally, and internationally. A notable national example that gained international attention is the case of Hayat, who was shot dead while attempting to migrate via boat from Tetouan to Spain. This incident sparked the hashtag **#ThePeopleWantToAbolishCitizenship**, expressing public outrage over the systematic assassination and the way the case was handled. One of the significant outcomes of this protest was the internationalization of Hayat's

case, highlighting it as a concern for a broad segment of Moroccan youth, leading Amnesty International to demand that Morocco conduct an investigation into the murder of Hayat Belqasim.

Conclusion

Despite the importance of modern media and the increasing awareness of its impacts, its use as a mechanism for awareness and a developed means of communication has often been random and unstructured. The growing utilization of these media in research, presentations, schools, and workplaces has emerged as a spontaneous outcome of individuals' evolving thought processes, often without scrutiny or understanding. Today, it has become an integral part of modern daily life, serving as a means of communication, a source of information, a way to keep up with local, national, and international events, as well as a tool for entertainment and work.

While modern media plays a significant role in promoting international solidarity and facilitating cultural exchange, as outlined in this research, these efforts remain largely incidental and uncoordinated. A notable observation during my research was the lack of academic references and studies that highlight the importance of modern media in cultural dialogue and its role in bridging religious divides, except for some studies conducted by centers focused on countering terrorism and cybercrime, which emphasize the use of the internet in what is termed "digital terrorism" and the dangers posed by social media and online violence to children—especially in the context of cyberbullying, which has led many children and adolescents to depression and even suicide attempts.

In light of the absence of similar research focused on utilizing modern media to promote a culture of dialogue, tolerance, and peaceful international coexistence, the primary goal remains to confront the negative aspects of modern media and the threats faced by users—from extremist and fanatical ideas to the spread of misinformation and lies. To mitigate these risks, researchers have developed a new approach for selecting information, known as "media literacy".

Media literacy, which is increasingly being taught in various schools and universities, is an electronic educational tool aimed at creating aware users of modern media and social networking sites. This discipline covers a range of topics, including user protection, digital security, and the positive use of modern media, transitioning from passive consumption to active engagement based on production following consumption. One of the most significant contributions of modern media is its facilitation of academic research and critical thinking when receiving information.

Regarding academic research, media literacy proposes various mechanisms, including verifying the legitimacy of a site by examining its focus and specialization. For example:

- **Sites ending with ".com":** These are classified as "social" or general sites that can be consulted for entertainment purposes only and are not academically accredited, as they are not subject to oversight and can be established by anyone.
- **Sites ending with ".net":** These refer to all internet sites, and similar to social sites, they are also unregulated and unaccredited.
- **Sites ending with ".ma/.uk/..":** These indicate the country of the site (e.g., .ma for Morocco) and are likewise not subject to oversight.
- **Sites ending with ".org":** These are dedicated to associations, organizations, and official institutions. They are therefore monitored and vetted, and their content is reviewed, making them accredited as long as the material aligns with their specialization (e.g., a medical organization is accredited for medical literature but not for religious or artistic subjects).
- **Sites ending with ".edu":** These are the most academically and scientifically credible, typically associated with educational institutions (colleges, universities, research centers, etc.). The information they provide is often produced by academics and researchers, and the material is more reliable when it falls within the researcher's field of expertise.

For media and media content, media literacy suggests a series of questions that recipients of information should consider before determining the credibility of what they receive through images and news. These questions facilitate a pause before accepting information, prompting recipients to analyze the content, thus helping them develop critical thinking and awareness of self and the influences involved in persuasion. Some of these questions include:

- How did the image/text capture my attention? What mechanisms were used? (colors/fonts/shape/size).
- What information is being presented? What does the content producer want me to understand?
- How might another recipient interpret this message? (For instance, if the image shows a child throwing stones at a tank: how would a Muslim Arab, a Palestinian, a Jew, a Christian, a human rights activist, an Israeli, a mother, or a child understand it?).
- What information has been emphasized, and what has been omitted? (For example, if the information states that youths caused chaos in front of a government facility leading to a traffic stoppage, why emphasize "chaos"? Who are these youths: citizens, foreigners, students, unemployed, employees...? Why weren't their voices heard? Was it chaos or protest? What happened afterward: arrests, violence...?).
- Who is the producer of the information? (A journalist, a student, a religious figure...?)
- Who owns the site? (A political party, an association, an individual...?)

- Who funds the site? (A political party, an official or governmental entity, an individual...?)

Despite their significance, these mechanisms are primarily preventive against lies and deceptions, providing an opportunity to cultivate critical thinking capable of analyzing information and imagining its impacts on others. This brings us closer to understanding others' perspectives and psychology, and perhaps embracing and comprehending them. Above all, the goal remains to develop electronic mechanisms to promote a civilized mindset, receptive to the other, and to spread high human values through more effective and widely disseminated means. To achieve this, we must initiate academic and scientific research with contributions from international organizations, intellectuals, and researchers worldwide, combining efforts to confront extremist and fanatical ideologies, and elevate humanity toward a peaceful international society.

References:

- Al-Mughlouth, A. S. (2008). Atlas of the wars of apostasy during the caliphate of the rightly guided caliph Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq, may God be pleased with him (1st ed.). Obaikan Library. *Obaikan Library*.
- Al-Safi, I. (2016). Jihadi intelligence: Deconstructing the mechanisms of terrorism engineering (1st ed.). *Moroccan Publishing House*.
- Anderson, S. R. (2010). How many languages are there in the world? *Linguistic Society of America*.
- Anwar, L., & Jamal, A. (2015). The dominance of foreign languages in education. *The biggest threat to Arabic. Al-Bayan Newspaper*.
- Avaaz. ((n.d)). Victories, Big, Bigger, Biggest... Creating massive marine reserves! Avaaz. Retrieved from <https://secure.avaaz.org/victories>.
- Baudrillard, J. (1976). L'échange symbolique et la mort. *Gallimard*.
- BBC. ((n.d)). Holy wars. . *BBC Ethics Guide*.
- Berger, J. M., & Morgan, J. (2015). The ISIS Twitter census: Defining and describing the population of ISIS supporters on Twitter (The Brookings project on U.S. relations with the Islamic World, No. 20). *Brookings*.
- Change.org. (2015). Nous demandons la libération immédiate et sans condition de Jason Rezaian emprisonné en Iran. *Change*.
- Ethnologue. ((n.d)). The ethnologue website for the languages of the world. Retrieved from <https://www.ethnologue.com/>.
- International, S. ((n.d)). Types of individual languages. *ISO 639-3*.
- Jakobson, R. (1987). Language in literature (K. Pomorska, Ed.). *The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press*.
- Jawarna, M. (2014). What are the wars of apostasy? . *Mawdoo3*.
- Khalidi, H. (2018). Intolerance to the Arabic language. *Minhaj*.
- Macwhinney, B. (2005). Language evolution and human development. *Carnegie Mellon University*.
- Manière, F. (2016). 1618 à 1648 : La guerre de trente ans et la ruine de l'Allemagne.
- McLuhan, M. (1964). Présentation de Pour comprendre les médias.
- Melo Rosa, L. (2001). (2001, May 19). Le multimédia et le rôle de l'enseignant de langue étrangère : enjeux et pratiques. In Colloque « Enseigner et apprendre les langues Européennes avec les nouvelles technologies ». *Institut Goethe, Paris*. Retrieved from

- <https://enfants-medias.cemea.asso.fr/IMG/colloquetic.pdf>.
- Nations, U. ((n.d)). The United Nations website. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/>.
- Organization, R. T. (2015). Numbers of adherents of major religions, their geographical distribution, date founded, and sacred texts. *Religious Tolerance*.
- Protestant, M. ((n.d)). The eight wars of religion (1562-1598). *Musée Protestant*.
- Puvimanasingh, S. (2013). Realizing the right to development. In Chapter 14: International solidarity in an interdependent world (pp. 161-180). United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Retrieved from https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/RightDevelopmentInteractive_EN.pdf.
- Shahrour, Z. I. ((n.d)). The role of the media in promoting the Arabic language. *Arabic Language Newspaper, International Council for the Arabic Language*.
- Spencer, R. (2018). The history of jihad: From Muhammad to ISIS. *Medium*.
- Symposium. (2018). Reading and Culture in Morocco, organized by the Reading Network in Fez, as part of honoring the Moroccan sociologist Dr. Ahmed Cherkaak, on the occasion of his winning the Morocco Book Award for 2018 in the Social Sciences category. Retrieved from <http://www.dirasat-aclp.org/arabic/files/Amara-Arabic4.doc>.
- UNESCO. (2001). Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, adopted by the 31st session of the General Conference of UNESCO, Paris. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127160m.pdf>.
- UNESCO. (2009). Investing in cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue: Executive summary. UNESCO World Report. Retrieved from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000184755>.
- United, N. G. (1998). Document of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution. Retrieved from <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n98/776/09/pdf/n9877609.pdf>.

Mizoram - Fresh Faces Herald A New Dawn

<https://www.doi.org/10.56830/IJHMPS12202406>

Ishaan Arora

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Malaviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur
(Rajasthan) **India.**

Vibhuti Singh Shekhawat

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Malaviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur
(Rajasthan) **India.**

E-mail: vibhutisingh@mnit.ac.in

Received: 9 Nov, 2024 Revised 11 Dec, 2024 Accepted 28 Dec, 2024 Published 31 Dec, 2024

Abstract

Mizoram is a curious blend of historiography and demography. It branched off from a composite state of Assam, is populated by less than a million Mizo nationals, who are all Christians (Protestants), wedded to the Presbyterian church. It has a 40 members' legislative assembly whose election was held on November 7, 2023. The main contest was between Mizo National Front (MNF) and Zoram Peoples Movement (ZPM) with Congress and BJP pitched in as marginal players. It was an election without much noise and hyperbole because of church dictates to avoid high-octane publicity. The results were announced on December 4, 2023 and it gave ZPM a complete majority of 27 seats, and its leader Lalduhoma became the new Chief Minister, replacing Lalthanhawla of MNF. Earlier, the contest was between MNF and Congress but this time ZPM pitched in to form the government. The victory symbolised the ascendance of Zo people. A new party formed the government, defeating both MNF and Congress.

Keywords: MNF, ZPM, Zo People, Mizo and Kuki people.

Introduction

The state politics of Mizoram is a blend of both historiography as well as demography. The peculiar demographic traits of the state make it all the more interesting to study the nature and trends of the state politics of Mizoram. The research here focuses upon understanding and decoding the voting behaviour of the residents of Mizoram as well as the tactics that have been resorted to by the various political parties in the state to attract the maximum number of votes and to secure a decent vote share in the state elections of Mizoram. The caste target tactics here is a major way via which the political parties have been striving to maximize their respective vote shares and this indicates that the state politics of Mizoram majorly revolves around the caste- based politics.

The research work incorporated here is based upon secondary sources of data collection. The research manuscript encompasses various reputed newspapers,

journals, books and magazines to present the related relevant findings in a crystal clear and transparent manner.

Religion-based Politics: "The saga of Mizoram is a story in contrast, from tradition to modernity, animism to Christianity and insurgency to resurgence – in all a divided dream but the resulting pacification, after a nightmare of trouble and tribulations, craves a happy ending as if in a mega soap opera where in the end all sinners become saints. It is a metamorphosis (SHEKHAWAT, SINGH, & SINGH, (N.D.)) most devoutly to be wished for". It is a state with an absorbing historiography and demography. It branched off from the composite state of Assam. It is a tribal state, sparsely populated having less than a million people, mostly following Christianity. They are governed by the Presbyterian Church and are thus protestants. The role of church is reformist. Complete prohibition is clamped because of church dictates.

The state is no more a habitat of half-starved, half-clad tribals roaming in the jungles like wild animals. It is now an ultra-modern state, known for three Gs – guns, girls and guitar.

Election to 40 members Legislative Assembly was held on November 7, 2023. The main contest was amid Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) and Mizo National Front (MNF) with Congress as an important player and the saffron party pitching in between as yet another marginal player. The BJP has made its second inning into the government of Mizoram with Christian majority. The ZPM was expected to give the MNF a run for its money and became a top contender for power. Both MNF and ZPM, as also the Congress had put up 40 candidates each but BJP was satisfied with fielding 23 candidates only. Kiran Rijuju, the Union Minister of Earth Sciences was the state in-charge of BJP.

The BJP also contested the 2018 poll and put up 39 candidates but Buddha Dhan Chakma was the only winner from Twichawng where the Buddhist Chakmas are in a majority. The rest 38 candidates lost the election, 33 of them forfeiting their deposit. This time BJP was more hopeful as it had poached three turncoats –ex-Assembly Speaker Lalrinliana Sailo (Mamit Constituency), ex-minister K. Beichhua (Saiha) (KARMAKAR, 2003) and ex-party adviser T. Lalengthanga (West Tuipui), and had established itself in four districts where minority Bru, Chakma, Lai and Mara people rule the roost.

The BJP substituted Buddha Dhan Chakma, a medico who sought VRS from politics and hence his seat was given to another follow Chakma, Duriya Dhan Chakma. The party's state unit President Vanlalthmauka chose to fight from Dampa. This place is known as a tiger reserve, bordering Bangladesh. Pollsters and Pandits envisaged a close contest between two rival contenders – MNF and ZPM, because both are not only the followers of Christian faith but are also committed to Zo Unification, seeking ethnic integration of Mizo, Kuki and Chin communities.

The Congress at one time was a dominant player under the Chief Ministership of Lal Thanhawla. He was Chief Minister for a record five times but sought retirement and consequently the Congress was now pinning hopes on its new state chief Lalsawta. The change of guard did not mean much and the Congress was relegated to a back seat with only one winner.

The interesting aspect of electioneering in Mizoram is the dubious role of Chief Minister Zoramthanga, who stood on two horses. In Mizoram, he rode on MNF and kept a distance from BJP but at the central level, he retained his friendship with Modi government. However the events in Manipur estranged relations with Zoramthanga and Union government and when Prime Minister Modi declared his intention to visit Mizoram for electioneering, Zoramthanga refused to share the dias with him so as to express his resentment on the role of BJP in Manipur. The Prime Minister then cancelled his visit. But the BJP did not give up the hope for a coalition with ZPM. Said Kiran Rijuju "We have not had any discussion with ZPM who is fighting against the MNF and Congress. But if ZPM wins a good number of seats, they will need to work with the BJP". ZPM was a clear winner. Kiran Rijuju's hopes of a coalition were dashed to the ground.

Refugee Crisis: The election in Mizoram was a blander event because the church had directed the contestants to avoid noise and hyperbole. This denuded election of colour and gaiety but it was compensated by strong ethnic passions. The five elections since 1998, were known for a plea to disenfranchise the minority of Bru people who fled to Tripura following ethnic riots in 1997 in Mizoram. The issue was finally settled when Union government intervened and facilitated the settlement of about 35000 Bru people in Tripura. But this did not provide any comfort to Mizoram and events in Myanmar became violent in January 2020, after the military coup. It resulted in civil war which compelled thousands of Chin people to flee from Myanmar to Mizoram for safety of their lives. Side by side, in November 2022, a few hundred Kuki-Chin people also took refuge in Mizoram after undergoing religious persecution in Bangladesh. This created a refugee crisis in Mizoram because Kuki-Chin, the Chins and Kuki-zo are ethnically tied to Mizos and the Union government did nothing and remained indifferent to these events. Naturally, the government, on account of ethnic ties extended humanitarian aid to these refugees and made them feel at home in Mizoram. While the refugee crisis was at its peak, the ruling MNF began to experience the trouble caused by ZPM, which in the ensuing election in April, upset the applecart and inflicted heavy blows on MNF. It won 27 of 40 assembly seats in 2018 and got all 11 seats in Lunglei municipal corporation.

The ZPM successfully displaced Congress as the main opposition party in 2018 by winning all the eight seats and it became a source of great trouble for Chief Minister Zoramthanga by creeping into his constituency Aizwal East where it bagged six seats. As though, this was not enough, fresh trouble started

in Manipur owing to ethnic clashes between Christian Kukis and Hindu Meiteis in May, 2023 which led to a great displacement of Kukis, numbering 12500. But interestingly though, far from troubling Zoramthanga, the crisis offered a helpline to him. Zoramthanga converted the difficulty into a political opportunity by declaring his support to Kukis for a separate administration in Manipur. A former extremist and a hardened guerrilla fighter, Zoramthanga of MNF made good use of this ethnic crisis and expressed his angst against Manipur's alleged ethnic cleansing of Kukis.

Obviously it compelled ZPM to react violently. Its president Lalduhoma, a retired IPS, was quick to react. He said it was a strategy to garner voter by MNF. He accused the MNF of double speak. While remaining friendly with BJP led government at the centre, it was opposing saffron agenda in Mizoram for the sake of opportunistic politics.

The Congress contested the election without the tried, tested and experienced Lal Thanhawla and was thus obviously handicapped but it thought its new president Lalsawta would deliver the goods. He did not come under the pressure of powerful Mizo Students Union, which had demanded that the Congress drop its candidate Meriam L. Hrangchal from Lunglie South constituency because she was married to a non-Mizo. Yet he could not take Congress to victory.

Zo Unification: All refugees pray for Zo unification because the Mizos treated the refugees with extreme kindness and compassion. (KARMAKAR, R., 2003B) About 300 persons belonging to 50 Kuki-Zo families were displaced in ethnic riots in Manipur. They were sheltered in Mizoram in a residential block at Falkland. In fact, Falkland had the largest concentration of over 1250 Manipuri refugees. Falkland is in Aizwal East constituency which is put forth by ex-Chief Minister Zoramthanga, who is the president of MNF too.

The MNF manifesto laid special emphasis is on the amalgamation of Zo sects such as the dominant Mizos, Kukis of Manipur and Chins sects of Myanmar and Bangladesh. But the irony is that whereas in Mizoram, the chant of Zo unification is an integrating force, in Manipur it fans secessionism and Kukis remain insistent on a separate administration which would eventually divide and split Manipur into two separate states. This is the eventuality the Meiteis of Manipur dread and fear most and oppose because they fear that a Manipur divided on religio-ethnic lines would make it a tiny geographical spec in the map of India. They are still enamoured of the days when Manipur was a big Kingdom settling frequent scores with Myanmar.

Though well looked after in Mizoram, the refugees still pine for their own homeland and wish to return there. Says John Zo, a Manipuri refugee, "We are thankful to the Mizoram government, to mention the CM for giving us shelter and taking up our concern. We hope and pray that the following government by

whichever party or coalition is sympathetic to us and aids us go back to where we hail from”.

Zo issue has become a recurrent theme in this election among Chief Minister Zoramthanga, whose co-contenders from Aizwal East-I seat are Lalthansanga of Zoram Peoples’ (KARMAKAR, R., 2003C) Movement, Lalsanglura Ralte of Congress and Lalruatifeli Hlawndo – an independent.

The protection and care of Zo people is an issue that everyone champions, chiefly the Chief Minister Zoramthanga. This is criticised by ZPM President Lalduhoma, who maintains that Zo welfare is a convenient cover of government to cover its failure of five years misrule. He said, “All political parties have been equally sensitive about the displaced persons but are not trying to derive political mileage from their misery”. The leaders of Congress and BJP show equal commitment to the displaced refugees who are voters in Manipur. Along with these political parties, the Aam Admi party too has registered its presence by putting up four candidates, knowing fully well that they are unlikely to cut any ice with Mizo electorate. This is merely tokenism.

The displaced Manipuri refugees have become a fulcrum of Mizo politics and all parties are vying with each other to demonstrate their love for the refugees. For the first time in five decades, refugees have become the poll issue in Mizoram as the Bangladeshi Muslims are a core issue in Assam. Mizoram is currently hosting some 33000 Chin refugees from Myanmar and 800 Kuki-Chins from Bangladesh. The Myanmar Chins fled from their country owing to civil war there while the Bangladeshi Kuki-Chins came here because of sporadic battle between Bangladeshi armed forces and Kuki-Chin extremist groups in the Chittangong Hill Tracts.

T.J. Lalnutluanga, seeking re-election from Champhai South constituency sought votes in the name of humanitarian work that the MNF has done for the refugees. His re-election would be a guarantee of continuation of this work for refugees, whose number is 11919. They are Myanmar refugees according to District Disaster Management Authority, Champhai.

This is countered by Clement Lalhmingthanga, a retired Lieutenant Colonel of the army, who is contesting on ZPM ticket from Champhai South. Criticising the government for falsely taking credit for the plight of the refugees and their alleged services, he said, "They are attempting to cash in on the show of brotherhood when actually their government did nothing for the people of Myanmar. They are being looked after by the NGOs, church organisations and the persons”.

A similar view was expressed by Champhai South Congress candidate that MNF was attempting to copyright the issue of refugees when everybody cutting across party lines is helping them. P.S. Zatluanga of BJP too said “The people have got the information that Centre has assured material help”.

Despite a war of words, the election is genteel owing to church dictates to follow a model code of conduct. The MNF not only harps on Zo unification but also parades its welfare schemes through Socio-Economic Development Schemes (SFDF). This scheme provides a financial assistance of Rs 3 lakhs to beneficiaries who take up a business of their choice. Said the MNF spokesperson “Some 60,000 families were provided with assistance of Rs. 50,000 each and another 60,000 were given Rs. 25,000 each in the second phase. The third phase was suspended temporarily as its initiation coincided with the announcement of polls”.

State Congress president Lalsawta trashed the MNF claim and said, “They provided only Rs. 25,000 and only a handful party workers got the money, not the farmers and skilled workers who required it”.

The SEDF too came in for shelling by the Congress president who said that this was an propagandised version of the New Land Use Policy (NLUP) which was launched somewhere in January 2011 by the Congress government under Lal Thanhawla to offer financial aid of Rs. 1 lakh each to 1.2 lakh clans identified by agriculture and allied departments.

The BJP too criticised SEDP. It offered the Lotus expanding to Livelihood Opportunity Transformation and empowerment scheme to bail out these beneficiaries who were affected hard by “fallacious and corruption engulfing SEDP”.

Thus a host of leaders were involved in the process of mud-slinging which from all-India standards was indeed soft and polite owing to church dictates to keep the election a genteel affair and avoid boisterousness and hyperbole.

The End Product: The results were announced on December 4, 2023 and they gave ZPM the majority. The final outcome was ZPM – 27 seats MNF 10 seats, the BJP 2 and Congress 1 in a 40 members assembly. The leader of Zoram People’s Movement is Lalduhoma who as stated earlier, is an IPS retired man. He joined the Congress and became its M.P. in 1984 (KHAN & HAUSING, 2023). He has the unenviable distinction of being the first legislator to be disqualified under the anti-defection law in 1988. In 2018, he formed the ZPM and Election Commission recognised it in 2019. Before getting recognition, its candidates fought election in 2018 as Independents and eight of them won the election including Lalduhoma himself from two seats.

The present election of 2023 has many shocks to record. The MNF was ousted in the election and the Congress, which was a ruling party at some time with Lalthanwala as its Chief Minister, was reduced to just 1 seat, behind even BJP which annexed two seats. In 2018, the Congress party had four seats. Mizoram has an electorate of 8.5 lakh persons. For ZPM, it was a very happy moment. Four years back upto 2018, it was not even a registered party and now it is a ruling party.

While Lalduhoma, won from Sirchhip constituency, the outgoing Chief Minister Zoramthanga lost his Aizwal East-I seat. The state, thirty six years ago, had seen only two Chief Ministers viz, Lalthanhawla and Zoramthanga and now the state is well set to experiment with a new Chief Minister, Lalduhoma.

Soon after the announcement of results, the new leader announced that his party will remain neutral and independent and would not join any group such as National Democratic Alliance (NDA) of Narendra Modi or the opposition alliance INDIA. The new Chief Minister said, “We don’t want to be dictated from Delhi. Our relationship with central government will be issue-based”.

The ZPM’s governance would be based on the promise of Kalphungthar i.e. a new system of inclusive government based on tribal tradition of village elders presiding over and deciding matters that are of crucial concern to the community.

The party has an advisory committee consisting of retired bureaucrats and pastors, who are all elders in the 60-90 age bracket and they are authorised to nominate the Chief Minister and assist him in selecting his team of ministers. It will have moral strength and serve as the conscience-keeper of new dispensation. As stated earlier, the ZPM, prior to its recognition by the Election Commission used to put up Independent candidates. The new CM has declared that he will rule according to the wishes of people who have high expectations from him to give them an efficient and corruption free governments. The farmers too have high hopes from him. He said, “Farmers want us to buy their produce at fixed prices which we are committed to”.

The most important announcement which he made was with regard to CBI whom his new government has given blanket-consent to unearth all cases of graft and corruption during the last five years. He also referred to financial difficulties caused by the outgoing government said “We have inherited financial constraints from the outgoing government, but we will honour all our commitments. We will constitute an expert committee and put fiscal reforms in place”.

Change of Guards: Having lost the seats, the incumbent Chief Minister took no time in submitting his resignation to the state Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati in the best traditions of democracy. It is really heartening to note that a former guerrilla that Zoramthama was, he adhered to democratic norms in submitting his resignation. What is more, he admitted that the peoples verdict for ZPM was because of “people’s unhappiness over my government’s performance during the pandemics”. Very few Chief Ministers while facing adverse verdict are so frank and honest about the reasons of their party’s defeat.

Zoramthama also said that he would not leave the NDA. He said, “I am a founding member of NDA. I have no thoughts of leaving”.

Narendra Modi congratulated the new CM and those elected on BJP ticket. He said that “I would like to greet all those who advocated for BJP in Mizoram. Our party will rigorously work to ensure Mizoram scales novel benchmarks of progress. I appreciate the hard work of our party workers who reached out to the people of the state and highlighted our agenda of good governance”. He then congratulated the BJP winners and said, “I would also like to specially greet K. Beichhua and K. Hrahme from our party on being elected MLAs. My greetings for their future legislative journey”. BJP President J.P. Nadda said, “We humbly take the people’s mandate and will keep working for the empowerment of the state”.

Women’s Representation: It is heartening to note that even in a small 40 members assembly, the state of Mizoram elected three women. These are Lalrinpuii, and Barly Vanneihsang from ZPM and Pravo Chakma from MNF. Lalrinpuii won from Lunglei East, Vanneihsang from Aizwal South-3 and Baryl Pravo from West Tuipui.

It may be recalled that L. Thanmawii of People’s Conference was the first women to be elected to the Mizoram in 1972 when it was a Union Territory having a 30 members legislature. The second woman was P. Csk Thansiemi of MNF in 1984, followed by Lahlimpuli. She was made the first woman minister of state in 1987 in the government headed by LM Laldenga. Another woman legislator was Vanlalawmpuii K Chawngtha who was elected in 2014 in a by-election and was made a junior minister in the then Congress ministry headed by Lal Thanhawla in 2017. Thus woman continued to be elected and inducted in ministry in Mizoram, a small state of 8 and a half lakh souls.

The present CM, the 74 years Lalduhoma was already a household name in Mizoram because he was a 1977 batch IPS officer. He had to suffer the ignominy of being disqualified as a first M.P. and then a MLA under the anti-defection law. This time after orchestrating the biggest stir in a Christian majority state, he realised that his right time has come only now and he said with an air of satisfaction “I have been struggling all these years for this moment”.

Lalduhoma was born in Tualpui village of Champhai district bordering Myanmar. From the very inception, he was a precocious child, given to academics, reading and writing. He caught the eye of union’s first CM C. Chhunga who was impressed by his academic learnings and appointed him as a principal assistant in his office in 1972.

He then went to the Gauhati university and graduated with distinction. Five years later, he cleared the civil service examination, became an IPS officer and joined service in Goa. He was a ruthless officer against drug mafia and in a short time built around him a refutation that was strong enough to reach the ears of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, who got him transferred to New Delhi and put him in her security. At Indira’s behest, it was he who brought the insurgent

leader Lal Denga of MNF to the negotiating table. Rajiv Gandhi made him the Additional DC of Delhi police, where he served till 1984. In 1984, he joined Congress and was elected unopposed. He would resign from the party four years later and thus incurred the disqualification as M.P.

He returned home and brought into existence a new political formation Mizoram Congress for Peace which he later rechristened as Mizo National Union (MNU) in 1986. To begin with, this experiment of getting into politics proved disastrous as his party failed to get a single seat in the election.

The MNU merged with a small party to form a Democratic Party which did not last long and split eventually. He then joined MNF but this step too proved wrong and he had to quit this organisation in 1997 after losing to Zoramthama in the race for party president.

He then formed MNF (Nationalist) which metamorphosed into Zoram Nationalist Party. In 2018, he led a new formation Zoram Peoples Movement, fought the election and won 8-seats. That was the beginning of his rise to power. The rest is history.

It may be noted that ZPM is just now another political formation that opposed the strong anti-incumbency of MNF. It represents a new dawn in a state which had seen the Congress and MNF vying for honours since the state acquired statehood from a union territory in 1987. For six long years, the ZPM was actively involved in Mizo politics and buffering between these two political parties. It came as a new political reset which was destined to replace these established political formations and set a new trend. It entered Mizo politics as a new political reset, disillusioned by the performance of both Congress and MNF. It began its political journey as Zoram Exodus Movement and chose a new path. It began working on a template vastly different from power-tainted Congress and MNF. In this game of political chess, Lalduhoma deftly arranged his pieces on the chequerboard of Mizo politics.

As stated earlier, the ZPM, to establish itself had to chart a new course and it gave the clarion call to rid Mizoram of corruption if returned to power. Lalduhoma promised corruption free rule and inclusive government which he called Kalphungthar. The party did the home work on farmers which were the mainstay of rural economy. The first thing ZPM did was to promise remunerative prices of agricultural products such as ginger, turmeric, chilli and broomstick. Apart from the agricultural sector, the ZPM also put its focus on education and public healthcare outside the ambit of medical reimbursement by the government.

What set the ZPM apart and different from the other political players was its constant refrain to create a corruption free government. It reorganised its internal functioning mechanism which was vastly different from that of other political parties. Unlike the BJP and Congress which had high commands and communist who depended upon their party political bureau, the ZPM set to

create a council of elders who served as a decision-making caucus which was prevalent in Mizo-inhabited villages. According to a party functionary, “They decide who will be the CM and the Council of Ministers. Prior to the polls, the council of elders, called Val Upa council, nominated Lalduhoma as the party’s chief ministerial face”.

It may be noted that the Val Upa Council came into existence soon after the ZPM was floated on August 15, 2017. The independence day was deliberately chosen to provide ZPM an auspicious start on its political journey. This 12 member council consisted of retired IAS and IPS officers as well as pastors who were between the age group of 60 to 90 years of age to provide maturity to it. In selecting these people, care was taken to cherrypick only those persons who enjoyed high esteem in Mizo society. Currently, the retired IAS officer and former Chief Secretary of Mizoram government Lalfakzuala is serving as its chairperson. “The council will function as the watch dog”, he said.

Yet another important political player in Mizoram is Lalthansanga who was defeated in two successive elections in 2013 and 2018. He lost to Lal Thanhawla of Congress and Lal Chamliana of Mizo National Front respectively. The law of average said that he was due for victory and hence the committee of ZPM selected him to take on the MNF Chief and CM Zoramthanga in the coming election with the hope that this time luck might favour him. And luckily he did defeat Zoramthamba and became a giant killer and that too, on his home turf, the Aizwal East-1. He expressed happiness at the outcome of election and promised to create a better and vastly improved Mizoram. In this, he took into consideration what isolated Mizoram in India. It was the lack of knowledge and he decided to make Hindi teaching popular in Mizoram to Indianise the state and break its political isolation. He declared with an air of confidence that “The old era is gone. People want a better Mizoram. Whoever comes to Mizoram will feel the Indianness here like any other state. Tourists will be able to move around peacefully. Our faces may look like Chinese but we are Indians”. The last one is important. The people in northeast states are of Mongolian ethnicity and hence featurewise they look like Chinese and not like the Aryans of north India or the Dravidians of south India. Hence it is only necessary to teach them Hindi so that they can communicate easily with the people of Indian heartland and show their Indian credentials despite facial dissimilarity owing to their ethnic differentiation. This is a welcome step towards greater integration of people of northeastern region with mainstream India.

Parties of Hindi Heartland: Whereas Mizoram’s people in this election preferred a regional outfit to national parties, the latter too worked hard to impress the electorate. In this game, the Congress was the worst sufferer. It was a party that ruled Mizoram for 22 years and this time it won only one seat. As The Hindu reports “C. Ngunlianchunga proved to be a saving grace for

Congress which ruled Mizoram for more than 22 years, by winning the Lawngthai West seat. The party had won five seats in 2018, down from 34 in 2013”.

The BJP proved its class by sweeping across the southern Mizoram’s Siaha district by winning both the seats, but sadly enough, it drew a blank in the Buddihst Chackma dominated area where it had won its lone seat in 2018. Thus it is a step down for Congress and step up for BJP which upstaged the former by winning two seats. The biggest gainer, of course, was the ZPM which formed the government on December 8, 2023. The ZPM’s success is attributed to the fact that it introduced new faces. More than 82% of its candidates were newcomers including the India footballer Jeje Lalpekhlua who won from South Tuipui seat. Lieutenant Colonel Cleament Lalhoninghange won the Champhai South seat. K. Beichhua, a former minister who quit MNF, won Saiha seat on BJP ticket. Sports Minister Robert Romawia Royte, along with six others lost the election.

Party Revolving System: It may be remembered that for long the Congress and MNF perpetuated a revolving door system wherein an alternate party came to power in every one or two-elections, since 1987. But the impressive win by ZPM marks a break from the past. It was formed in 2017, and it won 27 seats and an over 37% vote share - is a spectacular improvement from of its tally of eight seats and a 22% vote share in 2018”, observes Professor Kham Khan Suan Hausing.

The predicament for Congress is apparent. It won only one seat and was a distant second in six constituency. The only exception is Thorang constituency where Zodintluanga Ralte, its candidate lost by a whisker of 62 votes against his M.N.F. rival R. Rohmingliona.

Mizoram being a small state, followed the “small state syndrome”, where a party in coalition with the party in power at the union level wins the election on account of it being financed by the centre. But this election defied the old system and the ZPM formed the government on its own resources, independent of any largess from the central party. Kham Khan Suan Hausing calls it “an interesting electoral puzzle”.

While the MNF was facing anti-incumbency, the emergence of ZPM is because of the space vacated by the Congress. The new party tried to put up experienced, educated and star packed candidates before the voters such as Jeje Lal Pekhlua (national football player), Barly Vanneihsang (radio jockey and municipal councillor) and Vanlalsailova (a gospel singer who lost by 292 votes). It sent the right political vibes to voters. Lalduhoma, himself was a decorated IPS officer and he made an impressive impact. The new Chief Minister effectively exposed the inefficiency and irregularities in the rural development programme of earlier government. Earlier, the New Land Use Policy was

launched by the Congress party and replicated by the MNF but without much success. The failure of previous parties and “the precarity of farmer’s economy in rural Mizoram was effectively used by the ZPM to galvanise a groundswell of support for its pet development project aimed at alleviating poverty and raising rural income”.

Apart from this “The ZPM subtle messaging to arraign the MNF for its alliance with Bhartiye Janata Party and the latter’s failure to protect Christian minorities and Zo (Kuki-Zomi) people in Manipur since the outbreak of violence from May 3 seem to have worked in its favour”, observes Kham Khan Suan Hausing. Indeed this was the trick that played well and it delivered. The MNF, till now boasted that it protected and rehabilitated 40000 Chin refugees who fled from the February 2021 military coup de etat in Myanmar and over 12000 Zo (Kuki-Zomi) internally displaced persons from Manipur’s violence since early May, was systematically countered by ZPM, by exposing the hypocrisy of MNF that talked of protecting and giving asylum to Christian refugees on the one hand and at the same time continue to maintain its link with the very party at the union level, whose regional counterpart in Manipur allegedly committed atrocities against the Christians.

The remarkable emergence of ZPM in Mizoram marks both continuity and change in Mizoram politics. It leverages continuity and yet marks a subtle but definite break with past. For MNF, the defeat is enormous as two of its top leaders Zoramthanga and Tawnlula lost the election but one cannot write it off because it garnered 35% of vote share and managed a second place in 28 constituencies. It shows that these parties still enjoy considerably wide electoral support and clout and much depends upon their ability to revive themselves and produce popular leaders beyond Lal Thanhawla and Zoramthanga. Till then, let the new government set a model new corruption free government and take Mizoram to new heights.

Government Formation - A New Dawn: December 8, 2023 was an auspicious day for Zoram Peoples Movement as on this day it formed its first government, pushing behind both MNF and Congress that had ruled Mizoram since it became a Union Territory / State. Lalduhoma was sworn in as the Chief Minister by the Governor of the state Hari Baby Kambhampati. Eleven other ministers took oath with him at a function held at the Raj Bhawan. Thus the total strength of the Ministers became twelve, including the Chief Minister.

ZPM Legislature Party deputy leader K. Sapdanga was made the Home Minister while Lalrinpuli from the Lunglei East constituency became the first woman cabinet minister in Mizoram. She would hold Health, Social welfare and Tribal Affairs, Women and Child Development and Tourism portfolios.

The new Chief Minister Lalduhoma, while addressing a press conference declared that his government would implement 12 programmes in the next 100

days. As was already stated the Lalduhoma government was pro-farmer, and the new CM said “Our government will buy four local products from farmers like ginger, turmeric, chilli and broomsticks by fixing minimum prices. Farmers will have the choice to sell their products on their own or to the government”.

As stated earlier, Lalduhoma, a IPS turned politician had served as the security-in-charge of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and is rated as an efficient and able person. He said that the state’s financial condition was in bad shape and hence the next financial year would be a year of consolidation. The “Budget will be oriented to ZPM policies and all ministers will monitor their departments by a road map”. Of interest was his declaration to form a committee of “Ministers, MLAs, officials, representatives of all political parties, NGOs, churches and Mizo People’s Forum, a poll watch dog, to monitor development projects across the State”.

Concluding Observation: By putting into power ZPM, the state of Mizoram added a new chapter in its history. Till now, since Mizoram attained statehood, power oscillated between two parties – MNF and Congress. The ZPM victory put a new credible alternative between the two. The ZPM was formed in 2017 as a coalition of six small parties – Mizoram Peoples Conference, Zoram Nationalist Party, Zoram Exodus Movement, Zoram Decentralisation Front, Zoram Reformation Front and Mizoram Peoples Party. Finally it became ZPM and got recognition of Election Commission in 2017.

The new government is committed to create a corruption free atmosphere and create more employment opportunities. "Skill development and push to entrepreneurship will be our government’s priorities. We will have flagship hand-holding policy through which we will provide financial support to youngsters. We will also help them exploit central government schemes”, declared Lalduhoma.

References

- Karmakar, r. (2003). as mnf and zpm go ahead to head, bjp waiting to dust to settle in mizoram. the hindu.
- Karmakar, r. (2003b). zo unification is a running theme in mizoram: mnf makes it a promise. the hindu.
- Karmakar, r. (2003c). Mizoram poll a show of which party cares for “Refugees” more. the hindu.
- Khan, k., & housing, s. (2023). experimental political choice by mizo electorate. the hindu.
- Shekhawat, v. s., Singh, b., & Singh, a. (n.d.). the politics of tribal homeland. gautam book company.
- Nibedon, N. (2013). Mizoram The Dagger Brigade. Lancer Publishers LLC.
- Hlawndo, Z. (2011). A study of the cultural factors in the foreign misssions thinking of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church (Doctoral dissertation, University of Birmingham).

From South China Sea to Gwadar Port: Conflict Management in Asia and Broader Global Implications

<https://www.doi.org/10.56830/IJHMPS12202407>

Mariam Bensaoud 

Department of International Relations, University of Dokuz Eylul, Izmir, Turkey

Email: mariambensaoud1@gmail.com

Received: 9 Nov, 2024 Revised 11 Dec, 2024 Accepted 28 Dec, 2024 Published 31 Dec, 2024

Abstract

This article examines the potential challenges of China's expansionist projects in Asia to the U.S global governance model and ASEAN institutional model of governance based on non-interference. It analyzes the geopolitical challenges posed by China's expansionist initiatives, including the Gwadar Port, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and South China Sea projects, to the U.S. global governance model and ASEAN's regional non-interference approach. These developments signify a potential game-changer for Asia and global politics. The study evaluates ASEAN's effectiveness in addressing the growing economic and political rivalry between the U.S. and China. While ASEAN promotes a model of governance rooted in sovereignty and consensus, its limitations in resolving critical disputes highlight the escalating influence of China's unilateral strategies. The article also underscores the broader implications of China's initiatives, such as reshaping trade networks and challenging traditional power dynamics. By examining these trends, the study suggests that China's actions not only affect regional stability but also signal a pivotal shift in global governance frameworks and geopolitical alignments.

Keywords: China, U.S, Governance, ASEAN, non-interference, South China Sea, Gwadar, CPEC, conflict management.

Introduction:

The end of the cold war and the rise of a unipolar state has brought with it a global governance system that was supposed to last unchallenged based on norms and principles that represented more than any other country those of the U.S. Theories such as liberalism and institutional order have held expectations that envisioned a future governed by American economic and institutional model for the world. The rise of free trade, globalization and a world dominating currency were expected to bring international relations into harmony under the lead of the U.S. Scholars such as Keohane and Nye have for long highlighted how a liberal regime would make countries interdependent through trade and nesting which is adopted by international institutions to make states bound to global governance norms by increasing the benefits of compliance decreasing transaction costs and more importantly making costs of deviating high by binding the state to each other in security, economics etc. (Keohane & Nye,

1996). This was expected to be brought about by a globalization trend that makes countries unable to have protectionist policies. Ikenberry in the book “After Victory” outlines how the U.S. has entrenched a global institutional order by building international institutions and binding states to it to ensure its long-lasting rule in the international arena. Once the institutions are established and operating, it would be difficult for states to get rid of them or change them into other institution that represented other norms. This international institutional order gives the U.S. a normative advantage and the privilege to constrain states by assuring them of mutual constraints through international organizations (Ikenberry, 2000).

Literature review

Many scholars, however, have criticized such views on the prevalence of the U.S. and its system as the only players in the international scene. This is mainly highlighted as a counter-effect of the very same system established by the U.S. to maintain its dominating position. Globalization and free trade has according to many scholars allowed the rise of many countries that would not only challenge the U.S. economically but would also bring up institutional orders and norms that can conflict with those established by the U.S.

More importantly, challenges to U.S. model would rise through regional powers that would enhance regional integration and models that can challenge the western guided model of governance. This would not mean that it fully goes against its standards but that it challenges it in a way of creating a different model of governance to strengthen the region’s independence from the U.S.

Besides the example of the EU integration model which had posed a challenge to the U.S. by building an alternative market and a competing currency, more conflictual challenges are expected to rise from the South. Scholars such as Krasner have pointed out to how the inequalities fostered by the Northern model such as the IMF lending system etc. has given rise to calls for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) that represents the primary interests of the South such as an authoritative international model of governance rather than a market guided one. This is mainly because the market led governance created by the U.S. and the West puts Southern countries in the face of new non-traditional security threats while they are already weak states and divided by issues of state building, nationalism, poverty, political stability and ethnicity. Southern states mainly concerned about political stability and integration in their countries and regions would challenge the western international economic and institutional order (Krasner, 1996). The rise of South-South cooperation and organizations such as ASEAN and AU are examples of this. This is an example of what Walt has called leash slipping and soft balancing that is expected to rise in response to U.S. strength in international arena both institutionally and economically.

(Jervis, 2009); (Mastanduno, 2009) have pointed out to the ways in which the U.S. unipolarity carried the seeds of its own end or modification. The major reason for this is globalization which while at first gave room to the U.S. to manipulate other states has with time presented opportunity for other states to grow even faster than the U.S. and grow as challengers. Mastanduno in “System Maker, Privilege Taker” highlights how the system created to make the U.S. a privilege taker turned to be a challenge to U.S. unipolar ride in the system. Globalization and the spread of free trade has given rise to other markets in Asia and Europe. Japan and China’s economic rise leading to increasing demands on Asian market. The Chinese banks holding large amounts of U.S. dollar serves as a ‘nuclear weapon’ for china to constrain U.S. ability to stop China’s expansion in Asia and the world. This is mainly due to the extreme effects it would have on U.S. economy if China decides to sell off huge amounts of U.S. dollar held in its banks. China as Mastanduno calls it has adopted the status of the patient long term challenger of the U.S. This has been done by adopting the strategic plan of a “peaceful rise” which co-sounds Asian values of growing without threatening. This serves to calm down both regional and U.S. fears of China’s rise although a U.S. realist-theory led vision has instead emphasized on perceiving it as a threat rather than as peaceful rise. According to Mastanduno, China and Russia’s rise are clear signals that the U.S. would not prevail as the only player in the world economic and institutional order (Mastanduno, 2009). Wohlforth on his side, highlights on the U.S. social status management tools to keep its global rule by allowing and encouraging countries such as China and Russia as regional powers. This is done to ensure their stand at 2nd tier positions and not being able to come into direct competition with U.S. for 1st tier position. The U.S. would encourage China and Russia to have the lead in many regional spheres such as China leading the 6 talks on how to tackle North Korea and including Russia in G7 even when it didn’t have enough economic requirements for it. Wohlforth expects based on his social status management model that this would allow the U.S. to lead while keeping these growing countries limited to their regional spheres (Wohlforth, 2009).

Recent events in Asia, however, confirm the expectations of scholars about the increasing rise of Chinese challenge to the U.S. global and economic institutional order. China’s expansion in Asia and the nonconventional role played by ASEAN which does not cohort international norms and principles set a credible example for important changes in international relations that would challenge established views both in the practice and theory of IR based on U.S. unchallenged dominance economically, institutionally as well as militarily.

Research problem

Considering the mentioned literature on global economic and institutional leadership and governance, this article explores in a general term the case of

China and ASEAN regional governance and its possible future implications on international politics. To do so, the article sheds the light on the case of the challenging Gwadar Port project and CPEC which is to be a game changer in the region and the world as an implication of the Asian regional governance model also known as the ASEAN Way in dealing with China's expansion in the region.

Sections outline

The following sections are organized as follows; The first section explores the South China Sea conflict followed by a section on ASEAN and its conflict management way as well as its failed efforts to restrain China's aggressive expansion in the Southeast Asia. The third section explores China's unilateral and alternative action to fulfil its expansive plans other than the South China Sea through the Gwadar Port and CPEC with Pakistan. The Fourth section explores the geopolitical implications to follow from the success of this project and how it can be a game changer for Asia and the world.

I- South china sea conflict

Overview

Home to more than 30,000 small islands and reefs across three archipelagos, South China Sea is one of the world's major shipping routes. It facilitates the movement of over half of the world's oil tankers traffic and over half of its merchant vessels by tonnage. The Malacca Strait between Singapore and Indonesia is a particularly vulnerable chokepoint for sea borne trade.

The South China Sea conflict involves both maritime and inland claims among the sovereign states in the region between china and the southeast Asian countries including Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam. The parcel islands are subject to the disputed claims between china, Taiwan and Vietnam. Sparty Islands are disputed among China, Taiwan, Malaysia, Philippines, Vietnam and Brunei. The Scarborough Shoal is claimed by Philippines, China and Taiwan. Maritime boundaries of Gulf of Tonkin are also disputed by China and Vietnam. In addition to these territorial claims access to fisheries, oil and gas resources is also at stake (Gregory, 2013).

China's take on the sea

Sharing almost 40 percent of the traded goods through the SEA, China has been involved in most of the direct clashes between rival claimants in the dispute. The dispute has been especially high between China and Vietnam. In front of the complicated claims around the sea and its possible implication on the China's power which would grow not only economically but also militarily and in terms of oil and other resources, the U.S. has tried to interfere in the conflict through global governance Sea laws principles (Lunn & Lang, 2016). The U.S. has urged claimants to pursue their territorial claims and accompanying rights to maritime space by applying the UN Convention on the

Law of the SEA. China has, however, showed full opposition to the U.S. involvement and preferred bilateral negotiations with rival Asian claimants. Rival countries such as Malaysia and Vietnam, however, have showed a preference for multilateral negotiations through Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The following map shows maritime border claimed by China versus those defined for china according to UNCLOS.



II- ASEAN and its role Organization overview

Created in 1967, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) emerged as an important regional organization that was looked forward to for bringing the divided and different countries of Southeast Asia, that have long been exhausted by international wars and foreign presence, under one institutional umbrella (ASEAN Secretariat, 2005). The organization was envisioned to be an institutional vehicle that would heal southeast Asia's past injuries through a peaceful way that is peculiar to southeast Asian values and history. Besides establishing a common southeast Asian identity, the institution was expected to facilitate an economically prosperous future for all its members and promote cooperation on issues that beset the region (Hideshi, 2013).

Given its particular history, cultural and ethnical as well as political identity, the association of Southeast Asian nations emphasized on adopting an institutional order that reflects Asian values and the needs of the region by protecting its unity and sacred principles such as sovereignty and nonintervention. ASEAN's main objectives were set as protecting sovereignty, security, promoting peace and prosperity as well as respect for one another's sovereignty based on the very sacred principle of non-interference. This was

done in direct opposition to the international norms of intervention, international justice and responsibility in cases that shock human conscience or are of interest to international community. The history of divide of American presence and of tearing regional wars in the region has made countries highly sensitive on any type of governance that can leave room for foreign powers intervention in internal affairs. this was done in line with Asian values of family and country first instead of individual rights first. Authoritarianism and other principles that went against American model of governing were to be highly respected and not interfered with as long as the state saw it beneficial for its peace maintenance and continuity. To bring the divided states together, ASEAN saw as compelling to adopt the principle of noninterference under the title of ASEAN Way to secure the fears of conflictual states such as Myanmar who has held a long record of human rights violation, junta rule and a harsh position against any type of interference or criticism in its internal affairs (Bensaoud, 2015).

As a result, ASEAN adopted its very own way that was in direct contrast to the western way of regional and international cooperation based on legalism, intervention, individual rights and confrontation. ASEAN made sure to put states' rights above the authority of the organization itself. This ASEAN Way, however, has come under heavy criticism in multiple instances as ASEAN adopted passive and quiet stances on the face of very serious human rights crises in Southeast Asia (Bellamy & Beeson, 2010). Cases such as East Timor and Rohingya made ASEAN be pointed out to by global community and accused of holding to non-interference (Guiyab, 2013) principle at the expense of human life which was against international law and norms of human rights and responsibility.

ASEAN south china sea conflict resolution and management

ASEAN had attempted different ways and platforms for stopping China's move toward the sea, but which had in general been ineffective and not enough to stop China and its disputes with member states. This is mainly claimed to be the case because of ASEAN non-confrontational way which is dependent on the states will and consent to go ahead with an action or with accepting the agreement rather than being able to force a change in action on the state part through pressure. In 2002, China and ASEAN agreed on a Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. According to the declaration, all countries agreed to seek peaceful solutions to disputes in the South China Sea. ASEAN member states used the UNLCOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea) as a mean to pursue their own interests and oppose China's U-shaped line. The Philippines proposed a Zone of Peace, Freedom, Friendship and Cooperation (ZoPFFC) to resolve the conflict. China refused the proposal while Malaysia showed concern over it. Countries opposing China's interests such as Vietnam were instead in favor of it. Other countries, on the other hand, avoided opposing Chinese suggestions for a joint development of ocean

resources. As tensions escalated in 2010, Vietnam as the chair of ASEAN chose to internationalize the issue (Rustandi, 2016). This step was successful in leveraging the U.S. policy and succeeded to place the South China Sea issues on the priority agenda of ASEAN. While ASEAN made sure to undertake all negotiations by sticking to the regional code of conduct with Mainland China, it moved to adopting UNCLOS in all outcome documents of its negotiations.

In 2012, Cambodia serving as the Chair of ASEAN, however, failed to uphold ASEAN's unity in addressing the escalating tensions between ASEAN member claimants and mainland China. The held meeting ended without a joint statement, for the first time, which held a blow to ASEAN's long held desire and efforts to keep ASEAN's solidarity. During the 17th ASEAN Regional Forum Ministerial Meeting, the U.S. representative stressed that the U.S. had a national interest in the freedom of navigation, open access to Asia's maritime commons and respect for international law in the South China Sea (Wang & Lee, 2014). The United States then moved for providing patrol boats to the Philippines and declared support for Manila making the conflict take an aggressive turn and almost impossible to solve under the auspices of non-confrontational umbrella of ASEAN. This divided ASEAN more on the issue and spared the organization's voice on the dispute as each state went for a different action against joint solutions. In response to the situation, China chose to respond also with military actions and diplomatic condemnation of ASEAN members. The problem on solving the dispute among Asian community composed of China and ASEAN 's members continued and became more of an issue between the U.S. and China than one among the direct claimants. The U.S. foreign intervention and support to some ASEAN members along with ASEAN institutional incapability to have a coherent stand on the issue due to its principle of state above the organization made all efforts go in vain regardless of its efforts as a mediator. The issue is to this day subject to dispute and is likely to continue given China's perseverant and patient efforts to grow as an economic and military power in the region by which to challenge the U.S. This added to the latter's fears from China's rise an aggressive one rather than a peaceful one as drawn by China has taken the dispute beyond what ASEAN can afford to solve as U.S. support behind member states brought back issues of trust and suspicion that are highly alerting to Asian countries especially when it comes to countries such as U.S. or Russia interfering in Asian affairs.

This shows that while ASEAN has enjoyed a long history of practicing its ASEAN Way which has failed in many instances and succeeded in few to promote regional peace and stability, ASEAN lacks the needed experience in conflict management and resolution when it comes to serious issues such as South China Sea. This is due to ASEAN values of non-confrontation and putting ahead states say against the organization one which make its power almost absent when states choose to for unilateral action and divide on issues like South

China Sea. ASEAN's way of trying to solve the dispute based on its classical approach of non-intervention has left room for China to seek a different solution that would satisfy its expansion in the region and the world through unilateral action and beyond South China Sea. China's Gwadar Port Project and CPEC with Pakistan has done a blow to U.S. ability to tie China down on South China Sea (Ramay, 2016). Taking its expansive and ambitious boats to an old friend shores, China's Gwadar port project if successful promises to be a game changer for China and Pakistan while changing the game rules in Asia and most probably largely in the world at least in economic terms. An expansion that would be beyond ASEAN or the U.S. to constrain and which is ironically built upon the very baby brain of the U.S. for global dominance which is free trade and more free trade, less distance, less time and more delivery efficiency by planning a geopolitical and strategic trade move. The following section overviews what the Gwadar and CPEC projects are as well as their possible implications.

III- Gwadar Port and CPEC: The Game Changers

Located in the Gwadar city in the Baluchistan province of Pakistan, Gwadar port is the deepest Sea Port in the world in terms of its shore depth. Situated in the Arabian Sea near the mouth of the Persian Gulf right outside the Straits of Hormuz which is near the key shipping routes in and out of the Persian Gulf the port offers special opportunities both through its capacity and strategic location. It is estimated that following its completion, the port is supposed to have a shore depth of 17.1 to 18.2 meters which is the deepest in the world. It is expected to be able to allow 120 berths which is the highest capacity in the world along with the highest cargo handling capacity in the world of 400 Million Tons per year. This capacity gives the port the potential to become a regional hub for international businesses following its full operational capacity.

In 2015, the port was officially leased to China for 43 years until 2059. Accordingly, China is committed to develop the Gwadar port as a free trade zone like Singapore in Hong Kong Port.

CPEC-China Pakistan Economic Corridor

Considering the complicated South China Sea dispute and the hazards of having to do trade through it along with the extra costs and distance of 11000 KM, China chose to invest in its long-trusted friendship with Pakistan and transfer shipments through Gwadar port by building rail-road projects under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which is a project worth of \$62 Billion (Bhattacharjee, 2015).

The project is divided into four major areas which include the Gwadar port itself, energy, transportation infrastructure as well as other smaller projects such as building hospitals and schools throughout Pakistan. The projects are divided into early harvest ones expected to be completed by 2020 and long-term ones

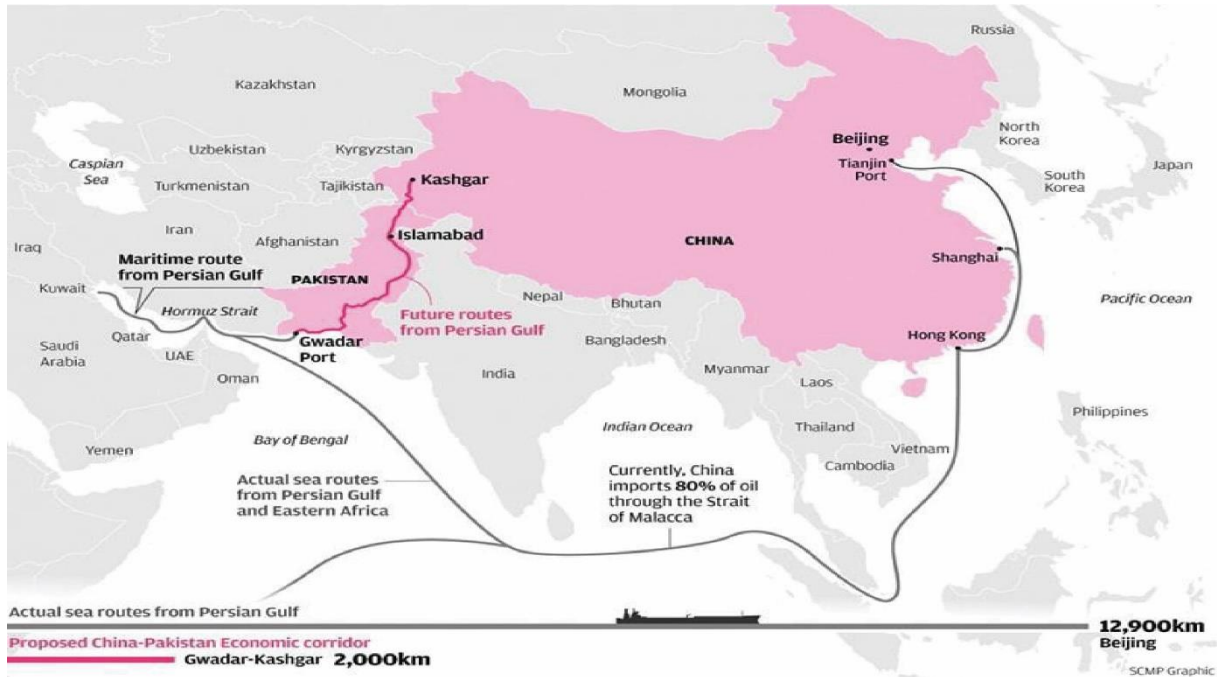
expected to need 15 more years of work (Pakistan, 2017).

Based on the 'one belt, one road' principle, the project is based on making Pakistan a bridge between the New Silk Road for Eurasian Connectivity and Maritime Silk Road between ASEAN countries. The project is not only expected to save huge shipping costs to China but also to be an incentive for developing Western China. This is mainly because the project position is linked to western China directly and trade would be entering and leaving china through its western part which would serve its objectives of balancing development in China and balancing the population distribution in the country. This is expected to directly benefit to the growth of both China, especially its western part, and Pakistan.

IV- Geopolitical and Broader Implications: A Reflection

Besides increasing China's chances of controlling the sea shores of South China Sea at its own terms as it gains dominance over trade activity in the region the project has high stakes for other nations such as Iran, UAE, India, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Oman. Iran's incentives for a similar project to lead trade in Asian region through a port which is not as deep and Gwadar and which cannot allow the same capacity. India's small port also is likely to be of less attraction in front of the impressive Gwadar. Qatar, UAE and Saudi Arabia would seize to be the hub of international trade which is the major source of their impressive growth in the recent decades. The very key strategic location of Gwadar with its unbeatable lodging capacity makes it an undefeatable potential financial hub for international trading that would put all the old trading order and powers into calculation. The port also serves Russia's interests for growth well as the port gives it better access to Pakistan's warm water which is more beneficial and efficient for Russian trade than normal one.

The following map show the port's strategic importance which reduces the distance for trading from 12,900 km from Beijing through actual sea routes from Persian Gulf to an impressive 2000 km through the proposed China-Pakistan Economic Corridor which is to be Asia' and world' new trading Hub (Wang, 2015).



Looking through the impressive potential and scope of the port to change the regional and international trade patterns through a faster road and an impressive capacity, it remains sensible to say that the project has high potential to be a geopolitical game changer that can change a lot in international relations. It is particularly beneficial for China to develop its western region which would give it better incentives to have an equal and better growth not only internally but also regionally and internationally. It also gives China dominance over trade in the region and most probably in the world through its efficient one belt one road which would change the trade calculations. State conducting trade through the port would spend less time and costs and gain more than those that might be tempted to stay out. Using the comparative advantage logic which also works to explain why states join international institutions that benefits some more than others, being out of the China established one belt one road and conducting trade through another route would put Chinese traded products to advantage than those traded otherwise. Following China's lead would then be the most sensible is being better in than worse out in front of an unbeatable successful project of china both in capacity, depth and strategic location. The dominance by which china is also to take out its major chunk of trade from South China Sea can give it better chances for controlling the SEA even more aggressively by controlling the other states through the major trade road through which they hold high benefits. The port potential to be an international trade hub puts at risk many countries and changes the geopolitical scenario in the Asian region with great implications for the world leading economies and powers. Needless to mention the fact that economic power is shifted to military and institutional ones to gain more influence and power in international relations by all states. Having the opportunity to lead such a record breaking port for world trade and a new geopolitical map for the region and beyond, it is not senseless to claim for an

impressive rise of China as a full challenger to U.S. dominance in international security, economy and institutional order. The power gained from such a project would give China more resources to invest in its military, ability to constrain other countries growth such as India and to gain more power as a rule maker and changer in international institutions. Using the same tools applied by the U.S. controlling world trade can make China invest more in international institutions while also expanding its challenging development strategy to EU and the west through aid without conditionality in Africa, Middle East and Asia. This Chinese version of soft power and of foreign aid has been well welcomed by countries of the South who have long been complaining about the trap-like lending system established by countries of the North which makes southern countries drawn more rather than grow more.

It would not, as a result, be far from realistic to witness a growing bloc of power with an institutional order with terms established under the lead of China and its counterparts such as Pakistan which may even conflict with international terms established under the lead of the U.S. Even if all these expectations do not come true, leading international trade by itself would put China to a very powerful position that would change many if not all aspects of international relations and politics.

Conclusion

As a conclusion and in line with scholars' expectations such as (Jervis, 2009) Walt and (Mastanduno, 2009) Asia has been a challenging region for the U.S. to maintain an international order and governance that is in coherence and under its prevailing lead. The Association of Southeast Asian countries challenging way to the conventional western way based on cosmopolitan values has contributed to the inability to draw politics in the region according to western incentives. The association leaving room for a preference of states unilateral action through the principle of states before organization and the ASEAN way based on non-intervention in line with Asian values has shaped the road for the rise of even stronger China that can change the economic and political game in the region and beyond. The ASEAN Way failure to solve the South China Sea conflict which came to be subject to calculations beyond Southeast Asia and China toward the U.S. own fears from China's rise was a triggering factor for China's more intelligent and challenging move toward CPEC and Gwadar port. Considering the future potentials of the port as a geopolitical and economic game changer, it goes without question that in case the project is successful and operation the international relations and governance we are to see in couple of years are to be way different than what we have been seeing under a claimed undefeatable prevailing U.S. lead in governance, economics and military. This is especially considering the rising unhappiness with the west in Southern countries where a top down led globalization that is

seen as exploitative through western MNCs making benefits while ruining political stability is increasing.

This is in addition to the decreasing normative position of the U.S. since the Iraq war and western inconsistent attitude with its values in response to the question of refugees following Syrian crises and the political ruin of the Middle East following the U.S. led war on terror. Taking on the steps of initiated U.S. moves to expand free trade, China's Gwadar port is to break any country's current afforded beneficial road through an impressive capacity and road and time reduction. This is to unquestionably also reflect on the distribution of power internationally knowing very well as scholars such as Mark Brawley have pointed out that trade carry distributional effects that affect and shape the states' ability to lead and international hierarchy. This is mainly because trade advantages also reflect in military capacity and institutional power by giving the more powerful a more influential voice in shaping rule, principles and norms in international regimes and institutions. While it is not in the scope of this article to outline exactly how the project, when operational, is to change the whole international relations picture it remains within our current scope to drive rational expectations about the potential impressive power shifts based on current announced envisioned abilities of the project. The project is not only to change Pakistan and China in terms of development and economic well-being but will have regional and international effects at many levels. It remains, however, important to point to the challenges that would accompany the project from social, cultural and other points of views especially considering Pakistan. It would be a challenge for Pakistan to gather all the economic benefits and leadership from the trade project while also maintaining its somehow established social and cultural identity and system that is remarkably different from the Chinese model in terms of religion, society and culture.

This raises the point that has been raised by many scholars such as Acharya on the real diversity of Asia when it comes to identities and societies, but which is in general represented as a coherent unit through the political discourse of Asian values first initiated by Malaysian politicians to cover the ethnic divide between Malays and Chinese and Indians in power. The challenge to maintaining the success of the project and its heavy weight would be on the part of Pakistan to balance between the economic benefits while coherently bringing its society up without creating a large disturbance that can lead to identity or social status dissonance. Such social and identity dissonance has for long been a major reason behind terrorist motivations to counter the effects of globalization on local identities. Having a coherent social and cultural plan to balance out possible side effects of opening its port to be an international and regional hub for trade would prove essential for Pakistan to garner the great benefits of the projects without falling into the traps of globalization in security and social challenges. All in all, if well operated the project has great potential to change

the game of international relations and have important implications on its practice, geopolitics and theoretical perspectives.

References:

- Bellamy, A., & Beeson, M. (2010). The Responsibility to Protect in Southeast Asia: Can ASEAN Reconcile Humanitarianism and Sovereignty? *Asian Security*, pp. 262-279.
- Bhattacharjee, D. (2015). China Pakistan Economic Corridor. *SSRN Electronic Journal*.
- Gregory, B. P. (2013). The South China Sea in Focus: Clarifying the Limits of Maritime Dispute. *Center for Strategic and International Studies CSIS*, pp. 1-29.
- Guiyab, A. (2013). Human Rights in ASEAN: How non-interference Impedes Development . *Working Article*.
- Hideshi, U. (2013). The Problems in the South-China Sea. *Review of Island Studies*,, pp.1-11.
- Ikenberry, J. (2000). After the Cold War, After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, And the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars, United Kingdom. *Princeton University Press*, pp. 215-256.
- Jervis, R. (2009). Unipolarity: A Structural Perspective. *World Politics*, V. 61, N.1, pp. 188-213.
- Keohane, R., & Nye, J. (1996). Complex Interdependence and the Role of Force, International Politics, Robert C. Art and Robert Jervis, eds. *New York: Harper Collins*, pp. 236-251.
- Krasner, S. (1996). Power vs. Wealth in North South Economic Relations, International Politics, 4th edition, New York. *Harper Collins*, pp. 299-318.
- Lunn, J., & Lang, A. (2016). The South China Sea dispute, Policy Article. *The House of Commons*, pp.1-3.
- Mastanduno, M. (2009). System Maker and Privilege Taker: U.S. Power and the International Political Economy. *World Politics*, V. 61, N. 1, pp. 121-154.
- Pakistan, G. o. (2017). *Progress Update*. Retrieved from *China Pakistan Economic Corridor*. <http://cpec.gov.pk/progress-update>.
- Ramay, S. A. (2016). CPEC: A Chinese Dream Being Materialized Through Pakistan, Policy Brief. *Sustainable Development Policy Institute SDPI*, pp.1-28.
- Rustandi, A. (2016). The South China Sea Dispute: Opportunities for ASEAN to enhance its policies in order to achieve resolution, Working Article. *The Centre for Defense and Strategic Studies*, pp. 1-26.

- Wang, J. (2015). Chinas New Silk road: A case study in Eu–China relations. In: Amighini, A. & Berkofsky, A. ed, Xis Policy Gambles. *The Bumpy Road Ahead, Beijing: ISPI*, pp. 92–109.
- Wang, V., & Lee, C. (2014). ASEAN and Recent Tensions in the South China Sea, In A Bridge Over Troubled Waters: Prospects for Peace in the South and East China Sea. *Prospect Foundation Taiwan*, pp.135-154.
- Wohlforth, W. (2009). Unipolarity, Status Competition and Great Power War. *World Politics*, Vol. 61, N. 1, pp. 28-57.

The Influence of Political Advertising on Voter Behavior: A Study on How Targeted Ads Shape Voter Preferences and Engagement.

<https://www.doi.org/10.56830/IJHMPS12202408>

Ghadier M. Abbas

Office of Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, American University in Cairo, **Egypt.**

Email:Ghader163220@bue.edu.eg

Received: 9 Nov, 2024 Revised 11 Dec, 2024 Accepted 28 Dec, 2024 Published 31 Dec, 2024

Abstract

Political advertising has evolved dramatically in recent decades, particularly with the advent of digital media and data analytics. Targeted political advertising has become a key tool in shaping voter behavior by delivering personalized messages based on demographic, psychological, and behavioral data. These ads and digital campaigns are designed to influence voter preferences, sway undecided voters, and boost engagement, fundamentally transforming modern electoral campaigns. This paper aims to analyze practical aspects of political advertising that target voters and the effectiveness of the different ad types to elicit greater political participation. The current state of affairs is described within the context of the American presidential election of 2016, which was notable for its unconventional aspects. In particular, the paper illustrates how Trump's campaign deployed strategically micro-targeted advertisements to specific demographics of American voters.

The research integrates the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) which is a psychological theory of persuasion with the statistics of the voting and advertisement. The research as well points to some ethical problems, like risk for the voters being deceived, misuse of data, and the increase of the scope of political partisanship.

By examining both the benefits and drawbacks of targeted advertising, this paper contributes to the broader understanding of its role in democratic processes. From the findings, there is a problem of how the positive aspects of voter's participation can be obtained without the chances of negative manipulation.

Keywords: Political Advertising, Targeted Ads, Voter Behavior, Voter Engagement, Political Campaigns

1. Introduction

Political advertisements are considered one of the basic components of electioneering and, owing to their abundance, power, and popularity, stand second only to public relations in shaping public perceptions and the attitudes of voters toward candidates or parties. Political advertising has moved to another level in political campaigns due to the availability of new communication technologies that allow campaigns to reach individual voters with targeted ads. Advertisements functioning as branding do not necessarily promote products to consumers, but rather reinforce consumer habits, particular interests, and even stereotypes based on information related to their target audiences (Barber & McCarty, 2018); (Kreiss, 2016).

The electoral scenario was markedly more polarized politically and emotionally

in the aftermath of the Donald Trump presidency than ever before in modern contemporary history. The election of Donald Trump served as an inflection point in U.S political surfacing post tautological politics and establishing micro-targeting politics. The Trump campaign employed targeted political marketing more effectively than other candidates in using social media to reach niche groups (Tufekci, 2017); Pariser, 2011). Thus, the current research tackles the bigger picture by focusing on the impact of positive targeting advertisement tactics developed by the Donald Trump campaign on the voting decisions of Americans and their impact on political polarization overall.

This paper focuses on the specifics of the impact of non-handicapped political advertising with the assistance of academic research from various fields: political science, psychology, and communications. It explores critical issues related to the ethical questions around micro-targeting, whether voters have the capacity for manipulation and what impact this means for democracy in general (West, 2017); Murdock & West, 2017). The paper also examines the case of Trump's campaign, which provides a good example of targeted ad effectiveness and shows both the advantages and the possible threats of digital political advertising.

2. Background

The Evolution of Political Advertising

Political advertisement has always been crucial in determining electoral winners and losers, but the advancement of the digital age has transformed the campaign advertisement landscape in a monumental way. Politico advertising, in the past, was rather simple, aiming at a massive chunk of the electorate through radio and television advertisement. Such advertisement techniques depended on mass communication approaches designed to have as many individuals grasp the core message at a go (Stroud, 2010).

The development of political advertising has reached new proportions as a result of the tremendous shift to digital platforms. With campaigns turning to Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, voters can be reached with very specific messages motivating them to vote through that social media platform (Murdock & West, 2017); Enli & Skogerbø, 2013). Such an ability facilitates the making of targeted advertisements to the voters that would appeal to their emotions, their beliefs, and their likes and can be made in such great detail that has never been witnessed before (Kreiss, 2016); (Barber & McCarty, 2018).

Data Analytics and Voter Profiling

Today, data and data analytics are the lifeline of almost all political campaigns and sieving through mountains of data, Sean Gourley believes is a fundamental part of any political strategists' role (Pariser, 2011). An example of how such data analytics can be employed if one is to leverage datasets such as those held by Cambridge Analytica to send precisely tailored messages to

undecided voters about immigration or economic security to white working class American voters (Barber & McCarty, 2018); (Tufekci, 2017). Or go another direction with campaign ads targeting tax cuts and deregulation to attract wealthy, conservative American voters (Tufekci, 2017).

As stated above, these forms of advertising have come under a lot of criticism around the world. However, they are still being effectively used and adopted by individuals, groups and political parties as it brings measurable results in the short run (Sullivan, 2016; MacKenzie, 2018). But the cost is that it may end up increasing the wedge between political parties and lead to further divisions in society. These concerns have led to calls for greater transparency and regulation of digital political advertising (Stroud, 2010); (Barber & McCarty, 2018).

3. Methods

Data Collection

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative analysis of campaign materials with quantitative survey data to assess the impact of targeted political ads on voter behavior. The study primarily focuses on the 2016 U.S. presidential election, with a particular emphasis on the Trump campaign's use of Facebook ads and other digital platforms.

1. **Campaign Advertising Materials:** A selection of political ads from the Trump campaign was analyzed to understand the content, messaging, and target demographics. These ads were compared to similar ads from the Clinton campaign to explore differences in targeting strategies (Kreiss, 2016).
2. **Voter Surveys:** Pre- and post-election surveys were conducted to assess how targeted ads influenced voter preferences. Respondents were asked about their exposure to digital ads, the emotional impact of the ads, and whether the ads influenced their voting behavior (Enli & Skogerbø, 2013).
3. **Behavioral Data:** Data from Facebook and Twitter was analyzed to track user engagement with political ads. Metrics such as click-through rates, comments, and shares were examined to gauge the effectiveness of the ads in generating voter interest and mobilizing supporters (Barber & McCarty, 2018).

Analytical Framework

The study uses the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) and Cognitive Dissonance Theory to understand how targeted political ads persuade voters. ELM suggests that ads which appeal to emotions or biases are more likely to persuade voters who are not highly engaged with political issues (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Cognitive Dissonance Theory posits that ads that challenge voters' existing beliefs may create discomfort, which can either reinforce their current preferences or lead to a change in opinion (Festinger, 1957).

4. Results

Influence of Targeted Ads on Voter Preferences

The results of the survey and behavioral data analysis reveal that targeted political ads significantly influenced voter preferences in the 2016 election. Voters who were exposed to tailored messages on Facebook reported greater engagement with the political process, with many claiming that the ads helped clarify their political preferences. Ads focused on issues such as immigration, economic security, and job creation resonated strongly with working-class voters, particularly in battleground states (Tufekci, 2017); Murdock & (West, 2017).

Additionally, the Trump campaign's use of fear-based messaging around topics like illegal immigration appeared to have a polarizing effect, increasing both support among conservative voters and opposition among liberal voters (Barber & McCarty, 2018). This demonstrates the power of targeted political ads in shaping voter perceptions and influencing electoral outcomes.

Voter Engagement and Turnout

The study also found that targeted political ads were effective in increasing voter engagement, particularly among younger voters and those who were previously disengaged from the electoral process. Ads that addressed specific issues, such as healthcare and student loan debt, were particularly effective in mobilizing millennial voters (West, 2017); Enli & Skogerbø, 2013). The Trump campaign's ability to engage these groups through digital platforms was a key factor in its success.

Case Study: Donald Trump's 2016 Campaign

The 2016 U.S. presidential election serves as a critical case study in the effectiveness of targeted political advertising. Donald Trump's campaign was notable not only for its unconventional approach but also for its strategic use of digital media, particularly micro-targeted advertisements, to shape voter preferences and engage with specific voter segments. The Trump campaign made extensive use of data analytics, social media platforms, and psychological profiling to optimize the impact of its advertising efforts, a departure from traditional campaign strategies.

Targeting and Data Analytics

Trump's campaign employed a sophisticated data operation, utilizing micro-targeting techniques to reach individual voters with personalized messages. This approach was underpinned by vast amounts of data collected from various sources, including social media behavior, online searches, and public records. The campaign used this data to segment voters into micro-groups based on their demographic, geographic, and psychological profiles. Targeting specific interests, fears, and values, the campaign tailored messages to resonate with voters on an individual level.

One key component of this strategy was the use of Facebook's vast advertising

network, which allowed the campaign to reach millions of voters with precision. The campaign's data team, led by firms like Cambridge Analytica, used psychographic profiling to craft highly targeted advertisements aimed at swaying undecided voters or increasing the intensity of support among existing Trump supporters (Benkler, Faris, & Roberts, 2018). By leveraging Facebook's targeting tools, the campaign was able to serve distinct ads to different voter groups: for instance, an ad focused on economic anxiety might be targeted to working-class voters in the Rust Belt, while an ad on immigration might be shown to voters concerned about border security in Arizona.

Psychological Principles and Persuasion Techniques

The Trump campaign also capitalized on the principles of psychological persuasion, drawing heavily on theories like the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) to influence voters (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). The ELM suggests that people are more likely to be persuaded by a message when they are engaged with the content (central route) or when they receive messages that appeal to their emotions or biases (peripheral route). The Trump campaign effectively used both routes to sway voters.

For example, emotionally charged messages about immigration, national security, and economic recovery were crafted to evoke visceral reactions—appealing to voters' fears, anxieties, and nationalistic sentiments. These advertisements were short, direct, and often sensational, aimed at provoking an emotional rather than a rational response. This strategy is consistent with the findings of prior research that shows emotionally-driven ads can have a significant impact on voter behavior, particularly when they reinforce pre-existing beliefs or fears (Barber & McCarty, 2018).

Conversely, for voters who were more thoughtful or deliberative (i.e., those who might have been considering Trump's policies more critically), the campaign also employed policy-based ads that focused on economic plans, tax reform, and job creation, thus engaging voters through more substantial, central route appeals.

The Role of Social Media and Voter Engagement

Social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter played a central role in Trump's campaign's digital strategy. Social media not only facilitated the targeted distribution of ads but also created an environment where political discourse was shaped by the amplification of divisive messages. The campaign encouraged followers to share posts, often spreading information that aligned with their personal beliefs, further deepening political polarization (Tufekci, 2017). This viral aspect of political advertising is critical in understanding how Trump's campaign manipulated the flow of information, often bypassing traditional media filters.

Moreover, the campaign's strategic use of Twitter by Donald Trump himself was an extension of his targeted ad efforts. Through frequent, controversial, and emotionally charged tweets, Trump was able to engage directly with voters, bypassing traditional media and shaping public discourse in real-time. This method of engagement, although often criticized for its divisiveness, was incredibly effective in galvanizing his base and keeping him in the media spotlight.

Impact on Voter Preferences and Turnout

The impact of Trump's targeted advertisements on voter behavior is evident in the 2016 election results. By tailoring messages to specific groups, the campaign successfully shifted the preferences of key demographics, particularly in swing states. Voter turnout in rural and working-class areas, where Trump's ads focused on economic distress, immigration, and job losses, was notably higher compared to previous elections (Puglisi & Snyder, 2015).

Micro-targeting allowed the campaign to convince certain voter segments that their concerns were being addressed, while also intensifying the support of existing Trump voters by reinforcing their emotional connection to the candidate. Research indicates that ads that align with personal values or fears, particularly when targeted at highly engaged voters, are far more likely to result in increased turnout and support (Stroud, 2010).

For example, the campaign's focus on economic anxiety in regions hit hard by deindustrialization resonated with working-class voters who felt left behind by traditional politics. By addressing these voters' fears and offering Trump as an anti-establishment candidate who would bring change, the campaign was able to convert many of them into active supporters, significantly altering the electorate's composition.

Ethical Implications and Challenges

Despite the success of Trump's targeted advertising, the use of such methods raises significant ethical concerns. One of the primary issues is the potential for voter manipulation. As micro-targeting allows campaigns to deliver tailored messages that exploit voters' emotional triggers, it becomes increasingly difficult for individuals to assess the veracity or fairness of the information they receive. Critics argue that this kind of targeted advertising fosters misinformation and political polarization by reinforcing echo chambers and deepening divisions (Benkler, Faris, & Roberts, 2018).

Additionally, the use of personal data, particularly by companies like Cambridge Analytica, without proper consent or transparency, raises serious privacy concerns. In many cases, voters were unaware that their personal data was being used to craft specific political messages designed to influence their decisions (West, 2017). This lack of transparency further complicates the ethical landscape of targeted advertising, calling for stricter regulations and accountability in political campaigns.

5. Discussion

Ethical Concerns and Democratic Integrity

Campaign ads targeting specific groups have a positive impact on voter turnout and participation in elections. However it is worth being concerned that the media allows for, and even fosters rampant ‘negative political advertising’. These ads focus on emotions instead of facts and include moral messages conveying danger in the politics of the opponents being criticized (Benkler, Faris, & Roberts, 2018).

The Future of Political Advertising

The continued evolution of digital advertising technologies presents both opportunities and challenges for future political campaigns. As campaigns become more data-driven and reliant on social media platforms, the potential for voter manipulation increases. There is a growing need for stronger regulations to ensure transparency and protect voters from unethical targeting practices (West, 2017); (Puglisi & Snyder, 2015).

6. Conclusion

The 2016 campaign of Donald Trump represents perhaps an invincible force but equally, a potentially detrimental one as well, that is, the practice of targeted political advertising. Even though being able to target specific electoral segments enabled Trump to win the elections comfortably, it brought to the fore the moralities underpinning targeted electoral campaigning by data exploitative means. The example of Donald Trump’s campaign exemplifies the growing role of social networks, data analysis, and micro-targeting in political marketing, which is becoming more sophisticated and individualised than ever before. This change leaves questions on the effect on voter and citizen engagement, the future of democracy and political integrity in the promotion of democracy and politics in the campaigns of the future.

Targeted political advertising has emerged as one of the important political campaign strategizing tools, providing attempts to explain voter behavior, motivate them, and go as far as impacting the election results. Such campaigns have greater chances by persuading the normally or somewhat unknown voters in a particular voting target category. However, it is the practice of microtargeting that raises the greatest ethical challenges, particularly with regard to voter agency and privacy. This can be best understood through the case of Donald Trump’s campaign. His strategies in the elections are a great example of what internet campaigning is in its current state and its dangers too that should be controlled in the future campaigns.

References

- Barber, M., & McCarty, N. (2018). The effects of targeted political ads on voting behavior. *Journal of Political Advertising*, 15(2), 142-157. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2018.1458507>.
- Benkler, Y., Faris, R., & Roberts, H. (2018). *Network propaganda: Manipulation, disinformation, and radicalization in American politics*. Oxford University Press.
- Fowler, E. F., & Ridout, T. N. (2013). *The role of political advertising in influencing public opinion and voter behavior*. *Journal of Political Communication*, 29(1), 12-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2012.714906>
- Graham, M. L., & McCauley, C. (2018). *Social media targeting and its influence on democratic behavior*. *Political Studies Review*, 16(3), 360-373. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1478-9299.12199>
- Green, D. P., & Gerber, A. S. (2008). *Get out the vote: How to increase voter turnout*. Brookings Institution Press.
- Hanna, A. (2017). *Micro-targeting and its impact on democratic discourse: The case of the 2016 election*. *Political Science Review*, 24(1), 23-45. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2942015>
- Hersh, E. D. (2015). *Hacking the electorate: How campaigns perceive voters*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kreiss, D. (2016). New media and the transformation of political campaigns: The 2016 election. *Political Science & Politics*, 49(1), 8-11. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096515001987>.
- Krosnick, J. A., & Petty, R. E. (2012). *Attitude strength and persuasion*. In K. Deaux & M. Snyder (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of personality and social psychology* (pp. 628-654). Oxford University Press.
- Lefever, R. D., & Hill, M. (2017). *Political advertising and voter polarization in the 21st century*. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 16(3), 189-207. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2017.1330483>
- Mayer, J. (2018). *Dark money: The hidden history of the billionaires behind the rise of the radical right*. Doubleday.
- Petty, R. E., & Cacioppo, J. T. (1986). The elaboration likelihood model of persuasion. In P. M. McGraw, J. L. Lerner, & M. E. P. Smith (Eds.). *Advances in experimental social psychology*, (Vol. 19, pp. 123-205). Academic Press. [doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(08\)60214-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60214-4).
- Puglisi, R., & Snyder, J. (2015). The dynamics of targeted political advertising: The case of the 2012 U.S. presidential election. *Journal of Political Economy*, 123(4), 782-808. <https://doi.org/10.1086/681090>.
- Stroud, N. J. (2010). Polarization and political advertising in the 21st century.

Political Communication, 27(3), 270-292.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2010.493681>.

Tufekci, Z. (2017). The role of social media in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. *Journal of Social Media Studies*, 2(1), 45-65.
<https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1023081603084>.

West, D. M. (2017). The future of political advertising. *Brookings Institution Press*.



THE SCIENCE
PUBLISHING HOUSE

<http://doi.org/10.56830/IJHMPS>

**Interdisciplinary Journal of Humanities, Media, and
Political Science (IJHMPS)**

**Vol.1 No.2
December 2024**