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"The more nations are united in a state, the richer it becomes, as each of them contributes to the world culture and civilization..."

Heydar Alirza oglu Aliyev
National Leader of Azerbaijan

"Multiculturalism is a lifestyle in Azerbaijan."

Ilham Heydar oglu Aliyev
President of Azerbaijan Republic

Letter from the Editor-in-Chief

Dear Readers!

It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that Baku International Multiculturalism Center publishes biannual, international, double-blind peer- reviewed, open-access journal titled "International Journal of Multiculturalism", covering the study of topics in the Social & Humanities aims to provide a forum for high quality research related to multiculturalism sciences and research.

The purpose of publishing the International Journal of Multiculturalism is to promote the traditions of tolerance that have been formed in Azerbaijan for centuries as well as to make a contribution to the environment of multiculturalism.

In Azerbaijan, multiculturalism is a state policy and a lifestyle. Azerbaijan is an example to the world with its own multicultural and tolerant style of life. The tolerance implemented by the government of Azerbaijan forms the foundation for even further strengthening of the friendship and brotherhood among the ethnic and religious communities living in our country. One of the ways in which the Great Leader, Heydar Aliyev, served our people was by developing multiculturalism in our country. The most significant value that Heydar Aliyev imparted to Azerbaijan was the ideology of Azerbaijanism, which has already become an important part of the ideology of multiculturalism. Azerbaijanism is what binds together all nations into one land and one ideology regardless of their ethnic or religious roots.

Today, President Ilham Aliyev resolutely carries on this policy. The policy of multiculturalism that is carried out under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev catalyzes integration processes within the country.

In 2014, the Baku International Multiculturalism Center was created to promote Azerbaijan's model to the world and study other models. 2016 was announced as "The Year of Multiculturalism," and 2017 was "Year of Islamic Solidarity."

The Baku International Multiculturalism Center serves to promote conditions of multiculturalism and diversity in Azerbaijan. Our main goal is to preserve cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity in accordance with the ideology of Azerbaijanism as well as to introduce Azerbaijan to the world as a center of multiculturalism and to apply and encourage existing models for multiculturalism.

We particularly encourage submissions resulted from meaningful and ethical collaboration among international scholars and practitioners. The aim of the "International Journal of Multiculturalism" is to promote scholarly, realistic and contemporaneous research in the field of multiculturalism. The journal publishes quantitative and qualitative empirical research and reviews of research literature. Our main goal is to publish the work of a vigorous, well-networked international community of scholars and expand the subject areas of the journal.

Members of the Editorial Board, selected by the criteria of their international scientific recognizability, will strive to contribute to the increase of the quality level and popularization of the International Journal of Multiculturalism as reviewers and consultants as well as authors of invited papers. The journal serves as a platform for communicating wealthy findings in the field of multiculturalism to the researchers and readers.

As Editor-in-Chief, I continue to welcome manuscripts on multiculturalism subject within that broad definition, especially articles that announce discoveries, present new information, and address methodological issues.

I also would like to thank those who served on the journal staff and its editorial board, and particularly the reviewers for providing the support and feedback necessary to find, develop and publish high-quality material.

We hope you will be satisfied with the new issue of International Journal of Multiculturalism, not only by the quantity, but also by the quality of the published materials.

Thank you for your time in reading this letter and we hope to hear from you sometime!

With all the best wishes,

Ravan Hasanov
Editor-in-Chief

SCOPE OF THE JOURNAL

International Journal of Multiculturalism is an international, double-blind peer-reviewed, open-access journal covering the study of topics in the social & humanities aims to provide a forum for high quality research related to multiculturalism sciences and research. International Journal of Multiculturalism provides an interdisciplinary forum for scholars in fields of multicultural psychology, multicultural communication, education, management cross-disciplinary, social welfare, sociology, organizational /community development and related disciplines.

International Journal of Multiculturalism is published two times (April, October) a year by the Baku International Multiculturalism Center. The journal is published in English. To be published in the International Journal of Multiculturalism a paper must be substantial and original. The Editorial Board does not accept articles published or submitted for publication elsewhere the journal is published in both print and online versions.

We particularly encourage submissions resulted from meaningful and ethical collaboration among international scholars and practitioners. Submissions that advance from prescreening will be subject to originality-testing and double-blind review. The journal publishes quantitative and qualitative empirical research and reviews of research literature.

The voluntary service of international editors and reviewers have enabled International Journal of Multiculturalism to provide the open-access content to the global community with no subscription fees to readers and no article processing fees to authors. The journal is fully financially supported by Baku International Multiculturalism Center .

Copyright

Archiving

All back articles are made available as full text on the journal website. In the event that the International Journal of Multiculturalism discontinues its publication, its archive of published articles will still remain available on the journal website, to be maintained as an archive website by Baku International Multiculturalism Center Press.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD TEACHER FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GREAT WESTERN AND ISLAMIC THINKERS AND EDUCATORS

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ABSTRACT

Considering the spiritual influence and the role of a teacher as a model among students, in order to be successful in raising and educating his students, he must be aware of and commit to the principles, moral duties, and views of great thinkers and education experts. The moral and behavioral traits and characteristics that a teacher must possess are among the things that have always been of interest to education experts throughout history. This paper aims at investigating the moral characteristics of a teacher from the perspective of some great Western and Islamic thinkers. The method of this research is library research, reviewing sources, and collecting information. The results of the research show that most of the world's thinkers and educators consider personality components to be the most important characteristics of a good teacher.

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1. Introduction

In today's world, education is of great importance and both the educator and the learner must adhere to some principles and values, and if they do not, education will not be realized in its true sense. The hesitation in the nature and essence of education compels us to commit ourselves to principles, tools, and methods so that we can be successful human beings in teaching others and in learning and teaching manners, knowledge, and skills. Curriculum and educational programs must emphasize the diverse needs of students and society at local, regional, national, and global levels in all areas of education and training (National Curriculum of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2012). A teacher who wants to be an excellent teacher and an example for his colleagues and students in his work and profession must equip himself with characteristics and behaviors, because it is teachers and educators who shape the individuals of society intellectually, spiritually and personally. Teachers can change students through their behavior and teaching (Nazari and Heydari, 2019).

In educational systems, many people are working and their activities are directly or indirectly effective in educating students but the role of teachers is much more prominent than other people because students spend most of their time in school under their supervision. Therefore, many graduates of the traditional and new educational systems consider their personality formation to be indebted to their teachers (Khaledi, 2016).

The teacher deals with the soul of students and is therefore accepted as a popular model. Although the student has acquired a lot of knowledge and information in the family, has learned behaviors, has got used to things, and to some extent his personality has been formed, he has not yet taken a fixed form and is largely flexible and changeable (Davoodi, 2005). Students are affected by the teacher's ethics, behavior and characteristics, and identify themselves with him. Therefore, a teacher is not just a teacher, but more importantly, he is a mentor and an influential role model (Khaledi, 2016). Teaching is one of the most important and needed professions in society, and the main duty of a teacher is to educate students, which includes their development in all aspects and dimensions. Part of the teaching profession has an ethical aspect, and the fulfillment of the teacher's educational responsibility requires his adherence to the principles and

rules of the teaching profession ethics. According to Donald Butter, the importance of teacher ethics lies in its goal, which is "to perfect human beings." (Safaei Moghadam et al., 2016).

Any teacher's behavior has obvious and hidden moral meanings, that is, collective moral issues that permeate all aspects of life. Therefore, it seems that the teaching profession is a profession that has a moral responsibility and burden. Any activity by human society without considering morality will lead the way to destruction and moral vices. Since education is the official institution responsible for educating the future human beings, emphasizing morality and ethics is an inseparable issue and neglecting them will leave irreparable consequences for a generation (Feiz and Ellahi, 2021). Accordingly, determining good moral characteristics for the teaching profession is essential. The present article aims to examine and compare these moral characteristics from the perspectives of great Western and Islamic thinkers.

2. Moral characteristics of a good teacher

2.1. Perspective of Western thinkers

In the path of overcoming inability and satisfying his sense of quest, perfectionism and righteousness, man has always needed guides and leaders, who have been given various names throughout history, names such as teacher, instructor, professor, mentor and master, etc. Although the difference in name and belief, the pursuit of different goals, and the use of specific methods in education have distinguished these people from each other, the participation in the work of guidance has brought all these names and people together under one class (Ramezani et al., 2017). Among this class, there have also been those who have emerged as more successful and influential than others; among these people is the Greek Socrates.

2.1.1. Socrates

Socrates was born in Athens in 469 BC. He voluntarily and with infinite love, guided and educated the people of Athens and, without leaving any written text, established his position not only among the people of Athens at that time, but also in the scope of history, and his presence spread throughout the centuries

(Ramezani, et al., 2020). Socrates considered the main goal of education in schools and teachers to be the training of thoughtful and creative people who could use information well (Mohammadi Chaboki, et al., 2018).

Now, it seems that enumerating and explaining the characteristics of Socrates as a teacher can be helpful to concerned teachers who, on the path of conquering the hearts of students and influencing them, want to become familiar with the characteristics and pure models of teaching. Accordingly, a question arises as to what characteristics in Socrates as a teacher-philosopher led to the emergence of his moral character?

*** A determined researcher:**

Willpower and perseverance in the path of research and acquiring knowledge and understanding were an advantage for Socrates and were among his characteristics. He does not get tired of pursuing the solutions to a problem and when his efforts were fruitless he resumed another day (Gompertz, 1996). Undoubtedly, acquiring existing knowledge and solving various problems is a difficult and uneven path that cannot be traversed and overcome except with the help of patience and perseverance, a path that teachers, like Socrates, cannot avoid patiently stepping on because it is up to teachers to make new knowledge available to students by acquiring it, and to make a diligent effort to the best of their ability to solve various human problems and even discover new sciences. This patience and effort of teachers, in addition to increasing knowledge and efficiency, is effective in creating and strengthening students' positive mindsets towards teachers and following their example (Ramzani et al., 2020).

*** Gentle and gentle behavior:**

One of the characteristics mentioned about Socrates was his kindness and good nature. It has been stated that Socrates showed such kindness and gentleness that his students, and even his enemies, would not miss his classes even once (Ramazani, et al., 2020). A person who sits on the platform of speech and leadership, like Socrates, must consider the fact that behavior and actions full of kindness and gentleness increase the impact of speech; just as a strong and powerful speech is wasted by the wrong behavior of the speaker and does not leave an impression on the listener. Now, if the speaker is to be a teacher who is to engage and conquer the souls of students, this personal characteristic is one of the

things that will be very useful to him.

*** Courage:**

Another characteristic of Socrates was his courage. Apart from those who had entered into dialogue with Socrates, the people of Athens undoubtedly viewed Socrates with a different view. They looked up to him because he constantly uttered outlandish words about the most sublime matters and was not afraid of any authority, not even the masses of the people, before whom all orators and statesmen squirmed and bowed down" (Gompertz, 1996). There are also these obstacles and barriers in the path of a teacher's work, because a teacher is supposed to teach and guide to the right path; therefore, the teacher's courage and fearlessness to confront these obstacles and to express his opinions openly is a necessary and valuable quality for him.

*** Self-control:**

Another characteristic that has been reported about Socrates is his self-control and self-mastery, and his avoidance of egotism. Socrates possessed all kinds of emotional forces, and only through self-control was he able to control them (Gompertz, 1996). He was able to bring all emotional states, interests, and desires under his will.

*** Contentment:**

Another characteristic of Socrates was his contentment and simplicity of life. Socrates' wealth did not exceed five minas, which was a very small amount of money; he and his family lived in complete contentment. Contentment means being content with little and avoiding excessive demands on worldly goods; contentment in a person makes him indifferent to others, preserves his human dignity, and gives him the strength to face shortcomings and deficiencies, and brings respect and social character to the individual. By possessing this characteristic, a teacher and trainer does not become a plaything for the goals of others, and by reducing greed and preserving his own dignity, he focuses on his job and the interests of his trainees (Ramazani et al., 2020).

*** Being a listener of all opinions:**

Socrates never considered himself indifferent to hearing different opinions. In fact, Socrates believed that no statement or claim is so absurd or so baseless that we should not listen to it with an open mind and seek its correct reasons; and no opinion, no matter how unpleasant, should be ridiculed and silenced with shouting and noise (Gompertz, 1996). People who are not good listeners often

either do not have the capacity and tolerance to listen, or due to prejudice, stubbornness, arrogance and pride, they consider themselves too superior to listen to the opinions of others. Aware of the students' conditions, instead of imposing himself or instilling in their minds, Socrates tried to start teaching from where the audience is interested and to lead them to try to understand the subject or solve the problem in question (Ramazani et al., 2020). This means that Socrates knew the audience and their interests and used this knowledge in line with his goals. The necessity of knowing each of the students and learners is because, given that humans have different characteristics and are not alike, a teacher who seeks to recognize these individual differences and considers their abilities and desires can have a deep and lasting impact on the students. Because, based on this knowledge, the teacher finds it possible to coordinate the materials with the understanding, comprehension, and interest of the students, and therefore be the center of attention.

2.1.2. Rousseau

Jean-Jacques Rousseau is a great representative of educational philosophy in the 18th century Europe. He was born on June 28, 1712 in Geneva, Switzerland. After living a life full of ups and downs, he passed away in 1778 at the age of 66. Sixteen years after his death, in 1794, his body was transferred to the Pantheon, the tomb of great men, by the decision of the French Revolutionary Parliament and buried next to his famous opponent Voltaire (Naghibzadeh, 2010). According to Rousseau, a teacher is a good one if he has the following characteristics:

*** Harmony with the nature:**

Rousseau believes that the teacher is primarily someone who is in complete harmony with nature. The teacher who understands the educational role of the environment does not interfere with nature, but cooperates with the flow of natural forces (Gottke, 2012).

*** Appropriate behavioral interaction with students:**

Rousseau attaches great importance to creating a friendly relationship between the teacher and the students and recommends that teachers do this (Amini Mashhadi, et al., 2016).

*** Teacher being a guide and model:**

Rousseau believes that the teacher should be the students' guide and role model and not force anyone to do anything. Teachers should stop pretending and be truly good. Your good behavior should first be engraved in the memory of your students, and then it will affect their hearts (Rousseau, 1963). Rousseau considers the work of education to be more than anything else in keeping human nature from the filth of society (Hosseini and Safdarian, 2013).

2.1.3. Bob Salo

Bob Salo is the director of the Internal Motivation Program at Holy Cross College. During his forty years of teaching, he has worked as an English teacher, school psychologist, school counselor, and principal in the Plymouth Public Schools. A good teacher, according to Salo, has several characteristics:

*** Building positive relationships:**

The most essential characteristic for a teacher is to establish positive relationships with students. If the teacher is proficient in his subject, but cannot connect with the students, he will only be able to connect with highly motivated students. The rest of the students may be overwhelmed and the teacher will never be able to establish a positive and direct connection with them. A teacher should explain the importance of hard work to achieve success and help children develop academically and socially (Salo, 2021).

*** Eagerness to learn:**

Good teachers, despite their skills and qualifications, do not stop learning. They often put themselves in new situations to experience the challenge, fear,

excitement, and joy of learning again. Someone who is eager to learn, shows students that learning in itself is fun and enriching.

*** Passion for teaching:**

A good teacher expresses interest in what he teaches. The teacher must show students that he or she enjoys his or her work and help them love and appreciate what they are learning.

*** Consistency of words and actions:**

The teacher is always a model of what he teaches. He knows that he can only be effective if his words and actions are consistent. Consistency of words and actions is commendable. An authoritarian teacher who teaches democratic values does not have moral qualities. A writing teacher who has never picked up a pen or touched a keyboard cannot convince students that writing is a hobby. The most annoying thing for students is the hypocrisy of the teacher. If students are sure that they are being treated fairly, they will tolerate demanding teachers and accept poor grades but when they feel a discrepancy between the teacher's words and actions, they will not tolerate it.

*** Loving and understanding students:**

Being interested in the subject and content of the lesson is important for the teacher, but it is not enough. The teacher must care more about the students than the lesson. Above all, he should show that he cares about them and has a sense of humor, provided that his humor is respectful and does not offend the students. The teacher should unconditionally respect the children and not show destructive external control behaviors, not belittle the students, and not speak sarcastically to them.

2.2. Perspective of Islamic thinkers

Morality in all human societies is based on the school, ideology, and value system that governs their society. Among the schools that have considered morality important and have left behind a valuable collection of verses, narrations, and numerous historical examples is the religion of Islam. This issue

has been mentioned in hadiths (sayings) from the Holy Prophet (PBUH). In a famous hadith from the Holy Prophet (PBUH), we read: “I was only sent to perfect moral virtues” and in another interpretation: “I was only sent to perfect good morals.” The word “only,” which is used as a limitation, shows that all the goals of the Prophet’s mission are summarized in this matter, namely, the perfection of

human morality (Makarem Shirazi, 2006). Thus, analyzing the educational path of the Holy Prophet can be a beacon of light for educators and parents in educating the young generation and illuminate the darkness of this difficult and risky path for them. Examining his educational style reveals the rules, principles, techniques, and educational styles used in his educational behaviors, and educators and parents can benefit from these principles and rules in their educational activities (Hosseinizadeh, 2007; Maleki Anvar, 2022).

2.2.1. The Holy Prophet

The Holy Prophet attached great importance to education in general and religious education and training in particular, and his moral characteristics and educational and training methods are also one of the unique examples of the characteristics of a good teacher and desirable educational methods.

*** Having sincerity in the teaching profession:**

One of the first customs related to the character of the Holy Prophet, which must be considered as a necessary and definite matter in education and training, is to have sincerity of intention in acquiring knowledge and teaching knowledge to others because the axis and focus of the value of knowledge and the behavior of each person depends on his intention (Maleki Anvar, 2022). Intention and motivation are so important and valuable that they must have a divine and spiritual color and flavor.

*** Creating a suitable educational environment:**

The success of education is, before any action and before anything else, due to the creation of a suitable educational environment. Creating a healthy educational environment can unconsciously lead students and children towards desired goals.

*** Loving the teaching profession:**

Undoubtedly, one of the most basic human needs after biological needs (water, food, etc.) is the need for love. This need is felt more intensely in children and adolescents due to their emotional nature. Teachers and schools also play an effective role in the formation of love in children, adolescents and young people. The influence of the teacher's personality on students cannot be denied. He can

manifest love in the students through his actions, behavior, words and attitude (Maleki Anvar, 2022). The Holy Prophet used different methods to express love to his children and grandchildren, some of which include expressing his love for them, giving gifts, joking, playing with them, patting their heads and even giving them fresh fruit (Hosseinizadeh, 2007).

*** Maintaining the dignity and human respect of learners:**

Human dignity has been considered in the Quran, the words and conduct of the prophet. Dignity means greatness, and greatness is the result of a certain productivity of a being without comparing it with others (Bagheri, 1995). One of the preferred behaviors of the holy prophet was greeting children and adolescents; because, although children and adolescents are young, they understand good and bad and understand love and respect. They love each other with their hearts and souls and move towards each other on the path of peace and security.

*** Being generous in spreading knowledge:**

A teacher should not be stingy in transferring knowledge and science to the true seeker of knowledge. He should give everything he has, in accordance with sincerity, and make it available to the learner so that he can follow the path of progress and advancement.

2.2.2. Ibn Kheldoon

Ibn Kheldoon, the great Muslim philosopher, sociologist, and historian, was born in Toos. Of the many writings of Ibn Kheldoon, only one bood is available in which he has discussed the principles and methods of education and training. One of the principles and methods of upbringing from Ibn Kheldoon's perspective is to be lenient and kind to the learner. He recommends that teachers should not be strict and unkind to learners ,especially children (Parvin Gonabadi, 1990).

2.2.3. Farabi

Abu Nasr Muhammad ibn Tarkhan, known as Farabi, is one of the famous Muslim philosophers who, under the influence of the philosophical thought of

Plato and Aristotle and its reinforcement in the context of Islam, has developed his own educational philosophy system, which, according to Davari Ardakani (1998), was called the inventor of Islamic philosophy for this reason. The cornerstone of all teacher characteristics from Farabi's perspective is based on the idea of a community living in a utopian City having an educational and religious basis. According to Farabi, teachers should be intelligent and clever, eloquent, love education and training, love truthfulness and hate lying, have generosity, be just and love justice, be brave, have a strong will and be educated according to the rules of his nature (Mirza Mohammadi, 2013).

3. Discussion and Conclusion

According to what has been discussed about the characteristics of a teacher from the perspectives of Western and Islamic thinkers and educators, it can be claimed that the behavior and personal traits of a teacher are very important. The future of a country cannot be imagined without educational considerations. The common characteristic of a teacher from the perspectives of Islamic and Western thinkers is that a teacher should be kind and compassionate to students, because it is this kindness and compassion that attracts students to the teacher and ultimately makes them interested in learning. Other characteristics include respecting the personality of the student and value them, control one’s ego, desires and whims, not being stingy in transferring knowledge to the students,

and observing and establishing justice and equality among the students The difference between these two views is that religious thinkers believe that teachers, in addition to all these aforementioned characteristics, must have the intention of teaching, belief, and closeness to God; Western thinkers do not accept religious moral education, especially in the curriculum, and from their point of view, what has ultimate value for humans is this worldly life and achieving happiness.

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTER-CULTURAL AWARENESS IN THE EDUCATION OF DENTAL HYGIENISTS

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ABSTRACT

Professional standards require that dental hygienists deliver culturally appropriate services and demonstrate respect for patients whose cultural beliefs and values may conflict with normative clinical recommendations. The present study provided a snapshot of undergraduate students in one dental hygiene education program about the students' Intercultural competence (ICC): "the capability to understand and adapt behavior to cultural differences and commonality accurately." Rather than a longitudinal study of a student cohort, investigators sought to understand if program outcomes were congruent with the stated visions and missions of the university, co llege, and department. The participants completed an Informed Consent before taking the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (version 3) online during regularly assigned class periods. The Internal Review Board for Research with human subjects approved using previously collected data for this report (IRB log #1137599). As a course and program assessment, the 50-question inventory generated individual and group profile reports about Orientation to cultural differences. Data were de-identified and analyzed using IBM SPSS statistics (version 1.0.0.1406). The scores of interest for this investigation included Perceived Orientation (PO), how the individual or group rates their Orientation toward other cultures, and the Developmental Orientation (DO), an individual's or group's primary orientation toward cultural differences and commonalities. In addition, the researchers examined group mean scores to evaluate any observed significant differences in ICC. The IDI assessment results indicated that students saw culture from their viewpoints at all steps in the dental hygiene education program and tended to minimize cultural differences and focus on similarities. However, group members were not adapting their behavior to accommodate cultural differences. The authors make several recommendations for dental hygiene education programs and future research.

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Introduction

Cultural competency is an important aspect of providing health care in any multicultural society. Utilizing a culturally competent curriculum builds on a theoretical knowledge framework and leads to students mastering culturally competent clinical strategies in community-based experiences. The learners fully develop cultural humility and a worldview of knowing, valuing, and applying culturally appropriate care. Purnell defines cultural humility as an individual's ability to process an intercultural exchange while paying specific attention your own value and beliefs through self-reflection. Cultural humility incorporates the cultural characteristics of the profession in partnership with the patient to develop a "mutually beneficial and balanced relationship" (Purnell, 2013, p.9).

The American Dental Association's Commission on Dental Accreditation (2019) directs all accredited dental programs to develop teaching strategies to provide culturally appropriate oral health care. The learning objectives guide course content to provide the knowledge, value, and practice of applying culturally appropriate care. Ethnocentrism is when a clinician believes their way of knowing, thinking, and behaving is correct. An example of this would be students returning from an oral health mission trip and reporting extensive childhood caries related to eating and drinking sugary foods. A culturally competent clinician would reflect that sugar cane production is a primary source of regional income, and the drinking water is not fluoridated, which increases childhood caries.

Background

Dental hygienists are primary oral health professionals who must be prepared to support patient care for anyone who presents at their practice. Therefore, the Commission on Dental Accreditation Standard 2-15 states: "Graduates must be competent in communicating and collaborating with other members of the healthcare team to support comprehensive patient care (interpersonal and communication skills to interact with diverse population groups effectively" (CODA, 2019, p. 26). The intent of this standard focuses on written and verbal communication supporting safe and effective oral care for diverse populations (i.e., health status, health services, and health beliefs).

Clinical Relevance

As the world population becomes more diverse, dental providers no longer see a homogeneous group of patients. Clinical providers may be competent about care related to the specific diagnosis. However, Purnell (2013) emphasized that providers who understand and respect the patients' beliefs and values about health care reach multually acceptable health outcomes.

Cultural competence requires dental hygienists to possess knowledge of various cultures and be comfortable with people from other cultures. Dental hygienists need to deliver dental services that are culturally appropriate and demonstrate respect for patients whose cultural beliefs and values may conflict with normative clinical recommendations. At the same time, they need to assist the patient in obtaining positive dental outcomes. Dental hygienists use specific beliefs to guide their practice as a community of professionals devoted to preventing disease and promoting and improving public health. These beliefs include statements such as:

- *Individuals have intrinsic worth, are responsible for their health, and are entitled to make choices regarding their health.*
- *All people should have access to health care, including oral health care.*
- *We are individually responsible for our actions and the quality of care we provide.4*

The National Dental Hygiene Research Agenda (2016) has three core areas of recommended areas of research: (a) Professional Development, (b) Client Level, and (c) Population Level. Population-Level Research is divided into health services and access to care. The ADHA (2016) has suggested that research about access to care should examine the challenges to positive health outcomes, such as recognized and unrecognized barriers to care.

Scientific Rationale for Study

According to statistics provided about Dental Hygienists by Data USA (2023), 79.6% of dental hygienists are White (Non-Hispanic), making that the most common race or ethnicity in the occupation. White (Hispanic) is the second most common race or ethnicity in this occupation representing 5.81% of dental hygienists. Data USA (2023) also reported that 94.7% of dental hygienists are female, with a median age of 42.5 while male employees are generally 42.3 years of age, 0.2 years younger

than their female counterparts.

Dental hygienists contribute to the health and well-being of society while helping individuals achieve optimal health. Their profession must function interdependently with other health care providers while each individual adapts to cultural backgrounds beyond their own. Dental hygienists must be able to adapt their care to cultural differences and commonalities among patients.

While current accreditation standards state that dental hygienists need to understand and to provide culturally appropriate oral health care plans, Engeswick observed that dental hygiene educators (i.e., faculty members) lack experience with cultures different than their own (Engeswick, 2013). According to the results of her study, dental hygiene educators in the Upper Midwest were more likely to minimize cultural differences and emphasize cultural commonalities. Fitch reports that dental clients' values and general oral health care beliefs are rooted in culture (Fitch, 2004).

Questions of Interest

The research reported herein reflected an interest in how a dental hygiene preparation program currently impacts the ICC of its dental hygiene students. Specifically, the study examined these questions:

1. What is the level of ICC at the beginning of the introductory course in Dental Hygiene?
2. What is the difference between pre-instruction and post-instruction ICC in the introductory course in Dental Hygiene?
3. What is students' concluding level of ICC after their studies in Dental Hygiene?
4. What is the difference in ICC between students at the beginning of their Dental Hygiene studies compared with students after their Dental Hygiene studies?

Need for Cultural Competence

Increasingly, researchers and instructors report the need for culturally competent practitioners, i.e., adapting their behavior to reach goals with cultural groups different from their own. Chen and colleagues (2018) found that undergraduate nursing students who had more opportunities to interact with people of different ethnic backgrounds had higher subscales of cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, cultural skills, cultural encounters, and cultural desire.

Seeleman and others (2009) report that when medical professions recognize cultural and ethinic diversity issues within the educational process the result is improved care. The authors recognize the implementation of a culturally competent curriculum presents a variety of challenges. Their research sought to develop a framework to assist educators to translate existing educational objectives to measureable cultural competent outcomes. The recommended curriculum framework would include "cultural competencies in 1) knowledge of epidemiology and manifestations of diseases in various ethinic groups, 2) knowledge of differential effects of treatment in various ethnic groups, 3) awareness of how culture shapes individual behavior and thinking, 4) awareness of the social content in which specific ethinic groups live, 5) awareness of one's own prejudices and tendency to stereo type, 6) ability to transfer information in a way the patient can understand and know when external help and 7) ability to adapt to new situations flexibly and creatively" (Seeleman et al., 2009, p.231).

The literature provides evidence for the efficacy of cultural training, cultural programs, and cross-cultural experiences in influencing students' learning and development of cultural knowledge, skills, and awareness, such as those experienced while participating in international service programs (Long, 2014) and study abroad opportunities (Carpenter and Garcia, 2012). However, such opportunities may be beyond the financial capacity of many students.

Theoretical Basis

To understand the developmental processes of growth in ICC, the investigators reviewed several theoretical frameworks. Eventually, the investigators chose the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) as the theoretical foundation for course planning and assessment. The IDC describes predictable (although not automatic) stages that individuals progress as their cultural competence increases.

There are five stages of the IDC (Bennett and Hammer, 2001). The stages (originally defined by Bennett in 1993) included stage one, Denial, the individual sees their culture as the only authentic culture and may reduce exposure to different cultures. Stage two is Defense; individuals in this stage are defensive of their culture, believing their culture is the best one, and use statements like "us and them." Stage three is Minimization; the individual views their culture as shared globally and sees cultures as having no differences. Minimization is divided into two stages because it is a transitional stage, wherein the person grows from an ethnocentric worldview to an ethnorelative worldview. Stage four is acceptance; here, the individual views their culture as one of many complex cultures.

They have learned respect for differences. Stage five is Adaptation; in this stage, the individual can put themselves in the other culture's "shoes" and adapt their behaviors and communication style to better fit into that culture at hand to communicate more effectively.

Faculty Preparation

The first essential step for teaching and learning cultural competence is understanding the current levels and gaps in competency among faculty members. This understanding provides faculty members insight into their current capacity to teach cultural competence within the program scope and sequence. It is recommended to provide culturally sensitive and competent undergraduate education "faculty must first recognize their limitations and bias in teaching this content" (Cuellar et al., 2008, p.143).

There are many over-arching challenges to adding new curriculum into an already extensive curriculum with required accreditation standards. Faculty may be relucent to add more content to their existing courses, require additional professional development programs to teach the changing curriculum concerning racial and ethnic minorities, and work in academic settings lacking educational opportunities for to update the curriculum.

Currently, the educational standards for culturally competent care has been included in the new standards of many health care professions providing evidence of the needed change.

Professional development for faculty members and instructors would lead them to examine their attitudes and understand how covert and overt curriculum influences learning. Such understanding also provides insight for where to start in guiding undergraduate students in their journey. Diaz et al. (2015) maintained this was critical to nursing education programs. However, it is also a general first step for any health care professional, including those in dental hygiene.

Integration into Curriculum Design

Past research has described several effective practices for teaching and learning that lead to enhanced cultural competence among undergraduate students in health professions. These practices include (a) self-understanding in attitudes and competence among faculty members and student learners; (b) experience with partners or groups of persons from cultures different than those of the student; (c)

coaching or mentorship from professionals farther along on the diversity and equity journey; and (d) reflection and growth opportunities.

Cuellar and colleagues reported about a program in which university students can choose to take a cultural competency course as part of their general education requirements. However, the university "does not dictate to students which courses they must take to meet these requirements, although some advisors strongly suggest courses with cultural impacts as appropriate to the nursing curriculum" (Cuellar et al., 2008, p.146).

To address integrating cultural competence in undergraduate education, Cuellar and colleagues (2008) developed Blueprint for Integration of Cultural Competence in the Curriculum (BICCC). Curriculum objectives are (a) define culture and cultural competence as they relate to teaching, (b) present educational standards of cultural competence in accreditation agencies, (c) present learning objectives for competent cultural information, (d) describe a curriculum incorporating cultural competence in the undergraduate nursing curriculum, and (e) provide examples of teaching strategies and implementation (Cuellar et al., 2008, p.143).

The conceptual frameworks recommended by Seeleman and colleagues (2009) utilized two basic assumptions: (a) the use of broad conceptualization of cultural competence related to patient cultural issues and ethnic backgrounds, epidemiological differences, patients' social content and prejudice/stereotypes and (b) not to assume that doctors (or dentists) are culturally and ethnically neutral. It is recommended the framework of instruction use a lens of cultural competence broadly considering knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to provide ethnically and culturally sensitive care to diverse patient populations (Seeleman et al., 2009).

Banks and colleagues (2001) identified components of best practices for primary and secondary education be grouped into categories including (a) teacher learning, (b) student learning, and (c) intergroup relations. These components may be applied to higher education. For example, education programs, even individual courses, should create what Banks and co-authors called "superordinate groups," groups with which members of other groups in a given situation identify. Such groups encourage cohesion, friendliness, and joint learning while reducing fear and anxiety.

Barker and Mak (2013) suggested using curriculum and classroom diversity to create opportunities to enhance students' cultural competence. They used an established intercultural resource called EXCELL Intercultural Skills Program in courses in several disciplines related to Business and Health. The EXCELL generic competencies framework was practical to support students in learning and

practicing culturally sensitive ways to (a) seek help, (b) make social contact, (c) participate in a group, (d) refuse a request, (e) express disagreement, and (f) give feedback (Barker and Mak, 2013). The researchers examined four-course case studies to explore possibilities for embedding skills in different disciplines. They recommended using discipline-specific scenarios provided by stakeholder experts. Students may use these scenarios to explore the options in low-risk education environments.

Method

Research Setting

The investigation reported herein was conducted at a mid-size, Midwestern, public university. The university student population included more than 2,200 underrepresented students (based on socioeconomic status, ethnicity, or non-traditional status). Nearly 10% of this university's 15,000 students were international students from more than 90 countries. The university has been ranked 31 in international student enrollment among master's degree institutions in the U.S. (Institute of International Education, 2014).

Population and Sample

This university's Dental Hygiene program enrolls 24 new students each academic year. This investigation included 68 undergraduate students in the Dental Hygiene program: 25 enrolled in DHYG100 CID 2300 during Spring 2019; 24 enrolled in DHYG100 CID 3233 during Fall 2019, and 19 enrolled in DHYG439 CID 2327 during Fall 2019 (Delgado, 2021; Engeswick, 2021).

Table 1 presents the demographic information collected from the students when they completed the IDI survey. All subjects included in the data in Table 1 were individual students; this is an unduplicated count. However, several participants did not respond to all demographic questions, so there is missing data.

Demographic Characteristic	# of respondents	# with this characteristic
Enrolled in DHYG100 CID2300 Spring 2019	68	25
Enrolled in DHYG100 CID3233 Fall 2019	68	24
Enrolled in DHYG439 CID2327 Fall 2019	68	19
Female	68	65
US Citizen	68	64
Between 18 and 24 years old	68	67
Completed secondary school	68	65
Second year of university	44	16
Fourth year of university	44	19
Member of ethnic majority	25	20
Childhood in North America	25	24
Lived only in North America	25	20

Table 1. *Demographic Characteristics of Subjects*

Variables

This study examined the undergraduate students' Intercultural competence (ICC): "the capability to understand and adapt behavior to cultural differences and commonality accurately" (Hammer, 2013, p. 26). The scores of interest for this investigation included Perceived Orientation (PO), how the individual or group rates their Orientation toward other cultures, and the Developmental Orientation (DO), an individual's or group's primary orientation toward cultural differences and commonalities.

Measurements

The investigators used the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI; Bennett and Hammer, 1998; Bennett and Hammer, 2001) to measure cultural competency. Respondants may complete the survey on paper or online within approximately 30 minutes. The 50-question inventory generates individual, and group profile reports about Orientation to cultural differences.

For more than 20 years, the IDI has been psychometrically tested in multiple languages. Its validity includes predictive validity within the educational and corporate sectors. Rigorous tests have shown the IDI's cross-cultural generalizability, including international and domestic populations. Designers followed psychometric scale construction protocols to ensure the IDI would not be culturally biased or susceptible to individuals "figuring out" how to get a higher score. Several studies indicated the IDI's strong predictive validity. For example, higher levels of intercultural competence (measured by the IDI) were predictive of successful recruitment and retention of diverse staff members (Bennett and Hammer, 2001).

Data Collection Procedures

The IDI as a program assessment was completed online during regularly assigned class periods. Students completed the inventory online during the third week of the semester. The online survey took approximately thirty to forty minutes for each participant to complete. To avoid having the students feel coerced to participate, the instructor (a) provided class time for completing the IDI so that students did not have to use their own "free" time for the survey and (b) offered points to enhance grades in the class. The participants completed an Informed Consent before taking the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (version 3) online during regularly assigned class periods. The Internal Review Board for Research with human subjects approved using previously-collected data for this report (IRB log #1137599).

Data Analysis Procedures

The data collected was analyzed by the investigators using established IDI protocols. To find the scores for each respondent, the IDI software, version 3, was used (Hammer, 2012). This Microsoft Access uses raw survey data to generate

reports detailing individual and/or group results. Data were de-identified and analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows version 1.0.0.1406 (IBM Corp, 2020). The researchers examined mean scores in various IDI areas to evaluate any observed significant growth indicators in ICC.

Results

Intercultural Competence Before the Introductory Course

IDI scores were collected from a total of 48 students at the beginning of two semesters of DHYG100 Perspectives in Dental Hygiene (Delgado, 2019). As Table 2 indicates, the students' Perceived Orientation scores ranged from 104.36 to 126.59, with the mean of 118.109, suggesting that students in general thought more highly of their ability to perceive and accept cultural differences. In contrast, the students' Developmental Orientation scores ranged from 48.32 to 117.06, with the mean of 87.269, indicating that students were actually in the ethnocentric half of the minimization stage. In this stage, group members see culture from their viewpoints and tend to minimize cultural differences – focusing on similarities instead of differences.

Time	Variable	*n*	Range	*M*	*SD*
Beginning DHYG100	Perceived Orientation	48	104.36-129.59	118.11	5.13
	Developmental Orientation	48	48.32-117.06	87.27	14.58
Concluding DHYG program	Perceived Orientation	19	114.24-129.96	118.11	5.13
	Developmental Orientation	19	69.42-113.70	87.27	14.58

Table 2. *Range and Mean ICC for Students Beginning DHYG100 Perspectives on Dental Hygiene and Concluding DHYG Education Program*

ICC data for DHYG100 was collected from two-course sections, one in each of two semesters; the investigators wondered if there was any statistical difference between the beginning scores of the two sections. ANOVA analysis found no statistical difference between the two groups of university students ($p < .05$). The investigation reported herein suggests that students early in their university studies (a) see culture from their viewpoints, (b) overestimate their capacity to adapt to cultural differences, and (c) tend to minimize cultural differences – focusing on similarities instead of differences.

Influence of Introductory Course on ICC

In one semester, investigators collected pre-instruction scores for 24 students and post-instruction scores for 19 students in DHYG100 Perspectives in Dental Hygiene (Delgado, 2019). Data analysis shown in Table 3 presents the resulting group statistics.

Orientation toward Cultural Differences	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*SE*
Perceived Orientation - pre-instruction	24	118.66	5.89	1.20
Perceived Orientation - post-instruction	19	121.47	5.31	1.22
Developmental Orientation - pre-instruction	24	88.10	16.04	3.27
Developmental Orientation - post-instruction	19	93.60	13.90	3.19

Table 3.*Group Statistics for Students Enrolled in DHYG100 Perspectives on Dental Hygiene*

A paired-samples t-test was calculated to show the differences for each student for which pre-instruction and post-instruction scores were available. Table 4 shows the results of this analysis.

There was no statistically significant difference between starting and concluding scores ($p < .05$). After this one-credit, one-semester course, students continued to (a) see culture from their viewpoints, (b) overestimate their capacity to adapt to cultural differences, and (c) minimize cultural differences – focusing on similarities instead of differences.

Table 4.*Paired Samples Test*

Orientation toward Cultural Differences	*M*	*SD*	*SE*	95%CI		*t*	*p*
				LL	*UL*		
Perceived Orientation	-.16	5.00	1.15	-2.56	2.26	-.13	.90
Developmental Orientation	.49	16.27	3.73	-7.35	8.34	.13	.90

Note. Significance at $p < .05$ level.

ICC Among Students After Dental Hygiene Studies

Table 2 presented information about the concluding level of intercultural competence among students after their studies in Dental Hygiene. As Table 2 indicates, the students' Perceived Orientation scores ranged from 114.24 to 129.96, with the mean of 118.109, suggesting that students in general thought highly of their ability to perceive and accept cultural differences. In contrast, the students' Developmental Orientation scores ranged from 69.42 to 113.70, with a mean of 87.269, indicating that students were in the ethnocentric stage of minimization stage. In this stage, group members saw culture from their viewpoints and tended to minimize cultural differences – focusing on similarities instead of differences.

Influence of Dental Hygiene Program on ICC

It is important to note that the data examined in response to research question 4 were collected from different students, so there are no paired differences to analyze. For purposes of this study, however, this may still be useful since the investigators established there were no significant differences among two different groups of students and were interested in the impact of the Dental Hygiene program in general. Table 5 presents the results of Levene's Test for Equality of Variances (equal variances assumed) between students at the beginning (point 1) and the conclusion (point 3) of the program.

Table 5. *Group Statistics for Levene's Test for Equality of Variances (equal variances assumed)*

Orientation to Cultural Differences	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*SE*	*F*	*t*	*p*
Perceived Orientation - pre-program	48	118.11	5.18	.75			.02
Perceived Orientation - post-program	19	121.47	5.31	1.22	.56	-2.38	
Developmental Orientation - pre-program	48	87.27	14.58	2.10			
Developmental Orientation - post-program	19	93.60	13.90	3.19	.06	-1.62	.11

Note. Significance at $p < .05$ level (two-tailed).

There was a statistically significant difference between starting and concluding Perceived Orientation scores ($p < .05$). However, there was no statistically significant difference between starting and concluding Developmental Orientation scores.

Principal Findings

The students' Perceived Orientation mean scores changed from 118.109 to 121.473, indicating that students generally continued to think more highly of their ability to perceive and accept cultural differences. In contrast, the students' Developmental Orientation scores changed from 87.269 to 93.600, indicating that students were continued in the ethnocentric stage of minimization stage. In this stage, group members saw culture from their viewpoints and tended to minimize cultural differences – focusing on similarities instead of differences.

Discussion

The present study provided a snapshot of undergraduate students in one Dental Hygiene education program. This was not a longitudinal study of a cohort of students as they move through the four-year program. However, this study provides

a baseline of information about a Dental Hygiene education program's impact.

This study indicates the starting level of cultural competency among undergraduate students is ethnocentric Minimization. In this stage, group members see culture from their viewpoints and tend to minimize cultural differences – focusing on similarities instead of differences. In the introductory course, the ending level of cultural competency among undergraduate students was in ethnocentric Minimization. There was no statistically significant difference in cultural competency's starting and ending values among undergraduate students in the introductory course. After their four-year program, cultural competency among undergraduate students was ethnocentric Minimization. Again, there was no statistically significant difference in the starting and ending values of cultural competency among undergraduate students in the Dental Hygiene program.

Practical Implications

Developers of the IDC maintain that progress is not automatic. In other words, one does not develop cultural competence by getting older. However, much of growing up involves getting along, learning a profession, reaching standards, and, in

fact, minimizing differences. These are all milestones that would keep someone in ethnocentric Minimization. And celebrating cultural differences is not automatic. For example, dental hygienists learn to expect and teach patients to conform to hygiene standards. Historically, hygienists have not been concerned about adapting hygiene standards and practices to the patients' cultural norms. Interestingly, this study's results illustrate how one's perceived Orientation to cultural differences might maintain the status quo. In other words, one perceives one's competence as actually more open to Acceptance and Adaptation than one's behavior indicates.

Commission on Dental Accreditation Standard 2-15 states: "Graduates must be competent in communicating and collaborating with other members of the healthcare team to support comprehensive patient care (interpersonal and communication skills to interact with diverse population groups effectively" (CODA, 2019, p. 26). This study provides evidence-based on the education of baccalaureate degreed dental hygienists, graduates tend to minimize cultural differences and focus on similarities. As a result, oral health professionals provide care to people of diverse cultures in educational and dental settings, community clinics, school-based programs, and nursing home settings.

Recommendations

At this time, dental hygiene education is focused on a disease model to develop specific treatment recommendations. As a result, little time and value are given within dental hygiene curricula to discover and establish cross-culturally appropriate care plans. Since experiences and reflections prompt growth, the preparation of Dental Hygienists will impact the ICC of the profession. However, this is likely to happen when teaching and learning strategies that promote ICC are intentionally infused throughout the preparation program. Therefore, the authors make the following recommendations for dental hygiene education programs:

- Mission and Vision: Re-define the college and department diversity vision, mission, and goals to bring cultural competence to the fore.
- Theoretical Basis: Consistently use a theoretical framework to scaffold the program.
- Faculty Recruitment: Search and hire diverse faculty, instructors, and staff members.
- Scope and sequence of the curriculum design: Develop a curriculum map that illustrates the integration of cultural competency across the four-year program.
- Faculty Preparation: Research on dental hygiene faculty knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes would provide insight for possible educational barriers that may exist in advancing access to oral health care and a cultural-competency framework.
- Teaching and Learning: Further research should identify cost-effective teaching and learning strategies to provide cultural knowledge and encounters to increase students' exposure and understanding of individuals from other cultures.
- Longitudinal Research: Repeat the study with the same students over time, when accepted into the Dental Hygiene program and during their last semester, just before graduation.

Research investigating faculty knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes can expose possible educational barriers in advancing access to oral health care and a cultural-competency framework. The authors recommend identifying practical cross-cultural diversity education courses to be used to develop guidelines for a competency-based curriculum for healthcare professionals. Developing culturally competent care models while uniting healthcare professionals during undergraduate and graduate education is critical to educating cross-cultural and globally-aware professionals.

Conclusion

This study provides a baseline understanding about the current impact of a Dental Hygiene education program. Entry-level first-year pre-dental hygiene students and senior dental hygiene students completed the Intercultural Development Inventory (Bennett and Hammer, 2001). The beginning dental hygiene students' starting orientation toward cultural differences was ethnocentric Minimization. The nearly completed dental hygiene students' concluding orientation toward cultural differences was still ethnocentric Minimization. Evidently, students who complete this Dental Hygiene preparation program continue to see other cultures from their viewpoints and generally minimize cultural differences – focusing on similarities instead of differences. Dental hygiene preparation programs must provide purposeful teaching and experiences within a curriculum framework if graduates are going to effectively interact with diverse population groups.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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'DAD, WHY DO THEY ALWAYS CHECK OUR PAPERS?': DE-SILENCING EUROPE'S NON-EUROPEAN IMMIGRANTS: A STUDY OF BANGLADESHI 'MIGRANT' AND 'REFUGEE' EXPERIENCES IN ESTONIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores different aspects of the life stories of the Bangladeshi refugee and migrant populations in the context of Europe's ever evolving refugee and migration politics. Assumptions about migration and refugee populations in everyday life have often been the product of political elite or national media discourses. Both are limited in scope and largely antagonistic in tone. To challenge the prevailing perception of 'refugee' and 'migrant' populations as a burden and a threat to host societies, this paper draws on a series of qualitative and in-depth interviews with Bangladeshi nationals living as 'refugees' and 'migrants' in Estonia. It contrasts these narratives with that of prevailing discourses which emerge from Estonian media representations. The importance of participants' personal agency and the diversity and heterogeneity of their broader community emerge strongly from the evidence. In this way, the paper challenges the homogenous assumptions about refugee and migrant populations coming from outside of Europe and raises important theoretical, conceptual and policy questions about who should produce narratives about refugee and migrant populations and how these narratives should be deconstructed in turn. Ultimately, the paper draws attention to the necessity of listening to 'marginalised voices' and advocates for adopting a decolonial framework to unpack the politics of refugee and migration in Europe.

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Introduction

This paper makes a case for de-silencing the voices of'migrant' and'refugee' populations in Europe. Its starting point is the commonly held assumption that Europe has received an ‘unmanageable’ inflow of non-European refugees and migrants recently, especially from the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia. The 2014–2016 period was particularly significant, with over 1.8 million arrivals to the region and the European Union (EU), constituting less than 0.004% of the EU’s population (Eurostat, 2016). Yet this period is commonly portrayed as a ‘crisis’ scenario (Balogh, 2017). While European countries formulated distinct responses when 'welcoming' these new arrivals, the majority adopted a negative and dehumanizing discourse, regularly portraying refugees as a serious security risk and cultural and identity threat (Bruneau et al., 2018). To safeguard their ‘European values’ some countries, such as Hungary and Spain, began to draw up wired border fences to essentially cease them as entry points to their territory (Claudia, 2017). A couple of countries, notably Germany, opened their borders and offered fast-tracked integration routes to new arrivals.

Similar divisions to the ‘crisis’ were also visible on the local level. On the one hand, thousands of volunteers and activists showcased solidarity with refugees, offering support and assistance in countries such as Sweden, Finland, and across the EU (Kallius et al., 2016). Conversely, pro-nationalist marches in Germany, Hungary, and some other EU countries (Bruneau et al., 2018) indicated the public’s growing appetite for pro-nationalist and anti-migrant policies. In short, by terming the refugee flow to Europe as a ‘crisis’ scenario, we have seen the (re)surgence (after 9/11) of the ‘politics of fear’ (Claudia 2017), with political leaders adopting this term ‘crisis’ to incite fear and divisions, just as their predecessors had done so with the ‘war on terror’ hitherto (Balogh, 2017).

These sentiments are relevant to how Europe handles the inflow of migrants and refugees from outside the continent today. It is evident that European attitudes toward Ukrainian refugees are determined by predispositions toward immigration. With European identity, attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees are rather positive (Alexandru et al., 2024), and one would expect this attitude to probably positively affect other groups of refugees, such as those from Afghanistan or Syria. Unfortunately, this has not been the case; the attitude towards refugees having backgrounds from outside

of Europe remains hostile (De Coninck, 2023). It seems Europe has learned very little when it comes to attitudes towards refugees as a whole. Therefore, the current study on immigrants having backgrounds from outside remains significant.

Much has been written on the individual aspects of Europe's so-called'migrant and refugee crisis', especially public attitudes towards recent arrivals as well as refugee and migrant experiences (Dionysios, 2021; Sevgi et al., 2022; Randall & Shalini 2016; Sigona, 2018; Burrell & Horschelmann, 2019). This paper zooms in on the latter issue and, notably, listens to refugee and migrant voices in Estonia, an EU member state and a small Baltic country, which has nonetheless been largely overlooked in the literature so far. Traditionally, debates on migration tend to focus on the 'largest' foreign ethnic group—Russian-speaking minorities—and their integrational aspects in the case of Estonia (Islam, 2016). By comparison, there has been little to no academic attention paid to migrants and refugees arriving from outside Europe (with notable exception by Islam, 2016-17). Yet, elite and public discourses towards non-European arrivals have become highly negative and critical over time (Sigona, 2018), even allowing for some serious on-the-ground violence and hostility to emerge. For example, the Estonian refugee center was set on fire in 2015, at the supposed height of Europe's'refugee crisis' (Postimees, 2015), clearly targeting to kill the over 50 residents then residing in the center. The then prime minister, Taavi Roivas, labeled the incident as the work of an 'evil person' and a'singular and exceptional event' (Postimees, 2015), without reflecting on the real, underlying causes of violence.

The voices of non-European refugees and migrants have been largely ignored in this context. This paper aims to bring the voices of Bangladeshi refugees and migrants to the forefront, whose stories, despite making up a small, but continually growing portion of the Estonian population, have never been heard before. This is surprising, not least given that some policy debates and (negative) media discourses have previously emphasised their increasing number specifically (Postimees, 2016).

In order to offer critical and in-depth empirical snapshots of 'the life stories' of 'marginalised voices' (Rutazibwa, 2016), this paper adopts an ethnographic interview technique and converses with 19 Bangladeshi nationals living as 'migrants' and 'refugees' in Tallinn. Prospective participants were identified as individuals who were frequently subjected to differentiation and exclusion from the Estonian community given 'Europe's refugee crisis'. The paper adopts a narrative approach to bring forth their life stories (Crawley & Dimitris, 2018) and identifies seven common themes, including the everyday representation of (Bangladeshi) 'migrants' and 'refugees' as

burden to the Estonian society, as criminals, dirty people, high in number and causing a 'storm' wherever they go. These representations in turn instil a sense of vulnerability and constant fear among the Bangladeshi nationals I spoke to. Zooming out of Estonia, these narratives seem to reflect the bottom-up dis/integration of (European) political communities in the context of mobile citizenship. Siklodi (2020, 91-118) illustrated how repeated bottom-up categorisations and separations of native groups of 'us', the full members of European political communities, and mobile/migrant 'others', the non-members, began to fuel broader processes of differentiation and exclusion – including by and among members of these supposedly separate communities. In this process, the voice of the 'other' is often claimed to be unheard or overlooked and legitimately so (Spivak et al., 1996; Quijano, 2007; Bhambra, 2014). While Siklodi (2023) only really examined these processes with regards to different groups of EU mobile/stayers, similar themes have been explored by other scholars in regard to the voices of non-European, non-white, non-Western, and so on voices, cultures and worldviews (Daniele et al., 2022' Sevgi et al., 2022; Beverly, 2020).

This paper is structured as follows. The first part provides a theoretical reflection on de-silencing and refugee voice and representation, followed by a justification of the study's narrative approach. After research methods, the third part of the paper recounts the seven aforementioned narratives. The final, concluding part considers the key contributions of this paper and identified potential avenues for further research.

Research Methods

This paper draws on 19 in-depth interviews with Bangladeshi immigrants and refugees living in Estonia during 2021, at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic and coincided with a national lockdown. During the interviews, it became quickly apparent that the pandemic contributed to the difficulties respondents were facing in making their voices heard by other members of Estonian society.

Methodological frame for this study emerged from the literature on oral narratives and life stories prescribed by Tonkin (1992), Yow (1994) and Bertaus (1991). Their reflections on how allowing respondents to share their 'stories' via open ended, in-depth interviews can offer a nuanced and comprehensive way to explore the daily lives of often overlooked groups of people, such as migrants and refugees were closely followed (similarly to research done by Edensor (2002) and Westwood & Phizacklea (2000)). The interviews opened with a general question, requesting respondents to

share their experiences of living in Estonia. While I generally refrained from interfering during their talk, a couple of prompts asking for specific examples or incidences (e.g., on their experiences in work or study places etc) were employed.

The interviews were conducted between September and December 2021. Every respondent arrived in Estonia directly from Bangladesh and has been residing there for over two years. Respondents were recruited via my existing networks which were made for my previous research project. The socio-economic make up of my respondents, and further descriptive information about the interviews, are presented in Appendix 1. For the purposes of the analysis, it is worth noting that two respondents had 'asylum seeker' status, while the others secured either a permanent or temporary residency status or long-term residency. All respondents live in Tallinn, age between 24-38 and I spoke to five women and 14 men in total. While the ratio of women and men respondents is reflective of the population, at the same time it was harder to reach out to the women. Each interview lasted around 45 minutes, though some interviews ran longer, depending on respondents' preferences on what and how much they wished to share. All the respondent's names that are presented for the analysis have been anonymised.

My own background as a Bangladeshi migrant was key to building rapport with my respondents. Allowing me to adopt an 'insider' position helped me to gather information, which offered me similar opportunity to Richies (1995), who drew on her own experiences with racism and sexism as an African American woman when establishing rapport with her African American female respondents. It was indeed evident during my interview sessions that participants were comfortable discussing sensitive issues. However, taking the insider position has the possibility of blurring the identity designation and the objectivity of the researcher (Delgado, 1998; Chaudhry, 2000). I also encountered some instances during my interview sessions. For example, some respondents simply did not finish their sentences assuming that I would anyway understand what they are talking about. I was particularly aware about these kinds of issues. Recognizing the importance of 'remaining a stranger' to my participants (Simmel, 2002) I made deliberate efforts to maintaining the separation between my experiences and theirs and followed Padgett's (2008) advice to hear what is said rather than assume that what is being talked about.

The interview data was analysed through narrative analysis. Seven subplots emerged from the data and these narratives were then analysed through secondary sources, namely elite and media representations. These representations are also from

around the time of the interviews and offer a counter perspective of how far the migrant narratives which emerged from the interviews reflect mainstream discourses, which shape public opinion in Estonia. The intention of introducing these representations was also to demonstrate that the media discourses of a group of people (immigrants and refugees in this case) are more often than not simple reflections of real facts or reality but rather the result of constructed realities.

Before turning to the interview data, it is important to reflect on the refugees and migrants I interviewed. According to the Bangladeshi association in Estonia, there are approximately 300 to 350 Bangladeshi living in the country. This makes Bangladeshi nationals one of the smallest migrant populations in the country – with the largest being the Russian, Ukrainian and Finns. There is thus very little, if any, specific reporting on this group and, so far, no specific research has been contacted with them. There is thus a need to engage with this group and this paper seeks to initiate such conversation.

Empirical narratives

Seven narratives were extracted from the interviewed data, including burden, fear, criminal, dishonest, number, storm, and dirty narratives. This section looks at each in more detail by doing both, 'giving' voice to respondents and interpreting their perceptions in the light of the decoloniality literature, first and foremost.

Burden narratives: Refugees know nothing

In the beginning, when I applied for asylum, many people from this country asked me, "Do I know any work?" I remember one day I was having a conversation with the social worker, who already knew my education background and work experiences. She asked me, "Do you think you can do this job?". I looked at her and answered, "You already know I have exactly the similar kind of job experience from my country that is required for this job." She did not say anything afterwards. I kind of felt the people in this society consider me as worthless. As someone who doesn't have the ability to work. I finally applied for a job by myself, without taking a social worker's help. I secured one. All I had to do was hide my refugee status (Ranjam 33 years old).

These stories are often ignored by the elite political discourses and even by the mainstream media. These narratives clearly indicate how elite political and media discourses affect public attitudes and can influence the work of even a social worker,

who is supposedly there to help asylum seekers. It does not matter which group of migrants (students, asylum seekers or refugees) and their background (based on gender, race or ethnicity). They are all consider a burden. Following the war on Ukraine and the surge in refugee flows, Mart Helme, an influential Estonian political leader of the EKRE party claimed, *"I talk to doctors. And the doctors are saying that the healthcare situation is terrible. HIV is going to return! Infectious diseases are being brought here from Ukraine that we have thought could never exist in Estonia anymore."* His sentiments suggest how homogenising right-wing discourses on refugees can be.

In the same remark he continued, *"These women, young women- we don't know what they're going to start doing here. Maybe hundreds of thousands of women from among them are going to start getting involved in prostitution."* According to this political leader, Ukrainian women and young women do not have any qualifications to find a job. He stated, *"We don't know what they're going to start doing here."* No matter where they are from, what their background is, which colour or race they belong to, refugees are all and always a burden. This is how misrepresentation of a silence group or community takes place. Often, members of these groups are portrayed as criminals, dishonest or just mere numbers.

Narrative 1 clearly indicates the consequences of such political rhetoric and its impacts towards a particular group of people. "I finally applied for a job myself without taking social worker's help. I secured one. All I had to do was hide my refugee status." If this respondent had not been hiding his refugee status, he would have ended up unable to find a job, becoming an unemployed person who would then become a burden on the society. This also gives us the sense that their stories are often unheard or overlooked by mainstream discourses, which often creates narratives that not necessarily true (Err, 2022).

Fear narratives: The mis-representation of refugees and migrants

I came to Estonia with the intention to have a better future. Basically, I came to study here with the intention at the back of mind that I will get a good job and get settled. While I was a graduate student, I had to do different kind of odd jobs. For example, I worked in a restaurant as a helper or a food courier. During my study period, I heard many times from my local colleagues that, "'Oh, you came here for work, not for study." It gave me a sense that I was taking away their jobs as a foreigner.

He continues,

I remember one day I was returning from my workplace, it was late night. The road was empty. All of a sudden one guy came and attacked me with a knife. I was talking in English, but that guy did not understand my words. I then ran away and that guy was chasing me with his knife. I was lucky. I was able to get into the main road and that guy did not catch me. I still think about what would have happened that day if he did. In those days, I always told myself, "Once I become a graduate, things will change. I will get a good job and I will not have to face these things." Now, I work in the corporate world, but nothing has changed. Almost every single day, I am asked by others, "Why did you not go back to your home country after graduation?" (Saiful, 29 years old).

These narratives are often ignored by the European society as a whole, as well as elite political or media discourses, except from very few individual activists or academics. The image of immigrants are often portrayed in a way that they are threat for society. The words that are being used by the media associated with immigrants are often the words that represents something to fear on. One of the prominent repertoires found from the newspaper reports reviewed was that of the immigrants being 'threat' for the society. This media representation amplifies the storm metaphor, reinforcing the image of refugees and migrants as a threat to society (see for example the article on, 'Estonia border patrols stepped up in wake of Lithuania crisis' (ERR, 2021)).

The term 'border patrols' is often associated with conflicts with neighbouring countries, as well as news and reports related to drug smuggle and human trafficking. These activities are viewed by the general population as threats to society and should be avoided (Ian, 2019). Following report makes such claim more profound, "Estonia's border preparedness has been boosted, particularly on its eastern frontier, in response to the migration crisis."

The terms 'eastern frontier' and 'border preparedness' give us the image of war related reports and articles. A sense that there are enemies and they need to be defeated. The following report installs this sense firmly, claiming "Estonian citizens see migration crisis as bigger threat than Russia" (Postimees, 2016). Given that Russia is the neighbouring powerful country, most people in Estonia see Russia as a threat to regional security. In this news article, immigrants are compared to such a profound threat. This particular excerpt strongly indicates how narratives are constructed rather than extracted from real facts.

Narrative 2 from the respondent clearly indicates the consequences of the above-mentioned (mis)representation of a group of people. Almost every single day, I used to hear, "Why didn't you go back to your home country after graduation?" In addition, this story clearly underscores that the respondent himself is still haunted by "what would have happened on that day" if he had not been able to get to the main road quickly. It shows how much fear he carries while living in the Estonian society day to day. Meanwhile, common media discourses portray immigrants as a threat to society. This clearly underscores that immigrants' own stories are not heard and are ignored by elite discourses (ERR, 2021).

Criminal narratives: Different treatment from the host society

One night I was walking down the street alone. It was very cold, and the roads were icy. Suddenly I saw an old woman fell on the street. She was trying to stand on her feet, but she was too old to stand on her own. I quickly went and helped her up. I always try to help, but sometimes I feel bad. Even-though I was helping, that old lady was rather hesitant. She was trying to keep a distance. She continues,

One day I went to the supermarket. I bought my things and put stickers (price tag) on all of them separately. When I went to the cash and handed over my things, the cashier opened my stickers and checked all the things by himself. This is not normal in this country. Usually, we are supposed to put stickers by ourselves and then we just punch it to the self-check-out machine or hand it to the cashier and cashier does it. I mean, the cashier punches those price tags to the machine. That cashier did not check anybody else's price tags before or after me. I was the only one who looked different there. Unfortunately, this has happened many times even after that. My 6 years old child one day asked me, "Dad, why do they always check our one?" I did not have an answer. (Ela 32 years old).

This narrative clearly shows how some individuals are treated differently just because of their colour or race. If we look at elite and media discourses, the common metaphor used by the reports on migrants as a rhetorical device, was that of a criminal narrative. Criminals are a threat to the society. This is known by even the most junior members of the society. Therefore, this notion creates a dangerous context for the migrants. Once they are identified as a threat, they need to be eliminated from the society. For example, one media report stated, "Migrants who are staying in the country without a legal basis and are subject to expulsion are placed in a detention centre of the Police and Border Guard Board with a capacity of 123 people." (Postimees,

2016) This extract has the term 'legal basis', which is often used in news, related to crime or criminal activities. The term 'expulsion' again is mostly used when a crime takes place. 'Detention centre' is a term related to criminals and their lives. These are the expressions which would normally be used or associated with media reports of criminal activities. Here, they are used to position migrants as the 'other'. Migrants are therefore someone to be fearful and they need to be isolated from the rest of the population. Narrative 3 from offers an insight of how such elite and media discourses shape people's attitudes. By comparison, examples of migrants being helpful are not found in such narratives. It is the overall falseness in these discourses which make new community members viewed as criminals, "she was rather fearful and was trying to keep her distance" ,and "Dad, why do they always check our one?" (ERR, 2021).

Number narratives: Not seen as a human, rather as some number

I am working in an IT firm over the last three years. Many of my Bangladeshi friends are also working in different sectors. We are contributing to this economy. We pay taxes and make the economy stronger. But, wherever I go, people ask me, "Why am I in this country? What is my motivation for living in this country? How many Bangladeshis live here? Etc Nobody asks me about what I do or how I am contributing to this society. (Mahmud 30 years old).

Often immigrants are portrayed as numbers with mainstream discourses concerned with how many immigrants come from which countries, how many take government subsidies, etc. For example, a report from a newspaper, stated *"Estonia is ready to receive up to 10 people evacuated from Afghanistan. The exact number of people for whom Estonia will be able to provide international protection will be known in the coming days" (ERR, 2021).* The report was written in a positive manner in terms of 'immigrants' being offered shelter during the chaos and terrifying situation, which has unfolded in Afghanistan since the return of Taliban to power. Yet, by clearly stating the number '10' it also shows how there is a limit, a restriction 'an exact number' Estonia can accept. It reassures the reader that the country will not accept more than ten refugees. The same sentiment, a fascination with numbers, can be traced in the above-mentioned narrative, where Mahmud is asked about *"[h]ow many [other] Bangladeshi lives"* in Estonia. Whereas narrative 4 indicates that Bangladeshis do not see themselves only in numeric terms. They are many different persons, with each 'contributing to this society' and 'paying taxes' to make the country's economy stronger. Yet they remain mere numbers for many people of the society because of the elite media discourses (ERR,

2021).

Dishonest narratives: The process of turning a particular community into the 'other'

Sometimes, I feel so depressed about the different treatment of people. At the university where I study, we have our friends from different countries. One day, I was not able to get into the class on time. I was only two or three minutes late. It was because of a delayed bus. My teacher asked me, "Why are you late?". I replied, "I am sorry. My bus arrived a bit late'. Teacher did not seem to believe me. She kept on talking, "Why did you not take an earlier bus, so to not be late?". She even said that if i come late in future, she will not allow me to get in. On that day I felt Okay. Since she is my teacher, she can say this. She continues,

But the very next day one of our classmates came more than 5 minutes late. The teacher asked, "Why are you late?" She gave the same answer, "My bus was late." Our teacher did not say anything more to her. I was so surprised by that. I think it was just because that classmate was European and was a white student. After the class, I asked my classmate why she was actually late. She said she was talking with her friend. It means she actually lied. Whereas I said the truth on the previous day. It was indeed the bus, which came late. I was not being lazy. I hope someday my teacher will realise her mistake. (Shumi 26 years old).

This story clearly underscores the 'dishonest' narratives. Elite political discourses are constructed in a way where immigrants are portrayed as individuals who cannot be trusted (Rutazibwa, 2023). Sometimes, discourses on immigrants raise questions about their history and integrity. The following media report for example shows not only immigrants are dishonest but also their intention to move; "*What causes problems is that few real immigrants cross the Mediterranean, most of the travellers are economic migrants from Africa"* (ERR, 2021. The term 'few' is used explicitly and in a way which suggests that large number of immigrants and asylum seekers are dishonest and it is a 'problem'. Singling out one group of migrants as 'African' again demonstrates how a particular group can be misrepresented and constructed in a negative manner. This media reporting is very much linked to narrative 5 about the teacher's reaction to Shumi's lateness and the dishonesty of her European classmate.

Storm narratives: Harmful to the society

I came here as an expat. I work for the most renowned IT company here in Tallinn. I am a well-educated person. I could have gone to anywhere in the world to do my job. I came to know that [Estonia] is the IT hub of Europe and it has good atmosphere for IT professionals. The very first day when I went to my office, one of my colleagues asked me, "Where are you from?" I said, "I am from Bangladesh". In response she said, "Oh, there are so many Bangladeshis in our office. The office is getting full of South Asians rather than locals'. I felt so bad, as if I had just arrived to the office from nowhere, without any qualification and my identity was Bangladeshi not as an office staff or as a colleague (Jokhon 38 years of age).

This particular story underlines how false representation constructs people's mentality toward a group of migrants. The most common rhetoric found in media discourses is that of the storm metaphor (Peter and head 2008). This storm metaphor creates an image as if immigrants bring a storm that will devastate and destroy the host society. For example, one media report declared that there was 'a broader state of emergency a couple of days earlier due to a surge in inward migration' (ERR, 2021). In this example, the terms 'declared',' emergency' and 'surge' are expressions that would ordinarily be associated with reports on severe storms, like cyclones or hurricanes, indicating the need for a state of 'emergency' to be declared by the authorities. Here, they are used to position immigrants as someone to be cautious of and as causes of potential harm to the Estonian society. It also suggests that they are a group of individuals who can destroy society, much like a super hurricane does. The following report repeats the same discourse, emphasising that immigrants represent a storm; *'The Estonian Rescue Board (Päästeamet) has sent just under a dozen tents and furnishings, including bedding, in order to house the migrants at camp and via the framework of the EU's civil protection mechanism, as well as 100km of barbed wire, and drones.'*

The words 'rescue' and 'tents' are often associated with a storm and its aftermath when there is a large population of victims affected by the storm. The use of 'drones' suggests that these immigrants need to be constantly monitored through drones and other technical support. The use of these metaphors may legitimise the perception that immigrants do not have agency of individual will to operate within a given structural framework. Whereas narrative 6 clearly indicates otherwise: '*I could have gone to anywhere in the world to do my job. I came to know that [Estonia] is the IT hub of Europe and it has good atmosphere for IT professionals'* (Postimees, 2021),

Dirty narrative: Stay away from them

Over the years, I have recognised that nobody sits beside me. If I am on the bus, most of the time the seat next to me is empty. The people would rather stand up instead of sitting next to me. I have noticed it even when I go to any office for any other purposes. People from this country don't want to come close to me. One day, I remember I was walking beside the playground in our neighbourhood. There were a lot of children who were playing at that time but when they saw me, they all stopped playing and quickly went back to their guardian's. This kind of thing happens to me often (Lovelu 31 years of old).

The account mentioned above gives us the indication that immigrants are often perceived as if they are seen as 'dirty'. Indeed, as mentioned earlier prominent political figures have openly claimed that it is refugees who bring 'Infectious diseases' with them to Estonia (ERR, 2022). Such labels will fuel practices of keeping a distance from new or recent migrant or refugee arrivals – especially if they look visibly different than Estonians.

Narrative 7 suggests that the mainstream narrative often carries overly negative connotations, portraying migrants as not just a burden (Crawley & Skleparis, 2018) but as an infectious threat. In order to consider how such narratives affect the lives of migrants in their everyday, their voices need to be heard by political leaders and presented in mainstream media reports.

Conclusion

This paper shed light on the often untold and largely overlooked stories of Bangladeshi migrants and refugees in Estonia within the context of Europe's relentless debates around refugee and migration politics. The main objective of this study was to provide an empirically rich account of the daily lives of Bangladeshi migrants and refugees, not just in their own words but in the light of broader discourse articulated by the elite and represented by media reports. To achieve this objective, the paper drew on a series of in-depth interviews and media reports from 2019-2021 from Estonia.

Seven main narratives emerged from the interviews. These narratives include the portrayal of migrants as representing an impending storm. This portrayal suggests that a state of emergency may be required due to their presence. Another narrative involves the observation of migrants who look different than Estonians as a mere number. This

perspective implies that migrants can be managed when clear targets are set. Additionally, migrants are sometimes portrayed as dishonest. They are viewed as lacking the trust of people. Finally, migrants are often depicted as dirty and are seen as needing to be distanced from the rest of society. These narratives are likely to impact Bangladeshis in Estonia given their visible 'otherness' from the rest of the society.

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CREATING A STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT MECHANISM FOR COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM IN AZERBAIJAN: BOTTOM-UP APPROACH IN ACTION

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ABSTRACT

Community-based Tourism (CBT) is a powerful model for promoting sustainable tourism, local engagement, and cultural preservation. However, within the prevailing neoliberal framework, even alternative tourism models like CBT are often constrained by market-driven priorities that perpetuate inequalities and limit the equitable distribution of benefits. Azerbaijan is a historically multicultural country where diverse ethnic minorities have coexisted for centuries, contributing to the nation's rich cultural fabric. This study aims to explore the feasibility of establishing a strategic development framework for CBT using a bottom-up approach in Azerbaijan. Through qualitative research, specifically focus group interviews with tourism experts and stakeholders, the study identifies the primary challenges to the successful implementation of CBT in the region. The challenges identified include insufficient infrastructure, a lack of community awareness, limited support from governmental and institutional bodies, along with limited community participation, unequal distribution of benefits, and conflicts over resource management. The research reveals that adopting a CBT approach could significantly enhance rural tourism development, promote socio-economic equity, and contribute to the country's sustainable tourism goals. The findings highlight the importance of policy innovation, capacity building, and the active involvement of multiple stakeholders to ensure the long-term success of CBT initiatives. The proposed development mechanism aligns with international frameworks, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the guidelines of the UNWTO, to position Azerbaijan as a potential leader for community-led tourism in the region.

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Introduction

Tourism has emerged as one of the fastest-growing global industries, contributing significantly to economic growth, cultural exchange, and job creation (WTTC, 2021). In Azerbaijan, the government has prioritized tourism as a strategic sector to diversify its economy and reduce dependence on energy exports (ATB, 2023). While these initiatives have led to the development of large-scale, urban-centric tourism projects, the potential of rural areas remains largely overshadowed. This overemphasis on conventional tourism models often prioritizes profitability over community well-being, leading to environmental degradation, cultural commodification, and inequitable economic benefits (Richards & Hall, 2000). CBT represents a promising alternative to traditional tourism by placing communities at the center of tourism planning and development. CBT is a participatory approach where local communities manage and benefit from tourism, aiming to reduce inequalities, empower people, and preserve cultural heritage (Goodwin, 2007). On the other hand, Mearns (2003) emphasizes that CBT must not only involve communities but also address their capacity limitations through training and capacity-building initiatives. Critically, CBT is not limited to rural settings, although it is predominantly associated with them. In urban contexts, community-driven tourism initiatives often take the form of neighborhood revitalization projects, cultural festivals, or guided tours showcasing local lifestyles (Salazar, 2011). Rural CBT initiatives, however, frequently focus on integrating traditional livelihoods such as farming, handicrafts, and ecological stewardship into the tourism experience. Thus, CBT can thrive in both urban and rural environments, adapting to the socio-cultural and economic context of the area.

In Azerbaijan, with its rich cultural heritage and diverse landscapes, CBT has the potential to address rural poverty, reduce urban migration, and promote cultural sustainability. Regions such as Sheki and Guba, known for their UNESCO-listed cultural assets, exemplify the opportunities for CBT development in the country (UNESCO, 2024). While some rural destinations, such as Sheki with its rich cultural heritage, have successfully embraced CBT principles, many initiatives remain controlled by a small group of individuals or external businesses, limiting broader community engagement and diminishing local control over tourism resources. This imbalance often restrains equitable distribution of benefits and reduces the authenticity of CBT practices. Moreover, there is a lack of standardized terminology and clear

frameworks for CBT in Azerbaijan, creating confusion in its application and development. In Azerbaijan, where rural regions face economic stagnation and outward migration, CBT offers a viable solution to these socio-economic challenges. Through integrating rural communities into the tourism economy, CBT can create opportunities for income generation, skill development, and cultural exchange. However, this requires a strategic and well-structured framework that not only empowers communities but also addresses structural barriers such as limited infrastructure, lack of access to markets, and bureaucratic inefficiencies.

The primary objective of this study is twofold: first, to examine how a bottom-up approach can empower local communities to actively engage in and benefit from tourism development; and second, to assess the feasibility of establishing a strategic framework for CBT in Azerbaijan through a practical and actionable bottom-up approach.

Literature Review

This section explores the fundamental principles of CBT and its significance in modern tourism development. Sub-chapter 1: Conceptual Understanding, Scope, and Importance of Community-based Tourism provides an in-depth explanation of what CBT is, its goals, and why it is crucial for sustainable tourism growth. Sub-chapter 2: The Role of Local Participation and the Bottom-Up Approach focuses on how involving local communities in tourism planning and decision-making ensures that the benefits are distributed fairly and in line with local needs. Sub-chapter 3: Challenges and Limitations of Community-based Tourism examines the obstacles and constraints that may hinder the successful implementation of CBT, such as lack of infrastructure, external pressures, and the need for capacity building.

Conceptual Understanding, Scope and Importance of Community-based Tourism

The idea that CBT could serve as a strategy for broader community development became more evident in the early 21st century. Mukherjee & Banerjee (2019) stressed that the key to successful CBT was not just involving local communities in tourism but ensuring that the economic benefits from tourism stayed within the community. This

concept of local empowerment emphasized the need for communities to control and manage their resources, enabling them to make decisions that are aligned with their interests and priorities. According to Goodwin (2016), CBT is a tourism model where communities play a central role in planning, managing, and benefiting from tourism activities, creating opportunities for both economic growth and cultural preservation.

CBT has emerged as a vital approach to sustainable tourism, offering a model that empowers local communities to actively participate in and benefit from tourism development (Timothy & Tosun, 2003). Its benefits vary depending on community conditions and include economic gains, environmental protection, and improved quality of life (Tamir, 2015). At its core, CBT is centered on principles of local ownership, community participation, and sustainable management of resources. Defined broadly, CBT seeks to provide authentic cultural and natural experiences for tourists while ensuring that the economic and social benefits remain within the host community. CBT is defined as responsible visitation to local or indigenous communities that allows for the enjoyment of their cultural and natural heritage, with resources developed and managed through community participation, ensuring that benefits are shared collectively (Boonratana, 2010). Hiwasaki (2006) outlines four main goals of CBT: conserving natural and cultural resources, supporting fair local economic development, empowering communities through active participation, and offering visitors authentic and responsible experiences.

The scope of CBT is vast and adaptable, extending to both rural and urban settings. In rural areas, CBT initiatives often integrate traditional livelihoods such as agriculture, handicrafts, and ecological conservation into the tourism experience. This approach not only provides a source of supplementary income for rural communities but also helps preserve local traditions and biodiversity (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009). In urban contexts, CBT takes a different shape, focusing on initiatives such as cultural festivals, guided neighborhood tours, and local entrepreneurship. These projects celebrate the unique identity of urban communities and expand stronger connections between residents and visitors, contributing to urban regeneration and community pride (Salazar, 2011).

A core principle of CBT is active community participation, which empowers communities to manage resources and tourism activities, ultimately securing greater benefits (Tosun, 2000). CBT's flexibility lies in its ability to adapt to the specific socio-cultural and economic contexts of the areas where it is implemented. Unlike traditional top-down tourism models, which are often driven by external stakeholders and prioritize profitability, CBT emphasizes inclusivity and equity (Goodwin, 2007).

While the definitions of CBT vary among scholars and practitioners, they share common elements including local ownership, community control, and the prioritization of community well-being over commercial interests. For example, the Community-based Tourism Handbook defines CBT as "tourism that is owned and managed by the community, providing opportunities for local people to gain benefits while preserving their cultural and environmental assets" (Handbook on CBT, 2009). At the heart of CBT is a bottom-up approach that emphasizes community participation. This model contrasts with traditional top-down tourism, which often prioritizes external stakeholders' interests over those of local populations. Local residents play a crucial role in decision-making, and their active participation in tourism planning helps create opportunities to access markets, grow businesses, reduce poverty, and generate jobs (Lo & Janta, 2020). As Harrison (2008) notes, CBT's success depends on aligning tourism initiatives with the values, traditions, and needs of the host community. CBT is a small-scale, sustainable tourism model that develops interaction between visitors and host communities. It supports natural resource management, builds local infrastructure, and promotes a bottom-up development approach, enabling communities to manage tourism resources while conserving traditions (Boboli, 2023).

Economically, CBT diversifies activities, generates revenue, and creates employment, while socially, it fosters interaction between locals and visitors, empowers communities, and preserves cultural heritage. Environmentally, CBT promotes biodiversity conservation, prevents land degradation, and enhances eco-tourism (Ishihara, 2020). It also minimizes environmental impact and educates visitors while strengthening community organizations, empowering women, and alleviating poverty (Dangi & Jamal, 2016; Bagus et al., 2019; Lee & Jan, 2019).

Ashley and Garland (1994) identify four models of community participation in tourism development, from passive involvement to active community ownership of tourism enterprises. The first approach involves a private investor operating a tourism facility on communal land, creating employment opportunities, but not directly benefiting the community financially. In the second approach, the investor shares a portion of the revenue with the community, though this remains voluntary and depends on the investor's initiative. The third model is a profit-sharing joint venture, where the community and the investor share profits, providing more direct financial benefits to the community, although the community's role in management may vary. Lastly, in a community-owned tourism enterprise, the local population develops and manages tourism activities, ensuring both control and profits remain within the

community.

Table 1 provides a comparative analysis of various tourism types, each with distinct approaches to community engagement, economic impact, environmental sustainability, and cultural preservation.

Table 1: Comparative Analysis of Tourism Types: Key Metrics, Community Impact, Challenges and Primary Focus

Tourism Types	Community Engagement	Economic Impact	Environmental Sustainability	Cultural Preservation	Challenges	Primary Focus
Community-based Tourism	*High*: Local people actively participate in tourism planning, management, and decision-making (Simpson, 2008).	*Moderate to High*: Direct benefits include increased local employment and revenue from tourism services (Liu et al., 2019).	*High*: Focus on sustainable practices, natural resource management, and conservation (Hall, 1996).	*High*: Local culture, traditions, and heritage are preserved and shared with visitors (Murphy, 1985).	Requires strong community involvement; conflicts between locals and external stakeholders may arise (Ife, 1995).	Empowering local communities through tourism development while ensuring environmental and cultural sustainability.
Responsible Tourism	*Moderate*: Communities are typically involved in decision-making, but with an emphasis on partnerships rather than control (Holden, 2008).	*Moderate*: Benefits are often shared through partnerships, with a focus on community-based businesses, providing jobs and promoting fair trade (Goodwin, 2016).	*High*: Strong focus on reducing the negative environmental impacts of tourism McCool & Moisey, 2008).	*Low to Moderate*: Cultural protection is encouraged, but the main focus is on sustainable practices (Scheyvens, 2002).	Issues with over-reliance on tourism, the need for education on sustainable practices (Wearing & Neil, 2009).	Promoting tourism that is ethically responsible and striving to minimize its environmental impact, support local communities.
Pro-Poor Tourism	*Moderate to High*: Focus on improving the livelihoods of the poorest segments of the population (Ashley et al., 2001).	*High*: Tourism-related income directly targets poverty alleviation and enhances access to basic services (Torres & Momsen, 2004).	*Moderate*: Often involves low-impact tourism but may not always focus on environmental sustainability (Ashley et al., 2001).	*Moderate*: Cultural aspects may be preserved but may not be the primary focus (Goodwin, 2007).	Difficulties in balancing tourism growth with poverty alleviation goals; dependency on tourism (Ashley et al., 2001).	Alleviating poverty and improving living conditions through tourism-generated income.
Sustainable Tourism	*Moderate to High*: Local communities are key partners in managing sustainable tourism initiatives (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006).	*High*: Revenue from tourism can be reinvested into local infrastructure and sustainable development projects (Swarbrooke, 1999).	*Very High*: Emphasizes reducing carbon footprints, sustainable transport, and green building practices (Fennell, 2008).	*Moderate*: Cultural elements are integrated but may not be the primary focus (UNWTO, 2004).	Managing the tension between economic growth and environmental limits; balancing scale and sustainability (Swarbrooke, 1999).	Balancing tourism development with the long-term health of the environment and society.
Rural Tourism	*Low to Moderate*: Local involvement is more peripheral, with tourism often focused on rural experiences (Sharpley, 2002).	*Low to Moderate*: Economic benefits mainly benefit those directly involved in tourism, such as farmers or small-scale operators (Ilieva & Ilieva, 2012).	*Low to Moderate*: Environmental sustainability is often not a primary concern, but focuses on rural landscapes (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004).	*High*: Showcases traditional lifestyles and crafts, fostering pride in local heritage (Warinda & Van der Merwe, 2023).	May lead to over-commercialization of rural areas, leading to loss of authenticity (Muller, 2006).	Promoting rural areas by providing economic opportunities while preserving traditional ways of life.

Source: Author's own compilation

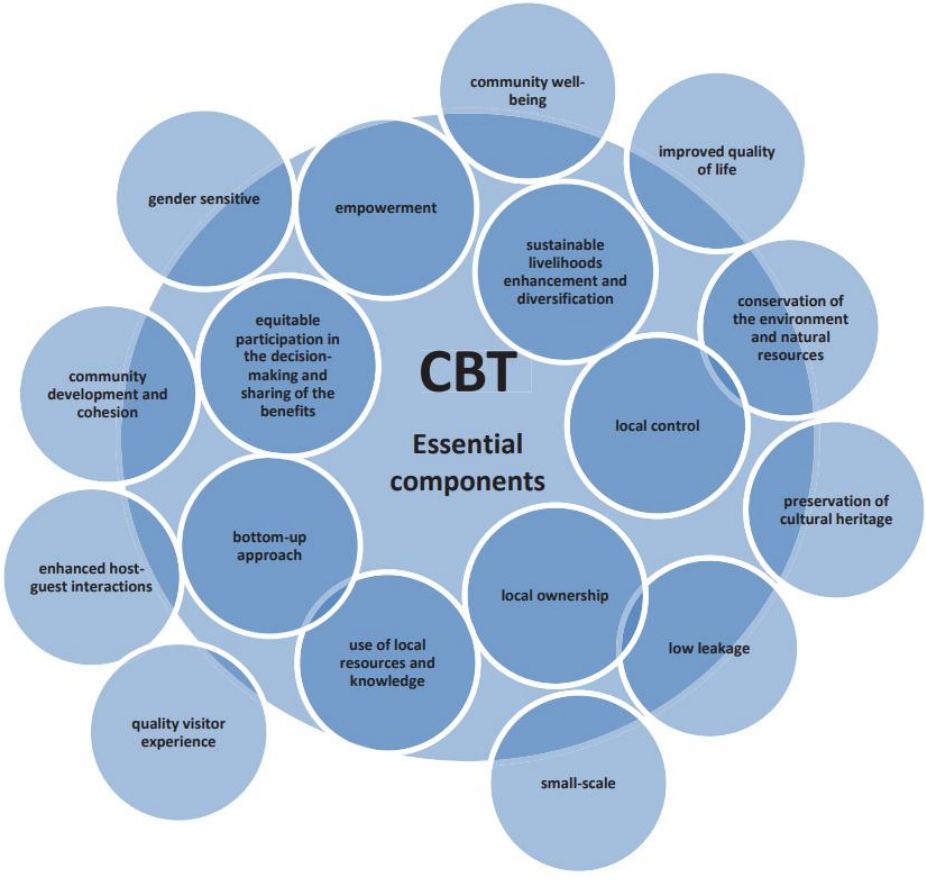
Globally, CBT has gained traction as a tool for achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specifically, CBT aligns with Goal 8 (promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth), Goal 11 (making cities and communities sustainable), and Goal 12 (ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns) (UNWTO, 2021). CBT helps local communities directly benefit from tourism, which can lead to more equal opportunities and less reliance on traditional industries. It also encourages the protection of the environment and local cultures. This shows how CBT can help achieve sustainability, and it is also relevant in Azerbaijan's tourism plans.

In Azerbaijan, the strategic importance of CBT lies in its potential to bridge the rural-urban economic divide and to promote regional development. The country's rural areas, which encompass rich cultural traditions, historical landmarks, and unique natural landscapes, remain underutilized within its broader tourism strategy. The "Strategic Roadmap on the Development of Tourism in Azerbaijan" (2017) acknowledges the unexplored potential of rural tourism and calls for innovative frameworks to integrate local communities into the tourism value chain. However, there are still not enough practical ways to empower these communities and make CBT work effectively.

The benefits of CBT are seen in many areas, including economic, social, and environmental aspects. Economically, CBT diversifies local livelihoods, generates income, and reduces dependency on single industries such as agriculture or mining (Scheyvens, 2002; Effective CBT: A Best Practice Manual, 2010). Socially, it strengthens community cohesion, preserves intangible cultural heritage, and enhances the self-esteem of community members (Singh et al., 2003). Environmentally, CBT promotes sustainable practices by incentivizing the conservation of natural resources and ecosystems (Weaver, 1998). These benefits show how important CBT can be in creating a positive impact on rural areas.

CBT works best when certain key components are in place. These include community well-being, improved quality of life, respect for local culture, conservation of the environment and natural resources, quality visitor experience, equitable involvement of communities and so on. CBT aims to create a balance between economic benefits, environmental preservation, and cultural sustainability, ensuring that local communities directly benefit from tourism activities (Martokumsumo, 2015). Figure 1 shows the essential components of CBT in a comprehensive way.

Figure 1: Essential components of community-based tourism



Source: Martokumsumo, K. S. (2015). Thesis, Massey University, New Zealand.

The Role of Local Participation and the Bottom-Up Approach

In a tourism context, the "bottom-up" policy approach indicates challenges and opportunities for destination communities to work with the public and private sectors. However, the key question is whether or not all tourism stakeholders are involved at the beginning of development plans, not at the end. This concept of participatory tourism planning is initially developed from the grassroots and extends to the global level by incorporating local wisdom, knowledge, culture and needs through alternative future scenarios of possible global tourism transformation. Continuity of pride amongst people living in destination communities might encourage local participation and maintain a sense of community and social equity for local residents

(Theerapappisit, 2012).

The relationship between CBT and the bottom-up approach is foundational. Unlike top-down tourism models, which often impose externally designed solutions on local communities, the bottom-up approach emphasizes grassroots participation and empowerment (Tosun, 2000). As outlined by Scheyvens (2002), a bottom-up approach enables communities to define their own development goals, ensuring that the benefits of tourism are distributed equitably within the community. In a CBT context, this means that community members are not only participants but also decision-makers in tourism development. Such an approach fosters a sense of ownership, ensures that tourism initiatives align with local values and needs, and minimizes the risks of exploitation or cultural erosion. This approach signifies that local communities are not passive recipients of tourism activities, but rather active stakeholders in shaping the direction of tourism development. It entails a shift in power dynamics, wherein communities are entrusted with the responsibility of planning, managing, and benefiting from tourism in ways that are culturally sensitive and environmentally sustainable. Furthermore, the bottom-up approach facilitates the integration of indigenous knowledge into tourism practices, thereby enhancing the authenticity of the visitor experience (Saarinen, 2006). However, achieving true community empowerment requires addressing power imbalances, providing capacity-building opportunities, and fostering collaborative networks between communities, government agencies, and private sector stakeholders.

Community-based tourism, when implemented with a bottom-up approach, allows local populations to leverage their cultural heritage, natural resources, and skills in ways that enhance both the tourism experience and the community's welfare (Bunten, 2010). The success of CBT lies in the empowerment of these communities, which allows them to control and benefit from the development of tourism in their area (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009). A key feature of the bottom-up approach is the recognition of the diverse needs and characteristics of the community. Each community is unique, with its own cultural traditions, environmental context, and social structure. Therefore, the development of CBT mechanisms must take into account these specific factors, ensuring that tourism activities respect local customs and contribute to the well-being of the community. This participatory process helps build a sense of ownership among community members, which is crucial for the long-term success of CBT initiatives (Martokumsumo, 2015).

Challenges and Limitations of Community-based Tourism

CBT has gained recognition as a sustainable alternative to mass tourism, emphasizing local community involvement and the preservation of cultural and natural heritage. However, several constraints hamper the successful implementation and sustainability of CBT initiatives. A key limitation is the lack of community capacity, resources, and institutional support, particularly in rural or underdeveloped regions. In such cases, the success of CBT often depends on external facilitation, such as capacity-building programs and policy frameworks that support local empowerment (Mearns, 2003). The reliance on external support can create dependency, jeopardizing the sustainability of CBT projects over time (Community-based Tourism Toolkit, 2020). Another significant challenge is the uneven distribution of benefits within the community, which can lead to conflicts and resentment. Infrastructure limitations in rural areas, such as inadequate transportation, accommodations, and essential utilities, also pose a significant barrier. Similarly, the lack of skills and training within local communities is a critical barrier. Afenyo-Agbe and Mensah (2022) highlight that these constraints prevent destinations from fully benefiting from tourism, restricting both tourist access and the overall visitor experience. Effective tourism management requires expertise in hospitality, marketing, and sustainable practices, yet many rural areas struggle with capacity-building. As Richards (2002) points out, local communities must possess the necessary skills to manage tourism effectively and deliver quality services. Without proper training, CBT initiatives may fail to meet the expectations of tourists, undermining their success. Marketing and promotion are essential to attracting visitors, yet financial limitations and a lack of expertise in rural areas hinder the development of effective marketing strategies. Tosun (2000) emphasizes that marketing is crucial for new and emerging destinations to reach potential tourists. Without proper promotion, these areas are unable to capitalize on tourism opportunities. Furthermore, sustainability concerns, such as the risk of over-tourism and environmental degradation, also pose challenges to CBT. While CBT aims to promote environmental conservation, Scheyvens (1999) warns that unmanaged tourism growth can lead to overcrowding and resource depletion, undermining the goals of CBT.

Economic constraints, including the lack of financial resources for infrastructure development and marketing, further limit the potential of CBT initiatives. Honey (2008) underscores that financial investment is often a significant obstacle for community-based tourism ventures. Without adequate funding, these initiatives struggle to

compete with more established destinations. Communities often lack the funds to maintain control of resources, which may result in reliance on external enterprises. As Goodwin and Santilli (2009) note, limited financial resources, lack of expertise in tourism management, and inadequate infrastructure can hinder the scalability of CBT initiatives. Additionally, externally imposed CBT projects, even if well-intentioned, risk failing due to a misalignment with community priorities or unrealistic expectations. The risk of commercialization and loss of authenticity as tourism demand grows further complicates the sustainability of CBT (Salazar, 2011). This can lead to the commodification of culture and a loss of the original cultural values that attract visitors in the first place.

Finally, issues related to diverse community dynamics, such as class, gender, and ethical factors, can hinder full participation and inclusivity in CBT initiatives. Insufficient resources, information, and stakeholder consultation further exacerbate these challenges, creating vulnerabilities that may undermine the effectiveness of CBT projects (Scheyvens, 2002).

Main Part

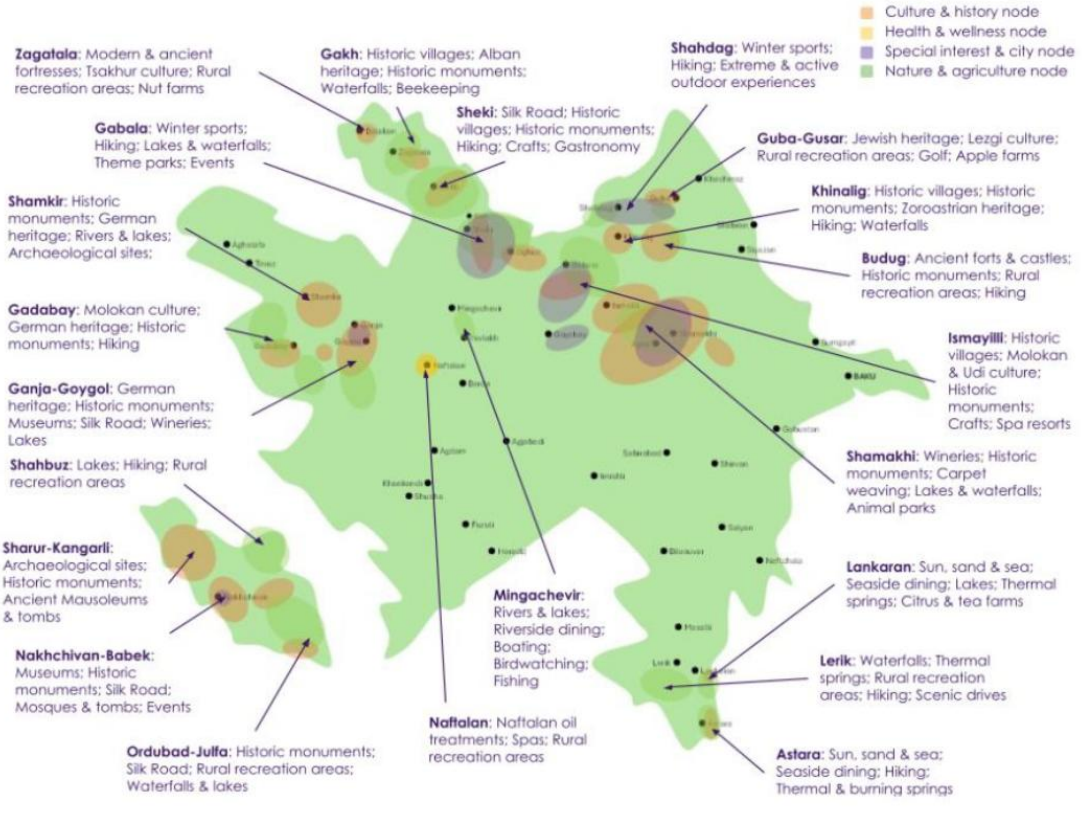
This section examines Azerbaijan's potential for developing CBT, highlighting the country's cultural and natural resources as key assets. The research focuses on identified priority tourism clusters, international experiences in CBT, and strategic initiatives for Azerbaijan's tourism landscape. The goal is to encourage community involvement, protect cultural heritage, and use sustainable practices to promote CBT successfully.

The Potential of Azerbaijan for Community-based Tourism Development

Azerbaijan's multiculturalism is a living reality, where mosques, churches, and synagogues stand side by side, and diverse communities celebrate their traditions in harmony. Communities such as Lezgins, Talysh, Avars, Mountain Jews, Molokans, Udis, and Kurds have preserved their unique traditions, languages, and customs while integrating into the broader Azerbaijani society. This cultural diversity presents significant opportunities for CBT, offering visitors authentic experiences rooted in traditional craftsmanship, music, cuisine, and heritage (Ismayilova, 2016).

To target development of Azerbaijan's CBT tourism offers priority tourism clusters have been identified. These clusters are located where hotspots, or "nodes", of the country's core tourism resources, tourism products (culture, nature & active, and health & wellness) and accommodation intersect in significant concentrations. With each cluster possessing a different mix of products, the main aim for each cluster is to be developed, positioned, and promoted in a way that maintains their uniqueness, and avoids the development of destinations that have a generic tourism offer. According to the map below, current priority tourism clusters include Sheki, Gakh, and Zagatala in the North-West, Gabala, Ismayilli, and Shamakhi in North-Central, Shahdag, Khinalig, Guba-Gusar, Khachmaz, and Budug in the North, Lankaran, Lerik, and Astara in the South, Ordubad-Julfa, Nakhchivan-Babek, Sharur-Kangarli, and Shahbuz in Nakhchivan. Additionally, the map below shows tourism products unique to each cluster, providing a detailed representation of their distinctive offerings.

Map 1: Tourism offerings of Azerbaijan (Cluster by Cluster)



Source: Author's own compilation

Azerbaijan's regions offer diverse resources that enrich CBT, making each area unique in its offerings. The country's cultural heritage plays a central role, with historic villages, monuments, and traditions that provide an authentic experience for visitors. These cultural sites allow tourists to connect with local communities and learn about their history. Azerbaijan's natural landscapes, from mountains to coastlines, offer excellent opportunities for outdoor activities like hiking and winter sports. Additionally, many rural areas engage visitors in agricultural tourism, where they can experience local farming practices and sample fresh produce, supporting sustainable agriculture. Each region's resources contribute to a diverse and sustainable CBT experience, benefiting both locals and visitors while preserving Azerbaijan's heritage and promoting economic growth.

International Experiences in CBT: Lessons Learned

International experiences provide valuable lessons from successful CBT countries. These international examples highlight the importance of a strategic approach to CBT that incorporates local knowledge, respects cultural heritage, and provides long-term benefits to the community for the development of CBT in Azerbaijan. Countries such as Thailand, Nepal, and Vietnam have successfully implemented CBT models that prioritize community involvement and have seen positive outcomes in terms of local economic development, environmental sustainability, and social empowerment. In Vietnam, for instance, community-managed conservation areas have allowed local groups to generate income from ecotourism while simultaneously protecting their biodiversity (Gossling, 2010). In Nepal, the development of CBT in rural communities has been instrumental in enhancing local livelihoods, especially in remote areas where tourism offers one of the few viable economic opportunities (Lama, 2019).

Figure 2 below highlights the CBT activities offered by Vietnam, Nepal, and Thailand, showcasing how each country uses its unique strengths to create memorable experiences. These countries are known for their vibrant cultures, stunning landscapes, and strong local involvement in tourism. From cultural exchanges and traditional crafts to nature-based adventures, the graph reveals how CBT activities reflect the diversity and charm of each destination, making them popular choices for travelers seeking authentic and sustainable tourism experiences.

Figure 2: CBT activities in Vietnam, Thailand, and Nepal

Source: Author's own compilation

Key Initiatives for Community-based Tourism Development in Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan, with its diverse landscapes, historical sites, and rich cultural heritage, has significant potential to implement CBT as a sustainable tourism model. However, there is a pressing need to create effective mechanisms that enable communities to participate actively in tourism development. As noted by Yurtseven and Toker (2021), the success of CBT in any region depends on the development of a comprehensive strategy that includes community involvement, capacity-building, and the creation of institutional frameworks that support sustainable tourism. According to the World Bank (2014), a successful CBT model requires a multi-faceted approach, including training programs, financial support, and a robust governance framework that improves cooperation among local communities, government agencies, and private stakeholders. First and foremost, it is essential to conduct an in-depth community assessment to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to tourism. This will allow for the development of suitable strategies that address local needs and aspirations (Sharpley, 2009). Capacity-building initiatives are critical in this process, as they provide local communities with the skills required to manage tourism operations, from marketing to hospitality and environmental conservation. Second, local governments must play a facilitating role in providing the necessary infrastructure and institutional support for CBT initiatives. Collaborative efforts

between public and private sectors, as seen in countries like Thailand will ensure that local communities can participate in the broader tourism market while still maintaining control over their cultural and environmental resources (Smith, 2006).

In Azerbaijan, many rural areas and smaller communities have unused potential for tourism development, but they often lack the necessary resources and skills to participate fully. Moreover, while tourism has begun to take root in urban areas such as Baku, rural regions remain disconnected from the benefits of this sector (Maharramov, 2021). Lezgin villages in the north are famous for their unique dances and carpets, while Udi communities keep old Christian traditions connected to the Caucasian Albanian heritage. In the south, Talysh villages show their ancient farming methods and special cooking traditions. Supporting CBT in these areas not only adds variety to Azerbaijan's tourism but also helps local people earn money, allowing them to keep their culture alive. Moreover, these efforts improve Azerbaijan's image as a tolerant and inclusive country, encouraging visitors to appreciate different cultures.

Developing a strategic mechanism for CBT can provide a framework for these communities to benefit from tourism while protecting their heritage and natural resources. To develop CBT effectively in Azerbaijan, a strategic development mechanism must be created, ensuring that local communities are not only involved in the decision-making process but also equipped with the tools and knowledge to manage and sustain tourism activities.

The "Azerbaijan Tourism Strategy 2023-2026" outlines a comprehensive framework for tourism development, emphasizing sustainable practices and community involvement. This strategy aims to enhance tourism experience by focusing on the country's cultural, natural, and historical assets, thereby fostering economic growth and improving the quality of life for local populations (ATB, 2023). In line with this strategy, the "Strategic Roadmap for the Development of the Tourism Industry in Azerbaijan" (2017) highlights the promotion of sustainable tourism in rural areas as a key instrument for development. This approach seeks to protect heritage, promote cultural identity, and generate income, thereby improving living standards and preventing excessive migration from rural to urban areas. A core element of the Azerbaijan Tourism Strategy is the development of community-based tourism projects that not only support local populations but also encourage social and cultural sustainability (ATB, 2023).

A major initiative under this strategy is the promotion of rural tourism, which empowers local communities by showcasing their cultural heritage and natural landscapes. Projects such as the "Cultural Heritage Route Development" help turn rural areas into tourism destinations, allowing locals to display their traditional crafts, architecture, and customs. These projects offer a dual benefit: preserving cultural practices while providing sustainable income sources for rural communities.

Agritourism is another vital focus of Azerbaijan's tourism strategy. The "Sustainable Agritourism Practices" project brings together local farmers and tourism professionals to create experiences that allow visitors to engage with farming and rural life. This project supports sustainable farming practices, where tourists can participate in agricultural activities and learn about eco-friendly techniques. This initiative benefits the local community by increasing the revenue from tourism, promoting local produce, and fostering an understanding of sustainable agricultural practices. It also enhances the tourism experience by providing a deeper connection to Azerbaijan's agricultural heritage and landscape.

Another significant aspect of Azerbaijan's tourism strategy is the development of eco-tourism villages and rural lodging options, designed to integrate tourism with environmental conservation. These developments, such as eco-lodges and glamping sites, not only cater to the growing demand for sustainable travel but also provide opportunities for local communities to engage in tourism management. Eco-friendly accommodation is built with the involvement of local residents, offering them employment and income-generating opportunities. These rural tourism projects contribute to the preservation of Azerbaijan's natural beauty while creating economic incentives for local communities to maintain their environments and traditional lifestyles.

A key component of community-based tourism development is enhancing the visitor experience, which has been prioritized through several initiatives. These developments include the creation of cultural and natural reserves, hiking trails, and visitor-friendly infrastructure that allow tourists to explore Azerbaijan's rural and natural areas. These investments improve accessibility and encourage tourists to engage with local communities in more meaningful ways. As part of these efforts, 70 guest houses across various regions have been supported with the necessary equipment to enhance their services and increase their capacity to host tourists. Moreover, the development of Slow Food travel routes and one-day trips to the liberated areas of Karabakh provides tourists with an authentic experience of

Azerbaijan's culinary traditions, while simultaneously promoting the cultural and historical significance of these areas. These initiatives not only boost tourism but also help preserve the rural identity and traditions of local communities.

The establishment of 8 Regional Tourism Departments (RTDs) and the creation of 9 cultural, natural, and architectural reserves like the Kish, Lahij, Basgal, Yukhari Bash, Khinalig and others have been instrumental in developing regional tourism across Azerbaijan. These initiatives play a vital role in promoting rural areas, creating new tourism opportunities, and protecting cultural and natural heritage.

Methodology

Focus Group Interviews were employed as the primary qualitative research method in this study to explore the complexities of CBT in Azerbaijan. This method is particularly suited for capturing diverse perspectives, fostering group interaction, and generating in-depth discussions on the challenges and benefits of CBT (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Focus Group Interviews are widely recognized for their ability to facilitate the exploration of collective experiences and ideas, which is essential for understanding nuanced phenomena in tourism research (Morgan, 1997). The use of Focus Group Interviews allows for an interactive exchange of ideas among participants, encouraging the emergence of unexplored insights and addressing gaps in existing literature. As noted by Hennink (2014), this method is particularly effective in gathering contextually rich data, which is critical for studies aimed at addressing specific regional or community-based issues. Through discussions with tourism experts, this study examined three key areas: (1) the challenges derived from community resources in relation to CBT, (2) the benefits that support CBT development, and (3) the potential solutions to mitigate identified challenges.

Data Collection

Primary Data Collection: To achieve the research objectives, Focus Group Interviews were conducted in December 2024, with the participation of 12 tourism experts and key stakeholders from diverse backgrounds. The participants included policymakers, tourism business owners, local government representatives, and community leaders, ensuring a multidisciplinary perspective on CBT in Azerbaijan. Discussions were held in Azerbaijani language. The sessions, lasting over four hours,

took place at the Guesthouse in Gusar village. To facilitate communication, the author himself acted as an interpreter. The gender ratio was 60% male to 40% female, with only two participants aged between 20 and 25. Key discussion topics included the economic benefits of CBT, strategies to enhance community participation, effective resource management, and addressing challenges in rural CBT implementation. Participants were provided with discussion guidelines in advance to ensure a focused and efficient process. Author employed interactive methods, such as brainstorming, scenario analysis, and case studies of successful CBT initiatives, to encourage creativity and active participation. The data collected was carefully documented through detailed notes and audio recordings. A thematic analysis approach was used to identify recurring patterns and insights. Key findings highlighted the need for capacity-building programs in rural communities, mechanisms for equitable benefit distribution, and stronger collaboration between the public and private sectors.

Secondary Data Collection: Secondary data was sourced from existing literature on CBT, including academic articles, books, manuals, handbooks, government and tourism organization reports, and policy documents. This data provided valuable context for the study by comparing international best practices and lessons learned from other countries with successful CBT models.

Interview Results

The following table presents the key findings from the Focus Group Interviews conducted with tourism experts and stakeholders in Azerbaijan in December 2024. The interviews focused on identifying the main challenges and recommendations related to CBT development in rural areas. Participants shared their insights regarding various issues, including infrastructure limitations, coordination challenges, government support, cultural resistance, and community awareness. Based on these challenges, recommendations for improvement were provided, emphasizing the importance of local community engagement, training, government support, marketing strategies, and the use of technology to enhance the visitor experience. Table 2 below summarizes the core themes and participant perspectives that were gathered during the interviews.

Table 2: Focus Group Interview Results (December 2024)

Main Themes	Sub-themes	Key Points from Participants	Quotes from Participants
Challenges in CBT Development	*Infrastructure Limitations*	Inadequate infrastructure (e.g., transportation, facilities) hinders tourism growth.	"The road access to rural areas is a major barrier for both tourists and locals." "Some of the villages are unreachable, and even locals struggle with transportation."
	Lack of Coordination	Weak coordination between local authorities, communities, and businesses in rural areas.	"There's no clear communication between local tourism businesses and the municipal offices." "We need a unified platform to coordinate efforts."
	Government Support and Policy Gaps	Insufficient government funding and lack of clear policies for CBT initiatives.	"We need more incentives from the government to encourage local participation." "The government should be more involved in providing financial support for tourism projects."
	Cultural and Community Resistance	Cultural resistance and reluctance to embrace CBT due to concerns over losing traditions.	"Some locals fear that tourism will ruin our traditions and way of life." "People worry that tourists will change how we live and damage our cultural values."
	Low Community Awareness	Limited awareness among rural communities about the long-term advantages of CBT.	"People don't yet understand how CBT can improve their lives over time." "Education about the benefits of tourism needs to be prioritized."
Recommendations for Improvement	*Improved Community Engagement*	Need for deeper involvement of local residents in the planning and implementation of CBT.	"Community meetings should be held regularly to ensure everyone has a say." "It's vital that we involve every member of the community in discussions, not just the leaders."
	Enhanced Training and Capacity Building	Local residents require specialized training in tourism management and customer service.	"We need workshops to learn how to deal with tourists and improve our services." "Training programs in hospitality and tour guiding could really boost the quality of our services."
	Strengthened Government Involvement	A stronger role from the government in facilitating access to resources and markets.	"The government should provide more funding and practical support for tourism projects." "Government involvement in marketing would help attract tourists to our area."
	Marketing and Promotion	Improved marketing strategies to promote rural tourism and attract international visitors.	"More effort needs to be put into promoting Azerbaijan's rural tourism destinations abroad." "We have beautiful landscapes, but we need better international promotion to bring tourists here."

	Leveraging Technology for Better Management	Utilizing technology to enhance visitor experience and streamline tourism management.	"Using digital tools for booking and marketing will help reach a wider audience." "Technology could help us streamline operations and connect better with tourists, especially younger generations."
Building the Strategic Development Mechanism	*Integration with National Development Plans*	Aligning CBT initiatives with national tourism strategies and long-term rural development programs.	"CBT needs to be integrated into national tourism policies for it to gain sustainable support." "Linking CBT to broader rural development plans could secure the long-term success of the sector."
	Public-Private Partnerships	Encouraging collaboration between local governments, businesses, and communities to ensure sustainable growth.	"Local governments and private businesses need to collaborate more effectively to bring tourism to rural areas." "Public-private partnerships could help provide the funding and expertise needed for CBT to thrive."
	Tourism Education and Awareness Programs	Implementing programs to educate local communities and visitors about the benefits and challenges of CBT.	"We need to teach the community how tourism works and how they can benefit from it." "Tourism awareness programs could help people understand what CBT is and how it works."
	Developing Long-Term Sustainable Models	Creating models for CBT that are not dependent on short-term funding but can generate long-term sustainable income.	"We should look for ways to make tourism self-sustaining in the long term, not just rely on external funding." "Sustainability in CBT should be a priority in the planning stages."
	Building a CBT Branding and Identity	Developing a unique brand for rural tourism that reflects the culture, history, and natural beauty of the area.	"Our region needs a tourism brand that highlights its unique culture and history." "Branding could make a huge difference in how tourists perceive the region."
	Cross-Sector Collaboration	Establishing connections between tourism and other sectors like agriculture, handicrafts, and local cuisine.	"Tourism should not be seen as separate; it needs to be linked with local agriculture and crafts." "We can integrate traditional food experiences into tourism, creating a unique package."

Source: Author's own compilation

Findings and Discussion

During the focus group interviews, participants shared their thoughts on the main challenges of CBT in rural Azerbaijan. The discussion covered many topics, but five key problems stood out: poor infrastructure, lack of coordination, weak government support, cultural resistance, and low community awareness. These challenges are connected, making it difficult for rural tourism to grow.

Infrastructure: A major Barrier	One of the biggest issues mentioned was infrastructure. "Even if we build guesthouses and create interesting activities, how will tourists reach us?" one participant asked. Many agreed that bad roads and a lack of public transport make travel to rural areas difficult. Infrastructure problems go beyond roads. Participants also talked about the need for better accommodation, clean restrooms, and internet access. "Tourists today expect basic facilities. If they don't find them, they won't come," another person added.
Coordination: The Need for Unity	Another key finding was the lack of coordination among local authorities, businesses, and communities. Participants pointed out that there is no clear communication between these groups, and efforts are often fragmented. For example, tourism businesses and municipal offices in rural areas work in isolation, without a unified strategy. This lack of cooperation means that tourism development is not as efficient or effective as it could be. A more coordinated approach, where all stakeholders work together towards a shared goal, would help improve tourism management and make better use of available resources.
Government Support: A Roadblock to Growth	Government support for CBT initiatives was also identified as a significant gap. Many participants noted that the government has not provided enough funding or clear policies to support rural tourism. Without financial incentives and a solid policy framework, local businesses and communities find it difficult to invest in tourism development. The government's involvement is crucial, not only for providing funding but also for creating the right conditions for tourism to thrive. More support from the government would help rural areas to overcome these challenges and take full advantage of their tourism potential.
Cultural Resistance: Fear of Change	Some participants talked about cultural resistance to tourism. "We want tourists, but we don't want our traditions to disappear," one elder said. Many people in rural areas worry that tourism will change their way of life. Others, however, saw tourism as a way to protect culture. "Instead of losing traditions, we can share them with visitors," a young craftsperson suggested. The group agreed that if tourism is done in the

	right way, it can respect local culture and bring economic benefits at the same time.
Community Awareness: The Missing Piece of the Puzzle	A final challenge was that many local people do not understand how tourism can help them. One participant shared a story: "When we introduced a homestay program, some villagers didn't want to join because they thought it would be difficult. They didn't realize it could bring income." Participants agreed that education is important. "If we show real examples of successful villages, people will believe in CBT," one person suggested. Raising awareness through workshops and community meetings could help people feel more confident about tourism.

Proposed Strategic Development Mechanism

The development of CBT in rural areas of Azerbaijan requires a clear and strategic approach. Different and interesting thoughts gathered from the Focus Group Interviews were analyzed, and the author summarized the participants' ideas to create a well-structured development mechanism with 5 core pillars. These strategic pillars include community engagement and capacity building, infrastructure and product development, policy and institutional support, marketing and promotion, and collaboration between various stakeholders. Figure 3 below illustrates these main components of the mechanism.

Figure 3: CBT Development Mechanism Pillars in Azerbaijan

Source: Author's own compilation

Pillar 1: Community Engagement and Capacity Building

At the heart of any successful CBT initiative lies the community itself. The participants emphasized that rural residents must not only be included in the tourism development process but must also lead it. Workshops and training programs are essential to raise awareness about the benefits of CBT and encourage local participation. Moreover, specialized training programs should be offered in areas such as hospitality management, business development, and cultural preservation. These programs will empower local residents with the skills needed to manage tourism-related activities effectively while maintaining their cultural heritage. Participants also highlighted the importance of nurturing entrepreneurial spirit within the community. Through supporting locals to establish small businesses such as guesthouses, family-run cafes, or guiding services, the economic benefits of tourism can be distributed more equitably. The ripple effects of such businesses could then inspire further innovation, creating a sustainable cycle of growth.

Pillar 2: Infrastructure and Product Development

Even the most well-designed tourism products cannot succeed without good infrastructure. Participants drew attention to the challenges of accessibility in rural areas, with poorly maintained roads and unreliable transportation networks discouraging visitors. Improving road conditions and transport links is, therefore, a critical step in discovering the tourism potential of remote villages. In addition to transportation, the development of eco-friendly accommodation options is also a priority. Infrastructure investments should also align with the promotion of unique tourism products. Participants proposed the creation of thematic packages, such as "Taste of Rural Azerbaijan," which could include culinary experiences, cultural tours, vineyard tours, and cooking classes.

Pillar 3: Policy and Institutional Support

The discussions also revealed a strong consensus on the need for supportive policies and institutional frameworks to ensure the success of CBT. The creation of a dedicated CBT development unit under the State Tourism Agency will provide the necessary institutional framework to coordinate and implement tourism initiatives in rural areas. This unit would serve as a centralized body to coordinate efforts, provide

technical expertise, and monitor the progress of tourism initiatives. Financial support mechanisms, such as grants and subsidies, were also seen as vital. These resources could empower communities to invest in projects like renovating historic buildings for tourism use or setting up eco-friendly campsites.

Pillar 4: Marketing and Promotion

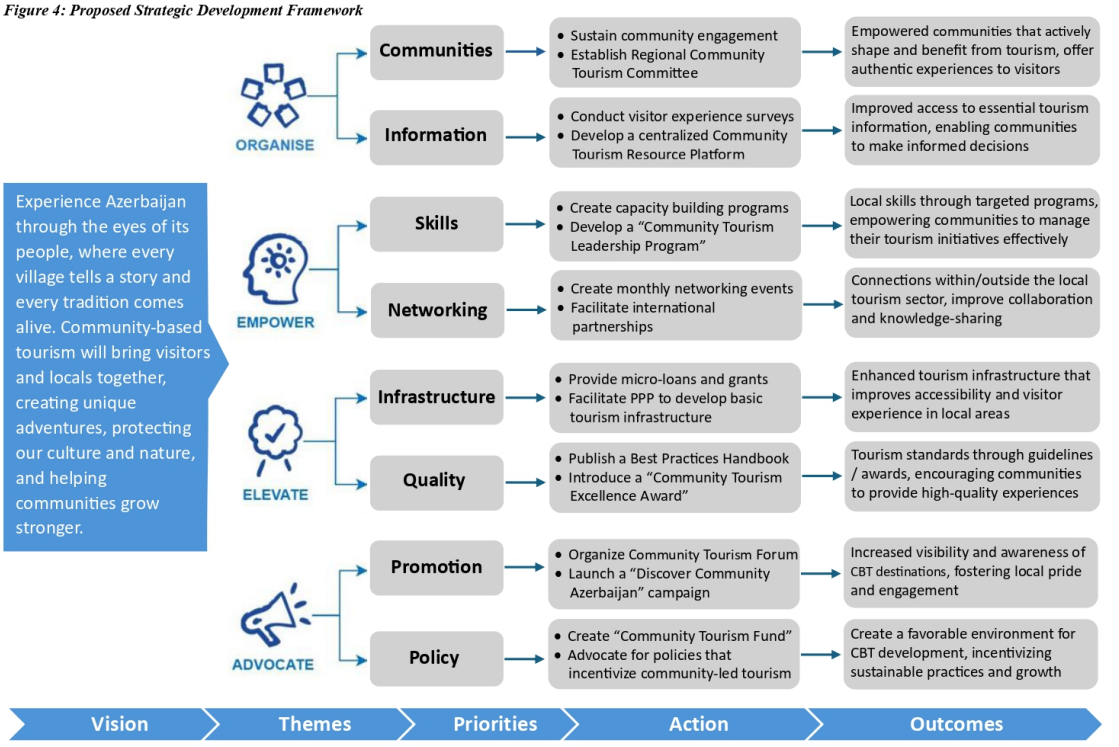
Effective marketing is the bridge that connects both domestic and international tourists to rural destinations. Participants proposed the creation of a CBT platform that not only provides information but also tells the story of rural Azerbaijan. This platform could feature profiles of local hosts, interactive maps of attractions, and testimonials from previous visitors, creating an emotional connection with potential tourists. In addition to the platform, collaboration with international tour operators was another key recommendation. Because integration of CBT experiences into existing travel packages can gain greater visibility and reach a wider audience at rural destinations.

Pillar 5: Stakeholder Collaboration

Lastly, participants emphasized the importance of collaboration between all stakeholders involved in CBT. Local communities, NGOs, private businesses, and government agencies must work together to ensure that tourism initiatives are inclusive and sustainable. Such partnerships will create a supportive network for the development and promotion of rural tourism, ensuring that all stakeholders are invested in the success of CBT initiatives. Establishing community tourism committees was suggested as a way to formalize this collaboration. These committees would serve as platforms for decision-making, where community members, business owners, and policymakers can voice their ideas and concerns.

Based on the interview data, the author compiled a Proposed Strategic Development Framework for CBT in Azerbaijan. This framework illustrates the vision for CBT with 8 key priorities, each accompanied by 2 action areas and specific outcomes. The framework provides a clear, structured approach to addressing key challenges and opportunities identified during the interviews, ensuring a sustainable and inclusive development of CBT. It serves as a roadmap for stakeholders to support steady growth and successful development of the CBT sector throughout the country.

Figure 4: Proposed Strategic Development Framework



Source: Author's own compilation

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several key recommendations are proposed for the successful development of CBT in Azerbaijan, focusing on creating a strategic development mechanism that is both sustainable and adaptable to the needs of local communities.

Establish a National Policy Framework for CBT (Note: CBT has been integrated into the Azerbaijan Tourism Strategy, with one of the 9 Pillars focusing on destination development, cultural heritage and communities). A clear national policy that supports the development of CBT is crucial. This policy should promote local empowerment, environmental sustainability, and cultural preservation. It should include guidelines for community engagement, tourism standards, and governance structures that ensure transparency and accountability.

Develop Community Capacity-Building Programs: Community members must be equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to actively participate in and benefit from CBT. This can be achieved through targeted training programs focused on hospitality, environmental conservation, entrepreneurship, and management. Capacity-building initiatives should also encourage the formation of local tourism associations or cooperatives, which would allow communities to collaborate and manage tourism initiatives more effectively.

Implement Collaborative Governance Models: Collaborative governance is essential for ensuring that community-based tourism is not just top-down or bottom-up, but a balanced approach involving all stakeholders. A strategic mechanism should promote dialogue and partnerships between local communities, government authorities, tourism businesses, NGOs, and academic institutions.

Create Sustainable Infrastructure and Services: This includes eco-friendly accommodations, waste management systems, renewable energy solutions, and reliable transport links to connect rural communities with tourism hotspots. The development of basic infrastructure should be done in a way that reflects the unique cultural and natural heritage of each community, ensuring that it enhances the visitor experience while minimizing negative environmental impacts.

Promote Community-Led Marketing: To differentiate Azerbaijan's CBT offerings in a competitive global tourism market, communities should be involved in the creation and promotion of their own tourism products. Community-led branding campaigns can highlight the authentic cultural experiences, local craftsmanship, and natural beauty unique to each region.

Ensure Long-Term Economic Sustainability Through Diversification: Economic sustainability is central to the success of CBT initiatives. Communities should not rely solely on tourism but should diversify their sources of income to mitigate the risks of market fluctuations and seasonality. Encouraging local agriculture, handicrafts, and small businesses to complement the tourism sector can help build a resilient local economy. This could involve creating "tourism product packages" that integrate local agricultural products, handicrafts, and experiences such as cooking classes or farm visits.

Develop an Effective Monitoring and Evaluation System: For any development mechanism to be effective, it is essential to monitor and evaluate its progress and impact. A participatory monitoring system should be implemented, where local communities play a key role in assessing the social, economic, and environmental impacts of tourism development. This can include regular feedback loops, community meetings, and impact assessments to ensure that the development mechanism is responsive to local needs and evolving circumstances.

Develop Regional and International Collaboration: Regional cooperation with neighboring countries can enhance the appeal of Azerbaijan as a tourism destination by offering integrated tourism products that span multiple countries. International collaboration with tourism organizations, NGOs, and global best practices can also provide valuable lessons and resources for developing successful CBT models. By engaging in international tourism networks, Azerbaijan can attract more global visitors while ensuring that local communities are an integral part of the development process.

Develop a CBT-Focused Tourism Education and Research Hub: Finally, the creation of a research center focused on CBT could facilitate the continuous exchange of knowledge, data, and innovations. This center could act as a hub for training local communities, conducting research on sustainable tourism practices, and fostering innovation in the tourism sector.

Conclusion

To sum up, CBT in Azerbaijan has the potential to bring great benefits to rural areas, support local cultures, and boost the economy. However, there are several challenges that need to be overcome for CBT to be successful. These challenges include poor infrastructure, a lack of cooperation among different groups, not enough support from the government, cultural resistance, and a lack of awareness in the community. These issues are all connected, and solving them will need teamwork from local communities, the government, and businesses. Providing training for the community, improving roads and services, and improving communication between different groups are all important steps. It's also important to raise awareness in the community about how CBT can provide long-term benefits. This can help reduce resistance to change and get more local support for tourism projects.

It is important to remember that CBT projects are meant to support local communities, so they should be managed and run by the people living there. The level of community involvement depends mostly on the type of CBT project. To encourage locals to take part in CBT, communities should work together and create tourism services and products based on their skills, knowledge, and strengths, with guidance from experts. Another key point is that the way profits are shared should be improved so that more money is used for projects that help the community. Also, more benefits should go directly to households instead of being shared only at the community level. To make the most of CBT, community members should form small groups with people who have similar skills and work together in tourism activities. Policymakers should create a plan to make sure locals are fully involved in the tourism industry. To support tourism growth at the district level, the government should set up tourism offices in each district to monitor tourism activities and policies. More research is needed on CBT education and how schools and universities can help with its success and development.

The strategies suggested in this research provide practical steps to help develop CBT in Azerbaijan. Through making sure that tourism projects fit with national goals and encouraging partnerships between the government and private companies, Azerbaijan has the chance to lead the way in community-based tourism in the region. This will not only benefit the local communities but also support the larger goal of sustainable tourism, which is important for the future.

In conclusion, while there are challenges, there is also a lot of potential for CBT to succeed in Azerbaijan. With the right approach and teamwork, it is possible to create a tourism industry that is good for the economy, respectful of local culture, and fair for the people living in rural areas. This could lead to a brighter future for these communities and sustainable tourism in the country.

Disclosure statement

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MOVING BEYOND THE LINES OF MUSLIM CATECHISM -ILMIHALS-: A SOCIOCULTURAL ANALYSIS ON ISLAM AND GENDER

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ABSTRACT

Muslim Catechism (ilmihals) are the works that contain the orders and prohibitions in Muslim societies, as well as the culture and traditions of the societies. In terms of containing these socio-cultural features, Catechism books include elements that reveal the sociocultural structure and are settled in the common memory of the society. The aim of this paper is to make a gender examination on these works, ilmihals. In detail, to reveal the ways in which different masculinities are constructed and how men are positioned and act in ilmihals (Muslim catechism) published at Republic Period in Turkey, with a specific emphasis on sociocultural structure of these works. The analyses show that men were portrayed as carrying gendered masculine traits and traditional masculine gender roles. Moreover, the characterization of men is gender-biased and ilmihals uphold hegemonic ideals that show how masculinities should be. All these findings demonstrate that there are two masculinities handled in these works: being equal to women in terms of servitude and being superior to women in terms of being God's deputy and trusty. Furthermore, ilmihals play an important role at reproduction of gender roles and serve as a model for the reflection of the patriarchal structure by putting women at private sphere and men at public sphere.

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Introduction

The Islamic sources of fiqh literature which include information for the believers about how to worship, how to behave in a given society, to show the duties and responsibilities in every institution in the family, sociocultural aspects, and subjects related to belief and morality are Muslim catechism-style works (not the same as what Christians have, but the teaching style of these two works can be regarded as compatible with each other), which is named as *ilmihal* in Islam.

Being an effective factor in shaping the sociocultural structure, these resources, which a believer of a religion, a Muslim in specific for this study, can consult when s/he wants to have information about all aspects of her/his religion, contain a lot of information about individuals in the society. One of this information is the characterization forms, roles and traits of femininity and masculinity that arise due to gender inequality. Therefore, a key rationale for the study is that are important in that they contain common gender stereotypes in a society and in this context play a major role in transforming these judgements into social behavior. Within these judgements, the changeable socio-cultural determination pointing to the masculine and feminine traits, roles, and responsibilities attributed to men and women called gender stereotypes (Bhasin 2003) are also included.

Rereading of the Islamic Sources

There has been a growing research discussing the place of women and/or the egalitarian perspective of the Islamic sources such as Qur'an, Hadith, Sunnah and other religious teaching texts (Berktay, 2012; Tohidi and Bayes, 2001; Martı, 2009; Wadud, 2021; Mernissi, 1987; Barlas, 2001; Badran, 2001; Mir-Hosseini, 2004). Anchored in this discourse, Islamic feminism is a global phenomenon taking Qur'an as its central and making exegesis as its main methodology with the core idea of full equality of all Muslims regardless of their genders. Naming themselves also as Islamic feminists, some of these researches were conducted by using hermeneutics model (Wadud, 2021) while some others carry out their research by arguing that Islam does not accept the

genders as equal, and attributes this inequality to the female body and grounds the sexual power held by women under pressure (Mernissi, 1975).

The point, then, is, to underline that for Islamic feminist literature, there are many Islamic references like Hadith, Sunnah, and other religious teaching texts other than Qur'an itself. Within these references, the works in which how each and every base of life of an individual and a community should be regulated is written, the *ilmihals,* are seen to have received insufficient attention. Another point is that the gender roles and gender stereotypes that ascribe women and men have been on the agenda of most of the scientific research for decades. However, conceptualizations and interest of men and masculinity have not received enough attention and seen as essential to shed light on.

As an evidence showing that these gaps in Islamic literature is seen as compatible with the former literature, these instances may be given: "Men have" says Kimmel "come to think of themselves as genderless, in part because they can afford the luxury of ignoring the centrality of gender." (1993, 30). With this challenging quote, Kimmel (1993) tries to make men visible in contemporary gender studies and addresses the dynamics of gender. Even though the research and studies on men and masculinity have increased in the last 30 years in many scientific fields to some extent, it is important to note that the sociological analysis on men and/or masculinity and religion is very limited. More specifically, while the studies on the construction of femininity in Islam is salient, less attention has been given to the construction of masculinity in Islam. By doing so, there has been little discussion of the forms of Muslim masculinities, especially in Islamic sources.

For instance, Islamic feminists argue that it is not the Islam itself to oppress women, but it is the patriarchal misinterpretations of the religious texts of Islam. So, these women reread and/or interpret Islamic texts from the eyes of women and for women in a feminist perspective. This means that although there are some movements and platforms for Muslim women to discuss patriarchy, oppression to women grounding on gender roles, identities and other issues, there is not a similar way for Muslim men in this particular context, or if any, it is rather rare. Going further, Ouzgane (2006) clarifies that masculinity in Islamic cultures is an unexamined and unidentified category. Bounding on this relative lack of social and cultural context in Islamic literature on men and masculinity, this research provides a valuable window on rereading ilmihals (Muslim catechism) and contributes to the scientific study of Muslim men and masculinities.

Based on all the frame drawn above, this paper aims at revealing the ways in which different masculinities are constructed and how men are positioned and act in ilmihals (Muslim catechism) published at Republic Period in Turkey. In order to reach this purpose, the masculine gender roles and masculine traits that are present in ilmihals are going to be analyzed.

In this context, the following research questions are going to be sought:

1. Which masculine traits are used in ilmihals?
2. What are the masculine gender roles in ilmihals?
3. Is the characterization of men in ilmihals gender-biased?
4. To what extent do ilmihals uphold hegemonic ideals and sociocultural structure that show how masculinities should be by looking at masculine traits and gender roles?

From Masculinities to Gender Stereotypes and Masculine Traits

Being a woman and a man are socially-constructed with different duties, responsibilities and roles (West and Zimmerman 1987). In other words, gender inequality paves the way for different gender roles and stereotypes for women and men.

Also called as masculinity ideologies, 20th century scholars described men as behaving in parallel with traditional male gender roles and stereotypes, consisting of three norms such as toughness, success-status, and antifemininity (Thompson and Pleck 1986). Levant et al. (1992) added self-reliance, homophobia, aggression, and sexual attitudes. Burn (1996) asserts that when men do not act according to these traditional masculinity norms, this situation ends up with stress and its consequences.

Here, masculinity needs to be examined from multiple angles, as there is not a sole masculity, but there are multiple masculinities constructed from gender order (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Harrington 2002). For another term derived from masculinity, Connell (2001) defines hegemonic masculinity as "hegemonic' signifies a position of cultural authority and leadership, not total dominance; other forms of masculinity persist alongside. The hegemonic form need not be the most common form of masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is, however, highly visible. (…) Hegemonic

masculinity is hegemonic not just in relation to other masculinities, but in relation to the gender order as a whole. It is an expression of the privilege men collectively have over women" (p. 17).

Thinking culturally, Silberschmidt (1999) listed the roots of masculinity in the precolonial period but still valid as "what a respected and good man should do":

- He takes care of his family;
- He educates his children and pays school fees;
- His wife does not roam about;
- He marries many wives and gets many children;
- He is friendly and shows respect toward his people;
- He assists his people when they have problems and gives good advice;
- He is generous and does not quarrel;
- He respects himself (p. 53).

Masculinity in Islamic Discourse

In Islamic discourse, the issue of equality of men and women, and the viewpoint of Islam on both genders have been handled by many different perspectives. Gender inequality underlies these different perspectives, although the concept of "gender" is not mentioned in most of the research in the field.

The research and discussion point of masculinity in Islam starts with the different interpretations of the Quranic verse that "men and women are complementary to each other" (Verse Baqarah, 187). Another point is that the ideal male personality in Islamic tradition is of Prophet Mohammad and with his explicit teaching and directions, that is, the Hadith literature and Sunnah, his behavior should be imitated by Muslims (Samuel 2011).

These points bring scholars such as Sardar (2013) to another insight that God has no gender, so, the attributes of God are valid for both masculine and feminine traits and roles. On the other hand, he adds, Muslim researchers name god with two names, both referring to different sexes: Majesty (corresponding to masculine traits and roles) and Beauty (corresponding to feminine traits and roles). Although there seems to be an equality within these traits, it can be understood that masculine traits have been entrenched here. Moreover, as Prophet Mohammad is a male political, religious and

military leader, patriarchy and masculinity are emphasized in the Islamic texts.

Leaning back to these grounds, the question, then, is how the scholars and researchers demonstrate the construction of Islamic masculinities in their research.

The first relevant study is from De Sondy (2009), one of the key and leading researcher on Muslim/Islamic masculinities. With his studies on Islamic texts, he argues that the message of Qur'an does not discuss similar norms of masculinity or femininity, because the message is not restricted by a specific form. He adds "The heterosexual man has interpreted the Quran in a patriarchal Islamic culture. Are we so surprised with the results? The codification of gender has also strengthened a limited understanding of Islamic masculinities, through the establishment of Islamic law as it was also shaped in a deeply patriarchal culture of Arabia". Another figure, Shaw (2000), sets forth that Muslim men are regarded as being free to use patriarchal authority and actors of the rigid cultural norms of hierarchical Muslim families. He also states that cultural ideals have unequal effects on gender relations for both sexes. For example, the gender and power relations in a family may be abusive; and/or most of the perpetrators of the violence resulted in crime are Muslim men especially in forced marriages (Razack 2004).

Gerami (2005) aimed at exploring the prototype of Islamist masculinity and the construction of masculinities within Muslim countries, that is, Muslim masculinities, for which he calls "un-organic masculinity issues". He stated that national construction of masculinity and ideal masculinities in this way stems from the heroic models of nation-building periods such as Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (Turkey), Jamaal Abdul Nasser (Egypt), Reza Shah (Iran), etc. These leaders both shaped the nation and the ideal masculinities. Another factor for constructing Eastern Muslim masculinities is the Cold War period accompanied by a global hegemonic masculinity and hierarchy of masculine modalities. Third factor, with ethnicity and racial diversity within Muslim communities, together with dominant prototype Muslim leader, there tend to be some weak and funny men to be visible on TV and in other mass media. An important point here is that even if this figure is a leader, or a working class hero, he was secular, but committed to Islamic moralities. In short, he made a division between Islamist masculinity as a construction of fundamentalist resistance movements; and plural Muslim masculinities as the gender identities of real men formed across boundaries of nationality, ethnicity, and class.

Thinking from a political perspective, the post-September 11 context of Muslim masculinity can be regarded as "Their universally recognized prototypes are bearded, gun-toting, bandanna-wearing men, in long robes or military fatigues of some Islamist (read terrorist) organization or country." (Gerami 2005, 449). Furthermore, bombing at London in 2005 are the other factors that made contribution to the labelling of Muslim men as perpetrating violence and crime, so needing to be regulated and controlled (Fekete 2009). As a natural result of these factors, these Islamic societies, the relationship between masculinity and nationalism are hegemonic and organizing, in a conservative and patriarchal manner (Waylen 1996). The honor of men in Muslim societies are bound to the veiling of the women, which must be protected by men and which puts women as a symbol of politics and nationalities (Gerami 1996). Meanwhile, this politicization process of women addresses to manhood and nationhood as a means of the control of women's bodies (Augustin 1993; Tohidi 1991).

Together with masculinity, the existing literature highlights us with some information from masculine gender roles in Islam. Portraying transnational "ghar damads" (son in-law) as unhappy husbands, Charsley (2005) made a research on Bristolian Pakistani narratives of transnational marriages by exploring the link between migration and masculinity. As a result, the researcher underlines that the stereotyping of these men can be categorized into two such as one argumentative and violent groom who marries to a British Pakistani woman in order to get a visa. On the other hand, the second men pursue an emotional life, and face some social, economic, and cultural problems associated with their migration. The writer also states that this kind of a marriage limits his capability to fulfil gender roles: "Rather than contributing to a household budget which sustains both his parents and his wife and children, after migration this becomes a 'double responsibility' to provide for his dependents in Britain, and to contribute to the household of his family in Pakistan".

Methodology

Since this study aims to reveal how different masculinities are constructed and how men are positioned and act in ilmihals published at Republic Period in Turkey by masculinity traits and male gender roles, it was decided to conduct this research with the techniques and processes of qualitative research paradigm. Qualitative research is one of the types of the scientific research in which the process in conducted by collecting, analyzing, decoding and interpreting non-numerical data in terms of the meanings people bring to them (McLeod 2019).

As to the research design of the study, content analysis was used as it aims to reveal the intended meaning of the messages (Tavşancıl and Aslan 2001).

Data Collection, Analysis and Procedure

The data was collected through document analysis technique meaning the analysis of written materials that the case or cases that are going to be investigated are present (Yıldırım and Şimşek 2016). The analysis of the data collected were done through Three Step Qualitative Data Analysis (Miles, Huberman and Saldana 2015) including data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

In the first step, the data was selected through the sections of the ilmihals including social life. This step was fulfilled by reading the selected sections three different time periods by the researcher in the light of the themes "men", "masculinity" "gender roles and traits" until the data set was determined by the researcher. After the data set had been ascertained, the codification/categorization process of the data set is done and these categories were presented to three field experts (two experts, having Ph.D. degree at sociology of religion and one at sociology of gender) to reach a consensus. So, the validity and reliability of the study were strengthened. In the second step, these selected data are positioned on a visual table in order to categorize them better. So, a preliminary preparation was made for the process of associating and interpreting between themes and categories. In the last and concluding step, the obtained data divided into categories were interpreted by having been supported by some examples from ilmihals and existing literature. As a result of these steps, the findings and comments was discussed and conclusions were reached.

Population and Sampling

The population of the research are the Islamic ilmihals. There are more than 100 Islamic ilmihals ranging from many subjects.

As the samples of the study, 9 Islamic ilmihals were selected via criterion sampling, one of the purposeful sampling techniques (Patton 1990, 182-183). These criteria were; being published in Republic period in Turkish, having a widespread readership and having the ability to represent the diversity of Islamic theology in Turkiye:

- *İslam Dini, Ahmet Hamdi Akseki, 11th Edition, İstanbul: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı Yayınları, 1960.*
- *Büyük İslam İlmihali, Ömer Nasuhi Bilmen, İstanbul: Bilmen Yayınevi, 1947.*
- *Tam İlmihal, Seadet-i Ebediyye, Zeynel Abidin Işık, Işık Kitabevi: İstanbul, 1979.*
- *Ansiklopedik Büyük İslam İlmihali, Ahmet Tabakoğlu and İsmail Kara, İstanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 1980.*
- *Yeni İslam İlmihali, Süleyman Ateş, 6th Edition, Ankara: Çelik Yayınevi, 1989.*
- *İlmihal I-II "İman ve İbadetler-İslam ve Toplum", 2nd V., Prof. Dr. Hayreddin Karaman Prof. Dr. Ali Bardakoğlu Prof. Dr. H. Yunus Apaydın, Ankara: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı Yayınları, 2006.*
- *İslam İlmihali (Kalblerin Anahtarı), Ömer Öngüt, İstanbul: Hakikat Yayınları, 1998.*
- *Ahir Zaman İlmihali, M. Hayri Kırbaşoğlu, 11th Edition, Ankara: OTTO, 2015.*
- *İzahlı Kadın İlmihali Ansiklopedisi, Asım and Mürşide Uysal, Konya: Uysal Kitabevi, 1991.*

Assumptions and Limitations

There were some limitations of the study. One of them was that 9 ilmihals were selected as the samples of the study. Another limitation was that only the chapters of the ilmihals regarding social life was regarded as the data set of the research. The last limitation was about the editions of the ilmihals. The content analysis conducted only within the framework of the above-written editions of the works; in case of possible changes, the previous or later editions of the works were excluded from the analysis.

During the study, it was assumed that the more the number of editions of the ilmihals was, the more the number of the readers of the ilmihals had. Moreover, only the above written ilmihals of the writers were taken into account. Not any of the writers' other products were considered.

Findings

In order to reach to the results of the research and make some discussion and interpretation among them, firstly the two research questions (revealing the masculine traits and gender roles in ilmihals) were answered respectively. These answers laid the groundwork for answering the third and fourth research questions.

Findings about the masculine traits used in ilmihals

As a result of the analyses on the data set, these masculine traits were found in ilmihals:

Responsible for his family, dominant, authoritative:

- Householder, head of the family (Akseki, 1960, 362-363; Ateş, 1989, 613-614; Tabakoğlu and Kara, 1980, 32-33; Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 68; Öngüt, 1998, 708)
- The shepherd of the family responsible for herding (Ateş, 1989, 612-613)
- Keeping his family under his command (Ateş, 1989, 612-613)
- Caring for his family not to depend on others (Tabakoğlu and Kara, 1980, 32-33)

Act as a leader, having leadership abilities and strong personality:

- Having influence and administrative power over the public (Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 279-280)
- Totally fair (Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 279-280)
- Having a good policy in managing and protecting the affairs of the country (Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 279-280)

Based on the generalization that the main place of men is the public sphere, these masculinity traits, which equate areas such as law, administration, security, and religion to the male gender, were found to be reflected as linguistic uses in ilmihals: Passing from father to son (Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 273); idea/statesman (Işık, 1979, 27; Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006; Kırbaşoğlu, 2015); man of politics (Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006); man of government (Işık, 1979, 398, 399, 779), man of law (Kırbaşoğlu, 2015) man of parties (Işık, 1979, 526); man of God (Işık, 1979; Ateş, 1989; Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006; Kırbaşoğlu, 2015); man of science (Işık, 1979, 534, 789; Ateş, 1989, 650; Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006), man of physics (Işık, 1979, 27), War Lords (Kırbaşoğlu, 2015); businessman (Işık, 1979, 400) are some of the instances for sexist language uses.

Moreover, it was found that the writers of the ilmihals used "man" instead of "human/person", indicating as if there was only one gender in some uses such as man (Akseki, 1960; Bilmen, 1947; Işık, 1979; Ateş, 1989); mankind (Ateş, 1989, 541-542; Kırbaşoğlu, 2015); earthman (Ateş, 1989, 540), son of Adam (Işık, 1979, 75, 84; Ateş, 1989, 544; Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 500), son of the earth (Ateş, 1989), father's friend (Işık, 1979, 53; Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006), mother of all evil (Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 500) and man of his words (Işık, 1979, 677) were the structures settled in the language, based on the premise that the female gender is secondary in addition to the male gender.

Self-reliant, strong personality, generous, trustworthy, sensible, makes decisions easily:

- Fair (Bilmen, 1947; Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 88-90)
- Respectable (Bilmen, 1947, 480)
- Tough (Öngüt, 1998; Ateş, 1989, 613-614)
- Trustworthy (Bilmen, 1947, 507)
- Smart (Işık, 1979, 100; Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 88-90)
- Doing the things suitable for humanity (Bilmen, 1947, 507)
- Generous (Işık, 1979, 585; Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 88-90)
- Powerful (Ateş, 1989, 613-614; Öngüt, 1998, 708)
- Brave (Ateş, 1989, 638; Öngüt, 1998, 708)
- Sensible (Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 279-280)
- Physically healthy (Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 88-90)
- Having the superiority of understanding and comprehension (Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 88-90)
- Having a strong memory (Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 88-90)
- Having an effective declamation (Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 88-90)

- Directing people to the right path (Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 88-90; Öngüt, 1998, 708)
- Admirer (Öngüt, 1998, 707)
- Whose value is known (Öngüt, 1998, 707)

Findings about the masculine gender roles used in ilmihals

Another finding gathered from the analysis was that there are traditional masculine gender roles such as protecting women, subsistence payment, being dominant on women, teaching women how to behave ethically, having the right to get married and to end the marriage, being able to perpetrate violence against women, having the right to marry more than one woman, being patient against the bad habits of women, being good natured and helping women with household chores. More specifically, these masculine gender roles can be exampled as follows:

The protector of women

- Protecting women (Bilmen, 1947, 480; Uysal and Uysal, 1991)

The supplier of the alimony (nafaqah)

All the ilmihals examined have made men responsible for the financial maintenance of a house, and even considered this supplying a duty for men. Meanwhile, women's work have been considered to be an additional support to men. This responsibility, named with the methaphores such as "householder, heod of the family, shepherding of the family", points to the gender inequality-based duty of men to meet all the financial needs of women and families.

The most general evaluation on this subject is made by Diyanet Ilmihal "Men, both having this superiority that Allah has given to them (having created as men) and because they spend money for this cause, they manage the affairs of women." (Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 315-316).

- The supplier of the alimony (nafaqah) (Bilmen, 1947, 480; Işık, 1979, 588; Ateş, 1989; Tabakoğlu and Kara, 1980; Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 315, 246-249; Öngüt, 1998, 708; Uysal and Uysal, 1991, 395)
- Exhausted (Öngüt, 1998, 707)
- Pitiable (Işık, 1979, 589)

Being dominant on women

- Dominating over women (Işık, 1979, 600; Tabakoğlu and Kara, 1980; Öngüt, 1998, 707-710; Uysal and Uysal, 1991)
- Giving woman her freedom (Ateş, 1989, 432)
- Not allowing his wife to live in the houses on the street, against parks, playgrounds, sports fields and/or schools (Işık, 1979, 602)

Teaching women how to behave ethically

- Examining the belief, worship and morality of women and teaching these to women (Akseki, 1960, 362; Işık, 1979, 598)

Having the right to get married and to end the marriage

- Divorcing (Işık, 1979, 588; Tabakoğlu and Kara, 1980, 602-603; Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 225-227; Öngüt, 1998, 670-675)
- Solemnising (Bilmen, 1947, 446; Ateş, 1989, 422-423; Öngüt, 1998, 658-659)
- Protecting woman by wedding (Ateş, 1989, 422)
- Devastating woman while leaving, throwing her out without giving anything (Ateş, 1989, 422)

Having the right to marry more than one woman

- Be able to marry up to four women (Işık, 1979, 571)
- Womanizer (Işık, 1979, 380)

Being able to perpetrate violence against women

- Using power (Işık, 1979, 398-399)
- Bad-tempered (Işık, 1979, 599-601)

- Torturing women (Ateş, 1989, 432)
- Beating women (Ateş, 1989, 614; Tabakoğlu and Kara, 1980, 33; Uysal and Uysal, 1991)

Being patient against the bad habits of women

- Mature for what his wife does (Tabakoğlu and Kara, 1980, 32-33)
- Dignified against the nervousness of the woman (Akseki, 1960, 362)
- Softly welcoming the grudges of his wife (Işık, 1979, 599-601)
- Being patient with his wife's wrong actions, unreasonable words and deeds (Işık, 1979, 585)

Being good natured

- Polite (Akseki, 1960, 362; Ateş, 1989, 613-614; Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 315; Öngüt, 1998, 707-710; Uysal and Uysal, 1991)
- Takes the hearts of woman by promising even the things he cannot do (Işık, 1979, 600)
- Soft-spoken (Işık, 1979, 585)
- Contented (Karaman, Bardakoğlu and Apaydın, 2006, 88-90)
- Respecting the rights of women (Öngüt, 1998, 707-710)

Helping women with household chores

- Helping women in disciplining children (Işık, 1979, 600)

Findings about the gender-biased characterization of men in ilmihals

The above mentioned and listed findings of the masculine traits and masculine gender roles in ilmihals demonstrate that the characterization of men in ilmihals is gender-biased. The masculine traits and masculine gender roles are in parallel with traditional gender roles.

It should also be noted that all of the ilmihals examined do not treat women in the secondary position in each and every issue and under all conditions, and in line with the egalitarian structures used and the provisions of the Qur'an, they assigned equal duties or responsibilities to both genders at some points.

The non-sexist language structures that are present in these ilmihals are "Every man and woman" (Akseki, 1960, 328); "her/his mother and father" (Akseki, 1960, 330);

"all humanity, every Muslim, every human being, male or female" (Işık, 1979); "girl or boy" (Kırbaşoğlu, 2015, 349), "man or woman" (Kırbaşoğlu, 2015, 371- 101-206-215-217-279-286), "Muslims with women, men, elderly or young people" (Kırbaşoğlu, 2015, 387). On the other hand, both egalitarian language structures and the Qur'an attributing equal duties and responsibilities to both genders in terms of servitude and child rearing are among these examples. Moreover, it is obvious that the egalitarian structures used in the surface structure deal with the oppression of women in the deep structure. In other words, there is an operational inequality in terms of discursive and expected actions from men and women. Even if the discourses expected from women are egalitarian, the actions are passive; and the discourses and actions expected from men are the actions that make men effective.

Findings about the hegemonic ideals in ilmihals

The findings of the masculine traits and masculine gender roles in ilmihals also manifests that ilmihals uphold hegemonic ideals that show how masculinities should be by looking at masculine traits and gender roles. In other words, to a large extent, ilmihals consist of some presumptions of hegemonic ideals.

What is understood from the term "hegemonic ideals" in this context is just as the same as Connell (2001) refers. According to his theory, there are multiple masculinities that were constructed within culture of society through a period of time. In this practice of gender relations within a given society and sociological field, men are more dominant than women and so have dominant social roles over women by leading a dominant position and embodies a form of hierarchical social organization in a given society.

Discussion and results

In this section, the findings obtained from the research carried out via content analysis were interpreted in the light of the existing literature. What the findings of the study mean, their compatible and incompatible aspects with the literature were evaluated by taking the limitations of the research into account.

From the answers of the first two research questions, the masculine traits and masculine gender roles used in ilmihals, it was found that men were portrayed as

carrying gendered masculine traits and traditional masculine gender roles. Moreover, the characterization of men in ilmihals is gender-biased and ilmihals uphold hegemonic ideals that show how masculinities should be by looking at masculine traits and gender roles.

When ilmihals are examined in terms of the presence of masculinity traits, it was revealed that these masculinity traits are responsible for his family, dominant, authoritative, act as a leader, having leadership abilities, strong personality, self-reliant, strong personality, generous, trustworthy, sensible and makes decisions easily. Furthermore, the writers also supported these traits with some sexist language uses. It can be interpreted from these finding that these uses position women in the private sphere and men in the public sphere, they both play a role in the reproduction of the gender roles of ilmihals and serve as examples of the reflection of the patriarchal structure in traditional societies to modern societies. When the current literature is examined, these findings and results appears to be in agreement with the results of this study, that is, there are "pro-male preferences" in ilmihals (Deaux and LaFrance 1998; Bem 1974; Kavuncu 1987; Bacacı-Varoğlu 2001; Sugihara and Katsurada 1999; Lara-Cantu and Navarro-Arias 1987; Ward and Sethi 1986; Showronski and Lawrence 2001). One of these researches was conducted by Bem (1974), stating that "act as a leader, aggressive, ambitious, analytical, assertive, athletic, competitive, defends own beliefs, dominant, forceful, has leadership abilities, independent, individualistic, makes decisions easily, masculine, self-reliant, self-sufficient, strong personality, willing to take risks, willing to take a stand" are the masculine gender roles. Taking Bem's inventory as a basis, Kavuncu (1987) adapted this scale to Turkish society and put forward that "responsible for his family, dominant, generous, impassive, masculine, forceful, sociable, adventurous, willing to take a stand, ambitious, idealist, self-sufficient, assertive, strict, acts as a leader, sensible, authoritative, willing to take risks, aggressive, trustworthy" are the masculinity roles accepted in Turkish culture. Another study conducted by Bacacı-Varoğlu (2001) also emphasized that males are considered to be the parts of public sphere while females are to be the parts of private sphere. Moreover, Sugihara and Katsurada (1999) adapted Bem's inventory to Japanese culture, Lara-Cantu and Navarro-Arias (1987) to Mexican culture, Ward and Sethi (1986) to Malaysian and South Indian culture. Similarly, Showronski and Lawrence (2001) states that within the gender traits, male stereotype is often positive such as independent, logical, etc. whereas that of women is negative such as emotional, illogical, etc. On the other hand, there are some previous research that the findings and results of this study do not match by resulting in having more positive attitudes toward women (Eagly and Mladinic 1989; Eagly, Mladinic and Otto 1991).

As to the masculine gender roles, it was found out that ilmihals portrayed men with traditional gender roles such as protecting women, the supplier of the alimony (nafaqah), being dominant on women, teaching women how to behave ethically, having the right to get married and to end the marriage, having the right to marry more than one woman, being able to perpetrate violence against women, being patient against the bad habits of women, being good natured and also helping women with household chores. It must be noted here that there are also some egalitarian uses in addition to those that only put women in a secondary position against men, but they are not as much as those of traditional roles. This findings and results are consistent with the results of the studies of Charsley (2005), Samuel (2011), Gerami (2005), Metcalf (2000; 1996), Hopkins (2006), Sunardi (2013). Metcalf (2000), in her research on the Sunni Islamic missionary movement called Tablighi Jamaat, underlines that the members of the movement has a focus on reconfiguring of gender roles such as men's learning how to cook, wash or look after one another; behaving gentle, self-abnegate and modest such as common feminine gender roles in society. In another research, Metcalf (1996) also gives an example to a political oriented Islamic movement such as Pakistani Jama'at-i Islami, which concentrates on the domestic roles of women rather than the previous movement. The latter movement think that women is a public reference and/or symbol for the institutionalization of Islamic order. Referring to the Muslim Pakistani men in Scotland as "relatively middle-class-, Hopkins (2006) stated that Muslim men form a dangerous and aggressive subculture while those of South Asian are passive, physically weak and conformable compared to English men and Afro-Caribbeans. With these stereotyping, Muslim men are to face with a complex way of constructing and negotiating gender identities. Sunardi (2013), for instance, gives the Muslim celebrations such as circumcisions to celebrate a boy's transition into adulthood as a means of masculinity marks.

Given this line-up and according to the analyses, another interesting outcome is that the characterization of men in ilmihals is gender-biased. Furthermore, these findings are unsurprising in that in parallel with traditional gender roles and ilmihals uphold hegemonic ideals that show how masculinities should be by looking at masculine traits and gender roles; and how men positioned superior to women through traits and gender roles that are linked to each other. In other words, another implication gathered from the analyses is that in some cases, masculinity is glorified. The findings also highlight that with some gender roles such as providing nafaqah by being the breadwinner and having the financial power and responsibility, men have control over women. For instance, Bilmen (1947) associates courage with masculinity by saying that "Masculinity means doing what is suitable for humanity, taking things that look good

and avoiding situations that require reproach. The opposite of this is decency.". Ateş (1989) also used manhood with the same meaning as bravery. All these descriptions were knitted on the positioning of women in the private sphere and men in the public sphere, and set an example of views confirming that the patriarchal structure in traditional societies is also reflected in the structure in modern societies. When the literature is taken into account, it is seen that this result and finding of this study correspond to the ones in the existing literature (Doğan 2012; Şefkatli-Tuksal 2012). Arsel (2014) states that Islam does not glorify women, on the contrary, it offers them to the service and domination of men in many areas. Arat (1986), Poya (1999) and El-Saadiwi, (1997) also attribute the secondary position of women to religion, culture and tradition. Like all other Islamic feminists, Şefkatli-Tuksal (2012) and Ahmed (1992) argue that this status of women is not due to Islam, but from the different and misinterpretation of Islam and the Islamic tradition. Doğan (2012) claims that at Islamic ilmihals, women are treated as dangerous and men are portrayed as the superior sex, who are in control and rational. Dönmez (2008) found that in myths, men are seduced, virtuous and powerful, while women are the seductive, flawed and ruled sex. Berktay (2012) states that monotheistic religions consider the function of men in reproduction as a reflection of God's creation of the universe, and in this regard, women are despised because of their fertility. In contrast to these statements from the literature, there are some contrary ideas such as Samuel (2011). Samuel (2011) asserts that while the Qur'an is concerned in various ways to protect women and assert their rights, it is explicit about male authority over women. He adds that the ideal Islamic male personality, Prophet Mohammad, with his explicit teaching and directions, that is, the Hadith literature and Sunnah, his behavior should be imitated by Muslims. The other factors influencing the different views are women's being positioned in the private sphere while men's in the public sphere, and in this context, women' being attributed to the domestic household chores, the care of the sick, the elderly and children, and men's being attributed to public affairs that are included in the state agenda.

As overall implications of this research, it can be asserted that in ilmihals, there are two new alternative masculinities that are handled in these works. These alternative masculinities may be a way of the changes of the gender order and may make a contribution on the studies about Muslim masculinities: being equal to women in terms of servitude and being superior to women in terms of being God's deputy and trusty.

- Regarding the servitude issue, the egalitarian structures used and the provisions of the Quran assigns equal duties or responsibilities to both genders at some points. It is an undeniable fact that these responsibilities are dealt with only in some

ilmihals, and especially in terms of servitude and raising children.

- In terms of superiority, Boase (1985) states that in Islam, men are regarded as God's deputy, trusty or vice-regent. Spiritually, man owns nothing as everything is God's; but, men has the power to regulate all the economic system such as private property, purchasing and selling the goods, earning money, etc. Similarly, there are also opinions arguing that Islam values women, women do not have to work but all their needs will be met by a man, and even men are in a pitiful state due to this burden (Işık 1979, 589). Some others put forward that these responsibilities of males give men the power to dominate women (Yavuz 1983, 528; Tabakoğlu and Kara 1980, 298; Uysal and Uysal 1991, 394-395), and in this context, they argue that men should get twice the share of women in inheritance, and all this is based on the fact that men provide livelihood (Tabakoğlu and Kara 1980, 298; Işık 1979, 589).

All these language uses, references, masculinity traits and male gender roles found in the works are proof that ilmihals serve as a bridge in the reproduction of gender roles in the sociocultural structure of a given society. In other words, men who will be included in the domain of gender determinations according to these ilmihals, dominating women, duties belonging to the public sphere, etc., will be able to find their responsibilities as roles ascribed to them by the society, and will be able to shape their behavior according to what is written in these ilmihals. These findings also serve as a model for the reflection of the patriarchal structure at traditional societies to modern societies by putting women at private sphere and men at public sphere.

Excluding the epistemology and roots, but including only methodology, it can be thought that this study may be an equivalent of what intellectual Muslim women do for and by themselves (Islamic feminism), by thinking that the masculine traits and masculinities of men can also be reread and interpreted within religious texts.

Lastly, when evaluating the findings and results obtained in the research, it is useful to keep several limitations in mind. The first limitation, that is, the samples of the study (nine ilmihals) were selected among all the ilmihal works. The second limitation is about the data set, that is, selecting only the chapters of the ilmihals regarding social life is regarded as the data set of the research. These two limitations are about the large population of the ilmihals, as Gürkan (2021) listed more than 100 Islamic ilmihals ranging from many subjects. Thus, there occurred a need to select some of the ilmihals and some of the chapters of the ilmihals. The last limitation is about including certain editions of the works and excluding the previous or later editions of

the works from the analysis. This situation is related to the fact that the readers of this research may be confused by naming the writer and/or all of the editions of the works. However, when conducting this research, it was assumed that only the written edition of the ilmihals is valid for the validity and reliability of the study.

The limitations above simply indicate that a single study is not definitive and many further research is going to be necessary to obtain a full view of masculinities in ilmihals. However, it is certain that the data set of this research can be differentiated and provide some insight to the other researchers to make a study on other ilmihals or religious texts on different issues.

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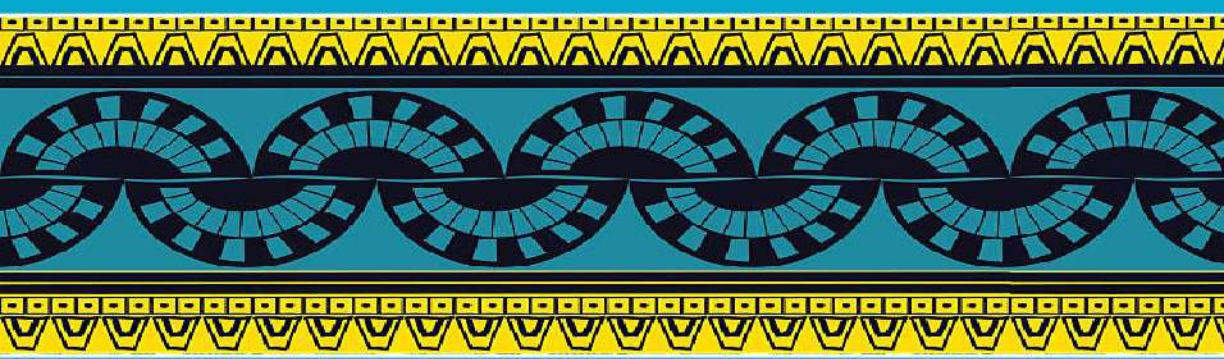

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