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Preface

The power exercised by media today is multifaceted and has influenced unprecedentedly to every aspect of human life. Development of the human through the Long history of human kind proved the fact that there is no reason for this development other than communication. The whole world is a result of communication and the species including human non-human physical nonphysical matter is in a constant struggle of interaction for the survival. Early rhetorical studies in ancient Greek to modern political speeches has proven the persuasion power language. Origin, survival and evolution of total matter seemed completely depends on communication. From ancient Greek perspectives on rhetoric and truth-seeking to modern existentialist and ethical arguments, communication is seen as the foundation of our shared world and a core component of human nature. Tracing the remarks of early philosophers, Socrates and Plato it can be argued communication" of Karl Jaspers attempt to highlight how human communication can develop a world of human friendly though communication.

Michael Traber A modern communication ethicist, he argued that "communication is inscribed in human nature" and is the "life-blood of society". Traber linked communication to fundamental human rights and the need for freedom, equality, and solidarity, viewing it as a transformative force for achieving a just society. Jürgen Habermas iIn his Theory of Communicative Action, Habermas highlights communication as the main source of knowledge and a "bridge that connects individuals in a process of mutual understanding". He emphasizes rational and critical free dialogue as necessary for the correct formation of knowledge and a functional democracy. It is an indispensable lens for understanding and navigating the forces that shape our world. The outcomes of this research profoundly influence the formation of the political, social, cultural, and economic mindset

of global citizens, making rigorous inquiry into communication dynamics crucial for a functioning democracy and an informed shared society.

In the rapidly evolving 21st century, communication continues to reshape human identity, social structures, and our global understanding of the world. It is the core mechanism by which we define meaning, exercise power, and connect across cultural, philosophical, and digital frontiers. The continuous need for research to interrogate and reinterpret this complex world, especially in the context of the pervasive information age, makes the field of communicology an indispensable discipline for creating an informed and shared society.

The necessity for rigorous scholarship that can both critique and construct new knowledge has never been greater. Whether grappling with the enduring philosophical questions of existence or navigating the immediate challenges of algorithmic influence and public health, the research presented here is essential to understanding the human experience.

The International Journal of Communicology, Volume 7, December 2025, presents a selection of articles that delve into this intersection of the theoretical, the traditional, and the digital, providing vital insights into contemporary communication dynamics.

"Emergence of Asian Communication Approaches: In search for East-West balanced Communication Theories" by Sugath Mahinda Senarath offers a critical discussion on the enduring influence of Eurocentrism in communication theory. This work makes a powerful case for the need to develop Asian-centric communication approaches rooted in local philosophical, cultural, and traditional foundations, arguing for a necessary theoretical balance that acknowledges and incorporates Eastern worldviews alongside Western frameworks.

"Mood and Meaning: A Heideggerian Critique of Foucauldian Discourse in Communication Theory" by J.D.A. Kumara embarks

on a profound philosophical inquiry. The study juxtaposes Heidegger's concept of Mood (Stimmung) as an ontological precondition for meaningful communication against Foucault's structuralist view of discourse shaped by the power-knowledge nexus. This intellectual engagement argues for incorporating the dimension of existential care into communication theory, moving beyond purely structural or power-based analyses.

"The Impact of Google's Algorithm Updates on Search Engine Optimization Practices with Special Reference to the Views of the Urban Community" by Sachithra Mahendra examines a crucial conflict in the digital sphere: the tension between content authenticity and algorithmic demands. Focusing on the Sri Lankan urban community, the research reveals how continuous SEO practices influence digital visibility, raising significant concerns about algorithmic bias and potential cultural homogenization in the digital ecosystem.

"Kolam Folk Drama Tradition Transmitted to the Common People through Various Media of Communication" by Ranjith Senanayaka conducts an investigative analysis of the traditional Sri Lankan Kolam folk drama. This study explores the diverse communication media—including masks, poetry, sound, and gesture—used by artists in the 17th–18th centuries to effectively transmit social commentary and satire to the general public, providing a historical perspective on non-digital, multi-modal communication.

"The Transformative Role of Libraries in Enhancing Health Literacy to Combat Non-Communicable Diseases in Sri Lanka: A Literature Review" by D. C. V Fernando critiques the potential of libraries to act as pivotal agents in enhancing population health literacy to manage the escalating Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) burden in Sri Lanka. It proposes a strategic framework for viewing libraries not just as repositories of books, but as essential public health infrastructure in the contemporary environment.

These articles, each with its unique methodology and focus, collectively underscore the mission of this journal: to provide a

critical space for scholarly discourse that is deeply relevant to our contemporary moment.

I am grateful to the contributing authors for their intellectual commitment and the peer reviewers for their diligent work in ensuring the academic rigor of this volume. We trust this collection will not only be a valuable resource but also an inspiration for future scholarship across fields and borders.

Prof. R.C.K. Hettiarachchi
Editor-in-Chief
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Mood and Meaning: A Heideggerian Critique of Foucauldian Discourse in Communication Theory

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Abstract

This paper offers a Heideggerian critique of Foucauldian discourse. The study has been limited to the realm of communication, and it is argued that a fundamental reorientation of communication is possible with Heideggerian phenomenology, particularly with the idea of 'Mood'. Michel Foucault's discourse theory situates communication within historically contingent structures. These structures are founded on the power-knowledge nexus. In contrast, Martin Heidegger's existential phenomenology foregrounds mood (Stimmung) as the ontological precondition for meaningful communication. Emphasizing mood as a form of pre-reflective, affective attunement that discloses the world, the theorization of human communication will be much more productive and deeper. Accordingly, this study posits communication within the lived, embodied, and temporally situated structure of Dasein. This approach is contrasted with Foucault's structuralist account, which positions the subject as a product of discursive formations. For Foucault, meaning is regulated by institutionalized systems of power in contrast to the Heideggerian idea of pre-reflective, affective attunement that discloses the world. This paper juxtaposes the two paradigms to argue that Heidegger's mood-centered model of communication provides a more authentic and existential foundation for understanding the 'communicative

act' as a mode of being-in-the-world. By transcending discursive determinism, this study informs the necessity of integrating existential care into communication theory.

Keywords: *Heidegger, mood, existential phenomenology, communication theory, Foucault, discourse*

Introduction

This paper is based on contrasting conceptions of communication found in conceptualizations in Heidegger's existential phenomenology and Foucault's discourse theory. It investigates how Heidegger's notion of mood as a foundational mode of human existence is crucial in understanding communication as a moment of disclosing the world. The Heideggerian idea is fundamentally focused on the meaning that precedes language and rational thought, unlike traditional cognitive or discursive models of communication. Heidegger sees mood as a pre-reflective attunement to the world. Therefore, communication is always embodied, situated, and intimately tied to the temporality of human experience.

The paper critically compares Heidegger's thought with Foucault's view of communication, noting that the external forces of the power-knowledge nexus profoundly shape both. That nexus is embedded in historical, institutional, and discursive contexts and lacks an individual's authentic, affective engagement with the world.

Accordingly, the paper argues that the communication act should be theorized not only structurally as a social construct shaped by discourse, but as a lived experience, guided by mood and attunement.

Mood as Pre-Reflective Attunement and Intentionality

Heidegger's existential phenomenology has profound implications for communication, but the same discipline has not been investigated in depth by communication scholars.

Heideggerian philosophy radicalized Western thought and its ontology project. However, that turn was not adequately grasped by the communication theorists.

In this paper, the cardinal idea of Heidegger's existential phenomenology, Mood, has been given pride of place, as it plays a foundational role in shaping communication by disclosing the world as meaningful. This disclosure comes even before rational thought or language begins. For Heidegger, Mood is not a private emotion but a mode of being-in-the-world (Colombetti, 2017). This pre-reflective attunement arises based on intentionality. For Heidegger, mood is an ontic expression of Befindlichkeit, or disposedness (Heidegger, 1996). This is the most profound thing in communication, as it establishes the background of significance for communicators, within which understanding can take place:

> In fact, Heidegger holds that our capacity to have moods is constitutive of human existence. We are who we are, according to Heidegger, not only because we are rational, social, or practical beings, but also because we are affective, and specifically, mooded beings: that is, beings who experience moods. On Heidegger's account, it is because we are mooded that the world is disclosed to us and that we find ourselves amidst worldly projects and social situations that already matter to us and that emotionally affect us. (Ratcliffe & Szanto, 2015, p. 662)

According to Heideggerian philosophy, we do not approach language or interaction neutrally; we are always already in a mood. This mood opens up the world for us, and others are crucial in creating the world. The other may be threatening or welcoming. Accordingly, Heideggerian understanding of communication is not based on closed or structured systems, but on affective openness to the world. Someone's existence is embodied, immediate, and temporally situated.

In this study, a comparative analysis is conducted using Foucauldian discourse analysis and its communicative implications, in contrast to Heidegger. Michel Foucault's theory of discourse offers a structural, historical, and institutional account of communication, in contrast to Heidegger, and the structural tradition of Western thought is manifest in his work. For Foucault, communication is shaped not by individual mood or existential attunement, but by discursive formations (Smart, 1994). These discursive formations regulate what can be said, who can speak, and what is regarded as truth. Therefore, discourse is a system of power-knowledge nexus that governs meaning through rules, classifications, and institutional practices.

> The alternative notion of power advanced by Foucault marks a radical departure from the conventional "power as domination" perception, in that it does not ascribe power to any particular actor. Foucault considers power to be omnipresent and to permeate society, affecting everyone. According to Foucault, power is intrinsically related to "knowledge." What is regarded as "knowledge" upholds certain social norms and standards, which are assimilated into the way individuals see themselves and relate to others. Foucault terms this indirect, insidious form of social control "disciplinary" power. (Masaki, 2007, p. 19)

Communication in a discourse operates through structures external to the individual. Such discourses can construct subjects through their discursive frameworks. In a Foucauldian analysis, communication is less a matter of affective engagement with the world than an expression of historically situated regimes of knowledge. Heidegger sees mood as disclosing a pre-linguistic horizon of meaning; Foucault sees discourse as constructing meaning through language, power, and institutional norms. Heidegger's communication model is existential and phenomenological, beginning in the lived world. The felt immediacy of being is emphasized. Communicative insights in a Foucauldian approach have to be realized archaeologically

and genealogically. Subjectivity is the result of discourse, and systems of meaning are not affected by individual subjects.

The Transcendence of Structural Conditions in Communication Theory

Communication in a Heideggerian framework is personal, situated openness. The mood is culturally shaped and grounded in the ontological structure of human existence (Dasein). Foucault, by contrast, denies any fixed or universal structure of the self. Hence, communication is not an agent's matter, but rather a phenomenon that discursive practices have produced. The mood enables authenticity or care-driven openness in contrast to Foucauldian skepticism on being "authentic"; that may itself be an effect of normalization or surveillance.

The mood-centered theory of communication transcends structural conditions, power, and historical contingency. The idea of theorizing how communication emerges from embodied care and moodedness has long been missing in the Western tradition, and Foucauldian understanding is a prime example of how communication is shaped by external systems of control and meaning, which is unique to the Western thought system. Each offers a profound—but profoundly different—insight into how human beings understand and relate to each other through language.

Heidegger defines understanding as "projection onto possibilities," and meaning is created through the ability to grasp things in terms of their potential ways of being or uses.

> Dasein's being as Sorge is factical existence. The understanding projection onto possibilities of being essentially determines it. What these possibilities factically are, Heidegger insists, is not for the ontological-existential analysis to determine. Nevertheless, insofar as Dasein is geworfen into them, their horizon is determined in advance.

> The horizon that determines what counts as an existential possibility for Dasein is given over to it as a legacy [Erbe] from worlds of the past. In the mode of authenticity: Die Entschlossenheit, in der das Dasein auf sich selbst zurückkommt, erschließt die jeweiligen faktischen Möglichkeiten eigentlichen Existierens aus dem Erbe, das sie als Geworfene übernimmt. The determination of possibilities by the legacy given over to Dasein is the essential historicity of Dasein's factical existentiality, the essential historicity of Dasein's being as Sorge. Insofar as temporality is the ecstatic unity of the Sorge-structure, this historicity- that is, the possibility of history as such-is grounded in the temporality of Dasein. (Duits, 2009, p. 85)

This understanding is not cognitive but existential. It arises from being-in-the-world in a practical and situated manner. For example, understanding how to play chess is not simply knowing the rules, but being attuned to the strategic affordances of different moves. Therefore, learning a language or communicating with communicative partners is not cognitive, but existential. This attunement is being "at home in a world" in the Heideggerian terminology (Malpas, 2008). In a communication activity, when one responds skillfully and immediately to situations based on familiarity and involvement, it will be an existential response. Understanding, in this sense, is profoundly pragmatic, and it involves responding to the world based on a background sense of what matters and what is possible.

The Role of the Subject in Communication

Interpretation, for Heidegger, is the enactment or working out of the possibilities projected in understanding and it consists of choices among the field of meaningful possibilities (Hill, 2022). In such possibilities, the understanding discloses itself. In such a circumstance, communication is an articulation

entangled with habitual and embodied coping. This coping is not grounded in reflective thought. Accordingly, in a communicative practice, meaning arises through lived engagement centred in the ontological structure of Dasein. In such an endeavour, existential care and attunement to the world are the key. In stark contrast, Foucault's structuralist approach holds that meaning is constituted by historically contingent systems of discourse, in which networks of language, practices, institutions, and norms play a pivotal role (Kelly, 2010). This structural framework is the limit on what can be said, thought, and known. Then, the subject is not capable of exercising its agency and interpreting or projecting meaning freely. For Foucault, the subject is produced by discourse in a given historical context.

> Foucault thinks that this standard structure is more readily discernible through analysis of the cognitive consciousness. What is seen only in partial glimpses in a study of the evaluative domain appears full-blown in a study of the cognitive. Accordingly, Foucault expects that in disengaging the Classical Age's positive knowledge of madness, he will also reveal explicitly the "common experience" of madness that underlies both domains. "This unique experience, which resides both here and there, which supports and justifies the practice of confinement and the cycle of knowledge - it is this that constitutes the classical experience of madness". (Gutting, 1989, p. 79)

What appears as understanding or interpretation comes from the external world and is governed by discursive rules and power structures. These structural arrangements are, in a sense, predefined and demarcate what is intelligible. Hence, Foucault misses the agent's situated, embodied, and affective projection of meaning. He sees communication and subjectivity as shaped externally by systems of knowledge and power, and is less interested in the existential structures of care and openness. Theorizing mood in communicative activity transcends the

constraints of structures that regulate the production of meaning and the formation of subjects as an existential enactment of freedom.

Foregrounding agency in communication is a salient feature in Heidegger's phenomenology as it relies on lived experience and the ontological horizon of possibility. In contrast, Foucault's archaeology and genealogy foreground structure and history. To understand human communication more deeply, the Heideggerian mood plays a profound role in interpretation, emerging from being-in-the-world; the subject's sense of possibility is entirely open. Not only Foucauldian discourse but also Heideggerian understanding is historically shaped. However, the two perspectives diverge fundamentally; Heidegger emphasizes the existential projection of meaning from within, and Foucault's concern is the external and historical forces that construct and regulate meaning. Hence, the two philosophical standpoints on communication contrast with each other as one begins from lived attunement, the other from structured constraint.

Heidegger's Philosophy of Discourse

Heidegger also engages in a philosophical project on discourse (Rede) like Foucault, but its fundamental aspect is to understand the positioning of the human being in lived experience (Honneth, 1992). For Heidegger, the discourse is the way in which the intelligibility of the world is articulated through signification. Hence, it is a pre-linguistic, pragmatic phenomenon that shapes active engagement with the world. Through discourse, we can identify the significant features of communicative surroundings, interpret them, and respond skillfully. This allows human beings to recognize what matters to us in any given situation. It is grounded in our practical involvement with the world. Discourse, for Heidegger, is not just verbal or linguistic communication. It is but a broader and more fundamental mode of meaning-making. It includes the way we orient ourselves to objects and situations, even when language is not involved.

However, Heidegger had paid serious attention to idle talk (Gerede), as it leads people to no longer engage with the world in a way that makes its richness and complexity intelligible (McCormick, 2020). In such talk, people rely on shallow, general statements that anyone can understand without severe involvement. This type of communication is categorized as detached from the world; a mere exchange of words without genuine understanding or orientation. Therefore, for Heidegger, the genuine form of communication is marked by embodiment in lived experience. The idle talk flattens experience into a more generic, surface-level exchange. Michel Foucault's theory of discourse operates within a completely different structuralist and historical framework (Howarth, 2000). As Foucault understands, discourse is not simply a way of articulating the intelligibility of the world. For him, discourse is a system of power-knowledge. Hence, it is not an existential engagement with the world. Instead, it is the very mechanism through which subjectivity, knowledge, and reality are constituted. This regulatory structure is instrumental in organizing and limiting what is possible to say or think.

The Heideggerian idea of the call of conscience is a form of deeply personal, non-linguistic communication. It orients us toward a more authentic mode of existence.

> In order to disclose Dasein's ownmost, finite possibility of being, Dasein's everyday involvement with beings needs to be interrupted. This occurs through the call of conscience, a call that occurs without sound. "The call of conscience," says Heidegger, "has the character of summoning Dasein to its ownmost potentiality-of-being-a-self, by summoning it to its ownmost quality of being a lack". Of course, here Heidegger is considering the call of conscience as an ontological term rather than as a psychological phenomenon. He emphasizes the disclosive function of conscience: "Conscience gives us 'something' to understand, it discloses".

> "What" consciousness discloses is Dasein's finitude (its being a "lack") and, with it, Dasein's ownmost possibility of being. (Vallega-Neu, 2003, p.15)

Foucault, on the other hand, would argue that the very way we understand conscience, selfhood, or subjectivity is formed and constrained by historical discursive structures. Therefore, the truths are determined by the structures. Power dynamics operate within these structures, and the boundaries of discourse are the limits of power dynamics. The individuals are often unaware of how deeply these external, discursive forces govern their thinking and speaking. Heidegger's emphasis on ontological questions of existence and meaning-making widens the horizons of communication, in contrast to Foucault's focus on epistemological and political concerns. Accordingly, for Foucault, a communicative act is a place where social control and normalization occur. However, for Heidegger, communication is a fundamental, pragmatic mode of signification, and it orients us to the world. The individual's engagement with the world and existential authenticity opens up a new vista for communicative practices, in contrast to the Foucauldian explanation of historical, social, and political primacy in communication, the governance of knowledge, and subjectivity.

Inauthenticity and Authenticity in Communication

Inauthenticity, in which individuals conform to social norms and allow their lives to be dictated by external expectations, constrains the communication phenomenon. Authenticity, therefore, is a communicative act that involves a genuine engagement with one's situation. In such authenticity, individuals consciously choose how they will respond to the world. Their inner sense of what truly matters to them, rather than reacting passively to social pressures, is manifested. In comparing Heidegger's views on communication and temporality with Michel Foucault's approach, it is possible to identify key differences in how both philosophers understand the roles of time

and communication. Authentic communication, in a Heideggerian explanation, emerges from a self that is temporally situated. The self constantly retains the past, awaits the future, and engages with the present. This temporal structure enables people to make sense of their world and communicate meaningfully. Heidegger argues that human beings are always already situated within a horizon of temporal expectations (Heidegger, 1996). While Heidegger highlights the temporal structure of human existence, Foucault emphasizes historically contingent discursive formations.

> Whenever one can describe, between several statements, such a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlations, positions, and functionings, transformations), we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation. (Foucault, 1972, p. 38)

For Foucault, communication is an inextricable part of the knowledge-power nexus. Therefore, discursive formations imply that dominant discourses largely determine our understanding of time, history, and self. History informs what we communicate, what we can understand, and what we can express. Foucault's concept of historization marks a stark difference from Heidegger's view of temporalization. The significance of time in communication —Heidegger's idea that time is not simply a flow of now-moments but also a structure of meaning —contrasts with Foucault's focus on historical time.

Conclusion

This paper investigated the philosophical divergence between Heidegger and Foucault regarding communication, not merely as an examination of two unique philosophers, but also to understand the difference between two giants through the systems of the Western world. The study revealed two fundamentally distinct conceptions of communication that shed intense

light on the reconceptualization of the communication 'act'. Heidegger's mood-centered model is centred on the phenomenon of communication as an existential, embodied, and temporally situated mode of being-in-the-world. Western communication scholars had not seriously studied this particular mode of thinking on communication, and by revealing the metaphysics of presence in Western thought, Heidegger radicalized the entire history of Western thought. This paper sought to grasp Heidegger's revolutionary idea of communication and to theorize it through a comparative analysis. For Heidegger, Mood, as an ontological attunement, discloses a horizon of meaning prior to language or cognitive articulation. It allows individuals to engage authentically with the world and the Other. In contrast, Foucault's discourse theory counts communication as a historically contingent construct. Systems of power govern this construct. This system of power is highly diffused and interlinked with knowledge. The communicative subject is produced and regulated accordingly. Heidegger emphasizes openness, authenticity, and existential care for communication, revealing a different paradigm. In this paper, Foucault's focus on structure, constraint, and normalization was questioned through a phenomenological lens. Accordingly, this study asserts that communication theory must transcend the confines of discursive determinism to recognize the foundational role of affective, pre-reflective attunement in meaning-making. By mooting Heidegger's insights alongside Foucauldian critique, it was able to uncover a richer, more holistic understanding of communication. This theorization in communication embraces the lived immediacy of being.

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Emergence of Asian Communication Approaches: In search for East-West balanced Communication Theories

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Abstract

Over the past five decades, communication studies and research have experienced steady growth. It is not an overstatement to suggest that communication studies in Asia have reached a significant level of maturity. However, most dominant communication theories remain Eurocentric and Anglo-American in orientation. Scholars from Asia, Africa, and Latin America have increasingly recognized the problem of Eurocentrism in the social sciences, although non-Western intellectual traditions have yet to achieve equal prominence in the development of original social theories. While the Western world is often credited with the "invention" of the social sciences, Eastern intellectual and philosophical traditions have been largely overlooked, whether intentionally or unintentionally. In this context, Asian approaches to communication are both intellectually rich and conceptually complex. There has been considerable debate on Eurocentrism, Anglo-American bias, and the de-westernization of communication theory. Within this discourse, it is increasingly important to develop theories grounded in Asian philosophical, cultural, and traditional foundations. The Asia-centric pursuit of communication theory, which emerged in the early 1980s, seeks to respond to this need. Mindful communication is one such emerging Asian

communication theory, rooted in Asian philosophical, cultural, and traditional thought. This phenomenological approach offers potential applications in contemporary communicative contexts across societies. However, de-westernizing communication theory does not imply rejecting Western theories entirely. Rather, a balanced integration of Eastern and Western perspectives is essential. A key challenge in this process is the required shift in mindset among some Eastern scholars who continue to regard Western theories as inherently superior or universally applicable.

Keywords: *Asia-centricity, Asian communication theories, communication research, de-westernization.*

Introduction

Over the past five decades, we have witnessed the steady growth of communication studies and research in Asia (Dissanayake, 2003). Asian pioneers in the field of communication pursued graduate training in the USA and the West, then returned to Asia to establish and propagate academic studies in the region (Chen & Miike, 2006). Although communication studies in Asia have achieved a certain level of maturity (Chen & Miike, 2006; Dissanayake,2003), most of them continue to apply Western theories and methods in their own contexts without adequately assessing their worth and compatibility with local conditions 'and yet, we do not seem to have a philosophy or a vision for the future of communication studies in Asia'(Chen &Miike, 2006, p. 1). Even though we believe we are gaining knowledge from the West, we have not actually received insights from all Western scholars (Chen & Miike,2006). “In point of fact, we are quite ignorant even of the works of Asian pioneers in the United States and Asian American communication scholars” (Chen &Miike, 2006, p. 1)

Scholars of the Global South have yet to succeed in building an endogenous intellectual movement.

'Groups of scholars and activists from various disciplines in the developing world have been influential in raising the issue of

the state of the social sciences in their countries. However varied they are, we cannot speak of a unified intellectual movement-their calls for endogenous intellectual movement'(Alatas, 2010, p. 171).

Indira Gandhi, then Prime Minister of India, delivering the keynote speech at the 7th Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement (1983), pointed out the importance of conducting scientific research in third-world countries on their own terms. "Meanwhile, technological change rushes on, giving further advantage to the already Affluent. No one has the time to think whether its consequences are benign or malign. To keep us, even societies that can ill afford some of these technical products feel they must acquire them. Non-alignment may shield us from war, but science is important for eradicating poverty. However, at present, 97 percent of the world's research is not relevant to us because it is earmarked for the priorities and the induced appetites of technological leaders. Science will serve our basic needs only if we direct our own scientific policies towards these problems, especially those of the smallest and poorest among us. Each of our countries must strengthen its domestic science and technology base, and we should collectively devise more effective mechanisms for pooling our experiences. Earlier non-aligned gatherings have considered this subject. At this Summit, can we move forward to make collective self-reliance a reality?"(Final Document of the 7th Conference of Heads of States or Governments of the Non-Aligned Movement, New Delhi, 1983, p. 146).

There is a need to develop Asian communication theories that take into account Asian-specific factors, including philosophical, cultural, social, traditional, and political factors. Even though Asian, as well as African and Latin American scholars, have clearly recognized the problem of Eurocentrism in social science, they have not become renowned for developing original non-Western social theories (Gunaratne,2010: pp 473-500). As Shelton Gunaratne (2010) noted, around 150 communication journals are published today. This publishing

landscape is overwhelmingly dominated by two major publishers: Sage Publications, based in the United States, and the Taylor & Francis Group, based in the United Kingdom (Gunaratne, 2010). According to Miike (2019), Asia-centric communication scholarship comprises five key aspects.

1. Constructing theoretical knowledge that corresponds to Asian communication discourse;2. Focusing on the multiplicity and complexity of Asian communicative experiences, 3. Reflexively constituting and critically transforming Asian communication discourse;4. Theorizing how common aspects of humanity are expressed and understood in Asian cultural particularities, and 5. Critiquing Eurocentric biases in theory and research, helping Asian researchers overcome academic dependency.

As Syed Hussein Alatas (2000:24) says,' in addition to political, social, and economic imperialism, we are also subjected to intellectual imperialism. 'Intellectual imperialism is the domination of one people by another in their world of thinking. Intellectual imperialism is usually an effect of actual direct imperialism or of indirect domination arising from imperialism (Alatas, 2000, p. 24)… As a result of being dominated by intellectual imperialism, scholars cannot become creative. They spend their time imitating'(Alatas, 2000, p. 24).

Background of this research.

This study focuses on the importance of developing research grounded in the Global South, particularly with reference to its cultural, philosophical, social, and traditional backgrounds. “While communication scholars both in Western countries and in Asia make use of Western models and paradigms of communication, minimal effort is made, except by a handful of scholars, to understand communication from an Asian perspective” (Dissanayake, 2003, p. 18)

In contemporary communication and social science scholarship, there has been increasing recognition that dominant theoretical frameworks have been largely shaped by Western epistemologies. As a result, knowledge production has often reflected Eurocentric assumptions, which may not fully capture the diversity of lived experiences, values, and communicative practices found in non-Western societies.

However, the purpose of this study is not to reject Western theories. Rather, it emphasizes the importance of achieving a balanced and dialogical integration between Eastern and Western theoretical traditions. Such an approach allows for a more inclusive and context-sensitive understanding of communication phenomena, particularly within Global South contexts where indigenous knowledge systems remain highly relevant.

This research is based on an extensive review of literature related to de-westernization, Asia-centric communication theory, and Global South epistemologies. It seeks to explore how culturally grounded perspectives can contribute to the enrichment of communication theory while maintaining openness to established Western frameworks. In doing so, the study highlights the need for epistemological diversity and theoretical pluralism in communication research.

The importance of Asian research

Unearthing and re-describing Asian approaches to communication is as fascinating as it is complex (Dissanayake,2003).'Western knowledge is not perfectly compatible with the Asian context and does not fully resonate with the Asian experience'(Chen &Miike, 2006, p. 1). They are beginning to question the universal applicability of the meta theory and methodology of Eurocentric communication scholarship and to see the limitations of being dependent on the imported communicative knowledge generated by Westerners for the West'(Chen &Miike, 2006, p. 1). Even though many Asian

scholars have pursued higher education in Western universities and subsequently returned to their home countries, there remains a tendency among some to continue relying heavily on Western theoretical frameworks rather than engaging deeply with their own historical, traditional, and philosophical roots. Blindly applying Western theories within Asian contexts may not always produce meaningful or effective outcomes, as such approaches may overlook local cultural specificities and epistemological foundations.

Therefore, it is important to critically reflect on and evaluate both the past achievements and future directions of Asian communication research (Chen & Miike, 2006; Gunaratne, 2010). Such reflection encourages a more balanced and contextually grounded scholarly approach that integrates indigenous perspectives while maintaining constructive engagement with established global theories. “The essence of the de-Westernized communication path is the subversion and reshaping of the unbalanced communication rights” (Ang & Zhou,2023:6).

As Wimal Disssanayake (2003:18) pointed out, 'there is a real need to expand the field by studying communication from various non-Western viewpoints. It is here that Asian approaches to communication become extremely important. Asian countries such as China, India, Japan, and Korea have produced rich and complex civilizations that have developed over the centuries. No civilization is possible without a vigorous system of communication. Hence, it is of the utmost importance that we seek to explore Asian theories, concepts, perspectives, and presuppositions of communication.

When we first look at Asian approaches to communication, we need to open and free our minds to see the possibilities for our own. This does not mean that we are completely rejecting or closing our doors to the West but digging and unearthing our Asian deep roots. “It would be a mistake to assume that Western models cannot explain non-Western situations, and only

indigenous models could" (Glück, 2015, p. 4). We are thinking about the importance of establishing a global knowledge system with equal access (Glück, 2015). In this regard, decolonizing our minds is very important.

The colonization adversely affected the languages and communication in the colonial areas (Tsuda, 1993).There are three critical consequences can be seen as, 'first, the loss and disappearances of indigenous language; second effect is the emergence of pidgin and creoles among the colonized(Tsuda ,1993), and, the third effect is the "most adverse effect may be the most serious and deep rooted; colonization of the mind, the mental attitude of the people in the colonized areas. Because of the long-term colonial rule, feelings of inferiority, helplessness, incompetence, and dependency have been developed and impressed upon the minds of the colonized. As a result, they develop an inferiority complex and feelings of alienation and victimization, leading them to adopt self-denial, self-degradation, and a sense of 'anomie' (loss of self-identity and own culture (Tsuda, 1993, p. 72).

Asian communication scholar Wimal Dissanayake (2003), one of the leading figures in the field, emphasizes the importance of constructing Asian approaches, concepts, theories, and models of communication.

'While communication scholars both in Western countries and in Asia make use of Western models and paradigms of communication, minimal effort is made, except by a handful of scholars, to understand communication from an Asian perspective. This is primarily because there are no Asian theories and models in academic circulation that communication teachers and students can readily use. Moreover, communication scholars in Asia have, by and large, been trained in the West and have used books, journals, and research papers published under a Western scholarly dispensation. If communication is to become a more meaningful mode of inquiry in Asia —and, indeed, in the rest of the world —it has to connect with indigenous intellectual roots,

situated knowledge, and local modes of thinking. Hence, the need to move along the path of constructing Asian approaches, concepts, theories, and models of communication is most urgent'(Dissanayake, 2003, p. 18). Asiacentricity is one of the leading approaches for studying Asian-based communication. Yoshitaka Miike has been instrumental in the theoretical development of this communication approach.

The Asia-centric pursuit of communication theory is not new (Miike, 2016). The field of Asian communication theory emerged in the early 1980s (Miike,2016). Asiacentric communication scholarship is five-fold: (1) to construct theoretical knowledge that corresponds to Asian communication discourse, 2) to focus on the multiplicity and complexity of Asian communicative experience, (3) to reflexively constitute, and critically transform, Asian communication discourse, (4) to theorize how common aspects of humanity are expressed and understood in Asian cultural particularities, and (5) to critique Eurocentric biases in theory and research and help Asian researchers overcome academic dependency(Miike,2019, p. 66).

Some scholars have criticized Asiacentricity as a form of ethnocentrism that seeks to universalize Asian theories. However, Asiacentricity is not ethnocentric in nature (Miike, 2019), nor does it suggest that all theories should be developed with the intention of explaining universal phenomena.

As Yoshitaka Miike (2019) states, Asiacentricity "does not enforce an Asian perspective as the sole or superior way of understanding for non-Asians, nor does it use an Asian-centered viewpoint to examine non-Asian cultures and communication." Miike (2006) further emphasizes that Asiacentrists should keep three key principles in mind. First, they should give equal attention to formal concepts derived from religious and philosophical traditions as well as informal concepts rooted in folk cultures. Second, Asiacentrists should explore the interconnections among various concepts in order to holistically reveal the deeper structures of Asian cultural worldviews and values. Third, they

should engage in Asiacentric comparisons of cultural concepts and their communicative implications (Chen & Miike, 2006).

The Asian perspective does not mean blindly neglecting or rejecting Western theories, but instead paying close attention to Asian philosophical, cultural, social, political, economic, and traditional roots, and integrating this knowledge and experience with contemporary knowledge and experience. It is a balancing of the Eastern and Western theories.

It is important to expand the field of communication studies by engaging with diverse non-Western viewpoints (Dissanayake, 2003), while also drawing constructively from Western intellectual traditions. Such an approach encourages epistemological balance rather than exclusion, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of communication phenomena across different cultural contexts. Asia, which comprises more than half of the world's population, is still perceived as lagging behind the West in communication research (Ang & Zhou, 2023). This reflects deeper structural and historical imbalances in global knowledge production, where Western paradigms have long dominated theoretical development and academic legitimacy.In response to this imbalance, Asia-centric approach have emerged as critical intellectual movement. These perspectives do not advocate the rejection of Western theories but instead emphasize the necessity of developing contextually grounded frameworks that reflect Asian philosophical, cultural, and social realities. As such, the goal is not theoretical isolation but rather theoretical pluralism, where multiple epistemologies coexist and enrich one another in the global academic discourse.

Conclusion

The development of Asian communication is not merely a matter of following Western-based communication theories. Asian scholars need to see their ground and the digging of their roots of knowledge. In this regard, as Alatas (2000) described,'

the emancipation of the mind from the shackles of intellectual imperialism is the major condition for the development of a creative and autonomous social science tradition in developing societies'(p.44). I think this is also important for developed Asian societies, including Japan and South Korea. 'Asian languages, religious-philosophical traditions, and historical struggles are vast storehouses from which we can develop concepts, principles, propositions, and models for communication studies in Asia' (Chen &Miike, 2006, p. 4). However, it does not mean that Western models cannot explain non-Western situations.

'The call for alternative discourses in Asian social sciences does not imply any cultural homogeneity in Asia, or that there is anything like an Asian branch of social sciences. It does suggest, however, that the social sciences, like any form of knowledge, take place in a social and historical context, and must be relevant in this context'(Alataes, 2010, p. 172).

Wimal Dissanayake (2003) identifies four areas that could be productively explored in coming up with Asian approaches to communication. ‘The first is the investigation of classical texts, which would yield valuable insights into communication. These are texts of a philosophical nature'(Dissanayake, 2003, p. 19).'A second area for exploration is the vast storehouse of concepts that could be recovered from classical traditions and current cultural practices. This is an area in which much valuable work has already been done'(Dissanayake, 2003, p. 19).'Third, the whole arena of rituals and performances (folk-plays, folk-dances, ballads, rituals, and ceremonies) could provide us with a valuable cultural space in which to examine traditional concepts of communication and communication practices. These can be religious, social, and communal activities (Dissanayake, 2003, p. 19), and 'fourth, it is important that we pay close attention to the day-to-day communication behaviors and see how they have been understood and discursively enflamed by traditional cultures'(Dissanayake, 2003, p. 19). One of the main problems in the development of Asian communication studies is that the remarkable potential of Asian scholars remains hindered by a colonial mindset.

Even Asian communication textbooks are also Western textbooks or their translations. Syllabuses are not given adequate attention for their traditional and philosophical knowledge roots. Most countries are far from adequately funding research on their own grounds. Mostly, they take policy decisions based on research reports from the West across different fields. The critical problem is the lack of understanding of the importance of conducting communication research in their countries. It is also the case that opportunities for training in Communication research are not satisfactory. It can also be seen that, even though dissemination of new knowledge among relevant stake holders and general public is important, due to some barriers such as not enough translators, limited amount of experienced writers on research finding based articles for general public, attitudinal limitations on research based media contents, difficulties on publishing research reports, limited opportunities for publishing research reports in index journals and most of the indexed journals and published in the West and when publishing reports to be met publisher's requires /guidelines, financial difficulties when buying quality journals and publications in developing countries are among the main issues.

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The Impact of Google's Algorithm Updates on Search Engine Optimization Practices with Special Reference to the Views of the Urban Community

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Abstract

The recurrent algorithm updates introduced and launched by Google continue to transform Search Engine Optimization (SEO) practices. This is a core practice that reshapes the mould of digital communication. The current study examines how these updates, particularly the Helpful Content Update, affect content visibility and authenticity within digital humanities, with special reference to the Sri Lankan urban community. The research used a mixed-methods approach, which combined survey data from 200 participants with qualitative interviews, participant observation, and a case study of the Daily News. The findings reveal that although SEO strategies improve visibility and audience reach, they can also cause a conflict between content authenticity and algorithmic demands. Against this backdrop, the study highlights the risks of algorithmic bias and homogenization, and points to adaptation strategies. These insights contribute to the ongoing debates about the role of SEO in shaping knowledge dissemination and cultural diversity in the digital sphere.

Introduction

Background and Research Motivation

Since the advent of the internet, search engines have

become a decisive factor in how individuals retrieve and consume information. Google is established as the global leader in this field. The search engine continually refines its algorithm, which impacts how information is organized and presented on the web. These algorithmic refinements, formally known as algorithmic updates, aim at enhancing the user experience by delivering more accurate search results. However, this process affects SEO practices.

As a result of this procedural shift, the Digital Humanities has emerged as a field at the intersection of technology and traditional humanities. Therefore, it is evident that the procedural change in question has expanded the field of communication. This study positions SEO practices within communication dynamics to highlight how algorithmic updates shape public access to information and, by extension, scholarly discourse.

The relevance of this study lies in understanding how algorithm-driven SEO practices have permeated the digital humanities. These practices influence both the quality and quantity of information produced. This research addresses the gap between visibility and information authenticity. Google's continuous algorithm updates attempt to prioritize content over SEO-driven content, making this gap particularly significant.

Taken together, these dynamics reveal that the impact of SEO practices extends beyond technical visibility to shaping the broader conditions of information access, thereby setting the stage for the central problem this study addresses.

The central problem addressed in this research is the potential alienation and isolation caused by information overload, a phenomenon exacerbated by SEO practices that prioritize visibility over content quality. This research problem focuses on understanding how algorithm updates (though designed to enhance search accuracy) may inadvertently contribute to a narrowing of perspective and a decline in the diversity of information presented to users.

It is hypothesized that Google's algorithm updates hurt the digital humanities. They enhance the visibility of user-centric content but risk contributing to a large volume of SEO-driven content that may dilute the quality of the information presented to the audience.

Literature Review

The field of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) has evolved considerably since its inception. Algorithmic updates continue to play a decisive role in ranking content. This ranking procedure decides the discoverability of information presented to users. These changes affect three significant knowledge components online: quality, accessibility, and diversity.

Since Google plays the leadership role in the search engine market, its algorithm updates remain influential. This influential role has implications for SEO strategies and the broader culture of content creation across various digital fields, including digital humanities.

The importance of SEO culture lies in its role in determining the visibility and accessibility of content on the internet. The increasing attention to visibility and accessibility has led to competition among content uploaders, resulting in digital information overload —a growing concern. SEO strategies have been criticized for prioritizing visibility over the quality and authenticity of content (Berman & Katona, 2013). Over time, SEO practices have shifted from simple keyword optimization to more complex strategies that require technical expertise and content creation to keep up with the constantly evolving requirements of search engine algorithms.

Google's algorithm is central to the way information is retrieved and ranked on the web. Algorithmic updates such as Panda, Penguin, Hummingbird, and, more recently, the Helpful Content Update, have changed the SEO landscape (First Page Sage, 2023). Each of the above updates had the sole objective

of improving the user experience by prioritizing quality content. They also influenced how websites optimize their content to remain visible in search engine results.

Panda (introduced in 2011) targeted low-quality content, focusing on removing 'content farms' from top search results (Cutts, 2011). The Penguin update (2012) penalized sites that used manipulative link-building tactics to artificially boost rankings. The Hummingbird update (2013) shifted the focus to understanding search queries more human-like and emphasized semantic search rather than merely keyword matching (Singhal, 2013).

However, the most discussed update, which is the Helpful Content Update (2022), represented a more influential shift towards user-centric content. Google aimed to reward content written for humans rather than solely for SEO, with a focus on helpfulness, originality, and expertise (Schwartz, 2022). The update directly addressed the ongoing tension between content designed to manipulate search algorithms and content that truly serves users' needs. This marked a significant development in Google's efforts to refine search results quality and highlights the ongoing struggle between authentic content creation and algorithm-driven SEO strategies.

Theoretical Framework: Digital Humanities and Algorithmic Influence

The field of digital humanities intersects technology and traditional humanities disciplines, leveraging digital tools to analyze, interpret, and present humanistic content. The digital humanities users have increasingly relied on digital platforms to disseminate research and engage with larger audiences. This naturally made them susceptible to the effects of algorithmic shifts (Kirschenbaum, 2010). The evolution of Google's algorithms directly affects the visibility of academic content, requiring digital humanists to adopt SEO strategies to ensure their work reaches a broader audience.

A critical theory underlying the impact of SEO in digital humanities is the concept of algorithmic gatekeeping (Bucher, 2018). Google's algorithms act as intermediaries between users and online content. In doing so, they perform a gatekeeping function, determining which information is easily accessible and which remains less visible. This raises concerns about algorithms' potential to limit exposure to diverse perspectives. This is currently a pressing issue in the context of digital humanities. This issue will only increase when the dissemination of cultural and scholarly materials is intended to maintain diversity.

This points to the fact that cultural capital in the digital age is closely tied to visibility, which is primarily determined by one's ability to navigate and exploit SEO practices (Bourdieu, 1986; Marwick & boyd, 2011). As digital humanity users rely on visibility to share their work, they must balance the need to adhere to SEO norms with the imperative to maintain the integrity of their content. This balance is becoming increasingly difficult as SEO becomes more technical and demanding, pushing some creators to sacrifice depth and complexity in their work to meet algorithmic standards.

Impacts of SEO on Content Creation in Digital Humanities

SEO practices continue to influence how content is created, especially in fields that rely on digital dissemination. Research suggests that the pressure to rank well in search engines has led to the rise of clickbait content and the overemphasis on keyword optimization at the expense of substantive content (Noble, 2018). The SEO strategies are effective in increasing traffic, but they encourage content that caters more to algorithmic preferences than to human readers. This undermines the depth and quality of information (Jenkins, 2013).

SEO-driven content creation prioritizes content that is easy to digest and algorithmically optimized. As a result, rigorous scholarly material tends to be neglected. Content creators must

now balance the technical demands of SEO with the need to maintain the academic integrity (Jones, 2014).

SEO's impact extends beyond textual content to the design and functionality of digital humanities platforms. Websites and digital projects must now be optimized not only for content but also for speed, mobile accessibility, and ease of navigation to meet Google's ranking criteria (Gillmor, 2018). This study does not aim to provide a comprehensive technical discussion.

Nonetheless, mentioning technical requirements, such as improving user experience, is important because they place additional demands on digital humanists, who must either acquire technical skills or collaborate with SEO specialists to maintain online visibility.

Algorithmic Bias and the Risk of Homogenization

The algorithms driving search engines cannot be considered neutral. They reflect the biases of their creators and the data on which they are trained (Noble, 2018). Google's algorithms are observed to prioritize certain types of content. These contents are authoritative or popular sources. This prioritization inadvertently marginalizes lesser mainstream voices. This can be considered a bias with important implications for the digital humanities. The diversity of perspective is neglected here.

Algorithmic bias can lead to the overrepresentation of certain viewpoints while silencing others, particularly content from marginalized or underrepresented communities (Gillespie, 2014). For example, content from large, well-established institutions is more likely to appear at the top of search results. At the same time, independent scholars or less prominent institutions may struggle to gain visibility, regardless of the quality of their work. This creates a hierarchy of knowledge that privileges dominant narratives and can homogenize the range of information available to users.

This is the filter bubble phenomenon, highlighting the risk

of homogenization in the digital humanities. The more the users engage with algorithmically suggested content, the more they are exposed to information that reinforces their existing beliefs and interests. This limits their exposure to diverse or challenging ideas. This trend poses a significant challenge for the digital humanities, as it undermines the field's goal of promoting critical thinking and disseminating a wide range of perspectives.

Addressing the Tension Between SEO and Content Authenticity

The tension between SEO practices and content authenticity has been a recurring theme in the literature. Several scholars have argued that while SEO is necessary for visibility in the digital age, it should not come at the expense of content integrity (Enge, 2019). The Helpful Content Update introduced by Google aims to address this issue by penalizing content created solely for SEO rather than to inform or assist users genuinely.

However, the success of this update in curbing the dominance of SEO-driven content remains to be seen. Otherwise, it could be considered a questionable phenomenon where the boundary lines seem blurred. Some studies suggest that algorithm updates can improve content quality in the short term as SEO practices quickly adapt to new algorithmic requirements. These requirements find new ways to game the system (Ziakis et al., 2019). This constant tug-of-war between algorithmic updates and SEO strategies suggests that content creators must continually innovate to maintain both visibility and authenticity.

This growing tension between technical optimization and scholarly integrity provides the foundation for the present study. The following methodology was adopted to examine these dynamics in the urban context systematically.

Methodology

Research Design

This research adopts a mixed-methods approach to analyze the influence of Google's algorithm updates on the SEO culture within digital humanities. The mixed-methods framework combines quantitative data from structured surveys with qualitative insights from interviews, participant observation, and case studies. This study has utilised both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of algorithmic changes and to address the social and cultural implications of SEO practices.

The quantitative component focuses on assessing the awareness of Google's algorithm updates among media professionals, digital humanities users, and SEO specialists. It also evaluates the effects of these updates on their content creation and visibility strategies. Meanwhile, the qualitative aspect deals with the subjective experiences of key stakeholders. It explores their strategies for adapting to algorithmic changes. The objective of this exploration is to address the challenges associated with SEO-driven content creation.

Sampling Strategy

The sample for this study was drawn from an urban population in Sri Lanka, primarily focusing on individuals who engage with or contribute to digital humanities content. Several factors guided this decision. The digital divide between urban and rural areas, along with higher levels of digital literacy among urban populations, was identified as a core factor. Furthermore, urban communities have greater access to digital technologies. Therefore, they are more likely to interact with search engine algorithms and SEO practices daily.

The survey questions were designed using a combination of multiple-choice, Likert-scale, and demographic items. Care was taken to ensure content validity by piloting the questionnaire

with a small group of participants. Participants were recruited through purposive and snowball sampling.

The sampling process followed these criteria:

- Media professionals: Journalists, content creators, and editors who regularly engage in digital publishing and SEO optimization.
- Digital humanities users: Academic and research users within the digital humanities field who actively use digital tools to disseminate their work.
- SEO specialists: Professionals responsible for optimizing content for search engines, particularly those with experience adapting to algorithmic updates.
- Digital consumers: General users from the urban population in Sri Lanka, focusing on their media consumption habits and awareness of how Google's algorithm shapes the visibility of content.

The purposive sampling helped target individuals with expertise relevant to the research objectives. The snowball sampling enabled the recruitment of additional participants through referrals from initial respondents.

Data Collection Techniques:

Quantitative Data Collection

Quantitative data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The questionnaire comprised both closed-ended and Likert-scale questions, designed to capture the participants' understanding of SEO practices, their awareness of Google algorithm updates (e.g., Panda, Penguin, Helpful Content), and how these updates influence their work or media consumption. The survey targeted a sample of 200 urban participants.

The structured questions were divided into the following categories:

- Demographic Information: Age, education level, profession, and frequency of digital device usage.
- SEO Awareness: Familiarity with SEO practices, knowledge of algorithm updates, and their perceived impact on digital visibility.
- Content Creation Practices: For content creators, the questionnaire focused on how they balance SEO strategies with content authenticity and user experience.
- Media Consumption: For digital consumers, questions assessed their awareness of algorithm-driven content recommendations and their attitudes toward the visibility of various types of content.

The quantitative data collected from the survey were analyzed using SPSS to identify trends, correlations, and patterns in the influence of Google's algorithm updates on participants' practices and perceptions.

Qualitative Data Collection

The qualitative data were gathered through the following techniques:

01) Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a sample of 20 participants, including SEO experts, digital humanities scholars, and media professionals. These interviews were designed to provide in-depth insights into their personal experiences with adapting to Google’s algorithm updates, how they navigate the challenges posed by SEO requirements, and their strategies for maintaining content quality while optimizing for search engines.

The interviews focused on the following key themes:

- The impact of major algorithm updates (e.g., Penguin, Helpful

Content) on SEO strategies.

- Balancing SEO optimization with the integrity of scholarly content.
- Perceptions of algorithmic bias and its implications for information diversity.
- Future expectations for SEO practices and search engine algorithms in the digital humanities.

02) Participant Observation: To further understand how SEO culture manifests in real-world scenarios, participant observation was carried out in several settings, including newsrooms, academic conferences, and digital content creation workshops. The researcher observed how content creators and SEO specialists responded to algorithmic changes, including the discussions and strategies they used to adapt.

Key aspects observed include:

- The interaction between content creators and SEO experts when planning digital strategies.
- The role of algorithms in shaping the selection of content topics, language use, and presentation formats.
- The challenges content creators face when attempting to balance SEO and creativity.

03) Case Study: A case study was conducted on the Daily News, a Sri Lankan newspaper that transitioned to digital in 1995. As one of the first South Asian newspapers to go online, the Daily News provides a unique historical perspective on how media outlets have adapted to both the digital environment and the ever-evolving algorithms of search engines. The case study involved an analysis of archival records and interviews with key figures from the Daily News to trace how algorithm updates have shaped their SEO strategies over time.

The case study focused on:

- The technical and editorial challenges faced during the

transition from print to digital.

- The evolution of SEO strategies in response to Google's algorithm updates.
- The impact of these updates on digital visibility and reader engagement.

Data Analysis

3.4.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data obtained from the survey was processed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis in SPSS. Descriptive statistics provided insights into the demographic composition of the sample, their level of SEO awareness, and the impact of algorithmic updates on their content creation or consumption practices.

Correlation analysis was employed to explore relationships between:

- SEO awareness and media consumption patterns (e.g., whether those who are more aware of algorithm updates are more selective in their media consumption).
- The influence of Google updates on content creators' strategies, particularly how knowledge of updates like the Helpful Content Update correlates with changes in their SEO practices.

The results from the quantitative analysis helped identify patterns and trends that were further explored through qualitative methods.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative data gathered from interviews, observations, and the case study were analyzed through thematic analysis. This involved identifying recurring themes and patterns in how algorithmic updates shape SEO culture and content creation in the digital humanities. The analysis focused on:

- The adaptation strategies used by content creators and SEO specialists to cope with algorithmic changes.
- The perceived tension between SEO-driven optimization and maintaining the authenticity and academic rigor of content.
- Concerns about algorithmic bias and the potential marginalization of certain voices or perspectives in the digital humanities.

Ethical Considerations

• This study adhered to standard research ethics. All participants were informed of the study's purpose and provided informed consent before participating. Data confidentiality was ensured, and no personally identifiable information was disclosed.

Limitations

This study focuses on the urban population of Sri Lanka, which may limit the generalizability of its findings to other geographical regions or demographic groups. Additionally, the study is constrained by the relatively small sample size for qualitative interviews and participant observation, which may not fully capture the diversity of experiences within the digital humanities community. Lastly, the research focuses specifically on Google's algorithms, potentially overlooking the influence of other search engines or digital platforms on SEO practices.

Results

This section presents the findings from the mixed-methods research conducted with 200 urban Sri Lankan participants, complemented by qualitative interviews, participant observation, and a case study of the Daily News. The results illuminate how Google's algorithm updates have reshaped SEO practices in the digital humanities, while also highlighting the broader cultural

and communicative consequences for Sri Lanka's urban media landscape.

1. Quantitative Findings: Awareness and Adaptation

The structured survey distributed to urban respondents via Google Forms and supplemented by in-person oral administration revealed significant patterns in SEO awareness and media consumption:

• Awareness of Algorithm Updates:
A majority (62%) of respondents indicated familiarity with major updates such as Panda, Penguin, and the Helpful Content Update. However, only 38% felt confident in their ability to adapt to these changes without compromising the quality of their work or consumption choices. This points to a gap between awareness and practical application. Many respondents acknowledged that they relied on second-hand information from peers, workshops, or online forums to stay updated.

• Perceived Impact on Content Quality:
Over half of the surveyed content creators (54%) admitted that they had adjusted writing styles. Examples include shortening articles, increasing keyword frequency, and structuring headlines to meet SEO requirements. Among consumers, 47% expressed the belief that online content was becoming repetitive and less diverse. This is attributable to algorithmic filtering that privileges familiar sources over new perspectives.

• Consumption Patterns:
The analysis of demographic and media-use data showed that younger respondents (aged 18–30) were more likely to engage with news via mobile devices and social media platforms, whereas older participants leaned toward established digital newspapers. Across all age groups, participants reported increased reliance

on algorithm-driven recommendations (such as Google's Top Stories or trending news) as a primary filter for content selection.

These results suggest that the urban community demonstrates high levels of digital literacy in terms of device use. However, there is less confidence and sophistication in adapting to the shifts caused by algorithmic updates. The SPSS analysis also revealed a weak but significant correlation between awareness of algorithm updates and selective media consumption. This indicates that those with greater awareness tended to diversify their content sources.

2. Qualitative Findings: Lived Experiences and Perceptions

Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with 20 participants, including SEO specialists, media editors, and content creators, provided insights into the challenges of balancing authenticity with visibility. A recurring theme was the quantity over quality dilemma. Here, the algorithmic incentives encouraged frequent updates and superficial content. One SEO specialist remarked:

"The balancing act between SEO and content quality is becoming more difficult, especially when algorithms keep evolving at such a rapid pace."

Editors highlighted the pressure to choose trending, SEO-friendly topics over long-form investigative journalism. A digital humanities scholar echoed this concern, noting that Google's Helpful Content Update, despite its intention to prioritize user- centric content, often still rewards formulaic structures optimized for search rankings.

Observations

Observational studies conducted in Colombo's public spaces, including cafes, buses, trains, and university campuses, confirmed the ubiquity of digital device use across urban demographics. The data revealed consistent patterns of multitasking, where individuals engaged simultaneously in content consumption and interpersonal interaction. The

researcher observed that algorithm-driven feeds often dominated participants' engagement, with conversations revolving around trending topics surfaced by search engines or social platforms.

These observations underscore a broader trend of digitally mediated attention. Here, the interpersonal communication is filtered through algorithmic priorities, sometimes at the expense of face-to-face dialogue.

Participant Observation

Active participation in SEO-focused forums, academic workshops, and digital content creation communities revealed internal debates about the ethics of SEO practices. Some practitioners embraced technical strategies to game algorithms. Others expressed discomfort, viewing such practices as undermining the authenticity of digital humanities content. This reinforced the survey's finding of tension between visibility and academic rigor, particularly among scholars attempting to maintain intellectual depth while remaining discoverable online.

Case Study: Daily News and the Digital Transition

The Daily News, which became the first South Asian newspaper to establish an online presence in 1995, provides an illustrative case study of long-term adaptation to digital shifts.

- Sender Perspective: Early challenges included a lack of technical know-how in web development and content management. Editorial teams were compelled to experiment with basic digital infrastructures, relying on trial-and-error learning.
- Receiver Perspective: At the time, internet accessibility in Sri Lanka was limited, and the concept of online readership was unfamiliar to most citizens. This mismatch created challenges in building an initial audience.

- Outcomes: Despite these difficulties, the Daily News' pioneering move established an important precedent for South Asian digital journalism. Over time, however, interviews with editorial staff revealed increasing reliance on SEO strategies to remain competitive. By the 2010s, the newspaper was prioritizing keyword-heavy headlines and frequently updated stories to sustain visibility within Google's search rankings.

The case study demonstrates the trajectory from experimentation to dependence on algorithm-driven practices.

Emerging Themes

From the integration of quantitative and qualitative data, three cross-cutting themes emerge:

01) Tension between authenticity and visibility

02) Across all data sources, respondents emphasized that while SEO practices enhance discoverability, they dilute content authenticity. For example, survey participants noted that repetitive formats were becoming the norm. The interviews revealed a persistent struggle to reconcile academic rigor with search engine requirements.

03) Algorithmic bias and cultural homogenization

04) The results confirm that algorithmic gatekeeping favors established institutions and dominant narratives, sidelining smaller voices. Urban consumers frequently reported seeing the same global or Western news sources, with limited representation of local or alternative perspectives. This raises concerns about cultural alienation and the erosion of Sri Lankan media diversity.

05) Digital alienation

06) Observations and interviews both highlighted a sense of alienation, consistent with Marx's theory of estrangement. Individuals reported feeling disconnected from in-person

interactions and overwhelmed by information overload. While digital platforms promised greater connectivity, they often produced isolation, reinforcing echo chambers and limiting exposure to diverse viewpoints.

Empirical Generalisation

Although the study sample was limited to Sri Lanka's urban community, the triangulation of surveys, interviews, and observations supports a broader interpretation. The consistency of findings across diverse contexts—from public transport to academic settings—suggests that these patterns cannot be considered confined to Colombo. Moreover, given Google's global influence through its algorithm, the findings have broader relevance for other developing countries experiencing similar transitions from traditional journalism to digital media.

Summary of Key Results

- High awareness of algorithm updates, but limited confidence in adapting without loss of content quality.
- A growing dependence on algorithm-driven recommendations among consumers is leading to homogenized information flows.
- Content creators and media professionals experience tension between SEO optimization and authenticity, with visible effects on journalistic and academic integrity.
- Observational data highlights screen-dominated communication patterns, often at the expense of face-to-face interaction.
- The Daily News case study exemplifies the long-term shift from digital experimentation to reliance on algorithm-driven SEO.
- Broader implications include cultural homogenization, algorithmic bias, and digital alienation within Sri Lanka's urban media landscape.

These results frame the subsequent discussion on how Google's algorithm updates shape SEO practices and thereby influence communication, culture, and identity in the digital sphere.

Discussion

Building on the empirical results, this discussion interprets the implications of Google's algorithm updates for SEO practices, digital humanities, and the broader field of communicology. The findings reveal the complexity of balancing visibility with authenticity. It also draws attention to emerging risks of cultural homogenization and digital alienation.

Authenticity Versus Visibility

The results highlight a persistent tension between the pursuit of visibility and the preservation of content authenticity. Survey participants and interviewees alike expressed concerns that SEO-driven strategies, such as keyword-heavy headlines, short-form articles, and rapid publishing cycles, compromise scholarly depth. This confirms the clickbait conundrum described by Jenkins (2013), where the imperative to generate traffic undermines intellectual discipline.

Google's Helpful Content Update was designed to reward human-centric writing. However, the findings show that it has not fully addressed the prevalent tension. Content creators continue to perceive algorithmic incentives as encouraging formulaic, quantity-driven production. This outcome represents a structural challenge in contemporary communication: visibility metrics dominate content strategies, at the expense of nuance and originality.

Algorithmic Bias and Cultural Homogenization

The study further confirms the role of algorithmic bias

in amplifying dominant voices while marginalizing local or independent perspectives. Interviews with media professionals revealed that content from well-established, globally recognized outlets consistently outperforms smaller or alternative sources. This pattern does not take quality into consideration.

This situation echoes Noble's (2018) critique of the algorithmic discrimination dynamic, which contributes to a homogenization of content. The risk can be considered acute in the Sri Lankan context. Western narratives dominate the online space, which can marginalise the local cultural identities. Observational data reinforce this concern, as urban consumers reported encountering a limited range of perspectives shaped by algorithm-driven recommendations. The danger is that Sri Lanka's cultural diversity is subsumed under global, homogenized media flows.

Digital Alienation and Social Isolation

Observational and interview data also shed light on the phenomenon of digital alienation. The individuals become estranged from meaningful interpersonal interaction. Consistent with Marx's theory of alienation (Petrović, 1963), participants described increased isolation despite greater online connectivity. The displacement of communal, face-to-face interaction by screen- dominated engagement suggests that algorithms not only curate content but also shape social rhythms and habits. This alienation raises questions about the long-term consequences of algorithmic mediation on communication practices and social cohesion. It emphasizes the importance of digital literacy not only as a technical skill set but also as a cultural and ethical framework within the digital information ecosystem.

Implications for Policy and Cybersecurity Law

The findings also point toward the need for future research in Cybersecurity Law and digital regulation. Algorithmic

gatekeeping, SEO manipulation, and the homogenization of content highlight gaps in governance around transparency, accountability, and fairness in digital information systems. As algorithms increasingly determine access to knowledge, they also raise questions about data privacy, digital rights, and the ethical responsibilities of technology companies.

Opening this conversation to the domain of cybersecurity law is crucial. Regulation could address:

- Transparency requirements for algorithmic decision-making.
- Protections against algorithmic bias to safeguard cultural diversity and minority voices.
- Data privacy and surveillance concerns, as SEO-driven personalization relies on user tracking.
- Accountability frameworks ensuring that digital platforms operate in ways consistent with democratic and cultural values.

This research aims to establish a link between SEO practices and cybersecurity law to invite interdisciplinary dialogue that extends beyond communicology into law, policy, and governance. Such integration would strengthen user protections and help preserve cultural integrity in an increasingly algorithmic society.

The study demonstrates that SEO practices shaped by algorithmic updates cannot be understood purely as technical adjustments. They are communicology phenomena with cultural, ethical, and political dimensions. To protect authenticity and diversity, adaptation strategies such as selective optimization, collaboration between academics and SEO specialists, and targeted digital literacy programs must be pursued.

At the same time, this research highlights the urgency of developing legal and policy frameworks to mitigate algorithmic bias and alienation.

Conclusion

This study has examined the impact of Google's algorithm updates on SEO practices within Sri Lanka's urban digital humanities community. Through a mixed-methods approach, incorporating surveys, interviews, participant observation, and a case study of the Daily News, the research revealed a persistent struggle between visibility and authenticity. While algorithmic updates such as the Helpful Content Update aim to promote user-centric content, in practice, they reinforce a culture of repetition, formulaic production, and algorithm-driven incentives that dilute academic rigor and journalistic depth.

The findings also highlight the risks of algorithmic bias and cultural homogenization. The search engines prioritise dominant voices and established institutions and marginalize alternative or local perspectives. This narrows the range of information accessible to users. For Sri Lanka, this presents a serious cultural challenge. The erosion of local identities in the face of globalized, homogenized content flows are a case in point. Observational and interview data further highlight how algorithm- driven consumption feeds digital alienation, displacing communal interaction and deepening social isolation.

These insights have important implications for communicology and the digital humanities. They reveal that SEO practices cannot be reduced to technical optimization strategies but must be understood as cultural and communicative phenomena that reshape knowledge production, media practices, and social relationships. Addressing these challenges requires not only adaptive strategies such as selective optimization, collaboration with SEO specialists, and digital literacy programs but also broader frameworks that situate SEO within questions of power, governance, and ethics.

In this regard, the study points toward an urgent need to extend research into the domain of Cybersecurity Law and digital regulation. Algorithmic gatekeeping and SEO manipulation raise unresolved questions about transparency, fairness, and

accountability in digital communication systems. Policies in this area could ensure that algorithmic practices respect cultural diversity, protect user rights, and mitigate the risks of bias and alienation. Future interdisciplinary research should therefore explore how communicology can intersect with cybersecurity law to design regulatory mechanisms that balance innovation with cultural integrity, ensuring that digital platforms serve both informational accuracy and societal well-being.

The integration of communicology perspectives with legal and policy insights, scholars, and practitioners is a necessity as it can contribute to building a more inclusive, ethical, and culturally grounded digital environment. This paper focused on Sri Lanka's urban community with its implications that extend far beyond its borders. The objective was to offer a lens for understanding the global intersections of technology, communication, and human culture in the algorithmic age.

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Transmission of the Kolam Folk Drama Tradition to the General Public through Various Communication Media

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Abstract

There were three types of folk drama traditions popular in various parts of Sri Lanka that used the four-way gesture. Kolam took the second place, and the first drama tradition to bring the stories to the audience through the drama of a mixture of demons, ghosts, and gods was the Kolam folk drama. Various communication media have been used since ancient times to convey human ideas, and the question is how Kolam, which began in Sri Lanka in the 17th - 18th centuries, was transmitted to ordinary people. Among the various communication media, drama was presented to the audience through Jataka and folk stories. A variety of communication media were adopted for that. It can be pointed out that the Kolam dramatist was able to transmit the tradition of Kolam folk drama to the general public through a variety of communication media, including allowing the general public to hear the selected Jataka stories first, and then dramatically presenting them, using the plot prepared using verse, using the elements and movements to convey ideas in a satirical manner, using theatrical techniques such as similes and irony, using different faces to depict the behavior systems of people from other levels of society through masks, using the semi-circular stage and shaping its various decorations with the subject of demonic beliefs, using the demon drum or lowland drum as another aspect of communication, and using music to

enhance the taste and using conversational situations to portray characters and provide the audience with the opportunity to recognize common human traits, etc

Keywords: *Kolam folk drama tradition, various communication media, transmission, humor, sound decoration, meaning decoration, four-way gesture, masks*

Introduction:

Lakshmi artists succeeded in creating two common folk drama traditions based on the words kolam and nadagam, which were used sarcastically in various parts of Sri Lanka. The first folk drama tradition was born on a threshing floor, with entertainment and faith in God as its primary focus. Subsequently, Kolam, which became popular in the lowland areas with a mixture of demon, God, and ghost beliefs, was first developed through various media to satirically address the social, economic, and life problems that arose in Sri Lanka at that time. This article aims to conduct an investigative analysis of it. The content was shaped by revealing that beliefs and beliefs are a popular concept in many countries of the world, and that beliefs such as demons, ghosts, etc. existed in Sri Lanka even before the arrival of Mahinda. Then, various research on Kolam folk drama were briefly presented, and the opinions given by scholars were mentioned. When viewed in the present sense, a special feature of the Kolam folk dramas was how the folk drama tradition became popular in Sri Lanka. Attention was paid to the plots used in Kolam drama and the various poetic creations used for it. Then, their interest in sound, meaning and visual representation used as technical means and the use of masks, which were a specialty of Kolam's, were discussed.

Objectives of the study

The objective of this study is to investigate the various

communication media used by the artists to bring the Kolam folk drama, which became popular in the lowland areas of Sri Lanka, to the audience.

Problems of the study:

How was the Kolam folk drama, which became popular in Sri Lanka in the 17th-18th centuries, transmitted to the general public? What were the techniques used for that?

Study Methodology

Among the methods followed in this study, three methods were followed: collecting data by meeting Kolam artists in Udupila, Mirissa in the field study method, presenting a series of questions to Kolam artists under the social survey method, discussing relevant issues and collecting data in a friendly manner, and consulting source books.

Literature review

Written by Professor Ediriweera Sarachchandra in 1968 *"Sinhala Gami Natakaya"* The Origins of Drama is a research book that focuses on a particular folk drama tradition and a number of other topics.

By Punchi Banda Sannasgala in the 1965 Sahityadhara Literary Anthology *"Sinhala Nadagam ha Nuthya"* A brief description was given under the title in the article.

Written by Martin Wickramasinghe Shureen in 1970 *Sinhala Natakaya ha Sandakiduruwa* The work is a book written on a wide range of topics.

Dharmaraja Thero, published in the tenth issue of Chinthaka magazine in 1970-71 *Natya Kalawe Prabhavya* Another study.

1971 Professor Sarachchandra *"Wes muhunu da Saba*

muhunu da" The work is a study of the art of masks.

Published in 1995, edited by Professor Jayasena Kottagoda Pahatharata Shanthi Karma කෘතිය පහතරට ශාන්තිකර්මවල ලක්ෂණ පිළිබඳ ව කරන ලද අධ්‍යයනයකි.

Published in 1995, edited by Professor Jayasena Kottagoda *"Sinahala Narthna Kalava"* A study of.

Written by the same author in 1998 *"Gami Nataka Praveshaya"* A work that analyzes the characteristics of lowland and upland peace rituals.

Presented as a publication by A. Goda in 2009 *"Sokari ha Kavi Nadagam"* The work is another study.

Published by the Sinhala Department of the University of Colombo in 2016 *"Pahatha Rata Mirisse Kolam"* A work compiled and edited by Dr. Ranjith Senanayake.

Launched by Dr. Ranjith Senanayake as a publication of the 2022 As Godage *"Natya ha Natya Kalava"* The work is a study that explains a lot of information, such as the history of Kolam drama, storylines, and mask art, under the origins of Sinhala drama.

Data Analysis

It is believed that since prehistoric times, human beings have used body movements as a means of communication to express their ideas. In the Pleistocene, after hunting an animal, they would dance around the animal they had killed, making various sounds and moving their horns to release the excitement. As humans entered the Neolithic Age, around 8000 BC, various rituals were performed by attributing divinity to natural objects as a result of following religious beliefs. On the island of Bali in eastern Indonesia, various parades were held during wartime to convey ideas in a dramatic form. Critics agree that prehistoric humans lived in various parts of the world with religious beliefs and were motivated to express ideas in the form of drama through

the medium of physical, verbal, spiritual, and dietary gestures. (The seven ages of the Theatre by Richard Southern P: 85) It is clear that kolam artists were able to provide social understanding, at least to some extent, through the use of kolam, which was a mixture of religious beliefs.

Sokari, Kolam and Nadagam are a traditional art medium trio that was developed to severely ridicule the various problems, sufferings, social injustices and beliefs faced by the ordinary people of Sri Lanka in the 17th-18th centuries. It is special that the media trio contains various heritages and reserves that are unique to them. It is a feature common not only to Sri Lanka but also to countries such as Japan and China. Japan's 'Kabuki' and 'No' drama arts are unique to it, while 'Holi' is a cultural element unique to India. Sri Lanka has had a lot of artistic elements based on demons, ghosts, gods, ghosts and beliefs since ancient times. The Shanti Karma rituals such as Mahason Samayam, Rata Yakuma, Sanni Yakuma etc. were based on the belief in Yaksha. In contrast, the Ura Yakkama, Naya Yakkama, Veddi Yakkama, Boru Yakkama, associated with Devol Madu, Puna Madu, Kiri Madu, Kohomba Kankariya, and the Eth Bandhana and Mee Bandhana, etc., were based on the beliefs in Yaksha, Deva, and Preta, respectively. These beliefs were carried out through various means of communication. Movement of the limbs was the main element and verbal expression was expressed through conversational moments.

The Shanti Karma is developed from the beginning to the end through poetry and singing. These songs, which have pure and pure literary value, are also full of literary taste. The various beauties contained in them show great potential to enhance the taste. These poems, which are not only figurative and allegorical but also a mixture of allusions, alliteration, and eliximab, are evidence of the permanence of the rituals of the Santhikas. The use of masks was another well-known means of communication. Apart from the sounds of drums and flutes used to depict situations, the folk artist was also able to convey ideas further through disguises.

What kind of Kolam? Don't come and do Kolam with me, you are doing kolam more than you want. The term 'kolam' and 'nadagam' has come to be used sarcastically in various parts of Sri Lanka, as a mocking expression of the word 'Kolam', which is used widely in Sinhala society in particular, and became so popular in the 17th-18th centuries that it became a folk drama tradition. The society of Sri Lanka, which became a colony of European nations, was under great pressure as a result of their injustices, taxation, and land grabbing. Therefore, the main flavor of Kolam folk drama is satire.

The Kolam folk drama tradition is an art tradition that criticized various weaknesses in the society at that time. Therefore, the attention of scholars was drawn to this matter and a lot of research was also carried out by them. To briefly explain it

01) Among the academic researches on the Kolam drama, the one conducted by Professor D. Pertolad of the University of Prague the Ceremonial of the Sinhalese – (1930)

02) Another research that leads to an understanding of the original form of the Kolam play is the Kolam text translated into English by John Callaway. John Callaway – Yakkum Natanawa and Kolam Natanawa Cingalese Poem, London (1829).

03) Another research by Dr. M.H. Gunathilaka, entitled “Kolam Drama and the Art of Masks in Sri Lanka” (1964)

04) Another book published by S. Godage is Sinhala Village Drama written by Professor Ediriweera Sarachchandra. (1968)

05) Gunatileka M. H., Mime, Mask and satiren Kolam of Ceylon land, a Note on the Fire Women pot Mask, (1970-81)

06) Kolam Mask Exhibition, the first performance of the Drama Club of the Vidyodaya University of Sri Lanka (1966)

07) Mask Dances of Sri Lanka, M.H. Gunathilaka - (1965)

08) Kolam Masks, Art Magazine, Art Council, Colombo (1963)

09) Mask and Kolam Dance, Wijesekera Nandadeva, Gunasena and Company, Colombo (1982)

10) Sinhala Kolam Tradition, Professor Gamini Dela Bandara, Printed by Piyasiri Printing Systems - (2000)

These researches and studies confirm that the Kolam folk drama tradition was used as an art medium to convey the irregularities, corruption and public problems prevailing in the society at that time to the common people. The fact that research and studies have been conducted on the Kolam folk drama tradition through several aspects such as its content, dramatic plots, the expression of the actions of anti-social elements in front of the common people through the use of masks, the satirical dances or movements used, the well-known social facts, the language used, etc. is a great support for the perpetuation of this art medium.

Although the Sinhalese are Buddhists, they have long been associated with various faiths and beliefs. This is a village religion, says Professor Manalath Obeysekara "The Great Tradition and the Little in the Perspective of Sinhalese Buddhism" The book provides information. Among them, Kolam is a type of folk drama rooted in faith in God, with a long history. The Mahavamsa states that it is a popular cultural element among the rural people of this country.

'Komala dance is named after a place in the world'

(Maha Vamsaya 1986, page 194)

The body of stories used for Kolam dance includes South Indian names such as King Usirathatan of Kalinga, and accordingly, Kolam dance cannot be said to be a type of dance that migrated from South India, and many local folk poems, folk stories, and folk dramas show this characteristic, that is, the association with South Indian names and places. The German national Grand Wedl has said that the original form of these

dances is Sri Lankan, and Professor Pertold is also said to hold the same opinion. (Dharmadasa, 1999-45 pages)

If we summarize some of the views expressed by scholars and researchers on the Kolam village drama tradition,

“Yakku Natanawa and Kolam Natanawa Callaway John, (1829) It's his idea.

“The dance festivals known as the Kolam dance are a spectacle, not very colorful, and difficult for a European to appreciate who studies the rural culture of Sri Lanka.” (Pertold, 1925)

“The worship of the Sinhalese is a kind of dance.” O pertold Archiv Orientalni., Vol II 1930 Page 218.

‘It did not take long for artists to appreciate the aesthetic qualities of the Kolam dances and the touching masked performances that they reflect.” Gunathilaka M.H. “Kolam Drama Literature” Colombo, 1968

‘Kolam dance is a complete reflection of the satirical power of the people.” (Gunathilaka

M.H. Kolam and Nadagam in the Local Theatre Tradition, Special Issue of Sahitya Sanghara, 1984, page 08)

“Kolam is a type of folk drama based on faith in God with a long history.”

(The Greate Tradition and the little in the perpective of Sinhalese Buddhism. The Journal of Asian Studies, Vol. 22, 2005) Gananath Obesekara.

Professor Sarachchandra in Sinhala Folk Drama states, “Kolam dance is a complete reflection of the power of folk satire and satire. There is a special dance that the artist sees as suitable for each kolam. When one looks at the dances of someone like Panikkirala and Nonchi Akka, one cannot help but feel that the artist who first directed this dance intelligence and created the characters of various people to be expressed through dance must

have been an innate genius." (Sarachchandra, 1968, page 87)

'Although there are features of various Shantikramas, one of the main features of Kolam dramas, which can be considered to have originated from the Shantikrama called Daha Ata Sanniya, is the wearing of masks and dancing.'(Sarachchandra, 1968: page 85)

According to these ideas, it is evident that this type of drama, which was seen in the ancient Sinhala society, when viewed in its present sense, has depictions of the four Sagasatara gestures.

The use of the Guru and other specific characters in the Sasaga book.

The use of a Sasaga poetic story or plot.

The use of the Sasaga arena or stage.

The use of the Dagasa lowland Yak drums and background music. It is no secret that the folk dramatist had the power to produce dramas due to such features.

Areas Famous for Kolam Drama

Many areas specialize in performing Kolam drama. Until recently, the Kolam dance was prevalent in these areas.

Matara District (Mirissa, Kamburugamuwa, Bandaramulla, Devinuwara, Dodampahala, Nakulugamuwa, Udupila), Galle District (Gintota, Thotagamuwa, Wakwella, Ambalangoda, Suddagoda, Kommala, Tunduwa, Himbutugoda, Hannaka, Pitigala), Kalutara District (Olaboduwa, Pokunuwita, Polgampola, Raigama, Kanawela, Horana, Meelama, Peraigama), Colombo District (Hokandara, Pannipitiya, Bokundara, Arewwala), Gampaha District (Ganemulla, Batuwantha, Bemmulla, Manalana, Rukgahawela, Meegoda), although a number of Kolam drama groups have lived in the areas above for about half a century, until now. The number of artists who preserve the art

of dance is a handful. They live in several districts.

In Matara District: Mirissa Area

In Galle District: Ambalangoda Pitigala Area

In Kalutara District: Olaboduwa Pelawatte, Miriswatte, Raigama

In many areas, in the early days, the traditional elder artists who gave leadership and respect to the Kolam dance groups are no longer alive. Only in the following areas should we praise the efforts of a few of their children and grandchildren to preserve this village drama tradition.

Professor A.M.H. Gunathilaka published in 1968 "Kolam Nataka Sahithya." The research also states that Kolam has been preserved. Still, it is a matter of regret that this folk drama art is rapidly declining in those areas, as the entire country has been influenced by commercialism. However, it is a matter of joy that the Mirissa Udupila artists have been keen to preserve the Kolam acting tradition until recently.

With the support of all these artists, Dr. Milton Senaratne, who led the Mirissa Kolam drama, revived the dying Kolam by staging performances in the areas mentioned above. It is a matter of joy that our attention has also been focused on publishing a work titled 'Mirissa Kolam Kuttama'.

The manuscript used for the aforementioned Kolam drama performances is that of Martin Amarasinghe (who passed away in 2019 at the age of 102. He had preserved the masks known as Kolam Kuttama in a room of his house for over 50 years and, based on the experience gained from his descendants, he also wrote the Kolam handbook by combining previous sources.) According to the manuscript, 15 verses are included on the birth of Kolam. (The Kolam poems used for this were written by Martin Amarasinghe, who lived in the Udupila village of Mirissa and preserved the Kolam masks for 52 years. The page numbers are not included, and the relevant poems were used in conjunction with that manuscript.)

තිත් මතඟ දිනි ඳු
ගුණ මිණි සපිරි මනි ඳු
කෙළෙස ඈ දිනි ඳු
වඳිම් අදරින් සරණ මුනි ඳු

(Excerpted from Martin Amarasinghe's manuscript)

The first three verses are dedicated to the name of the Three. Then, in the fourth verse, the blessings of God are prayed for, and after that, the remaining verses are dedicated to the birth of the kolam, after which permission is sought from the congregation.

පවර මුළු දිය තේ
නොහැර පැවතෙන දිය තේ
ඇසුවන්ව යහප තේ
කියම් කෝලම් පැවති උප තේ

It ends with the birth (excerpted from Martin Amarasinghe's manuscript)

වදාළ බස් පිළිගෙන රජ එදි නේ
සදා කැපූ කෝලම් රුව එදි නේ
නදා සිරින් රඟ දැක්වූ සඳි නේ
එදා බිසව දොළ දුක් සන් සිඳු නේ (එම)

Although 15 verses belong to this handbook, only the necessary parts were selected in the Kolam Sandarshanas and limited to five verses, and the birth of Kolam was mentioned.

One of the main strategies for transmitting the Kolam drama tradition to ordinary people is to use stories from the Jataka book as seed material. Rather than presenting a story to the readers through a printed medium, by performing it in front of them, the story is watched, and at the same time, by directing the past object into the field of vision through the physical, verbal, spiritual, and eating gestures of the actors and actresses, the audience and the reader get a mental pleasure: a taste, a satisfaction, a joy. Therefore, the Kolam writer is a creative artist.

By making a past story visible in the present, the audience is taken to the past, and the past is made visible before them.

Therefore, a powerful means of communication is to creatively shape the form by depicting the emotions of the characters through facial expressions, through singing, playing, dancing, singing, and conversation. This is the skill of the Kolam dramatist. Accordingly, among the visible characters, the Maname Kolam is a well-known object.

The Maname story included in the Sinhala Jataka book, which is an adaptation and translation of the Pali Jataka Attha story, was first transformed into a visual poem by the Kolam writer. The essence of the story depicted in the Kolam is as follows.

The Maname story

is a very popular story among the stories depicted in the Kolam drama. It is called ‘Maname Kolam’ and is based on the Chulla Dhanuggaha Jataka. According to the story of Mirissa Kolam, Prince Maname went to Taksala to study and became a very popular student of the Venerable Disapamok. He then took his daughter as his wife and set out with her to Varanasi. On the way, they entered the forest. There, they met a Vedda king and his group of Veddas. Seeing the Veddas eating meat, the prince told the queen that he was hungry and asked for some meat. The Vedda king, having feelings for the queen, left the prince and persuaded the queen to come with him. The queen asked the Veddas to bring some meat and gave it to her husband. But since it was raw meat, she threw it at the Veddas. Seeing the meat thrown at them, the Veddas became angry and entered into battle with the prince. There, the prince's sword fell from his hand. The queen immediately picked it up and gave it to the Veddi king and killed the prince. Then the princess prepared to go with the Veddi king. Then the Veddi king said, "Free the Veddi king's jewels, I will go across the river and deposit them and come back and accompany you." But after freeing the jewels, if you kill the husband you love, you will do the same to me," the Veddi king said and left, taking the jewels with him. Then the queen was

left alone in the forest, mourning. Seeing this, Shakra Devendra took the disguise of a fox and came to the riverbank with a piece of meat taken from its mouth. The fox saw a fish in the river and put the piece of meat on the bank and tried to catch the fish. In the meantime, a hawk came and snatched the piece of meat. The fish did not get caught by the fox and swam back into the water. Seeing this incident, the queen mocked the fox's actions and said,

බඩ සා දුකට ගෙන යන මස් කැටිය ලොලා
ගොඩතබමින් දිය යන මසුට ලොබ වෙලා
උඩ යන උකුසු අරගෙන ගිය පස නොබලා
දැක දැක මෝඩකම් කෙරුව ද තෝ හිවලා

(එම)

The fox, mocking the queen's actions, addresses the queen and says:

මනමේ රජුට අග මෙහෙසුන් බිසෝ වෙ ලා
බැද්දේ උපන් වැදි රජෙකුට ලොබ බැඳ ලා
පැළඳි ආභරණ ගඟකින් එතෙර ක ළා
මටත් වැඩිය අනුවනකම් බිසො ක ළා

(එම)

This story is presented in four-way gestures in the Kolam play. There is no story built up with dramatic moments without explaining the plot in sequence. Although the characters in the Jataka story include a group of thieves and their leader, in the Kolam, the Veddi group and its leader replace them. In 1956, when Professor Ediriweera Sarachchandra produced the play Maname, marking the beginning of Sinhala classical drama, he used this Jataka story as the seed for the Kolam, along with dramatic moments that lead to conflict, intrigue, and arouse emotions. The characters of the Veddi group and the Veddi king were included in the Kolam for the first time, rather than the thieves.

Humans have had a taste for listening to stories since ancient times. It is seen that ideas are transmitted through various stories, and some people had innate talents in listening to stories, weaving stories, and generating ideas through multiple stories.

It is also seen today. The Buddha brought many Dhamma facts closer to the listener through the medium of stories. The Kolam folk drama tradition, which emerged from such a source of stories, brings the story closer to the audience rather than the reader visually. Before the Maname Kolam, the Jataka story is presented to the audience. Then it is presented in a dramatic manner. It is made to be heard through poetry singing. At the beginning, the introduction of the object, the introduction of the characters to the audience, the description of the environment, and the conflicts between the characters, the Kolam writer used four-line poetry, a communication medium that attracted the interest of ordinary people at the time.

The poem's environment is depicted as a forest scene, adorned with forest leaves and branches, and the Veddi king and the Veddi group are disguised as a group of ancient Veddi people by exposing their upper bodies and applying colorful paint. It is unique that many means of communication have been used, such as bows and arrows, as well as the expression of emotions through gestures.

Sandakinduru Katha

This story, known as "Sandakinduru Kolama" in the Kolam drama, is also adapted from the "Chandakinnar Jathakaya". After the Gurunanse and the group of singers sing introductory poems in the book, Kindura and Kinduriya come to the assembly and dance. Their dances include various types of poetry. Then they sing poems expressing their love for each other and praising the beauty of the forest.

කිඳුරා : කුසුම් පිඬක් පෙම්බර මා ආදරී
යෞවන මා පෙම් උයනෙ සුපිපී
කිඳුරිය : රොන් ගැනුමට ගුම් නාදය පතුරා
බව ද සාමිනි කැකෙන බඹරා
කිඳුරා : වඩමු කුසුම් බිඟු සේ පෙම් වෙනෙගී
කිඳුරිය : පුදනෙමි පෙම් පැණි ගයනෙමි පෙම් ගී
ප්‍රාණය ලෙසින් වසමූ දෙදෙනා අපි
ප්‍රාණය ලෙසින් වසමූ දෙදෙනා''

The singing style, word choice, and rhythm used to express feelings perfectly convey the love concepts that have arisen in their minds. Another means of communication was to make ordinary people the subject and to transmit their emotions by piquing their interest.

Meanwhile, Gurunanse announces the arrival of King Bambadat. King Bambadat enters the stage dancing, sees the Kindura couple, and kills him. Kindura laments the loss of her husband in poetry.

Then a dialogue between King Bambadat and Kindura is presented in poetry. During this dialogue, prose texts are included. Suddenly, the god Shakra arrives there. There, the god Sak revives Kindura. From there, the king is expelled, and a lecture is given to the Kindura couple on the principles of Pativrata Dharma. This is done in prose. The Gotaimbara and Andhabhutha Jataka stories originated as kolam dramas. Kolam artists in Mirissa believe it is challenging to present these stories in a dramatic way. The reason is that there are currently no poems or songs related to these stories in the kolam handbooks, nor are there any kolam masks required. They say that only Maname kolam, Sandakinduru kolam, and Jasaya Lenchina kolam can be presented in a dramatic manner at present.

By dramatically presenting these stories, the audience is communicated that the work is not only in the diplomatic society of the past and in the colonial eras that followed, but also in the present-day society, by satirizing and presenting the human activities that have taken place and are taking place, thereby creating a sense of enjoyment for the audience.

The opening scene in the Kolam drama tradition is the Anabera Kolam. This profession, which is performed by order of the state, is a kind of satire on the communication that took place within the state apparatus. It was made humorous by the real scene of the Kolam drama, emphasizing the many obstacles that the ordinary people had to the governance of the state.

The Anabera is introduced by Gurunanse in the book, not in ordinary speech but in poetic singing, demonstrating literary features.

රජුන් දෙන අණ	සා
අණබෙර කරව විග	සා
එතොරතුරු විම	සා
ඒය බෙරකරු මහලු විල	සා
අතට හැර මිටිය	යි
ඉණට උල්කටු පිහිය	යි
මහලු තද වයස	යි
වරෙන් ගුරුනේ රාජ	පනතයි

(Based on the manuscript of Martin Amarasinghe)

Literary works are more appealing to anyone than ordinary expression. Here, the Kolam artist not only visually portrays the drummer, but also draws the audience's attention to a past drummer through verse singing. Therefore, there is no doubt that the ancient art of poetry was a significant means of communication in the Kolam folk drama tradition.

In verse singing, the background music, namely the Yak drum, rhythmically played, enhances the sound, melody, and taste of jugutsa. The Hewarala Kolam is a character created to protect the British dominance in the feudal social system and to provide them with protection. There were many acts of harassment and injustice against the ordinary people, and the Hewarala, who acted in favor of the British and fulfilled their needs, obtained positions from the British. The characters he created by satirizing his actions were communicated to the public through the medium of poetry.

සන්නස් පත රැගෙ	න
අවියද කර තබාගෙ	න
ඇවිදින් දැන් මෙත	න
කියයි සබමැද නොබෝ කලකි	න

නිරිඳුන්ගේ පොර න
සිටින තනතුරු ලැබගෙ ණ
නමින් බඩ ජල ය න
බොළඳ මුක්කන් කෙනෙක් දැන් එ න

(Based on the manuscript of Martin Amarasinghe)

The message of the command drum was to denigrate the diplomatic medium of communication, while the message of the garrison drum was to ridicule the protectors of the British. The various communication media strategies used for this included the characters' behavior, the words they uttered, their costumes, the actors' introductions of the characters, the music, the satirical and humorous performances of the characters, etc. From this, the understanding of the Kolam dramatist about society, what obstacles are caused to society due to the activities of some people? What should be done to eliminate them from society? What characters should be shaped for that? etc. were revealed through several aspects using various forms of communication media.

Another character who was despised by the general public in contemporary society is the Kolam known as Arachchi. The character of Arachchi, who the British exploited during British rule, was brought to the stage as a kolam in the Kolam folk drama by Kolam artists. The way the general public criticized Arachchi at that time is conveyed through a literary statement that demonstrates the media's skill.

නසා දුප්පත් හැ ම
අසාධාරණ කරයි මෙලෙස ම
ගසා කෙත්වත් හැ ම
මෙසා එයි ආරච්චි කෝල ම (එම)

This statement, which describes the injustices he committed daily, the harassment he inflicted on the poor, and the fraudulent acquisition of land, creates a sense of horror.

The kolam artist satirized certain turbulent situations,

riots, and activities of rural families by delving into the inner workings of society and understanding the behavioral situations of individual characters. For this, the Jedi kolam or Jasaya and Lenchina kolam have been used with expressive power, capturing another aspect of society in the commentary as a skillful means of communication.

අණට මෙහි එන් නා
පිළි පොට්ටනිය ගන් නා
වටපිට බලන් නා
ජෙඩි කෝලම මෙසේ එන් නා (එම)

Jasaya's wife is Lenchina, and the kolam artist who depicts her behavior is a talented poet.

මල්ල හුණු පුවත න
කොල්ලො දෙස බලා ඉඟි කර මී න
කල්ල හොර මායම් න
කෙල්ල ලෙන්චින ඒය දුවගෙ න (එම)

Even without watching the Kolam folk drama, the characters' appearance and behavioral patterns are conveyed to the reader through literary devices.

Public communication is a method used to exchange or disseminate various ideas and information among people in society. For this, multiple media should be used, and for this, the person presenting the information is called the public communicator. The message or data that was given is called "Sandesha". The general method for delivering the message is called "Madhya". The person receiving the message is the "Receiver" and when all these factors are fulfilled, the work of public communication is done.

It is also revealed from Sanskrit literature that these factors are implemented in ancient communication poems. Audience - sender, Haraka - bearer, Receiver - receiver, Sandesha - something to be said in a message. The tradition of exchanging messages dates back to ancient times, as evidenced by literary history. It is noteworthy that this had become a social function. The following can be listed up to the present day.

01) Sending a message written on a copper plate or other paper by means of an arrow.

02) In the ancient literature of the Rigveda, the use of a swan called 'Sarama' to exchange a message

In the story of Nalopakhyayana in the Mahabharata, the love story of Prince Nala is carried to Damayanti. A swan performs the function of a messenger.

01) A swan named Hanuma, the messenger in the love story of Rama and Sita (page 312 of the Ramayana)

02) In the history of Purana Huru, a swan named Visirenkaiyar is used to communicate with a king named Koppen Kolan. (Kulasuriya, 1991, page 374)

03) According to the Jataka literature, a crow and a parrot have been used in the communication function in the Kama Vilapa Ummagga Jataka stories, respectively. It is clear to what extent the use of communication media existed in past literary works. Literature is useful not only for fulfilling daily needs, but also for discussing common human problems, sharing them with ordinary people, and instilling a compassionate view in their minds.

Although the use of mass media in the past was straightforward, involving animals, people, and inanimate objects, it has undergone a massive change in the modern world. With the development of the art of writing, the printing press developed. Newspapers and magazines became powerful media, while art, sculpture, painting, and poetry (prose, verse) were the most popular media until recently. Kolam, the folk dramatist, satirized the activities of various sections of contemporary society through traditional drama.

මරක්කල්	ලුන්නේ
නරක්කන් කවුද	දන්නේ
හරක් මර	මින්නේ
මරක්කල කෝලමයි	එන්නේ

Marakkala, Lansi, Aandi etc. were transmitted to the ordinary people through kolams in a way that ridiculed the weaknesses of the contemporary society and generated humor.

Using the femininity of women in a male-dominated society, the fickleness of certain female characters was depicted by showing their behavioral characteristics through a character. Lenchina kolam presented erotic feelings

රුවට කොරල හැඬි තලගොයා හට
මාව සරණ දීලා මව්පියෝ ගියා
මගේ හිමියා පඹයට තියාගෙන
සොර සැමියා ගෙන්වා ගත්තා මෙමව්

(From a manuscript by Martin Amarasinghe)

A poetic technique adopted to enhance expressive power is to achieve the listener's emotional satisfaction through the combination of sounds. In this context, kolam artists have introduced the nonchi kolam.

දුල්ල නැත කැරැල්ල මුහුලි යේ
තල්ල යුග කොපුල්ල හැකිලි යේ
මල්ල කොළ මැහැල්ල ඉගිලි යේ
තල්ල මත හැල්ල නොහැරි යේ

Kolam artists used metaphor as a poetic device to enhance their expressive power and convey meaning.

In the description of the Naga maiden

'නා දළු අදර එක ලෙස'

(The lips are like a flower)

Under the description of Ananga Bhairava Kolam

'දරා ගෙන එන වෙළඳ රුව සේ'

When the couple was described

'වන සිව්පා ලෙසින
දීන ගතිය නිතරම ඇත වන මෘගයෝ මෙන් කදිමට

(Like four-legged animals living in the forest)

When the Panchanari Ghata was described

'ලතාවක ගත දිසි අඳුන් කුල සේ'

A unique aspect of the expressive power of the Kolam artist is the use of masks. In each Kolam, the masks are designed to look and feel like the artist. Professor Ediriweera Sarachchandra thinks that.

'It is not wrong to say that the beauty of a work of art depends on tradition.' (Sarachchandra 1999,110)

Every artist who made Kolam masks helped create a tradition. The use of masks to capture the eyes and hearts of each character helped create a shift in the stylized sattvikabhinaya or Prakriti style, and the dance also received exceptional support. Critics believe the artist who created the masks and dances of the Kolam folk drama tradition is talented. (Sarachchandra, 1999) Page 109)

Conclusion

The Kolam folk drama tradition, which gained popularity in the lowland areas of Sri Lanka in the 17th-18th centuries, dramatized the religious beliefs and presented stories based on the Shanthi Karma tradition and common problems. It is a folk-art medium that was transmitted to ordinary people through various communication media. These are some of the presses that the Kolam drama artists followed to develop an artistic sensibility through the said folk drama tradition. By reading stories aloud and creating a taste for stories, providing some understanding of the nature and behavior of human characters, by showing the stories through poetic depictions, using short verses constructed by the poet using short verses, depicting events, character descriptions, and conversational moments, by using alliteration for sound taste, by creating the interest of the audience, readers, and listeners, by shaping the statements. By shaping the sweetness of meaning through the use of metaphors and hyperbole, by expressing personal moods through the use of masks. By using stage decorations, by using yak drums for

music, and by using food gestures necessary for enjoyment, various communication media were used to transmit the Kolam folk drama tradition to the audience in general. There is no doubt that Kolam became popular as an enduring theatrical tradition among the common people of the lowland Sri Lanka due to the dramatic structure of the story.

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Appendix A: Proposed Logic Model for a Library-Based Health Literacy Initiative in Sri Lanka

This logic model outlines the theoretical framework for a proposed national initiative designed to leverage Sri Lanka's library network to combat NCDs through improved health literacy. It charts the pathway from inputs and activities to the intended long-term impact.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact
• Funding from government (MOH, Ministry of Education) and international development partners. • Trained Librarians (see training program in strategies). • Existing Library Infrastructure (buildings, shelves). • Technology: Public access computers, reliable internet connectivity. • Partnerships (see Appendix B). • Culturally tailored health information materials in Sinhala and Tamil.	**1. Professional Development:** Conduct certified training for librarians on health information resources, NCDs, and digital literacy. **2. Resource Enhancement:** Curate and provide access to print and digital health information; develop multilingual resource guides. **3. Community Programming**: Host workshops, expert talks, and health awareness campaigns within libraries and communities. **4. Digital Access Hub:** Offer free internet access and guided training on using reputable health websites and telehealth services. **5. Partnership Coordination:** Establish formal referral systems and collaborative programs with local health clinics and NGOs.	• # of librarians trained. • # of health information resources acquired and circulated. • # of community workshops/events held. • # of patrons attending digital literacy sessions. • # of collaborative MOUs signed with health sector partners. • # of multilingual pamphlets/booklets distributed.	**Short-Term (1-2 yrs):** • Increased knowledge and self-efficacy among librarians to provide health information. • Increased public awareness of the library as a health information hub. • Improved patron ability to find and evaluate health information online. **Medium-Term (3-5 yrs):** • Increased community knowledge of NCD risk factors and prevention strategies. • Improved patient-provider communication among library patrons. • Increased adoption of health-seeking behaviors (e.g., getting screenings).	**Long-Term (5+ yrs):** • A significant contribution to the reduction of NCD incidence and prevalence in Sri Lanka. • Reduced health disparities between urban and rural communities. • Empowered communities with the skills for lifelong health literacy and informed decision-making.

Appendix B: List of Key Stakeholders for Multi-Sectoral Collaboration

Effective implementation of the proposed strategies requires coordinated action across multiple sectors. This table identifies key stakeholders and their potential roles in a national health literacy initiative.

Stakeholder Group	Key Entities	Proposed Role in Collaboration
Government Health Sector	• Ministry of Health (National & Provincial) • Epidemiology Unit • Family Health Bureau • Government Medical Officers	• Provide expert oversight, accurate health content, and validation of information. • Co-develop awareness campaigns and training materials. • Facilitate connections for library health screenings and talks by medical professionals. • Integrate library referrals into public health strategy.
Library Sector	• National Library of Sri Lanka • Sri Lanka Library Association (SLLA) • LISC Teaching & Learning Academic Institutions • Public, University, and Library Networks	• Act as the primary implementing body and community gateway. • Manage daily operations, program delivery, and patron engagement. • Identify community needs and report on program effectiveness. • Advocate for funding and policy support.
Education & Academia	• Ministry of Education • Universities (Medical Faculties, Departments of Sociology/Public Health) • Postgraduate Institute of Medicine (PGIM)	• Co-design and deliver specialized training for librarians. • Provide access to academic research and databases. • Engage students in community outreach and research projects based in libraries.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)	• NGOs focused on health (e.g., Sri Lanka Cancer Society, Heart Foundation) • NGOs focused on literacy, education, and community development	• Provide targeted expertise, funding, and ground-level support. • Assist with community mobilization and outreach in hard-to-reach areas. • Support the development and distribution of educational materials.
International Development Partners	• WHO Country Office • UNICEF • World Bank • IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations)	• Provide technical assistance, best-practice models, and grant funding. • Facilitate international knowledge exchange and capacity building. • Support advocacy efforts for policy change and sustainable funding.
Community Representatives	• Local Community Leaders • Patient Advocacy Groups • Citizens	• Ensure initiatives are culturally appropriate and address real community needs. • Participate in co-designing programs and materials (e.g., as focus groups). • Act as champions and trusted messengers within their communities to promote library services.

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