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L1 Saudi-Arabic Learners' Use of Articles with Count and Mass Nouns in L2 English

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Abstract

English and Arabic differ in the use of the article system about singular, plural and mass nouns. Count and mass nouns take different articles in English. Thus, it would be interesting to investigate the effect of count and mass nouns on first language (L1) Saudi-Arabic learners' use of the article system in second language (L2) English. In English, according to Adger (2003), the use of articles is determined by the nouns due to the c-command relationship; that is, the determiner must agree with the noun with which it is linked. If the nouns are singular and indefinite, the indefinite article must be used; if the nouns are plural or mass with indefinite contexts, 'some' must be used. Regarding definite contexts, the definite article is used with singular, plural and mass nouns, which is like the Arabic language. In this study, I will also investigate generic sentences in which the indefinite article is used in singular contexts and the bare plural that is used in plural and mass contexts, which is also a difference between English and Arabic because Arabic only uses definite articles for generic reference. I will examine that through the Bottleneck Hypothesis by Slabakova (2008) and the Feature Reassembly Hypothesis by Lardiere (2009) to investigate the learners' ability to acquire functional morphology, as well as the mapping process regarding the use of articles with count and mass nouns. The data were collected using a forced choice task involving 67 L1 Saudi-Arabic learners of English. The results revealed that the learners were accurate in their use of the definite article with count and mass nouns and in their use of indefinite articles with singular and plural nouns, but had trouble with generic sentences and indefinite articles in mass contexts. The outcomes support the BH and the FRH, which state that learners might encounter difficulties due to L1 transfer when they need to map and reassemble the functional morphology.

Keywords: Count, Mass Nouns, English, Saudi-Arabic Learners

1. Literature review

As Chierchia (1994) suggested, count and mass nouns differ in relation to definiteness in English. It has been argued that count and mass nouns are derived from two separate semantic domains; count nouns consist of a set of individual items and groups that form this individuality, while mass nouns donate amounts of things and do not consist of individuality as count nouns. Another difference between count and mass nouns is that count nouns can be numbered and take plural forms, while mass nouns cannot. Moreover, the use of nouns with articles will be determined by the c-command relationship. That indicate that the singular nouns as (cat) must be preceded by an indefinite article as English does not accept a bare singular noun. If the noun is plural then "some" is used to indicate indefiniteness.

An example of combinatorial restrictions in the English D system is shown in Example 1.

- | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|--|
| (1) a. the/some boy | a. the/some boys | a. the/some water |
| b. a/every boy | b. *a/every boys | b. *a/every water |
| c. *most/all boy | c. most/all boys | c. most/all water (Chierchia, 2010, p. 109). |

English uses indefinite articles ('a/an') with singular nouns and 'some' with plural and mass nouns. In definite contexts, the definite article ('the') is used in singular, plural and mass contexts. Article use characterises the difference between English and Arabic regarding the use of the article system for count and mass nouns. In English, an indefinite article ('a/an') will be used if the noun is in the singular form, as in Example 2a, while 'some' will be used with plural nouns (Example 2b) and mass nouns (Example 2c).

- (2) a. I would like to get an orange (singular)
 b. I would like some oranges (plural)
 c. I bought some furniture for the living room (mass)

In the definite context in English, the definite article ('the') is used with singular, plural and mass nouns, as in shown in Examples 3a, b and c.

- (3) a. The man is tall (singular)
 b. The men are tall (plural)
 c. The sugar is organic (mass)

Another structure related to count and mass nouns that forms part of generic reference is known as characterising or generic sentences; these refer to generalisations as opposed to definite or particular sentences that refer to specific events or items. Krifka et al. (1995, p. 3) stated that 'much of our knowledge of the world, and many of our beliefs about the world, are couched in terms of characterising sentences.' The articles that are used in generic sentences are indefinite articles in singular contexts and the bare plural in plural contexts.

- (4) a. A potato contains vitamin C, amino acids, protein and thiamine. (Krifka et al., 1995, p. 3)
 b. John smokes a cigar after dinner. (Krifka et al., 1995, p. 3)
 c. Frogs are awake. (Lyons, 1999, p. 189)

Determiner Phrases (DPs) in English comprise a number of features that define the function of the DP, including person, number, and definiteness. These functional features can be classified as either interpretable or uninterpretable.

Interpretable features are related to semantics and contribute to the overall interpretation of the phrase. They cannot be eliminated before being spelled out, which means they must be produced in written or oral form. Examples of interpretable features include the definite article [+definite] and the indefinite article [-definite].

In contrast, uninterpretable features are connected only to the morphosyntactic structure of the sentence. These features must be eliminated before being spelled out. For instance, the nouns that follow the article must be checked for singularity and plurality before they can be produced.

In Arabic, definiteness is expressed via a bound morpheme that is overtly marked by the suffix '-n' in indefinite contexts, while the definite article is the prefix 'al-' (Fassi Fehri, 2012), as seen in Example 5. Awad (2011) indicated that the indefinite article, which occurs morphologically in the written form of standard Arabic, is not always used in Arabic in the same way as it is in English: 'In formal, standard and classic Arabic, indefiniteness can be (optionally) represented by small, non-morphemic accents suffixed to words' (p. 5).

The indefinite article also only occurs phonologically in Modern Standard Arabic (Abudaljuh, 2016), with speakers of other dialects, except for some Bedouin dialects, tending to drop the indefinite article '-n' (Al-Malki

et al., 2014). This is also true for Saudi-Arabic speakers, who drop the indefinite in the absence of the definite article 'al-' and use bare nouns to indicate indefinite contexts. In dialects such as Syrian Arabic (Sarko, 2009) and Moroccan Arabic (Fassi Fehri, 2012), bare nouns are used for indefinite contexts. Therefore, definiteness in Arabic concerns the use of the prefix 'al-' for definite contexts and bare nouns for indefinite contexts. The definite article, namely the prefix 'al-', is always used in spoken and written forms of the language, as shown in Example 5.

- (5) Qaratuw Kitab-u-n. Al-Kitab-u Momtia.
'I read a book. The book is interesting'.

For singular, plural and mass nouns with indefinite situations, the nouns are used as they are without any additions (bare nouns), which applies to all the indefinite situations in Arabic, as shown in Examples 6a, b and c.

- (6) a. Indefinite singular noun phrases (NPs):

ana abħað řan ragam ġiasi.
I looking. 1sg for record
*'I'm looking for record.'
'I'm looking for a record.'

- b. Indefinite plural NPs:

lagad wada řato malařig řal altawilah.
already put. 1sg spoons on the table
'I've already put spoons on the table'

- c. Indefinite mass NPs:

Goan đahab le-yashtri ħalib
John gone.3sg to-buy.3sg milk
'John has gone out to buy milk' (Alsowiliem, 2014, p. 31, p. 32)

This is different from English, in which learners must use the word 'some' before indefinite plural and mass nouns. In Arabic, the definite article 'al-' is used in singular, plural and mass contexts, as shown in Examples 7 a, b and c below.

- (7) a. Definite singular NPs:

al-ragol kan motřab
The man.SG was tired
'The man was tired'.

- b. Definite plural NPs:

al-regal kano motřabien
The men.PL were tired
'The men were tired'.

- c. Definite mass NPs:

al-sukar kan řali
The-sugar.MASS was expensive
'The sugar was expensive'. (Alsowiliem, 2014, p. 30)

With regard to generic reference, Arabic only uses the definite article, and does not have generic sentences, unlike English. Example 8 below demonstrates the use of 'al-' with all the nouns in question.

- (8) a. al-dainasour-aat-u mungaridh-at-un.
DEF- dinosaurs-FEM-PLU extinct-FEM-PLU

'The dinosaurs are extinct.'

b. *dainasour-at-u munga

dinosaurs-FEM-PLU extinct-FEM-PLU

'Dinosaurs are extinct.' (Al-Malki et al., 2014, p. 23)

Recent study by Muftah, M. (2023), investigated the accuracy order and acquisition processes of English articles by 45 Arab EFL learners at the undergraduate level. The theoretical framework used is Bickerton's (1981) semantic model, which focuses on the features \pm Specific Referent (\pm SR) and \pm Assumed Known to the Hearer (\pm HK).

The key findings include that the SOC (Supplied in Obligatory Contexts) measure revealed an accuracy order of $a > the > \emptyset$, while the TLU (Target-Like Use) measure revealed an accuracy order of $the > a > \emptyset$ across the learner groups. The UOC (Used in Obligatory Contexts) measure showed that the zero article (\emptyset) goes through a "flooding-then-trickling" process, followed by a U-shaped development marked by an overgeneralization stage. Learners had difficulty distinguishing between [\pm HK] and [\pm Countability] features. Lastly, the most challenging contexts to acquire were [+SR, -HK] and [-SR, +HK], indicating difficulty with the interaction between specificity and assumed knowledge.

Thus, the study provides insights into the accuracy order and underlying acquisition processes of the English article system for Arab EFL learners, highlighting the complex semantic features that pose challenges in article usage.

2. The Feature Reassembly Hypothesis and the Bottleneck Hypothesis

Slabakova's (2008) Bottleneck Hypothesis (BH) is mainly related to functional morphology; Slabakova argued that functional morphology was the most difficult part of a language to acquire because different languages have different morphologies, and morphology is linked to a variety of syntactic and semantic features. Differences between the first language (L1) and the second language (L2) could lead to difficulty with acquisition. According to the BH, once the features have been acquired, learners should be aware of and informed about the semantic consequences, regardless of whether these have been taught explicitly. The acquisition of definiteness is part of the functional morphology in English; thus, it would be interesting to investigate the acquisition of count and mass nouns, as well as their potential impact on the use of the article system in English as in Azaz (2019), Jensen et al. (2020), Momenzade and Youhanaee, (2014) and Cho, (2017).

The BH is consistent with the Feature Reassembly Hypothesis (FRH) by Lardiere (2009), who argued that L2 learners had the ability to remap features from the L1 onto the L2. According to the FRH, learners will go through two stages in the acquisition process. The first stage is the mapping between the L1 and the L2 if the languages have similar features, which may be the case when using definite articles with count and mass nouns in English and in Arabic, as the use is similar. However, if the features are different, as in the case of indefinite articles, learners not only have to map one feature onto another, but also need to perform a second stage that entails the remapping of these features, which might be difficult for the learners and may lead to errors in acquisition. Lardiere (2016) later suggested that definiteness was a functional category and argued that the Determiner (D) and the Number (N) must match; that is, morphosyntactic feature values such as [\pm definite] and [\pm plural] need to match. For example, [-definite] must be matched with [-plural] in English: The morphemes 'a/an' must agree with the lexical item (noun) in terms of being [-plural], as in 'a book,' while a singular noun without the indefinite article would be grammatically incorrect, as in '*book.' The main task for learners is to link the lexical items according to the morphosyntactic features that the languages accept, which necessitates acquiring both the features and the lexical items that match them in order to be able to use them correctly. With regard to definiteness, L2 English learners are required to match the [-definite] and the [-plural] in order to use the features correctly. Thus, the predictions based on the BH and the FRH are that learners will be able to acquire definite articles with singular, plural and mass forms, as these occur in their L1, Arabic, which will make it easy for the learners to map from their L1 onto their L2.

With regard to singular indefinite articles, learners may experience difficulties because there are no equivalent articles in their L1. The learners might also encounter difficulties with indefinite plurals and mass nouns because they will need to use ‘some,’ while Arabic uses bare nouns. Thus, the learners will need to reassemble and map in addition to using the indefinite article and ‘some’ with count and mass nouns.

With regard to generic reference, learners may overuse the definite article because they might only use it in generic reference, and may have problems using the indefinite article and bare noun due to mapping difficulties. In addition, a learnability issue stems from differences in the L1 and in the L2 and the fact that, in English, the generic involves a combination of complex features involving three morphemes (‘a’, ‘the’ and ‘plural-s’) in two different contexts (NPs and generic sentences). The combination of features with which learners are likely to struggle is mapping the [-definite] and [-plural] in generic singular sentences. They also need to map the [-definite] and [+plural] in generic plural sentences. Thus, according to the hypotheses, learners would have difficulty in acquiring indefinite articles for singular indefinite contexts and in singular generic sentences, as well as ‘some’ in indefinite plural contexts and the plural-s in plural generic sentences due to differences in the L1 and the L2. Learners may also have difficulty with mapping the interpretable features [\pm definite] onto the uninterpretable features [\pm plural].

Table 1: Summary of the differences and the predictions

	English	Arabic	BH and FRH
Indefinite singular	a or an	bare noun	Learners might have difficulties with the mapping of interpretable [-definite] and uninterpretable [-plural] features.
Indefinite plural	some	bare noun	Learners might have difficulties with the mapping of interpretable [-definite] and uninterpretable [+plural] features.
Indefinite mass	some	bare noun	Learners might have difficulties with the mapping of interpretable [-definite] and uninterpretable [+plural] features.
Definite singular	the	Al-	Learners will only map the definite articles in their L1 onto their L2.
Definite plural	the	Al-	Learners will only map the definite articles in their L1 onto their L2.
Definite mass	the	Al-	Learners will only map the definite articles in their L1 onto their L2.
Singular generic sentences	a or an	Al-	Learners might have difficulties with the mapping of interpretable [-definite] and uninterpretable [-plural] features.
Plural generic sentences	plural-s	Al-	Learners might have difficulties with the mapping of interpretable [-definite] and uninterpretable [+plural] features.
Mass generic sentences	bare noun	Al-	Learners might have difficulties with the mapping of interpretable [-definite] and uninterpretable [+plural] features.

As shown in the summary in Table 1, there are many variations in the use of articles with count and mass nouns in English, and this type of complication is not found in Arabic. Thus, we proposed the following research question:

3. Research question

Would the singular, plural and mass contexts affect the knowledge of L1 Saudi-Arabic learners regarding the article system in L2 English?

4. Participants

The participants were 67 L1 Saudi-Arabic learners of English who were enrolled at Al-baha University, and were in their first year of study in the foreign language department. The participants were all female, and were aged between 20 and 21. Ten L1 English speakers also participated in the study.

5. Methodology

The methodology involved a forced choice task consisting of 54 sentences. As the aim of the study was to investigate the effect of singular, plural and mass nouns on the article system in English, the task was designed to select contexts that included singular, plural and mass nouns with generic references, as well as definite and indefinite articles. There are two types of generic references, namely generic NPs and generic sentences, as discussed above. However, the focus was solely on generic sentences because, according to Snape (2008), there is no definite mass generic relationship in generic NPs in English; thus, generic NPs were excluded. The sentences that were included contained definite and indefinite articles with singular, plural, and mass nouns, as well as count and non-count nouns. These sentences were divided into four categories (generic sentences, indefinite articles and definite articles); each category consisted of six sentences and included singular, plural and mass nouns. Thus, there were six generic singular sentences, six generic plural sentences and six generic mass sentences. The same categorisation was applied to definite (singular, plural and mass) and indefinite (singular, plural and mass) features.

The answer key was based on the effect of singularity and plurality. The learners had a choice of five options, as shown in Example 1, namely 'a', 'an', 'the,' 'some' and 'Ø.' Therefore, in singular contexts, the indefinite article ('a' or 'an') would be used, and 'some' would be used in both plural and mass contexts, as shown in Examples 9 a, b and c below.

(9) Indefinite article

(a) singular

I saw _____ a _____ bird.
a an the some Ø

(b) plural

There are _____ some _____ chairs in the room.
a an the some Ø

(c) mass

Sonya is pulling _____ some _____ luggage
a an the some Ø

With regard to the use of the definite article, the correct selection of the definite article ('the') for the singular, plural and mass conditions in Examples 10 a, b and c were as follows:

(10) Definite article

(a) singular:

_____ The _____ music you like best is rock and roll.

(b) plural

John said he will take care of _____ the _____ cats while you are away.
a an the some Ø

(c) mass

_____ The _____ vocabulary in this exercise is easy.
a an the some Ø

Therefore, the appropriate selection for singular generic sentences would be the indefinite article and the null determiner (Ø) in plural and mass contexts, as shown in Examples 11 a, b and c below:

(11) Generic sentences

(a) singular:

- ___ An ___ iron is an appliance used to take wrinkles out of cloth.
 a an the some Ø
- (b) plural
 ___ Ø ___ Trees need water to survive.
 a an the some Ø
- (c) mass
 ___ Ø ___ Gold is metal
 a an the some Ø

The learners completed the forced choice task online using the Blackboard system by adding the task to the quiz section and the learners could access the task through their university username and password. Blackboard system is a platform that allow to present different materials to the learners as well as conduct quizzes and test. the platform is provided by Al-Baha university to all the faculty members and students. All the learners have done the task during the lecture time using their own devices.

6. Results

This section presents the results for the Saudi-Arabic learners and the L1 English speakers to answer the research question:

Would the singular, plural and mass contexts affect the knowledge of L1 Saudi-Arabic learners' regarding the article system in L2 English?

The number of correct responses is presented first. For the L1 English speakers, the correct responses are 60 as there were ten participants and six sentences for each category for the learners to select from. As for the Saudi-Arabic learners, there were six sentences in each category as well and 67 participants, the total should be 402. This is followed by the descriptive results and the results of the Friedman test.

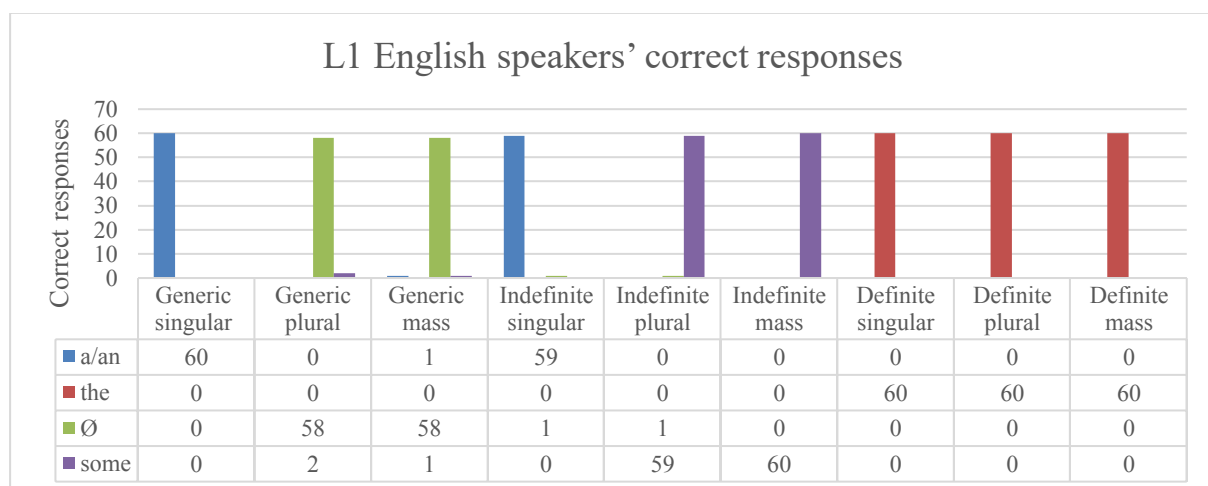


Figure 1: L1 English speakers' correct responses

Figure 1 shows the total responses for all the categories for L1 English speakers, and Figure 2 shows the results for the Saudi-Arabic learners.

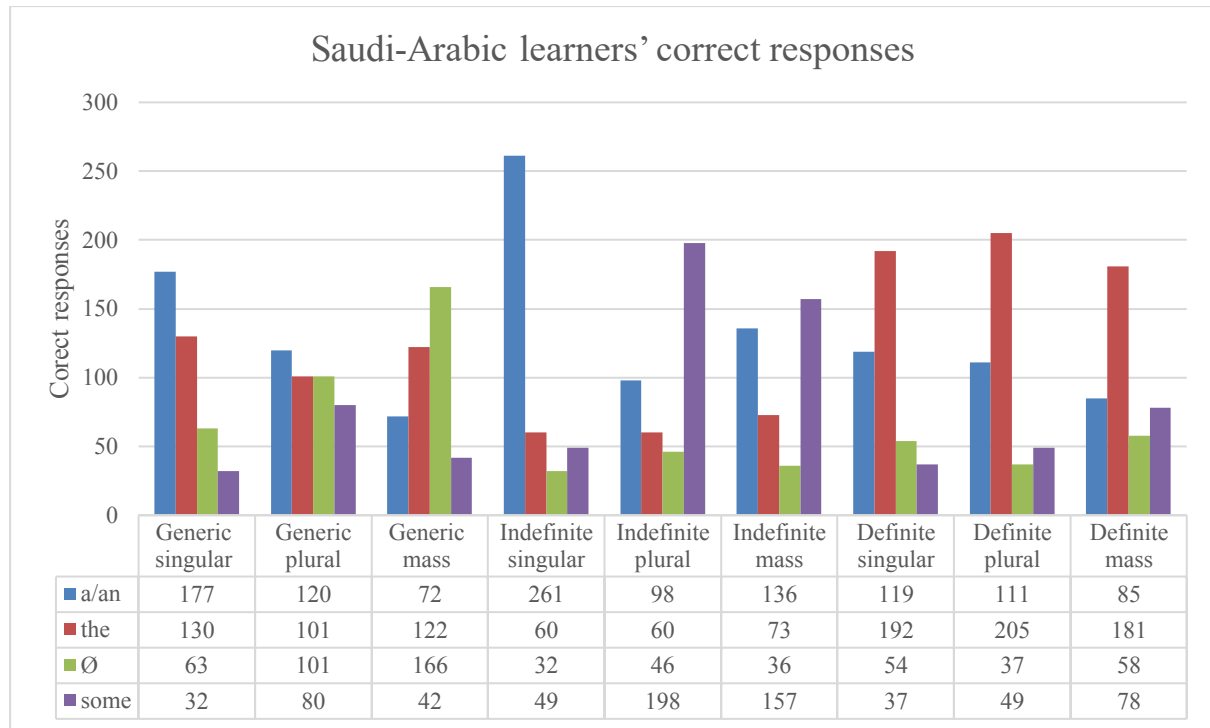


Figure 2: Saudi-Arabic learners' correct responses

According to Figure 2, if the learners had selected only the target article in each category, the sum of the articles in the table should be 402 because there were 67 participants and six sentences in each category. However, as the learners did not only select the target article, the total of 402 was distributed according to the four available options ('a/an,' 'the,' 'Ø' and 'some'). The green boxes in the tables indicate the correct article choice. As the two options for the indefinite article were 'a/an,' I now present a closer investigation of the two categories that had the indefinite article as the target article. These were scored out of 67 as they were individual sentences and not a summary, as in Figure 2 above. The scores are presented in Figure 3 with generic singular and indefinite singular in Figure 4.

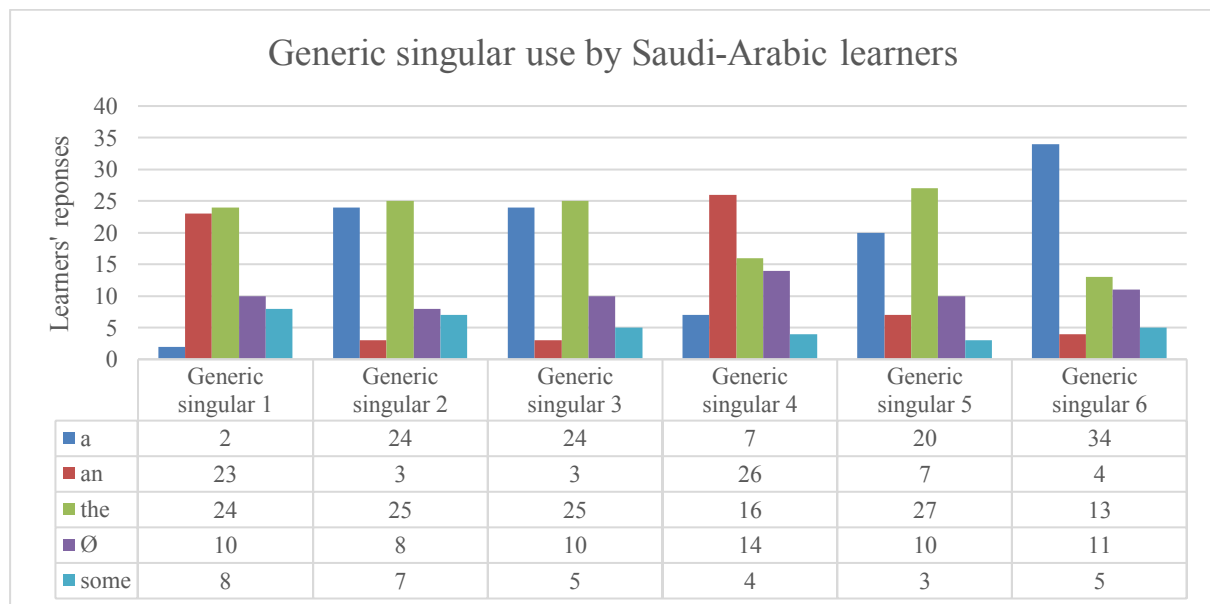


Figure 3: Generic singular use by Saudi-Arabic learners

12. ___an___ Orange is green until it ripens.
 a an the some Ø

13. _____ an _____ iron is an appliance used to take wrinkles out of cloth.
 a an the some Ø

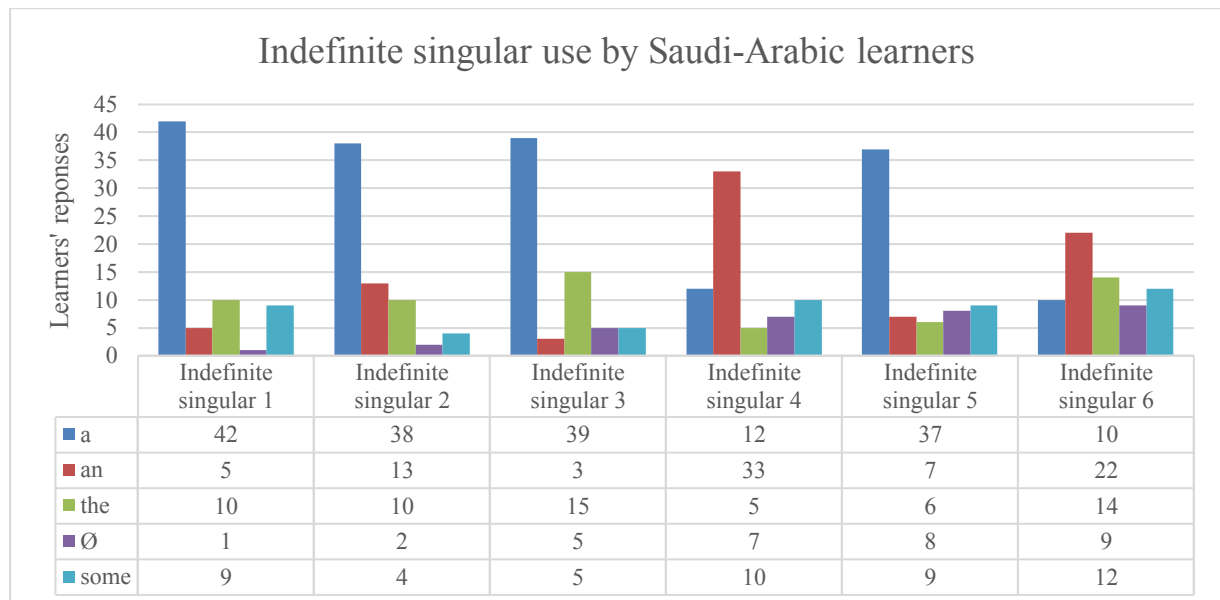


Figure 4: Indefinite singular use by Saudi-Arabic learners

14. The teacher made _____ an _____ announcement
 a an the some
15. The Brooklyn Bridge was designed by _____ an _____ engineer.
 a an the some

The main reason for including both 'a' and 'an' in the options was to clarify that the learners understood the use of these articles and the differences between them; as shown in Figure 3 and 4, the learners selected the correct articles, although the use of the definite article was high in the generic references likely to be L1 transfer, which will be explained in the discussion section.

The results of the Shapiro-Wilk tests are presented in tabular form; as the results were not normally distributed, the Friedman test was then used to identify the significant differences in the categories. Table 2 presents the results for L1 English speakers, and Table 3 shows the results for the Saudi learners.

Table 2: L1 English speakers' Shapiro-Wilk results

	Shapiro-Wilk	<i>p</i> -value
Generic singular	0.345	< .001
Generic plural	0.363	< .001
Generic mass	0.363	< .001
Indefinite singular	0.363	< .001
Indefinite plural	0.357	< .001
Indefinite mass	0.363	< .001
Definite singular	0.345	< .001
Definite plural	0.345	< .001
Definite mass	0.345	< .001

Table 3: Saudi learners' Shapiro-Wilk results

	Shapiro-Wilk	<i>p</i> -value
Generic singular	0.91	< .001
Generic plural	0.775	< .001
Generic mass	0.824	< .001

Indefinite singular	0.913	< .001
Indefinite plural	0.916	< .001
Indefinite mass	0.883	< .001
Definite singular	0.92	< .001
Definite plural	0.89	< .001
Definite mass	0.929	< .001

The mean rankings for the Friedman test are presented below: L1 English speakers' rankings are presented in Table 4, and the Saudi-Arabic learners' rankings in Table 5 below.

Table 4: Mean rankings for L1 English speakers

Generic singular	Generic plural	Generic mass
5.45	4.55	4.55
Indefinite singular	Indefinite plural	Indefinite mass
4.55	5.00	4.55
Definite singular	Definite plural	Definite mass
5.45	5.45	5.45

Table 5: Mean rankings for Saudi learners

Generic singular	Generic plural	Generic mass
4.96	3.37	4.57
Indefinite singular	Indefinite plural	Indefinite mass
6.85	5.27	4.38
Definite singular	Definite plural	Definite mass
5.19	5.54	4.86

In Table 4, the mean ranking was close with the L1 English speakers unlike the Saudi-Arabic learners in Table 5. Table 5 shows a variation in the mean rank as the generic plural is the lower with 3.37 and the indefinite singular is the highest with 6.85 followed by the definite plural with 5.54 and 5.19 with definite singular.

Table 6: Friedman tests for L1 English speakers and for Saudi-Arabic learners

L1 English speakers		Saudi learners	
N	10	N	67
Chi-square	8.727	Chi-square	70.518
df	8	df	8
Asymp. Sig.	.366	Asymp. Sig.	<.001

The results in Table 6 indicate that there were no significant differences in the L1 English speakers' categories, which were generic, indefinite and definite in singular, plural and mass contexts. The case was different for the Saudi-Arabic learners, as the results in Table 6 showed significant differences in the items. Thus, I will present the results of another Friedman test according to the singular, plural and mass conditions across the three categories.

The mean rankings for the singular generic, indefinite and definite contexts are presented in Table 7, together with the plural and mass contexts.

Table 7: Mean rankings for Saudi-Arabic learners for singular, plural and mass contexts

Generic singular	Indefinite singular	Definite singular
1.75	2.39	1.87
Mean Rank		
Generic plural	Indefinite plural	Definite plural
1.51	2.22	2.27
Mean Rank		
Generic mass	Indefinite mass	Definite mass
1.99	1.90	2.11

Table 8: Friedman test for singular, plural and mass contexts

Singular		plural		mass	
N	67	N	67	N	67
Chi-Square	18.679	Chi-Square	29.381	Chi-Square	1.746
df	2	df	2	df	2
Asymp. Sig.	<.001	Asymp. Sig.	<.001	Asymp. Sig.	.418

According to Table 8, there was a significant difference in the generic, indefinite and definite articles in the singular and the plural forms, as the learners demonstrated greater accuracy in the indefinite singular than they did in the generic singular and the definite singular contexts. There was also a significant difference in the plural contexts, as the learners demonstrated greater accuracy in indefinite and definite plural forms compared to generic plural forms. There was no significant difference between the generic, indefinite and definite in mass contexts, as the learners' accuracy in mass contexts was similar.

7. Discussion

The research question that I aimed to answer was as follows:

Would the singular, plural and mass contexts affect the knowledge of L1 Saudi-Arabic learners' regarding the article system in L2 English?

The Saudi-Arabic learners had different levels of accuracy for generic sentences, indefinite and definite articles across the singular, plural and mass contexts.

The results revealed that the learners were accurate in their use of the definite article due to the effect of L1 transfer, which was similar to Köylü's (2023) finding that Arabic learners were more accurate in the use of the definite article than were Turkish and Chinese learners, which the author attributed to transfer from the L1.

The results also showed that the learners had less accuracy in generic sentences, which may have been due to L1 transfer. The learners had the least accuracy in generic plural sentences compared to generic singular and mass sentences, as they used the indefinite article more often than the bare plural, which was the correct response. The accuracy for the singular and mass contexts was also low, as the learners tended to use the definite article in both contexts more often than was warranted, which may have been due to the effect of their L1, Arabic. As discussed above, Arabic only uses the definite article for generic references. This result was similar to the findings of Hermas (2020a), who showed that L1 Moroccan Arabic learners of L3 English had difficulty with the indefinite article in singular sentences and with the bare plural in plural sentences.

It was surprising that the Saudi -learners had high levels of accuracy when using indefinite articles. As the BH suggests, learners would be able to acquire a feature even if it did not occur in their L1, which was borne out by the results of this research. The learners demonstrated higher levels of accuracy in singular and plural contexts compared to mass contexts, which may have been due to the complicated article system in English. As Alhaysony (2012) argued, the source of errors in the use of definite and indefinite articles for L1 Saudi-Arabic learners who were acquiring English was not only interlingual (arising from the transfer of L1 features), but also intralingual (arising from the English language), particularly with regard to the process of learning articles in the L2. The types of errors that were caused by the target language were due to overgeneralisation, incomplete understanding of the rules and ignorance of the rules' restrictions.

The participants were in their first year of studying English at university, and had received a significant amount of input regarding the use of definite and indefinite articles, which may have caused them to be more aware of the use of the indefinite article. The learners were more accurate in their use of the indefinite article in singular contexts than they were in plural and mass contexts.

The accuracy of the use of the indefinite article with singular plurals, as Köylü (2023) argued, could have been due to the learners being able to recover from L1 transfer if they had high levels of proficiency. This outcome was similar to the findings of Ionin et al. (2011), Ionin

et al. (2013) and Hermas (2020a, b), who stated that learners with high levels of proficiency were more accurate in their use of the English article system.

According to the results presented above, the learners demonstrated a high degree of accuracy in the use of the definite article in singular, plural and mass contexts. However, as seen in Figure 2, the learners selected the indefinite article more than what they have showed. The correct response for the mass nouns was 'some,' which the learners selected 157 times. However, the indefinite article was selected 136 times for mass nouns, which was quite high; this may have been due to generalisation because the learners had recently acquired the indefinite article and tended to overuse it.

As mentioned previously, the learners had just started at the university and were in their first year; thus, they may have recently noticed the indefinite article and started to generalise it. The overuse of the indefinite article occurred in singular and plural contexts, but not in mass contexts.

The results revealed that the use of articles affected singular, plural and mass contexts. The learners have shown high accuracy with singular context with generic, indefinite and definite articles. However, the learners showed different accuracy with plural and mass, particularly with generic and indefinite articles. The learners' accuracy with plural and mass with generic and indefinite articles was lower compared to the singular contexts. With regard to the definite article, the learners were accurate in their use in singular, plural and mass contexts, which may have been due to the similarities in the use of the definite article in the L1 and in the L2.

8. Conclusion

In this paper, I demonstrated that Saudi-Arabic learners had different degrees of accuracy when using definite articles in singular, plural and mass contexts. The generic sentence references were the least accurate, followed by the use of the indefinite article in mass contexts. This may have been due to L1 transfer. The learners used the definite singular, plural, mass and indefinite singular and plural accurately. Although indefinite articles are not used in their L1, the learners were able to map and reassemble the feature, which supports the BH and the FRH.

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Women's Property and Inheritance Rights: Application of Laws from the Perspective of Two Major Religions in Bangladesh.

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Abstract

Since the establishment of Bangladesh in 1971, the Government has been committed to providing equal rights and opportunities for women through laws laid down in the constitution. Since independence, while many policies have been implemented to ensure women's empowerment, unfortunately, they continue to face obstacles in inheritance rights. While there are laws in place for both Hindu and Muslim families to ensure the proper distribution of property, in practice, these laws are not rigorous or sufficient to allow women to take charge of their rightful shares, thus depriving them of one pathway to financial independence. Furthermore, due to socio-cultural pressures, women are also unable to demand their rights effectively. When compared to the past, Bangladesh is progressing well in terms of women's empowerment and establishing gender parity in society, but establishing and ensuring absolute ownership of property for women will help us achieve the target within a short time. The purpose of this paper will be to provide a broad survey of existing laws and discuss possible solutions to address prevailing discrimination to bring about full property rights for women in Bangladesh (although this issue affects Shia and Ahmadiyya women in Bangladesh in terms of percentage, they constitute a very small community. Therefore, they are outside the stated scope of the study).

Keywords: Women, Subjugation, Patriarchal, Inheritance, Non-existent, Equality, Bangladesh

1. Introduction

Until the twentieth century, most women in Bangladesh were subjugated and confined within the domestic sphere, where they were separated from the outer world and had minimal access to modes of production, labor markets, decision-making processes, and public life. Since independence, women in Bangladesh have made significant advancements, receiving increased opportunities for education, which enhanced workforce participation and engagement in public spaces and helped them experience inclusive empowerment. In recent years, women's rights have become one of the primary concerns of state policy-making in the country, and the government has taken many initiatives to achieve gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls (SDG-5)¹. Despite efforts to

¹ SDG-5 is to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

reduce the gender gap and advances made, women in Bangladesh remain isolated, and patriarchal and sociocultural structures place them in positions of subjugation among their communities and families. The major obstacle to women's development is their restricted and unequal access to resources, particularly land and other fixed properties (Mubin, 2013). Men's and women's equality in the distribution of resources (inheritance) has become a matter of paramount significance over the years. The ability of women to inherit property in Bangladesh appears to be extremely discriminatory and insufficient. Apart from distributing little to no quantity of shares to women, very nominal control is ensured over the property they own due to the patriarchal structures and misogynistic approaches towards women in society. This generates a ripple effect regarding the advancement and empowerment of women. At the same time, they remain less influential within the familial and societal frameworks because they do not own as much property as men. The root of this problem lies in the divergent religious laws that govern inheritance and property rights in Bangladesh (Inheritance rights of women in Bangladesh, n.d). The existing inheritance laws and discriminatory social and cultural practices in society are geared toward continuing the perpetuation of patriarchy.

The purpose of this paper is to contribute to the emerging literature on recognizing and addressing women's inheritance rights in Bangladesh. Women's emancipation from restrictions on their agency is a crucial precondition for a country's overall development. It is impossible to ensure even growth by ignoring almost half of the nation's population. One of the principal preconditions for women's agency is allowing them to possess property and control assets. This ultimately results in stability and growth and reduces the risk of domestic violence.

2. Study Methodology

In this research, the qualitative approach has been used to gather pertinent information. Data are collected from classical and modern books, including Bangla and English, articles, research papers and reports, newspapers, and internet sources to comprehend the existing laws of women's rights to property and inheritance. Along with these sources, the Holy *Quran* and *Hadith* (the legacy of Prophet Mohammad) are referred to in this research. Primary or secondary data or both can be used for the content analysis of the qualitative method (Harris, 2001). Therefore, this research processes and analyzes data using a descriptive qualitative approach (Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

3. Constitutional rights for women in Bangladesh:

In Bangladesh, the republic's constitution is the fundamental will of the country's people. The people of Bangladesh achieved this charter through a supreme sacrifice in 1971. The Constitution guarantees equal rights for everyone regardless of gender, race, status, place of birth, and creed. According to Justice Kahsefa Hussain of the Bangladesh Supreme Court, our constitutional principles were built on the concept of equality. Several provisions of the constitution unambiguously embody the principle of equality (Annual Report, Supreme Court of Bangladesh- 2022). In the constitution, basic rules of state policy and essential human rights for the citizens of Bangladesh have been guaranteed through chapters two and three. In article number 13, it is stated that the citizens shall control or own the tools as well as means of production and supply, and with this end in view, ownership shall take on the following forms –

- a) State ownership, that is, ownership by the State on behalf of the people through the creation of an efficient and dynamic nationalized public sector embracing the critical areas of the economy (*The Constitution of the People's Republic Bangladesh*)
- b) Co-operative ownership, that is, ownership by co-operatives on behalf of their associates within such limits as may be suggested by law (*The Constitution of the People's Republic Bangladesh*) and
- c) Private ownership is ownership by people within such limits as may be agreed upon by law. (*The Constitution the People's Republic of Bangladesh*).

According to Article 19 of the Constitution, equal chances for every citizen are guaranteed where it is mentioned that the state shall make every effort to ensure fairness of opportunity for all citizens and shall embrace efficient actions to eradicate social and economic discrimination between men and women. The state is also responsible for safeguarding a decent share of wealth among the citizens to achieve a uniform level of economic development all over the state. The Constitution's articles 27 and 28 also mention that everyone should be treated equally in the eyes of the law (*The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh*).

Later, through the 15th Amendment of the Constitution, another clause was added under Article 19, declaring equality of opportunity and women's involvement in all areas of national life (*The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh*).

In part 3 of the constitution, under Article 28 (clauses 1, 2, 3, and 4), it is said that women shall have equal rights to men in all sectors of the country and public life. No citizen shall be exposed to any incapacity, obligation, constraint, or condition regarding access to any place of public entertainment or admission to any educational institution (*The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh*). Nothing in this article shall prevent the state from special provisions in favor of women or children or for the advancement of any disadvantaged section of general people. All previous laws conflicting with these are declared invalid by the Constitution, which instructs the state not to formulate any law unsymmetrical with these rights (*The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh*). Along with the above-stated provisions, article 44 guarantees the right of every citizen to move to the High Court Division to enforce any of the fundamental rights conferred by part 3 of the Constitution under clause 1 of Article 102 (*The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh*).

4. Inheritance law in Bangladesh

Laws legislated by the state or government apply to everyone within its boundaries regardless of race, religion, class, and culture. In Bangladesh, there is no uniform law regarding family and personal matters. Disputes regarding family or personal issues such as marriage, divorce, maintenance, custody, adoption, and other affairs are regulated through personal laws that come from one's respective religion. This plays a significant role in the inheritance rights of women, such as land rights, since religious personal rules are governed mainly by the scriptures of the faiths practiced in the country (Anand, n.d). This means religious laws determine the distribution of the property of the deceased. The inheritance of Muslims is regulated by Muslim law (Shariah law), and Hindus are regulated by Hindu law, and the same applies to other religions as well. The state does not interfere in these spheres. In the context of Bangladesh in the Hindu religion, the condition of women is still being disregarded as amendments have not been enacted to improve the situation and status of women since 1956. Initiatives were taken by the State to reform the existing laws, but strong protests from the Hindu community stopped those efforts. However, the government agreed that amending the Hindu succession law is a pressing need today and is amenable to taking steps. This is the condition of around 10% of the total population in the country as numerically, Hindus (7.95%) comprise the second largest religion in Bangladesh, and the country has the third largest Hindu population in the world (Bangladesh Population and Housing Census, 2022, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics). On the other hand, Shariah law applies to more than 90% of the total population in the country as it is a Muslim-majority unitary state, and a uniform law is functional all around the country. According to Shariah law, a woman holds a separate estate. She has absolute authority over what she obtains by inheritance, gift, or profits attained due to hard work. Islam comprehends an ambivalent message concerning the equality of the sexes in worldly matters and social relationships between people (Monsoor, 2008, p.12). Nevertheless, women do not enjoy their granted rights of inheritance under the law.

5. Hindu Inheritance Law

The Hindu religion is predominantly a male-dominated religion. Here, women perform a secondary subordinate role in the family and society. According to Hindu scriptures, Hindu law is sacrosanct, unchallengeable, and unalterable. No human agency is allowed to challenge its legitimacy as it has the sanction of the supreme power (Agarwala, 1998). Hindu law is considered the most ancient legal system in the world (Gandhi, 2001, p.1). Hindu inheritance law is the personal law of followers of Sanatan Dharma (a Sanskrit expression that is the formal name of Hinduism) that is applicable in matters of marriage, adoption, inheritance of property, gifts, and wills. There are two philosophical schools in the Hindu inheritance law, the *Dayabhaga* and *Mitakshara* schools of thought. The *Dayabhaga* school of thought does not allow the sons to have a claim to their father's ancestral property until his death, and the *Mitakshara* school of thought grants the sons the birthright to familial property. Hindus in West Bengal, Bangladesh, and Assam mainly follow the *Dayabhaga* school of thought, and the rest of the Indians in non-Bengali societies (Chennai, Mumbai, Punjab, Benares, Maharashtra) follow the *Mitakshara* school of thought. In Bangladesh, except for the Hindu inheritance law of the *Dayabhaga* school of thought, Hindu women's property

rights are regulated by the Hindu law of the Inheritance Act (1929) enacted during British colonization, known as the Anglo-Hindu Law. The ancient Hindu law is pertinent where the prevailing state law cannot resolve the issues regarding women's property rights. While most people in Bangladesh adhere to the *Dayabhaga* School of Law, the Hindu Law of Inheritance Act of 1929 only applies to Mitakshara practitioners (The Hindu Law of Inheritance Amendment Act, 1929).

The Vedas (oldest scriptures of Hinduism) and historical commentaries on women's right to property have bifurcated the right to property for women into Stridhan and Non-stridhan, which is practiced by the Mitakshara school of thought.

A woman has absolute control over the succession of Stridhan property. Stridhan is separated into Saudaiyka and Non-saudaiyka². Women had complete possession over Saudaiyka property. Such property contained gifts from her husband, parents, or other family members. Women possessed restricted rights over the non-saudaiyka property after the wedding, and the approval of the husband was needed for alienation. This type of property includes gifts from non-relatives. Gifts or property received by a woman from a male or female relative are considered non-stridhan property. She has restricted ownership of it as she could only use such property but does not have the right to alienate the inheritance of the property. Such property would devolve on her death.

In Bangladesh, among Hindus, a significant portion of women are eliminated from inheritance and succession. According to the *Dayabhaga* School of Law, only five groups of women inherit the property (Zahur, 2017, p.82) out of fifty-three. They are based on personal preference: wife, daughter, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother (*sapinda*). *Sapinda* means close blood relation between ascendants and the deceased (Islam, n.d), those persons connected by the doctrine of religious efficacy. This indicates the ability to bestow a spiritual advantage upon the deceased person. These women inherit limited rights on the property, and not each daughter of a man is equivalently entitled to inherit the father's property. Unmarried daughters and married daughters with male children can receive the property share, while widowed daughters with no child (barren widowed) or daughters having no male child are barred from property rights. If the sons are still alive, generally, daughters do not receive a share in the father's property. Widows have a very insignificant share in their husband's property in the form of life interest. In this law, sons eliminate others except for non-agricultural property in terms of inheritance from the father. Sons or grandsons (sons of a predeceased son) receive the property from their grandfather, which their father would have received if he had been alive during their grandfather's demise. The daughter or daughters may inherit the property if neither sons nor wife or sons of the predeceased son are alive, with the unmarried daughters having preference. Along with this, loss of chastity is another ground that deprives a wife or daughter of succession.

'Male succeeding as an heir (whether from a male or female) takes an absolute interest in that property, and upon his death, the property transfers to his nearest heirs, but female succeeding as heirs (whether from a male or female) takes a limited interest in that property inherited by her' (Akhtar & Abdullah, 2007, p.67). Male offspring is considered significant when it comes to property distribution. After carefully reviewing the provisions of Hindu inheritance laws, it is noticed that daughters are not generally granted a share of the father's property while the sons are still alive. While it is not stated straightforwardly in the inheritance distribution system, this tradition has been going on for a long time. According to Zahur (2017), since religion forms the foundation of society, this religious disenfranchisement has a tremendous effect on the overall position of women in society (p.82). As a consequence, women endured the most in their property and inheritance rights as these rights were established based on religious principles. Taking this into account, the daughters are more likely to suffer because their rights to ancestral property were annulled, which eventually led to the loss of social status and dignity.

6. Muslim Inheritance Law

Bangladesh is a Muslim-majority country, and it is home to the world's 5th largest Muslim population. Islam performs a substantial responsibility in the personal and political lives of the vast majority of the Bangladeshi population. The Muslims in Bangladesh are governed by the Islamic law of inheritance, and Islam provides equal dignity to both sexes of human beings (Ghani & Khan, 2019). The law of succession of the Muslims is called Al-

² Saudaiyka means absolute wealth of a woman. Non-Saudaiyka means a woman does not have the power to dispose of the property without the husband's consent.

Faraid, which comprises four sources of Islamic law: a) The Holy Quran- the central religious text of Islam b) The Sunna- which is the custom of the Prophet c) The Ijma- is the consensus of the knowledgeable men of the community over the appropriate course of action on a specific issue d) The Qiya- a rational deduction of what is ethical and impartial following the moral standards put down by God. The Holy Quran encompasses only three verses (4:11, 4:12, and 4:176), which provide particular details of inheritance and share and introduce numerous distinct rights and limitations on questions of inheritance along with the overall enhancements to the family life and treatment of women. The Holy Quran states that there is a predetermined stake for both man and woman in the inheritance of property. Al Faraid is exceptionally detailed compared to other existing inheritance laws, which some non-muslims have also appreciated because it addresses the share of different categories of inheritors. Many scholars referred to Al Faraid as the most sophisticated and elaborate system of rules for the distribution of property known to the civilized world (Rumsey, 2009). Muslim law acknowledges two classes of heirs: Sharers and Residuaries. Sharers are those allowed to a specific portion of the deceased's property. Residuaries would occupy the stake in the remaining property after each sharer has obtained their share. The sharers are the Quota-heirs or dhawu al-farā'id, which includes four males and eight females, a total of 12. The male sharers are the a) Husband, b) Father, c) Paternal grandfather, and d) Maternal brother. The female Sharers are the a) Wife, b) Daughter, c) Granddaughter, D) Mother, e) Grandmother, f) Full sister, g) Paternal sister, and h) Maternal sister. The Residuaries are the members of Asaba, which includes male and occasionally female family members who inherit as residuary after the share of the Sharers is disseminated. There is no clear and specific share for a woman based on the relationship with the deceased person in Bangladeshi society (Khan et al., 2016).

The daughter will acquire half of her father's total property if a deceased person has only one daughter and no son. The daughters will collectively receive two-thirds of their father's property if the person has two or more daughters. If the father has one or more sons, the property will be distributed by a 2:1 proportion between sons and daughters. For example, if a departed individual leaves Tk 100 and leaves three sons and one daughter, the daughter will get Tk 14.29, and the three sons each will obtain Tk 28.57 (Granted by the Quran, Denied by Men, The Daily Star.net). The wife will inherit one-fourth of her late husband's property if a deceased person has no child, grandchild, or generation downward. Additionally, the wife will get one-eighth of the property if he has descendants (Table 1). According to *Sharia* law, the wife is entitled to receive her *mahr* (*Denmohor* is a bridal gift from a man to a woman when they marry). She can claim the due *mahr* from the deceased person's heirs if it has not already been paid. *Mahr* should be disbursed at the time of marriage, but in practice, this amount is only given to the wife if the couple divorces (Sarowar. M. Golam et al., 2007, p.22). A mother may also inherit property from her child. If the deceased person does not have any child, grandchild, or great-grandchild, the wife (of the deceased person) will inherit one-third of his property; otherwise, she will get one-sixth of the property (Granted by the Quran, Denied by men, The Daily Star.net). The *Sharia* law also gives complete authority to a woman to sell, transfer, or modify the property she owns (Chandan, March 8, 2019). However, over time, people have violated Islamic laws regarding the dispensation of property among women (Khan et al., 2016). Research conducted by eminent economist Professor Abul Barakat titled 'Assessing Inheritance Laws and their Impact on Rural Women in Bangladesh' reveals that the scenario becomes considerably more depressing concerning effective ownership of women over the land. According to a moderate estimation, Muslim women effectively own around 5 percent (ranging between 3% and 5%) of the land in rural Bangladesh (2014, p.2).

Table 1: Farā'id towards women mentioned in the Qur'ān

Daughter (more than one and no son)	Father	2/3
Daughter (one daughter and no son)	Father	1/2
Daughter (with son)	Father	Residuary, one daughter gets 1/2 of one son
Half-sister from the mother's side (one only, and there are no descendants and parents of the deceased)	Brother	1/6
Inheritor	Inheritance owned by	Share of Inheritance
Mother (If there is a grandson)	Son	1/6
Mother (If there is no grandson)	Son	1/6
Sister (more than one, and there are no descendants and parents of the deceased)	Brother	All get 1/3 of the property

Uterine sister (more than one, and there are no descendants and parents of the deceased)	Brother	1/3
Uterine sister (one only, and there are no descendants and parents of the deceased)	Brother	1/2
Wife (If there is a son)	Husband	1/8
Wife (If there is no son)	Husband	1/4

Source: (*Sūrah al-Nisā'*, 4: 11, 12,176), (Khan, Abdullah, Rahman, Nor, & Yusoff, 2016).

7. Current Status of Women in Bangladesh

Bangladesh recognized the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1984³. Since then, the government has been working relentlessly to establish equal opportunities for women and implement policies to eradicate gender discrimination. For the advancement of women, Bangladesh ratified several international human rights conventions, pacts, agreements, and instruments and is dedicated to achieving the targets and objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The country is progressing towards ensuring women's empowerment, but the general situation of women is still at a disadvantage in comparison to men, which needs to improve. Society has a rigid perspective towards the changing scenario of women and is responsible for the underdevelopment of women. They are still struggling to achieve equality and experience empowerment in the country. According to Dr. Barakat, in rural Bangladesh, households own 65.1 decimals of land on average, whereas only 10.3 decimals are possessed by women. This indicates that women possess only 15.8 percent of the land at the household level (Dr. Barakat, 2014, p.2).

Both Hindu and Muslim women in Bangladesh are recurrently disregarded whenever the question of inheritance rights comes up. It is evident that because of personal laws, the volume of property women get in Bangladesh is polarized. Due to the lack of a 'Uniform family code,' there is a higher probability of discrimination; in actuality, this discrimination affects Hindu women harshly in their socio-economic lives (Begum, 2018, p.110). Within the law, Muslim women are entitled to greater property and inheritance rights than Hindu women. Nevertheless, both Hindu and Muslim women are underprivileged, but Hindu women are placed far away from ever receiving equal rights (Inheritance Rights of Women in Bangladesh, n.d). Even without going against religious scriptures or regulations, equal rights can be granted to women of both religions: Hindu Women through Stridhana and Muslim women through Wasayah and Hiba. These provisions of gifts and wills can be exercised to make women's procurement of equal rights to property simpler in relation to men. However, most people in society are not ready to provide women control over any property since distributing property to them through these alternatives is not compulsory and depends on personal preference. For instance, through Clause 25(2) of the Women Development Policy in 2011, the government of Bangladesh intended to incorporate equal property rights for women, which did not interrupt any of the Quran verses directly. Different powerful religious factions commenced a nationwide strike against this initiative, and the government had to relinquish the idea (Inheritance Rights of Women in Bangladesh, n.d). Leader of the Islami Oikyo Jote Misbahur Rahman said in an interview with the national daily Samakal, 'Before the election, the Grand Alliance pledged not to formulate any law that contradicts the Quran and the Sunnah. Now, if they develop a women's policy that goes against the Quran, why should we accept it?' (Equal Property Right, the Daily Star.net, 2019). Renowned social activist Professor Kaberi Gayen stated, 'Since the first day of declaration, the religion-based political party declined the policy and announced resistance against it, stating that it granted equal inheritance rights to men and women (Equal Property Right, The Daily Star.net, 2019). All the religion-based groups and parties, including Jamaat-e-Islami, labeled the policy as anti-Quran and proclaimed that the government would collapse if the policy were enacted' (Equal Property Right, The Daily Star.net, 2019). This particular incident demonstrates that many in society and families of the women are unwilling to allocate an equal share for them in the property. In Bangladesh, the inheritance laws constructed on personal Rules, on the one hand, offer the citizens permission to perform their religious obligations but, on the other hand, violate the spirit of the Constitution, which guarantees the same rights for men and women in all areas of life. Nevertheless, to strengthen national development, the constitution of Bangladesh has guaranteed equal opportunities and rights for women through various laws and policies (Zahur, 2017, p.79). In practice, women confront extreme

³ 8th periodic report of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW)

discrimination in their personal lives by being deprived of the absolute ownership of property. In Hindu succession law, the opportunity to have complete authority in their inheritance is almost virtually non-existent, whereas, in Muslim laws, women are given more scope of ownership and inheritance. Ensuring the absolute interest of inheritance for Hindu women in Bangladesh is very important for the country's inclusive development. Simultaneously, for Muslim women, establishing the application of existing laws is of great necessity because they also cannot demand their rights in many cases, and they are systematically eliminated from property inheritance. As women are not entitled to absolute ownership of the property, they are unable to become financially independent and self-reliant, which ultimately results in the country's underdevelopment. It can be said that not only religious laws but an extremely entrenched patriarchic mindset in society are preventing women from acclaiming absolute property rights. In rural Bangladesh, the preference given to male children is quite strong. Therefore, a fundamental modification in the organizational framework is required to safeguard the rights of women. This change will empower rural women by developing their self-esteem and bargaining power by attaining freedom to become independent and cognizant of their rights (Parveen, 2007, p.256). In May 2023, the High Court asked the government to take action to ensure Hindu women's rights to equal inheritance of property, including marriage and divorce registration, maintenance, adoption, and guardianship (Reflecting on Hindu Women's Inheritance Rights, The Business Standard, August 2023). These illustrations show us that there must be a uniform code of law.

8. Possible Solutions/Recommendations

We are now living in the 21st century, where the world is constantly evolving towards positive change, but still, here in Bangladesh, the change regarding property rights for women is very insignificant. The dilemma is both cultural and legal. Here, we still follow the traditional inheritance law legislated during the age of British colonialization. This has remained unaltered since 1947, when the British departed from the subcontinent. Besides this long-standing conventional family law, socio-cultural prejudices hinder women from acquiring their legal rights in property distribution. Most women are stripped of their rights to land due to these norms and values. Sarowar et al., 2007 mentioned that land possessed by a family is generally titled under the name of the male head of the family and, due to cultural restrictions on gender roles and their deficiency of self-sufficient financial resources, women hardly purchase land in their name. In our country, a small number of women have land ownership, but they have very nominal to no control over their land. In some cases, women are compelled to relinquish ownership of property to their male counterparts, and very few of them can take legal action against such theft. This happens because of a need for more awareness, courage, and financial limitations. Corrective measures should be taken and implemented to ensure equal inheritance rights for women in terms of property rights. Here are some recommendations for ensuring the inheritance rights of women-

8.1. Reform existing property/ inheritance law

Gender inequality regarding land and property is extensive in Bangladesh due to inequitable inheritance systems, discriminatory access to land markets, and gender-biased land reform⁴. Since gaining independence, Bangladesh has adopted numerous legislative measures to protect women's rights. However, no significant initiatives were taken to modify or reform the existing law of inheritance in the country. As a result, countless issues are still not addressed and remain unresolved. Reforming the existing inheritance laws is a crucial need of modern times. Nearly all countries are working to ensure women's empowerment and gender equality, as these are significant criteria for human rights. According to M. Harari, legal reform at the statutory level can be an essential starting point even in situations in which customs are perceived to be very difficult to transform (2019, P.42). The age-old Hindu inheritance law which is being practiced in Bangladesh needs to be reformed immediately not only for women but for the overall development of the country because without empowering women it is not possible to secure advancement in the country. Whenever the question of reforming Hindu inheritance law is elevated, it is permanently nullified on the grounds of religious sentiment. The fragmentation and disputes between orthodox Hinduism and the progressive wing of the Hindu community and patriarchic attitudes in society are responsible

⁴ Women's Control over Economic Resources and Access to Financial Resources, including Microfinance, World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, 2009

for this stalemate. At the same time, there should also be some readjustments in the Muslim inheritance law, as we can find some discrepancies there regarding property distribution. While the Islamic law of inheritance (Al Faraid) is less discriminatory regarding women's property rights, a new property-sharing law is not recommended for Bangladesh; instead, it is essential to implement the provisions of Al Faraid among Muslims. If that can be done, the women of the Muslim community will be able to become economically solvent and self-dependent. A study found that legislative reforms can influence women's property ownership. Countries with more equal legal regimes for women are correlated with higher property ownership by women (Gaddis I et al., 2020, p.23). Legislators should revise discriminatory laws restricting women's property ownership. Adequate legislative reforms should enact a well-balanced legal system where the rules and regulations will be mentioned unambiguously, and those laws should be implemented to ensure women's right to gain benefits and establish absolute ownership of property. Therefore, where laws exist and are violated, the government should punish violators with stricter penalties, which can be monetary or, in severe cases, prison sentences.

8.2 Change the Socio-cultural norms through community engagement

The prevailing socio-cultural norms and practices are another major hindrance in establishing property ownership for women in Bangladesh. While women in the country form almost half of the entire population, still, they are treated as second-class citizens. For decades, women have been subjugated in the male-dominated patriarchal structures of society; most women have limited access to financial services and the decision-making process as a result of constraints. Hence, women remain prey to males in almost all aspects of their lives, which leads to the deprivation of property ownership. The prevalence of traditional attitudes and practices contradicts existing statutory laws and established civil rights. It is high time to transform the perception of society regarding women and consider them as equal to men. To counter the problem, the engagement of community leaders, religious figures, and social influencers can play a decisive role in society through dialogue and media engagement.

Socio-cultural norms prohibit women from demanding their share of the property from their male family members such as brothers, fathers, and husbands because if they ask for the rights, they will be criticized by society, even by their family members, as it is considered "unconventional" or improper in the view of patriarchy to question the place assigned to them in society. This approach forces women to leave their ownership to male family members. If we can amend this social perception through raising awareness a magical transformation can happen in Bangladesh regarding the inheritance rights of women. The socio-cultural atmosphere of the country is uncondusive to women's rights. It elucidates the contradiction between the law and local settings and how women's inferior status has become an accepted social norm in Bangladesh (Begum,2004, p.263).

8.3 Appropriate knowledge regarding property rights for Women

Education is essential for any transformation in the family, society, and country. As women comprise around 50% of the total populace of Bangladesh, women's education is crucial to bringing positive and fundamental changes in the country (Chowdhury, 2014). Women should be given proper education and knowledge regarding property rights and maintenance to secure their inheritance rights. A chapter on inheritance rights or the substances of the property distribution system and calculation process should be incorporated at the secondary and higher secondary levels so that both girls and boys can become conscious of the issue. It will ensure a just and appropriate distribution system in the country and allow women to claim their actual share; without having explicit knowledge, women cannot establish their rights on their ancestral property. Also, boys should know the property sharing system among relatives who are legitimately entitled to own the property. Proper education and legal training should be provided so women can better implement the laws. Educational institutions should hold inclusionary, interactive meetings with parents to engage them in conversation about women's rights regarding property.

8.4 Awareness of Women

Creating awareness through disseminating information among women is an essential precondition to ensure equal rights and opportunities. With accurate and proper information, becoming aware of equal rights and opportunities is possible. Once the women of our country have the information associated with inheritance, they will be able to

claim their rightful share in the ancestral properties. For awareness creation, the government should take necessary steps such as conducting seminars and meetings for the women and regularly initiating mass gatherings and discussion sessions with the victims at the grassroots level. Simultaneously, social media can be a valuable platform to disseminate knowledge and raise awareness about civil rights. Writing blog posts, making content or videos, sharing images and stories on inheritance rights for women, and exchanging information publicly through social media provide its users the power to initiate discussion. Along with that, the authorities should come forward to extend support for deprived women, particularly in the country's rural areas. So that women can share their problems to get a workable solution and receive their deserved proportion of familial properties.

8.5 Making the legal process easier

In Bangladesh, access to the legal system is very complicated, particularly for ordinary people. Corruption and malpractice make the problem even worse. Often, property and inheritance issues become very intricate and lengthy. The government should take perhaps more responsibility to make the process easier and more accessible for women. Most importantly, the judiciary process in Bangladesh should be more friendly and approachable. Often, we can see that a property-related case takes years to solve an issue, which becomes a burden for the victim, and they become frustrated due to the long duration of the judiciary process. According to statistics, as of 2017, approximately 2.5 lakh cases with the land survey tribunals remained unsolved throughout the country. The number of cases has hiked to 3 lakhs now (Land disputes pile up with weak tribunals, *The Daily Sun*, 30th November 2019). There are tribunals overburdened with innumerable land dispute cases. In some regions, there are more land disputes than others. Data indicates that in Kishoreganj, 44,152 cases are unresolved; in Mymensingh, 32,676 cases; in Netrokona, 21,863; in Jamalpur, 17,951; in Tangail, 10,809; in Chandpur, 9,126 and 7,438 cases in Dhaka land survey tribunals in Bangladesh are pending (Table 2).

Table 2: Number of land dispute cases pending in central districts of Bangladesh

Name of the District	Number of Cases
Kishoreganj	44,152
Mymensingh	32,676
Netrokona	21,863
Jamalpur	17,951
Tangail	10,809
Chandpur	9,126
Dhaka	7,438

Source: Compiled by the author, partially taken from 'Land disputes pile up with weak tribunals,' *The Daily Sun*, 30th November 2019.

According to research collaboratively operated and published by Netherlands-based charitable organization the Hague Institute for Innovation of Law (HiiL), the Netherlands government, and BRAC titled 'Justice Needs and Satisfaction in Bangladesh 2018', in Bangladesh every year, 31 million people encounter legal challenges among them land related legal disputes are 29 percent of total numbers, and this is a second most prevalent legal problem affecting 8 million people per year (p.173). Additionally, it is noticed that an average of 9.5 years is required for land-related cases to be settled (The uncomfortable truth about land disputes in Bangladesh: Insights from a household survey, 2020).

In practice, a small number of women are willing to seek legal help and file a lawsuit to establish land ownership. One of the primary reasons is the existing legal and judiciary system, which is not advantageous for the general people of the country. For instance, courts, particularly in rural areas, can be headed by women justices and possibly held on camera for the privacy and protection of women and witnesses from external undue influences. In the future, a strong, functionally independent judiciary and human rights commission should be the state's objective towards safeguarding property rights for women and other vulnerable individuals and communities. The presence of women in the legal profession, such as the inclusion of more women justices and lawyers, could ensure better access to justice for all. In justice, females in leadership can enhance people's trust and assurance, empower the underprivileged, and make the court environment reachable to the disenfranchised (Justice for All: Why Having More Women Judges Benefits All of Society, March 2023).

8.6 Initiative to ensure proper application of laws

There are several laws and regulations concerning inheritance in Bangladesh, but those laws could be more effective when it comes to the question of proper application and implementation. Many people consider Islamic inheritance law as more balanced and equitable for women. Due to a lack of appropriate knowledge and awareness, many people oppose applying the law, which hampers establishing justice for women in property share. On the other hand, Hindu inheritance law is imprecise and inconsistent, which is also a challenge for women's property ownership. This ambiguity should be clarified with proper explanations, and the laws should be implemented appropriately to establish women's rights so that we can eliminate discrimination from society. While the government has good will and intentions, the authority should be more proactive in enforcing its regulations.

9. Strengths and Limitations of the Study

One of the research's strengths is its comprehensive investigation of the historical context regarding women's inheritance rights. The most notable strength of this paper is that it analyzes the Inheritance laws in a detailed manner, including the references from holy scriptures that form the basis of these laws. Simultaneously, it illustrates the challenges women face in inheritance and suggests relevant remedies to ensure their inheritance.

This study has potential limitations. The lack of sufficient recent and contemporary specific data regarding women's inheritance is one of the significant limitations. Besides this, a comparative discussion between Bangladesh and India could be drawn. Still, India is a much larger state with a more diverse population, religious groups, and inheritance laws, which are not necessarily represented in Bangladesh. Therefore, this comparative analysis can be left outside the scope of the study. Nonetheless, while discussing the inheritance rights of women, the paper focuses on the Muslim women, commonly the Sunni sect of the society, not the *Shia* and *Ahmadiyya* women in Bangladesh. However, this can be a potential substance for future research.

10. Conclusion

“Where women are honored, there the gods are pleased: but where they are not honored, no sacred rite yields rewards” (Manusmriti: The Laws of Manu, p.55). Several laws have been enacted to safeguard the rights of Bangladeshi women and the situation is changing gradually towards equity. We can see very clearly that women in Bangladesh have been participating in parliamentary elections since the independence of the country. The country's government is undertaking many initiatives to empower and transform the status of women in society; because of those initiatives, the disparity between men and women is also decreasing significantly in terms of education, participation, and wages. Due to sociocultural stereotypes and gender norms that persist in our society, these initiatives are not able to accomplish their objectives properly and, to some extent, are failing.

In Bangladesh, inheritance is governed by religion, which has left the inheritance process discriminatory and unfair, particularly for women. Among Hindus, according to the Dayabagha School of Law, not all women are entitled to inherit property; even if they inherit, their property rights are restricted in life interest. Several inequalities can be seen in Hindu inheritance law for women. Regarding Muslim women, according to the law of inheritance, ‘Al faraid’ gave a single share to the daughters and a double share to the son. In Muslim society, the distribution of property is determined by the roles and responsibilities of males and females, where a man is more responsible compared to a woman. According to hadith Sahih Bukhari, a man is supposed to be the “Guardian” of his family. Consequently, they are entitled to the lion's share of family property. Though women are allocated a limited share of the property, it does not benefit them economically. We can see very clearly that in Bangladesh, despite many existing laws and norms, in reality, women are not granted complete ownership or access to property. As a result, they are not solvent financially, which ultimately leads to the underdevelopment of women in our society. Due to the inequitable distribution of property, women are not able to become self-sufficient and empowered. If the state apparatus is willing to change women's position and empower them, providing them with absolute rights over their property is essential. Therefore, state law should intervene to give women equal shares of property. Thus, I feel the government should take an interventionist possession to ensure equity in property rights.

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Cybercrime's Global and National Dimensions: Policy Frameworks, Challenges, and Future Solutions

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Abstract

As global reliance on digital technology expands, so do the risks posed by cybercrime, which impacts individuals, institutions, and nations. This study has five main objectives: to evaluate global strategies for countering the growing cybercrime threat, compare diverse national approaches that reflect distinct legal traditions and enforcement priorities, identify and address critical challenges in combating cybercrime, assess the significant social and economic impacts of cybercrime, and highlight critical areas of focus to mitigate these threats. It also looks at the sophisticated methods that cybercriminals use and how technological advancements constantly reshape societal understanding and responses to cybercrimes. Cybercrime, once rooted in traditional crime, has evolved into a distinct and formidable threat fueled by the internet's anonymity and interconnectivity. This study advocates for a comprehensive global cybersecurity strategy that prioritizes legal reforms, encourages international cooperation, and tailors prevention strategies to the changing cyber landscape. It also addresses disparities in national cybersecurity preparedness, emphasizing the critical need for enhanced security measures and proactive strategies to mitigate cybercrime's widespread economic, social, and national security consequences.

Keywords: Cybercrime, Global, National, Dimensions, Challenges, Impacts, Solutions

1. Introduction

1.1. Definition of Cybercrime

The use of cybercrime is growing uncontrollably, and digital technology is advancing at an irreversible rate. We offer definitions of cybercrime that consider several scenarios. Cybercrime involves illegal activities via the internet and devices, which are often associated with hackers. Hacking is a general term for cybercrime, not just

hacking itself (Coll, 2022). Additionally, it is defined as the use of computers to perform socially unacceptable acts; the majority of cybercrime in the modern day involves the transfer of physical crimes into virtual spaces. (Richards, 2011). Hence, cybercrime encompasses a range of illicit activities conducted through devices and the internet, which are often linked to hackers. It represents the migration of traditional criminal activities into the digital realm, where illegal operations are conducted via computers and online platforms. Hacking serves as a prominent example of cybercrime, encompassing various socially unacceptable acts facilitated through computer technology. The landscape of cybercrime is always changing along with technology; thus, attempts to prevent and lessen its negative effects on society must be continuous.

Cybercrime, a significant issue in the digital age, can have severe consequences for nations and globally. States should be aware of this and take precautions. Cybercrime is increasing globally, highlighting the need for improved legal systems, national policies and response strategies to safeguard national security and social and economic systems. Owing to an increase in cybercrimes globally, research has emphasized the growing significance of cybersecurity and the need for improved national and international planning and response strategies to safeguard social and economic systems (Batrachenko, et al., 2024). With respect to government data, financial theft, and espionage, cybercrime is on the rise worldwide. Governments need to work together, establish prevention plans, and conduct investigations via digital forensic methods. (Sara, 2016). Social cohesiveness, economic stability, and national security are all impacted by cybercrime, which is an increasing concern in the digital era. Preemptive response strategies, robust policies, and enhanced legal frameworks are needed. Resilient social and economic networks depend on effective cybersecurity and digital forensic measures.

In conclusion, the emergence of digital technology has coincided with a notable rise in cybercrime, which is characterized by illicit actions carried out using electronic devices that are linked to the internet and that pose a general threat to public safety. The stability of contemporary society, the economy, and national security are all seriously threatened by cybercrime utilizing computers and other internet-connected gadgets. Recent studies have highlighted the need for national regulations, strong legal frameworks and strategies for enforcing response as cybercrime spreads around the world. Effective cybersecurity measures and the use of digital forensics are essential in the fight against cyber threats targeting wealth, finance, government action and sensitive data worldwide. We need to take comprehensive measures to protect the integrity of our growing digital industry and society.

1.2. Traditional Crime and the New Cybercrime

As digital technology has advanced, a new phrase called "cybercrime" has surfaced. There are crimes that fall outside of the usual categories. The methods employed in these two categories of crimes are diametrically opposed. Consequently, the various aspects of these two crimes are contrasted in this paper. Traditional crimes are committed by bodily offenders. Criminals use their experience and knowledge to commit crimes, and emerging crimes demand knowledge (Kumar, 2021). The microcontext of crime involves a person's presence, spatial possibilities, control, surveillance, and vulnerability, all of which have been used historically to explain criminal behavior (Rothe & Friedrichs, 2017). Understanding different kinds of criminal offenses is more structured by the categories shown in Table 1.2.1. The table facilitates recognition of the many types and consequences of these crimes by grouping them into several categories. Crimes directed at individuals or property include theft or other forms of physical injury, whereas crimes concentrate on the development of criminal intent. Criminal activity in legal contexts is widely represented by statutory and financial crimes, which include financial deception and regulatory infractions. Traditional crimes involve direct physical actions, whereas emerging crimes require specialized knowledge and skills. The microcontext approach examines individual and environmental factors influencing criminal behavior, such as location, control, surveillance, and vulnerability. Crimes are classified into crimes against persons and property, inchoate crimes, statutory offenses, and financial and other crimes. Table 1.2.1 helps organize and clarify these types of offenses, facilitating a clearer understanding of their nature, consequences, and context. This structured understanding aids in recognizing diverse forms of criminal behavior and the specific legal and societal responses needed. Recognizing these categories is crucial for academic study and practical applications in criminal justice.

Table 1.2.1: Criminal Offense Types

<i>Categories</i>	<i>Offenses</i>
Crimes Committed Against Individuals	Arson, Child Abuse, Domestic Abuse, Homicide, Assault and Battery, Kidnapping, Rape, and Statutory Rape
Crimes Involving Property	Robbery, Vandalism, Theft, and Fraud
Inchoate Crime	Conspiracy, attempt, aiding, and abetting
Lawful Offenses	Financial/White Collar Crimes, Drug-Related Crimes, Traffic Offenses, and Crimes Associated with Alcohol
Financial and Additional Offenses	Cybercrime, tax evasion, embezzlement, money laundering, fraud, and blackmail

The word "cybercrime," which was coined in the latter half of the 20th century, describes a traditional crime with a fresh look that is constantly evolving in response to new developments in technology (Newman, 2009). Cybercrime is the term for crimes committed using technology and the internet by the same offenders as traditional crimes. Hackers can be members of criminal gangs, disillusion teenagers, and enraged employees, activists, and state foes. Their techniques for obtaining information and carrying out attacks are comparable to those of physical crimes; the distinction is in the application of technology (PGI, 2018). Despite the use of technology and the internet, cybercrime essentially does not differ from traditional crime in terms of players and their goals. In essence, it is a contemporary version of classic crime, committed by comparable criminal characters employing cutting-edge technology techniques. Rather than a fundamental shift in criminal behavior or intent, the evolution of cybercrime is primarily a reflection of changes in the instruments employed. Understanding the types of cybercrime is a reflection of the level of danger it poses to institutions, individuals, and businesses, as well as its relentless evolutionary process as technology advances daily. Recognizing its type is important in arranging legal framework amendments in accordance with the digitalization context, as shown in Table 2.1.2. Cybercrime, though it uses modern technology and the internet, fundamentally mirrors traditional crime in terms of its underlying motives and the individuals involved. While tools and methods have evolved, the essence of cybercrime remains consistent with classical criminal behavior. The motivations behind cybercrimes are often the same as those behind physical crimes, regardless of the hacker's identity: state rivals, activists, angry employees, professional thieves, or others. The primary distinction lies in the technological means used, not in the nature of the crime itself. Technology advancements are contributing to the sophistication of cybercrime, which is commensurate with the continuous expansion of criminal tactics. Understanding the different forms and characteristics of cybercrime is crucial for assessing the risks that it poses to businesses, organisations, and people. As shown in Table 2.1.2, this understanding is crucial for modifying legal frameworks to meet the difficulties brought about by digitalization. Therefore, even though crime has taken on a different face, the underlying ideas that motivate criminal activity have not been altered.

In contrast to cybercrime, which involves virtual interactions and digital proofs, traditional crimes require direct physical actions and tangible evidence, such as theft, violence, and property damage. Similar criminal profiles and motivations underlie both kinds of crimes; thieves are frequently driven by a desire for vengeance, money, or personal fulfillment. In contrast, cybercrime employs technologically enabled digital techniques such as malware, phishing, and hacking. While traditional crimes have changed over time due to modifications to physical security systems and tactics used by law enforcement, cybercrime has continued to adapt due to advancements in technology. Conventional crimes have well-established legal frameworks that can be modified to accommodate emerging practices. Legislative frameworks are changing to keep up with technology advancements, and cybercrime is becoming more widely acknowledged as a separate category requiring specialized legal and technological knowledge. To effectively build legal responses and modify frameworks to address both classic and emergent criminal concerns, comprehending the similarities and differences between cybercrimes and traditional crimes is imperative.

In conclusion, a comparison of traditional and cybercrimes reveals that criminal behavior is both constant and evolving. Conventional crimes, such as stealing, violence, and property destruction, are defined by overt physical acts and concrete proof, and they are carried out by people driven by greed, retaliation, or self-gratification. These crimes have evolved with changes in physical security and law enforcement techniques, but their core nature remains consistent. In contrast, cybercrime represents a contemporary adaptation of traditional criminal behavior, leveraging modern technology and the internet. Although the methods—such as hacking, phishing, and malware—are digital, the underlying motives and criminal profiles are similar to those involved in traditional crimes. Cybercriminals, whether professional thieves, criminal organizations, or state adversaries, commit crimes for reasons comparable to those of their traditional counterparts, with the primary difference lying in the technological tools and techniques used. The evolution of cybercrime reflects the rapid advancement of technology, necessitating specialized knowledge and sophisticated methods. This ongoing development poses unique challenges to legal frameworks, which must adapt to address the specific nature of cybercrime effectively. Even though they are well established, traditional legal solutions must change to meet the complexity of cybercrime, as demonstrated by the modifications needed for digital environments. To effectively construct legal remedies and ensure that both classic and emergent criminal dangers are fully addressed, comprehending the parallels and differences between cybercrimes and traditional crimes is imperative. The structured classification of crimes, as displayed in Tables 1.2.1 and 2.1.2, facilitates this understanding by making it simpler to recognize and address various categories of criminal activities. Legal frameworks must be modified to reflect the changing nature of crime, both traditional and cyber, to maintain the integrity of justice and security protocols in a world that is changing constantly.

1.3. Research Questions

The article focuses on comprehending the extent of cybercrime at the global and national levels, the various issues these crimes provide, their effects on various sectors of society, and viable tactics and solutions for tackling them, which are encompassed by the study question.

- How can the global community effectively address and mitigate the growing threat of cybercrime?
- How do different countries' legislative frameworks and enforcement strategies address and adapt to the evolving threat of cybercrime, and what are the distinctive features of their approaches?
- What are the key challenges in combating cybercrime, and how can it be improved to address these issues effectively?
- What are the impacts of cybercrime on society and businesses, and what comprehensive strategies are needed to address and combat these impacts effectively?
- What are the key categories of activities necessary for effectively combating cybercrime?

1.4. Research Objectives

To answer the research questions above, this research highlights five objectives:

- To evaluate global strategies to effectively address the growing threat of cybercrime, the global community must adopt a coordinated and multifaceted approach.
- To compare national approaches between different countries that have developed various legislative frameworks and enforcement strategies to combat cybercrime, reflecting their unique legal traditions and national priorities.
- To identify and address challenges in combating cybercrime.
- To evaluate the significant impacts of cybercrime on society, comprehensive strategies that incorporate both preventive and responsive measures are needed.
- To identify and describe the essential areas of focus and activities required to address and mitigate the threats posed by cybercrime.

1.5. Research Methodology

This research employs a desk-based methodology to examine the impact of cybercrime across different geographical regions, alongside a comparative analysis to assess various nations' legal frameworks and response strategies. Through this approach, the study reveals shared challenges, distinct differences, and specialized tactics

these regions use to combat cybercrime effectively. Additionally, this analysis highlights critical issues and identifies potential solutions to enhance the global response to cybercrime.

1.6. Literature Review

Cybercrime has become a major worldwide concern in an era characterized by rapid technical innovation. The significance of understanding cybercrime—defined broadly as illegal activities facilitated through the use of the internet—has escalated as countless social, economic, and national security systems have become increasingly interconnected and reliant on digital infrastructure. This literature review synthesizes findings from recent studies exploring the multifaceted nature of cybercrime, its traditional crime roots, and the responses required in both global and national contexts.

The definitions of cybercrime provided by scholars such as Coll (2022) and Richards (2011) underscore the phenomenon's breadth, encompassing various actors and motivations that reflect the shifting boundaries of criminality in the digital age. Batrachenko and colleagues (2024) highlight the increasing prevalence of cybercrime, necessitating stronger legal frameworks and policy responses tailored to protect social and economic structures at the national and international levels. Governments are increasingly aware of the implications of cyber threats, as cybercriminal activities target sensitive data, financial assets, and infrastructure, thereby jeopardizing economic stability and national security (Sara, 2016). The need for collaborative and multifaceted response strategies is further emphasized by the literature, which advocates for enhanced cybersecurity measures, robust legal systems, and improved international cooperation.

Traditional crimes have historically involved direct physical interaction and impacts, whereas cybercrime leverages technology to perpetrate similar motives, such as theft, revenge, or satisfaction (Kumar, 2021; PGI, 2018). Research highlights that successful analyses of cybercrime must address both the continuity and transformation of criminal behavior, emphasizing that despite the change in tools, the fundamental motivations of criminals remain largely unchanged (Newman, 2009). The literature illustrates those cybercriminals, whether state-sponsored actors or malicious individuals, often employ methods that mirror those of traditional crime, albeit through a digital interface (Indonet, 2024). The literature reveals distinct approaches to combatting cybercrime shared by various national entities, highlighting the evolving legislative framework of key nations, including the United States, the EU, China, Japan, and Australia. These frameworks illustrate a trend toward specialized legislation and enforcement mechanisms to address the unique challenges posed by cyber threats (CISA, 2024; GDPR, 2016; Markopoulou et al., 2019). In particular, the U.S. demonstrates a comprehensive strategy involving various legislative acts, such as the DMCA and CFAA, alongside multiagency collaborations focusing on strategic enforcement of cybercrime laws (Chabinsky, 2010). The European Union's rigorous legal framework emphasizes data protection and international collaboration to enhance collective resilience against cyber threats (Seger, 2011).

Combating cybercrime poses several unique challenges because of its complex and adaptive nature. The literature highlights significant hurdles, including anonymity and jurisdictional issues, which hinder the effective tracking and reporting of cybercriminal activity (Marisol Cruz Cain, 2023). Furthermore, differing legal frameworks and international cooperation inconsistencies impede a unified front against cybercriminal organizations, emphasizing a pressing need for continual adaptation and collaboration (Europol, 2019; Cassim, 2010). The consequences of cybercrime are profound, extending beyond monetary losses to encompass psychological, social, and organizational dimensions. Studies by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) indicate that cybercrime costs nearly one percent of global GDP annually, further illustrating the growing need for advanced protective measures and strategic investments in cybersecurity (Lewis, 2018; Tariq, 2018; Tieng et al., 2024).

The literature presents a compelling narrative on the significant challenges posed by cybercrime in both global and national arenas, underscoring the necessity of comprehensive, adaptive, and collaborative approaches to cybersecurity. Understanding the evolution of cybercrime—its overlap with traditional crime motivations—can inform legislative and enforcement strategies tailored to the contemporary digital landscape. Future research should seek to bridge existing gaps, offering insight into effective collaboration frameworks that enhance the

global response to this pressing threat and ensure continued protection for individuals, organizations, and nations alike.

2. Research Findings

2.1. How can the global community effectively address and mitigate the growing threat of cybercrime?

The threat of cybercrime is growing and becoming more widespread because of daily digital technology advancements, which have been used as the means in relationships among trade, politics, and the economy. These elements result from our growing dependence on digital technology. Although technology has evolved into a vital instrument for expediting tasks, cutting expenses, time, and complex procedures, it is also a weapon capable of destroying economic growth. Billionaire Warren Buffet noted that cybercrime is more of a threat to the economy and instability than nuclear weapons are (Chin, 2023). Significant geographical differences in cybercrime costs in relation to GDP are highlighted in Table 2.1.1. Cybercrime affects a larger percentage of GDP in industrialized nations such as North America, Europe, and Central Asia, whereas less developed regions are comparatively less affected. Nonetheless, as digital economies expand worldwide, the equitable consequences of cybercrime continue to be a crucial concern for every area. Effectively combating cybercrime necessitates specialized approaches that consider the distinct digital infrastructures and economic environments of every location.

Table 2.1.1: Geographic Dispersion of Cybercrime in 2017

Area (World Bank)	GDP by Region (USD, trillions)	Cost of Cybercrime (USD, trillions)	Loss from Cybercrime (% GDP)
Americas North	20.2	140 to 175	0.69 to 0.87%
Central Asia and Europe	20.3	160 to 180	0.79 to 0.89%
The Pacific and East Asia	22.5	120 to 200	0.53 to 0.89%
South Asia	2.9	7 to 15	0.24 to 0.52%
The Caribbean and Latin America	5.3	15 to 30	0.28 to 0.57%
The African Sub-Saharan	1.5	1 to 3	0.07 to 0.20%
MENA region	3.1	2 to 5	0.06 to 0.16%
<i>Global</i>	\$75.8	\$445 to \$608	0.59 to 0.80%

Source: (Lewis, 2018)

The international economy is seriously at risk due to the growing menace of cybercrime, which is being fed by rapid improvements in digital technology. While technology fosters creativity and increases output, it also presents risks that could compromise financial stability. Cybercrime has the potential to pose greater economic risk than nuclear threats. Compared with less developed countries, industrialized regions experience greater GDP loss as a percentage of cybercrime. Effective cybercrime response necessitates customized approaches that consider the distinct technological and economic environments of each country, given the ongoing growth of the digital economy.

The typology of cybercrime shown in Table 2.1.2 emphasizes how varied and intricate cybercrime is. Every category, which includes offenses against people and property as well as deception, market-based, and political offenses, illustrates a distinct facet of the illicit use of technology. A multimodal approach linking international cooperation, legal frameworks, and technical innovations is needed to combat these cyber offenses. Staying up to date with initial cyberthreats is imperative to safeguard individuals, organizations, and entire countries against the ever-destructive effects of cybercrime as digital technologies progress.

Table 2.1.2: Cybercrime typology

Crimes against devices	Crimes against persons	Crimes of deception and coercion	Market-based crimes and crimes against property	Political offences
Hacking	Hate speech	Fraud	Illegal markets online	Hacktivism
	Harassment	Extortion	Intellectual property infringement	Cyberwarfare
	Sex crimes			Cyberterrorism
				Controlling cyberspace as political deviancy

Source: (Lavorgna, 2020) *Cybercrimes: Critical issues in a global context*

One category of online criminal conduct is cybercrime, which can range from small-term mischief to more serious financial crimes. Cybercrimes are more common due to several factors, such as weak security systems, a lack of security awareness, technological advancements, internet anonymity, the exploitation of human weaknesses, lax punishment, reliance on technology, user identities, location, financial motivation, and the ever-changing digital environment. To reduce the likelihood of cybercrimes and create effective security procedures, it is imperative to become aware of these components (Indonet. 2024). Cybercrime is a complex offense involving personal, property, deception, market-based activities, and political offenses. Addressing this topic requires a comprehensive approach involving technological advancements, robust regulatory frameworks, and international collaboration, while understanding the underlying factors is crucial for protection.

The surge of cyberthreats has had a major effect on international institutions and governmental organizations. The consequences of global and business-critical risks and threats are emphasized in the 2020 UN Joint Inspection Unit examination of the country's cybersecurity rules (Flores Callejas, et al., 2021). The UN Joint Inspection Unit highlights the necessity of strong cybersecurity frameworks and plans and stresses the importance of tackling global and business-critical cyber threats. The acknowledgment of the possible repercussions of cyberattacks is seen in the change from putting national security measures into place to considering the wider effects of cyberthreats on international governance and collaboration. Cyberattack reports indicate that the popularity of targeting international governments and institutions has increased (Sentinel One, 2022). Studies have shown a marked rise in cyberattacks directed at foreign governments and organizations. The increasing focus on high-profile targets with significant influence and vital infrastructure by cybercriminals and state-sponsored actors is indicative of a strategic shift that is driving this expanding trend. There are a variety of reasons behind these attacks, including destabilization, disruption, and financial or political gain. The number of cyber threats is growing, impacting governmental organizations and international institutions. The UN Joint Inspection Unit emphasizes the need for enhanced cybersecurity measures. Collaboration, information sharing, and defensive capabilities are crucial for maintaining global governance and institutional operations.

Advances in digital technology have led to an increasing menace of cybercrime, which presents a serious risk to international trade, politics, economies, and stability. Technology increases efficiency and output, but it also introduces risks that could negatively affect economic expansion. Cybercrime now represents a greater economic threat, particularly affecting industrialized nations more than less developed regions do. As digital economies continue to expand, addressing cybercrime requires tailored approaches that consider regional technological and economic contexts. The diverse nature of cybercrime, spanning offenses against individuals, property, and political structures, underscores the need for a comprehensive and adaptive response. This encompasses technological progress, strong regulatory environments, and global cooperation. The complications of cybercrime and the factors that cause it to increase the effectiveness of security solutions are determined. To protect institutional and governmental truthfulness from the threat of cyberattacks, it is critical to increase cybersecurity safeguards and

foster international cooperation. This is demonstrated by the increasing weight given to well-known international targets.

2.2. How do different countries' legislative frameworks and enforcement strategies address and adapt to the evolving threat of cybercrime, and what are the distinctive features of their approaches?

The ways in which countries respond to cyber threats are changing in tandem with the digital realm. Owing to the serious threat cybercrime poses to international security, privacy, and economic stability, several legislative frameworks and enforcement strategies have been developed by various nations. The national approaches to fighting cybercrime from the US, the EU, China, Japan, and Australia are compared and examined in this paper, with an emphasis on the legal systems and methods of enforcement. The United States has implemented a diverse legislative framework that consists of a network of specialized authorities in addition to federal legislation to combat cybercrime. The important pieces of legislation are the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), which provides internet service providers with safe harbor protection against digital copyright infringement (Congress, 1998), and the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act (CFAA), which aims to counteract the growing ubiquity of cybercrimes (Goldman, 2012). The Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act (CISA) encourages government and business sector sharing of threat intelligence (Beyer, 2015). Numerous important organizations oversee enforcement. Financial cybercrime, including credit card fraud and financial crimes enabled by cybercrime, is the primary focus of the United States. While the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) conducts high-profile investigations into major cyber threats (Chabinsky, 2010) and the Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) promotes worldwide cooperation with international partners to address cybersecurity threats (CISA, 2024), while federal laws are enforced, the Department of Justice (DOJ) seeks appropriate punishment for those guilty and ensures that justice is administered impartially and fairly (Livingston, 1999). The US has a comprehensive approach to combating cybercrime, combining legislative frameworks such as the DMCA and CFAA with specialized enforcement agencies. Important laws that address unauthorized access and digital copyright infringement are the DMCA and the CFAA. Different authorities carry out enforcement, which is indicative of the dynamic nature of cyber threats.

The European Union's approach to cybercrime is guided by a robust legal framework focused on data protection and network security. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which is the cornerstone of EU data privacy, guarantees confidentiality and adherence to legal requirements for the handling and acquisition of personal data (GDPR, 2016). The first piece of legislation at the EU level to secure network and information systems is the Network and Information Systems (NIS) Directive, which addresses the risk of interruptions to IT services and key infrastructures, which are vital to the operation of the Union and Internal Market (Markopoulou, et al., 2019). The Budapest Convention further promotes international cooperation through its global framework for combating cybercrime to criminalize computer-related crimes, providing investigative tools and safeguards to protect human rights and prevent law enforcement abuse, with the Council of Europe developing additional practices (Seger, 2011). The European Cyber Crime Centre (EC3), which was founded to fight cybercrime in the EU, supports enforcement throughout the EU. It generated analytical products for the deep web and dark net, particularly items related to bitcoin and the underground economy (Vendius, 2015). The European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) provides operational cybersecurity advice and recommendations (Negreiro, 2019). Additionally, each member state has its own national cybersecurity agencies responsible for implementing EU directives and enforcing cybersecurity laws. The European Union's comprehensive approach to combating cybercrime integrates a robust legal framework with dedicated institutions to safeguard data privacy and network security. Central to this framework are the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Network and Information Systems (NIS) Directive, which establish stringent guidelines for data handling and protection of critical infrastructure. The Budapest Convention further enhances international collaboration and establishes a global standard for addressing cybercrime. Important responsibilities in providing operational and strategic support are played by the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity (ENISA) and the European Cyber Crime Centre (EC3). When taken as a whole, these steps guarantee a coordinated and efficient response from national agencies throughout member states to the constantly changing risks posed by cybercrime.

China's legal framework for addressing cyber threats is characterized by stringent national regulations and a focus on state control. The Cybersecurity Law aims to ensure adequate security for the country's "informatization" policy (Creemers, 2023). The People's Republic of China's Data Security Law, which addresses procedures, responsibilities, and liabilities at the levels of both state administration and data handlers, is the cornerstone legislation in China's data security domain (Chen & Sun, 2021). The country's data protection law was reformed, leading to the creation of China's new Personal Information Protection Law, which has the main goal of protecting the privacy and personal information of Chinese citizens (Torrise, 2023). Enforcement is handled primarily by the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC), which governs the Chinese digital realm, sets rules, and enforces regulations while supporting the Party Central Cybersecurity and Information Commission (CCIC)'s work and holding authority over specialized technical bodies (Portrait, 2023). The Public Security Bureau (PSB) enforces criminal background checks for websites and mobile applications hosted in China. The "Measures for the Administration of internet Information Services" that the Chinese State Council published in 2000 serve as the reference law (What is Public Security Bureau filing and why is it required?, 2023). The SIIO oversees internet communication policies, legal systems, online content management, business approvals, government plans, news website promotion, government publicity, website investigations, telecom service provider management, and local information office guidance (Michelle Chan, 2011; Sam et al., 2015). China's legal framework for cybersecurity and data protection is characterized by a robust and centralized regulatory approach intended to enhance state control and safeguard national interests. The nation's efforts to safeguard its digital infrastructure and manage data security, with a focus on the protection of private and personal information, are driven primarily by the Cybersecurity Law and the Data Security Law. China's evolving attitudes toward privacy are reflected in the Personal Information Protection Law, a significant form of data protection legislation. A number of important organizations oversee enforcement, such as the Public Security Bureau (PSB) and the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC), which ensure that digital operations follow strict regulations and supervise compliance. Measures for the Administration of internet Information and other historical rules serve as the foundation for the framework.

Japan's national approach to cybercrime is proactive and involves robust legislative frameworks, coordinated enforcement, and a strong emphasis on prevention and resilience. Cybercrimes in Japan are punishable by the Penal Code and Unauthorized Computer Access Law, along with the most defined laws in the Cybercrime Convention. However, certain Convention's provisions—such as communication eavesdropping and unlawful access to computer systems—are not addressed by current legislation (Natsui, 2003). The private sector's practices for processing and protecting personal data are governed by the Act on the Protection of Personal Information (APPI) (Iwase, 2019). The Japanese Act on the Regulation of Transmission of Specified Electronic Mail aims to combat spam emails, introduced in 2002, with an opt-out system, strengthened penalties in 2005, and targeted overseas spam (Kawase, 2024). National and municipal governments' roles and strategies for improving cybersecurity are delineated in the Basic Act on Cybersecurity (BAC). Critical infrastructure operators must voluntarily improve cybersecurity and cooperate with governments according to a cybersecurity strategy released by the Japanese government (Hiromi Hayashi, 2023). The Cybersecurity Strategy of 2018 was announced by the Japanese government and aimed to promote a sustainable cybersecurity ecosystem for sustainable development, with a focus on mission assurance, risk management, and participation (Europe, 2024). Japan's cybercrime enforcement is overseen by several institutions.

The National Police Agency (NPA) is a national organization that is tasked with developing police policies; carrying out operations; managing issues, including criminal justice, education, training, and communications; and organizing police administration (NPA, n.d.). According to the Act on Personal Information Protection, the Personal Information Protection Commission (PPC), an independent body in Japan, protects people's rights and interests and ensures that personal information is used appropriately (PIPC, n.d.). The secretariat of the Cybersecurity Strategy Headquarters is the National Center of Incident Readiness and Strategy for Cybersecurity (NISC), which works with the public and business sectors to create a safe, open, and equitable cyberspace (NISC, 2024). The first Computer Security Incident Response Team (CSIRT) in Japan, the Japan Computer Emergency Response Team Coordination Center (JPCERT/CC), works with the Asia Pacific Computer Emergency Response Team (APCERT) to coordinate incident coordination and manage damage-causing incidents (JPCERT/CC, 2023). Japan's cybercrime strategy is a comprehensive approach that combines legislative measures, coordinated enforcement, and cybersecurity resilience. The country's legal framework includes the Penal Code, Unauthorized

Computer Access Law, and Cybercrime Convention regulations. However, there are still holes in the coverage, especially in regard to communication interception and illegal access to computer systems. As they address cybersecurity risk, specific privacy laws and regulatory email regulations need to be updated on a regular basis to respond to the limitless evolution of cybercrime. The Basic Act on Cybersecurity and the Cybersecurity Strategy emphasize collaboration and a collaborative approach to enhance national cybersecurity. The Cybersecurity Strategy of 2018 emphasized sustainable cybersecurity practices and international collaboration. Despite these challenges, Japan's commitment to updating its legal framework and international cooperation is crucial for maintaining and advancing its cybersecurity posture in the digital world.

Australia takes a balanced legal framework and proactive enforcement stance in regard to fighting cybercrime. The 2001 Cybercrime Act amended the Criminal Code Act of 1995 to include the following new offenses (Chan, et al., 2003). With the help of the Privacy Act of 1988, people now have more control over their personal data. They can seek access, prohibit unsolicited marketing, understand its use and dissemination, amend inaccurate information, and register complaints (Government, n.d.). Enforcement is conducted by several government agencies, including the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC), which is a Commonwealth government agency that monitors global cyber threats, issues alerts Australians, and develops solutions. It provides advice to individuals, businesses, and critical infrastructure owners on cybersecurity incidents (Reuters, 2024). The Australian Federal Police (AFP) is the main law enforcement body that helps other law enforcement agencies while upholding Commonwealth criminal legislation, fighting organized crime, and safeguarding Commonwealth interests (Government, 2024). The Privacy Act of 1988, the Freedom of Information Act of 1982, and the Australian Information Commissioner Act of 2010 assign three primary duties to the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC): privacy, freedom of information, and government information policy (Government, 2023). Australia's approach to cybercrime is a balanced legal framework with a proactive enforcement strategy. The Cybercrime Act of 2001 and the Privacy Act of 1988 are key legislative updates that address cyber threats and protect individual rights. The Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) monitors global cyber threats, whereas the Australian Federal Police (AFP) enforces Commonwealth laws and tackles organized crime. The federal information policy, freedom of information, and privacy departments are overseen by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC). This integrated strategy addresses immediate cyber threats while fostering a culture of cybersecurity resilience and individual privacy. As cyber threats evolve, Australia's approach will need to adapt to ensure the effectiveness of both legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms in safeguarding the nation's digital landscape.

In conclusion, the global response to cyber dangers is represented in various legislative frameworks and enforcement strategies that are tailored to the unique needs and objectives of each nation. The United States employs a multipronged strategy to combat various aspects of cybercrime, combining federal legislation such as the DMCA and CFAA with specialized authorities. The European Union prioritizes network security and data protection through regulations such as the GDPR and the NIS Directive, with assistance from groups such as the EC3 and ENISA. China's cyber defense posture is greatly impacted by its strict national regulations and state control policies, which include laws such as the Data Security Law and Cybersecurity Law. Japan combines these components with proactive laws such as the Penal Code and APPI, coordinated enforcement, and an emphasis on resilience. Australia has taken a balanced stance, incorporating both legislative changes and effective enforcement by organisations such as the AFP and ACSC. Each region's strategy highlights the need to adapt to evolving cyber hazards while balancing legal, regulatory, and enforcement actions to protect digital environments and maintain privacy.

2.3. What are the key challenges in combating cybercrime, and how can it be improved to address these issues effectively?

Cybercriminals use cutting-edge technology and crafty tactics. This is a factor that makes it challenging for experts to combat cybercrime. Common problems in fighting cybercrime, such as location loss, data loss, problems with the legal system, barriers to international cooperation, and public-private partnerships, call for more investigations and comparisons (European, 2019). Cybercrime is a crime involving cybercriminals targeting computers or networks, causing damage, or stealing information. It is difficult to track due to anonymity and international

spread. Fear of identity theft and reputational damage hinders reporting. Internal limitations hinder a comprehensive understanding of cybercrime (Marisol Cruz Cain, 2023). Therefore, specialists attempting to counter these threats face considerable obstacles in light of the growing environment of cybercrime, which is typified by the use of sophisticated strategies and cutting-edge technology. The difficulties in international cooperation and public-private partnerships, as well as problems with location loss, data loss, and the shortcomings of the legal system, add to the complexity. To solve these issues and develop better solutions, further research and comparisons are needed. Tracking and reporting are made more difficult by the anonymity and global reach of cybercriminal operations, which deters people from coming forward for fear of identity theft and reputational damage. A comprehensive and collaborative strategy that overcomes internal barriers and fosters international collaboration is needed to effectively address cybercrime.

The main problem with the suppression of cybercrime, which requires high skills and abilities, is the need to respond to more options. However, cybercrime poses a serious risk to the security of the country, as it targets private, state, and international organizations. The internet is the primary target, and combating it requires coordinated international efforts. The European Cyber Crime Center (EC3), a key player, collaborates with internet companies and operates online payment systems to protect users and destroy criminal organizations (Nuredini, 2014). On the other hand, with strong law enforcement agencies, it is not enough to fight complex cybercrime; it requires strengthening the legal framework by amending inconsistent laws to keep pace with the evolution of cybercrime. South African common law, including the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act (ECT), has been ineffective in addressing cybercrime. The Act's section 15 for electronic information admission is commendable, but its criminal sanctions are insufficient. Courts are cautious in handling cybercrime cases, and the banking sector is vulnerable. The Council of Europe's Convention on Cybercrime is recommended to prevent international cybercrime (Cassim, 2010). The fight against cybercrime is fraught with challenges that demand a high level of skill and an adaptive legal framework. Despite the efforts of entities such as the European Cyber Crime Center (EC3), which works with internet companies and online payment systems to thwart criminal activities, cybercrime remains a substantial threat to national security, affecting private, state, and international organizations. The primary battleground is the internet, necessitating coordinated international efforts to effectively counter these threats. However, even with strong law enforcement agencies, combating sophisticated cybercrime requires more than just robust enforcement; it necessitates a well-evolved legal framework. Current laws, such as South Africa's Electronic Communications and Transactions Act (ECT), fall short of addressing the complexities of cybercrime, particularly regarding inadequate criminal sanctions and cautious judicial handling. To enhance the effectiveness of legal responses, it is crucial to amend inconsistent laws and consider ratifying international agreements such as the Convention on Cybercrime of the Council of Europe. These steps are vital for developing a comprehensive and effective approach to combating international cybercrime and safeguarding against its evolving threats.

In conclusion, combat against cybercrime is becoming more complex because of the use of modern technology and modern strategies with the use of more sophisticated tools by cybercriminals. In addition, the fight against complex crime faces a number of challenges, including loss of location and data, gaps in the legal framework, and barriers to international cooperation and public-private partnerships. These factors hinder an effective response and emphasize the need for more thorough research and comparative analysis related to this type of crime. In particular, cybercrime poses a significant threat to national security and targets many organizations, including private, public, and international institutions. The main battle is the internet, where international coordination efforts are important. While specialized international organizations play a key role in addressing these threats, the current legal framework is insufficient to address the evolution of cybercrime. The limitations of this law, especially in criminal penalties and judicial prudence, highlight the need for legal reform and international cooperation. To effectively fight cybercrime, a comprehensive strategy to overcome internal obstacles and promote global cooperation is needed. Strengthening the legal framework, amending inconsistent laws, and ratifying international agreements. By addressing these issues, we can better prevent and combat the multifaceted and growing threat of cybercrime.

2.4. What are the impacts of cybercrime on society and businesses, and what comprehensive strategies are needed to address and combat these impacts effectively?

Cyberattacks cause serious societal problems, including identity theft and online scams, have a negative psychological impact on the people who are affected, and have a substantial financial impact on businesses and financial institutions. According to a survey by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), cybercrime costs the world economy up to one percent each year. The increase in cybercrime is ascribed to the adoption of new technology by cybercriminals as well as the ease with which they may use black markets and digital currency (Lewis, 2018). Additionally, cybercrimes pose a serious danger to financial institutions since they are expanding quickly and resulting in both direct and indirect losses. Organizations need to concentrate on security measures such as strengthening internal security, performing cybersecurity assessments, providing training, and carrying out cybersecurity audits to safeguard themselves (Tariq, 2018). Cybercrime, a silent, dangerous threat, costs organizations an average annualized \$5.9 million, with varying costs ranging from \$1.5--36.5 million (Das, & Nayak, 2013). The study noted that crime is an omnipresent social phenomenon that affects all societies, regardless of civilization. It is a basic human instinct and a social concern because of the potential disturbance it causes. Victims may forfeit priceless things such as property, money, safety, and serenity—values that are crucial to fulfilling many desires. The study revealed that the newest type of social interaction in society is cyber communication. Emails, texts, and online social networking sites allow consumers a rapid and efficient means of communicating with individuals worldwide.

In particular, teenagers use computers or other personal electronics to spend hours every day online. Meanwhile, cybercrime costs have increased significantly in online business, with global spending on information security reaching \$2.1 trillion by the end of 2019, emphasizing the need for stronger security measures to fend off possible cyberattacks (Ibrahim, 2019). The pervasive threat of cyberattacks underscores a critical challenge for businesses, financial institutions, and individuals alike. The economic burden, estimated at nearly one percent of global GDP annually, coupled with significant social issues such as identity theft and online scams, reveals the far-reaching impact of cybercrime. Financial institutions face escalating risks, necessitating rigorous security measures, including enhanced internal protocols, regular cybersecurity assessments, and comprehensive training. The substantial financial losses, alongside broader social implications, highlight the urgent need for advanced and proactive defenses. As cyber communication becomes increasingly integral to modern life, the surge in global spending on information security has emphasized the necessity of fortifying our digital infrastructure to mitigate these evolving threats. The growing sophistication of cyber threats necessitates a concerted effort to safeguard against their potentially devastating effects on both the economy and society.

Cyberattacks, which cost the world's economy more than 1% annually, represent a serious risk to individuals, businesses, and financial institutions. The rapid advance of cybercrime technology and the ease of exploitation in the black market and fundamental currency are the main reasons for this cost growth. Shares are high, especially for financial institutions, as direct and indirect losses are increasing frequently. To address these issues, organizations need to implement strict security measures, such as strengthening internal controls, conducting regular cybersecurity assessments and setting funds for in-depth training and audits. Cybercrime has more than just monetary damage. It includes important social issues such as identity theft and cyber fraud, which have a profound psychological impact on people and communities. Significant losses such as personal safety, financial security, and peace of mind are often inflicted by victims. These effects illustrate how cybercrime affects society as a whole and is exacerbated by the increasing use of cyber technology. Cybercrime affects many users, especially teenagers, who spend much of their time online, as email, text messages and social media are becoming more important for daily communication. The rising cost of cybercrime, which has reached an average annual loss, underscores the urgent need for better security measures. The need for businesses to invest in strong protection against cyber threats is illustrated by the rising global cost of information security. This investment is important in ensuring the social and emotional well-being of the general population in addition to their financial wealth.

In conclusion, a multifaceted strategy is needed to combat the threat of cyberattacks, including bolstering digital infrastructure, putting in place cutting-edge security measures, promoting a strong legislative framework, and cultivating a cybersecurity-aware culture. Organizations, businesses and individuals need to be watchful and

proactive to mitigate the potentially devastating impacts of cyber threats on society and the economy as they continue to evolve.

2.5. What are the key categories of activities necessary for effectively combating cybercrime?

The study resulted in Table 2.5.1 four fundamental categories of activities necessary for effectively combating cybercrime. Each category represents a distinct area of focus, reflecting a comprehensive strategy to address the multifaceted nature of cyber threats.

a) Cooperation and Communication

This category highlights the importance of collaborative efforts and communication channels in the fight against cybercrime. It includes actions taken between various entities, such as governments, international organizations, and the private sector. Key activities involve establishing bilateral and multilateral agreements between states to coordinate efforts across borders. Additionally, establishing reporting channels and promoting international cooperation are essential for exchanging data and resources, which improves our ability as a group to identify, stop, and neutralize cyberthreats.

b) Policy and Strategy

The development of a structured and logical strategy to combat cybercrime requires policies and approaches. The creation and execution of international and national regulations aimed at countering and averting cyberthreats fall under this category. Effective policies outline the goals, priorities, and actions needed at various levels to combat cybercrime. National policies might include guidelines for cybersecurity practices and responses, whereas international strategies could involve agreements on cooperative measures and joint initiatives to address global cyber threats.

c) Legal

Legal action is a vital means of determining, prosecuting, and prosecuting cybercrime. These rules involve the development and implementation of laws, regulations, and frameworks that focus specifically on combating cyber threats. Effective laws and regulations establish clear standards, define cybercrime activities, provide a basis for legal action against perpetrators, and provide mechanisms for dealing with and judging cybercrime cases.

d) Training and Technical Assistance

Training and technical support are necessary to provide people and organisations with the necessary abilities and knowledge to effectively combat cybercrime. They also help create a technical grasp of cybersecurity infrastructure, management, and sustainable technology. Through this training, people become more aware of cyberthreats and acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to stop and handle cyberincidents with the aid of technical support.

Therefore, Table 2.5.1 outlines a comprehensive strategy for combating cybercrime, emphasizing the necessity of cooperative endeavors, well-defined protocols, legal structures, ongoing training, and technical assistance. To provide a coordinated and successful response to the changing problems of the digital era, each category is essential to the construction of a strong defense system against cyber threats.

Table 2.5.1: Four Types of Cybercrime Prevention Activities

Categories	Activities
Cooperation and Communication	International coordination, bilateral and multilateral agreements between governments, reporting channels, and other measures are examples of actions made by entities to prevent cybercrime.

Policy and strategy	Policies and tactics at the national and international levels are required to combat cybercrime.
Legal	Legislation, regulations, and frameworks are examples of legal actions intended to prevent cybercrime.
Technical support and instruction	To combat cybercrime, one needs technical expertise (i.e., knowledge of infrastructure, security controls, and sustainable technologies), cybersecurity training, and cybercrime awareness.

Source: (To, 2023). Global Cybercrime: Federal Agency Efforts to Address International Partners' Capacity to Combat Crime.

3. Conclusion and recommendations

Cyberbullying is becoming more serious and difficult to solve. It has a global and diverse impact on institutions, individuals, businesses, and governments. Studies have shown that as technology continues to evolve, criminals use more sophisticated tactics. These factors prompt the government to pay more attention to addressing current and future challenges. The rapid development of cybercrime, which is rooted in traditional crime, reflects the need for policy-making, building a strong legal framework, and strengthening institutions' capacity to effectively combat crime. This new type of crime. The rapid transformation of traditional crime has adapted to exploit the growing technological vulnerabilities in the anonymity and interconnectedness of the modern internet landscape. The results highlight the need for an all-encompassing global strategy for cybersecurity that includes international collaboration, legal changes, and flexible tactics. The diverse responses from various nations illustrate both progress and disparities in addressing this pervasive issue, indicating that while considerable strides have been made, much remains to be done. The wide-ranging impacts of cybercrime—including economic losses, social insecurity, and national stability—further emphasize the urgency for enhanced protective measures and proactive strategies to mitigate risks.

Drawing from the findings of my research, researchers offer the following recommendations:

1) *Enhance Legal Frameworks*

The government should perform extraordinarily in modernizing the legal framework to address cyber threats more effectively and in a timely manner in the context of rapid change. In this context, the government should create new laws and amend existing laws to keep pace with the evolution of cyber-illegal activities. Nations should consider ratifying international treaties or agreements in line with international standards.

2) *Strengthening international collaboration*

Given that cybercrime occurs across borders, international cooperation is crucial. To fight cybercrime and offer a coordinated response to cyberthreats, partnerships and exchanges across nations must be formed.

3) *Enhance Cybersecurity Education and Awareness*

Governments should advance policies to raise awareness of cyber risk to individuals, organizations, and businesses to be able to protect themselves from cyber threats.

4) *Leveraging Technology and Innovation*

Governments and the private sector should work together to invest in cybersecurity technologies to develop new tools for advanced solutions, including learning machines and artificial intelligence (AI), to anticipate, identify, and respond to cyber threats more successfully.

5) *Foster public-private partnerships*

Enhancing cybersecurity resilience necessitates public-private cooperation. Governments should collaborate closely with professionals in the business sector to exchange resources, knowledge, and best practices. They should also establish structures that promote cooperation and improve their countries' overall cybersecurity posture.

6) *Optimization of Incident Response Mechanisms*

Nations should establish and refine incident response protocols and frameworks that enable rapid and efficient handling of cyber incidents.

7) *Regular assessments of cybersecurity postures*

To determine their efficacy and spot weaknesses, organizations should systematically inspect and analyze their cybersecurity methods. Cybersecurity safeguards must be steadily experienced and updated to settle ahead of evolving threats.

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Settling Investor-State Disputes in the GCC: A Critical Analysis of the Challenges under International Investment Law

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Abstract

The study critically analyses the challenges and obstacles encountered in resolving investor-state disputes within the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states under the framework of international investment law. The number of established bilateral investment treaties involving GCC states has increased over the past decade to promote foreign direct investment. Most treaties include arbitration provisions as a method of dispute resolution, often governed by international institutions such as the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). However, the difficulty lies in balancing state sovereignty with investor protection in accordance with international investment law. The analysis reveals several anticipated challenges faced by host states due to the growing number of bilateral treaties, particularly as foreign investors raise claims that challenge the host state's regulatory rights. GCC states must adopt measures that limit the risks associated with the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism. The study outlines a series of recommendations to address these challenges while also protecting foreign investors.

Keywords: Investor State Dispute Settlement, ISDS, arbitration, GCC, ICSID

1. Introduction

Trade agreements between countries considered an effective mechanism to promote international trade and to reduce barriers between countries. Under the merits of globalization, developed and developing countries utilize such trade agreements in the form of bilateral and multilateral treaties to encourage and promote investments from foreign parties. The aim of International Investment Law is to govern matters related to Foreign direct investment (FDI) and to settle disputes that arise between foreign investors and host states (Dolzer & Schreuer, 2012). As a result, methods have been set forth to protect investors rights and encourage FDIs in host states. Such methods include the development of Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanisms (Jennings, 2016).

Investor-States disputes are mostly covered by international investment conventions, treaties, and agreements, either between host states or a host state and investors. Typically, a clause is included that refers the parties to the agreed method of dispute resolution. Most Investor-State Disputes are governed under international investment law and referred to the Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) (Sornarajah, 2010).

The ICSID and other similar institutions are responsible for the settlement of investor-state disputes under its adopted rules upon the agreements of the parties. However, under the covenants of international investment law and the practices of the ICSID number of critical challenges hinder the procedures and settlement of such disputes.

The purpose of the research is to analyse the recent critical challenge associated with investor-state disputes, based on the legal framework and practical case laws, with particular focus on the GCC states. These challenges are associated directly with the host state sovereignty and the protection of investor rights, which are considered as fundamental pillars under the rules of international investment law. The article aims to discuss the legal intricacies, procedural issues and complexities related to the settlement of investor-state disputes. Furthermore, reform measurements will be recommended to improve the current legal mechanisms and promote the effective settlements of these disputes.

2. Investor-State disputes resolution mechanisms

Methods of dispute resolution vary and have developed in recent years to accommodate the need for a coherent procedure that is fair and equitable for the disputed parties. The increasing rate of foreign direct investment internationally embraced the necessity for an internationally acknowledge and recognized alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. National courts are perceived to be complex in certain jurisdictions whilst other jurisdictions require further legislative development to resolve disputes involving foreign parties (McLaughlin, 1979).

With particular focus on investor-state disputes, the traditional path of state litigation is considered less desired by foreign investors in case an investor-state dispute arises (Papanastasiou, 2015). As a result, such disputes became essentially governed by international investment law and preferably resolved by alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. Such mechanisms include the use of arbitration, mediation, conciliation, or negotiation (Dotzauer, 2023). Nonetheless, under the scope of cross-border trade agreements and for the settlement of foreign investment disputes that arise between the state and foreign parties' international arbitration is positioned as the primary preferred dispute resolution mechanism (Papanastasiou, 2015). According to a study conducted by Daphna Kapeliuk which questioned the effectiveness of investment arbitration it was found that "*investment arbitrators usually do what they are supposed to do-issue an unbiased decision based on the evidence in each case*" (Blythe, 2013). The use of international arbitration in state-investor disputes assists in limiting biased decisions issued by national courts as well as providing confidence for foreign investors who prefer the use of arbitration as the main dispute resolution mechanism. Moreover, states that agree to resolve disputes with foreign investors via international arbitration have witnessed an increase in foreign direct investment. The use of arbitration in international investment is considered an effective tool by states to attract foreign investors (Myburgh & Paniagua, 2016).

The ISDS system provides foreign investors with the right to bring claims against a state before an international tribunal that is privately composed of contracted arbitrators (Dotzauer, 2023). These rights are granted and standardized within provisions of bilateral investment treaties between governments to encourage cross-border foreign investment. The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) was created in 1965 and validated by the 165 signatory states to the ICSID convention. Article 25 of the convention stipulates that "*(1) The jurisdiction of the Centre shall extend to any legal dispute arising directly out of an investment, between a Contracting State (or any constituent subdivision or agency of a Contracting State designated to the Centre by that State) and a national of another Contracting State, which the parties to the dispute consent in writing to submit to the Centre. When the parties have given their consent, no party may withdraw its consent unilaterally...*". neutrality in overseeing the dispute and impartiality of decision making are fundamental pillars of the ICSID that aims to promote fair and equitable treatment for foreign investors and eliminate concerns related to home-state bias. This is reflected under article 14 of the convention in relation to the selection of the arbitral tribunal which states that "*(1) Persons designated to serve on the Panels shall be persons of high moral character and recognized competence in the fields of law, commerce, industry or finance, who may be relied upon to exercise independent judgment. Competence in the field of law shall be of particular importance in the*

case of persons on the Panel of Arbitrators...”. The Article is indicative of the parties’ rights for a fair and equitable treatment under the supervision and protection of the ICSID. Furthermore, the issued awards are considered binding and enforceable within the signatory states providing further significance to the ICSID decisions while protecting investors' rights to seek enforcement on the assets held by the host state.

Cases decided by the ICSID are steadily increasing on an annual basis. The surge of cases is related to effective use of international bilateral and multilateral treaties that are under the scope of international investment agreements and subsequently governed by international investment law. As a result, most disputes arising between foreign investors and states that are submitted to arbitration fall under the jurisdiction of the ICSID, as well as other arbitration institutions.

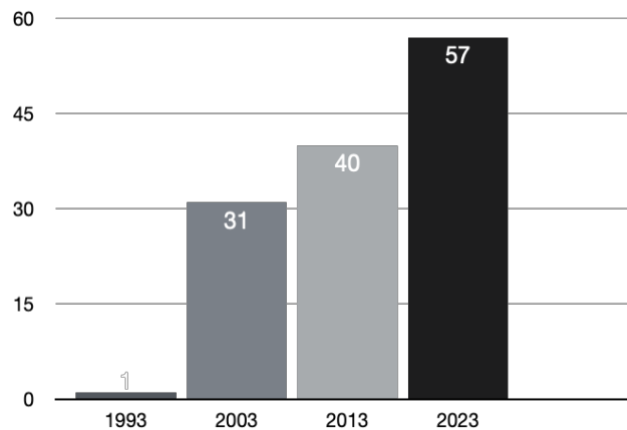


Chart 1: ICSID registered cases by calendar year

The chart above indicates the stable increase within the number of cases registered by the ICSID during the past three decades. In 1993 only one case was registered and governed by the ICSID whilst the number has increased annually reaching to 57 registered cases in 2023 only. It could be said that factors associated with such an increase in registered cases are due to the increasing numbers of foreign direct investment within host states and the ratification international investment agreements by host states to promote such investments. Furthermore, the ICSID has established its effectiveness in resolving disputes between investors and states during the past three decades manifesting the centre as a primary institution to resolve disputes referred to arbitration.

In light of globalization and the evolving necessity to promote foreign investment for the purpose of development all the GCC states have joined and signed the ICSID convention. Nonetheless, the significance of the ICSID convention and its hub as an international arbitration institution became effective towards the GCC states at the beginning of the 21st century. In particular, the past five years have indicated surge in the number of cases related to GCC states either as a home state or a respondent state.

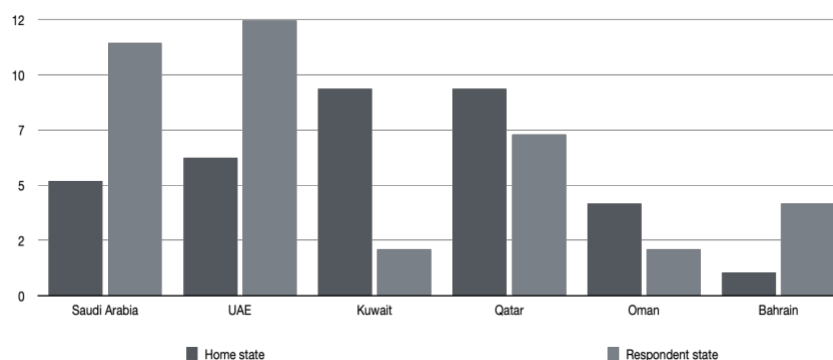


Chart 2: Registered cases in the ICSID

The chart above indicates the number of registered cases in the ICSID which involves member states of the GCC. Currently, Saudi Arabia has recorded 5 cases as home state, whilst 11 cases recorded as a respondent state. The UAE has recorded the highest number of registered cases combined whilst Bahrain recorded the lowest number of registered cases by the ICSID. Nonetheless, most of the recorded cases within the GCC states have been registered during the past decade. Promoting foreign investment within the GCC countries has been constituted as a priority for prosperity and economic development (International Monetary Fund, 2018). As a result, number of international investment agreements have been established between GCC countries and other states to encourage foreign direct investment. For instance, Saudi Arabia has signed more than 150 international investment agreements with other states during the past five years. The increasing number of such agreements is bound to raise the number of foreign investments between the states which subsequently increases the possibility of disputes arising that are governed by the ICSID. Similarly, other GCC member states have established investment relations with other states either in the form of bilateral or multilateral trade agreements. In general, encouraging foreign direct investment within the GCC states is important whilst foreign parties will be attracted to investing in the GCC states considering that neutrality and impartiality are granted by the ICSID in case a dispute resolution requirement (Cleis, 2017).

The advantages of ISDS governed by the ICSID convention for foreign investors are not limited to the aforementioned reasons. There are number of benefits and special features rendering ISDS mechanism as advantageous under the ICSID. Disputes are resolved by a specialized institution with experience in resolving international investment disputes. The awards reached by the ICSID are considered internationally recognized and enforceable within the signatory states. The mechanism ultimately aims at providing a fair and equitable treatment for the disputed parties. As for host states, including the GCC states, becoming a signatory to the ICSID indicates their commitment to the application of international law as well as promote alternative dispute resolution mechanisms that are accepted internationally and considered essential for foreign investors.

3. Challenges and implication of ISDS on the GCC states

The GCC states are unified in many aspects, such as economically, politically, and culturally, rendering similarities within the faced challenges and implications of ISDS to a great extent. There are number of critical challenges associated with ISDS as a mechanism that affects the GCC states, particularly through the use of international arbitration under the governance of the ICSID. The challenges to be addressed in this section are imperative to the legitimacy of international institutional arbitration between states and investors toward achieving its core benefits.

3.1 Regulatory limitation

The balance between investor protection and state sovereignty is a significant concern in the application of ISDS. Mechanisms that seek to enhance investor protection under international investment law may impose regulatory limitations on the host state (Taniguchi & Ishikawa, 2016). Such an approach can place states in a compromising position as they seek to attract foreign investors. As a result, participation in ISDS under international investment agreements may limit a state's sovereignty (Taniguchi & Ishikawa, 2016). As a mechanism, ISDS grants investors the right to challenge national regulations. Therefore, hindering national legislative developments to be enacted due to conflict with existent international agreements that are beneficial for the investors. Nonetheless, states inherently have the right to regulate and enact legislation and policy measures for the benefit of the public. This falls within the sovereignty of the states and recognized under Article 2(1) and Article 2(7) the UN Charter . Limiting the state's ability to regulate can lead to possible conflict between the state and investors that are reliant on international investment agreements.

ISDS restricts states of their right to regulate by providing investors with the ability to challenge the states actions that contradict with international commitments (Tienhaara, 2011). Further, the mechanism may lead to the state's "regulatory chill", thus abstaining from enacting regulations due to its conflict or the threat of arbitration. In such circumstances, ISDS impacts the sovereignty of the contracting states. Number of case laws have indicated such effects. The *Ethyl Corporation V Canada (1997)* case demonstrates how an anticipated legal

challenge by foreign investors can affect regulatory decisions by the state. Importantly, the case outlined the conflict between public interest regulations and the investor protection in accordance with international trade agreements. Furthermore, such hesitance to regulate by the states may affect specific sectors such as environmental protection. A specific example of this is the experience faced by Costa Rica which highlighted the risks associated with ISDS. The government in Costa Rica has deemed environmental protection a priority and declared a moratorium on oil exploration (Shekhar, 2016). This decision has impacted foreign investors leading Harken energy to threaten the government with legal actions. Harken Energy raised a claim before the ICSID for damages and loss of profit amounting to more than USD 50 million. However, the claim was withdrawn after the government presented its willingness to settle the case outside of the ICSID (Shekhar, 2016).

The case demonstrates the Costa Rican government intention to settle the dispute via negotiation rather than international arbitration as a less costly dispute resolution method. Subsequently, the case declares the risks of tension between environmental protection and foreign investments that are based on international investment agreements. Therefore, leading to regulatory chill that promoted a cautious attitude by the Costa Rican government in implementing and enforcing stricter laws related to environment protections to avoid lawsuits by the investors.

3.2 *Balancing national interest with investor protection*

Investment disputes concerning public utilities or natural resources are of significant concern and importance in the GCC. In particular, the oil and gas sector is a critical industry that impacts the economies of all GCC states. Therefore, it is essential to protect sectors that are considered imperative to the states and safeguard their public interests and policies. Regulatory limitations and 'regulatory chills' resulting from international arbitral awards can be effective in certain situations. However, GCC states will not enforce awards that contradict their public policies and national interests. As a result, it is important to strike a balance between national interests and investor protection. This is especially significant in the context of ICSID arbitration and represents a complex challenge faced by many states. Many international investment agreements, particularly bilateral investment treaties, contain provisions aimed at protecting foreign investors.

Number of international treaties that the GCC states are a party to includes provisions that protect fundamental aspects of international investment law, such as fair and equitable treatment. Article 4 of the UAE-Mexico investment treaty provides that “*Each contracting party shall accord to investment made by investors of the other contracting party treatment that is fair and equitable and not less favourable than that it accords to its own investors of investors of third countries in similar situations*”. The article essentially ensures that the treatment of foreign investors fair and equitable rather than discriminatory and bias. Furthermore, articles in international investment agreements may include a clause to protect foreign investors against expropriation. This includes providing compensations if for instance the state takes the investor's property or considers the foreign investment for public use. Thus, a provision against expropriation becomes essential for foreign investors where the states provide adequate, prompt, and effective compensation in case such actions occurred. An example of protection against expropriation within a GCC state is found within the Kuwait-India bilateral investment treaty. Article 6 stipulates that “*investments of investors of either contracting state shall not be nationalized, or expropriation, except for a public purpose related to the internal needs of the contracting state, on a non-discriminatory basis and against compensation*”. The Article provides an expressed term for the protection of investors against expropriation unless specific conditions occurred. This specific condition limits expropriation to public purpose for a non-discriminatory reason with compensation from the state.

3.3 *Scope of treatment*

Treatment of foreign investors by states is a concern under international investment law that requires protection. Differential treatment that is not in accordance with international investment agreements or subject's foreign investor to discrimination are causes for disputes between investors and states. Bilateral agreements between states may include a clause that indicates the level of treatment expected towards investors from each state. For instance, a provision may include a Most Favoured Nation treatment which provides specific investors with

favourable treatment in comparison to other investors that are not signatory to the investment agreement between the parties. An example of such clauses within the GCC states can be found within Article 3 of the Bahrain-UK bilateral agreement. The article states that "*Neither Contracting Party shall in its territory subject investments or returns of investors of the other Contracting Party to treatment less favorable than that which it accords to investments or returns of investors of any third State.*" The clause protects British investors in Bahrain from being treated less favourably in comparison to non-signatory state parties to the agreement. As of yet, there are no published cases related to the practices of Most Favoured Nation Treatment clause that involves a GCC state. However, the case of *Siemens A.G v Argentina (2007)* demonstrates the outcome once a Most Favoured Nation treatment clause is successfully invoked by the investor. The tribunal ruled in favour of the investor to settle the dispute via arbitration rather than domestic court litigation as stipulated in the Argentina-Germany Bilateral treaty by borrowing a more favourable dispute settlement provision from the Argentina-Chile bilateral treaty.

The scope of treatment between states that are governed under international investment law can extend to national treatment. A clause or national treatment indicates that foreign investor will be treated similarly to domestic investors with no less favourability to their operations and investment in the host state. An example of such clause is indicated under Article 3 of the Qatar-Turkey Bilateral treaty. The article stipulates that "*Each Contracting Party shall accord to investments of investors of the other Contracting Party treatment no less favourable than that accorded to its own investors in like circumstances*". Therefore, Turkish investors in Qatar are required to be treated alike to and equalled with domestic investors. Such a clause aims to prevent discriminatory treatment of foreign investors by the host state. Although no ISDS cases recorded in relation to provisions determining the scope of treatment that included a GCC state its principles considered critical and essential within investment treaties with other states. Disputes may include discriminatory treatment raised by foreign investors in major sectors, such as energy, construction, and infrastructure.

3.4 Security and transfer of funds

Protection of foreign investors under the covenant of international investment agreements is not limited to fair and equitable treatment. States may agree on provisions that provide full protection to foreign investors. This is not limited to physical protection but also in terms of legal protection with ease of access to the justice system. For example, Article 2 of the Oman-US bilateral treaty obliges both parties to provide the utmost protection and security to foreign investors and that appropriate measures be conducted to protect their assets. Furthermore, provisions that seek to protect investors' funds are typically included within bilateral investment treaties. It aims at protecting and ensuring foreign investors' right to transfer funds concerned with their investment in a free manner that is not subjected to delays. such agreement is evident within the Saudi Arabia-Japan bilateral treaty. Article 6 of the treaty states that "*Each Contracting Party shall guarantee to investors of the other Contracting Party the free transfer of payments related to their investments, including but not limited to: (a) capital, (b) profits, (c) dividends, and (d) proceeds from the sale of an investment, without delay and in a freely convertible currency*". As a result, Japanese investors in Saudi Arabia may freely repatriate their profits and other financial flows without facing concerns related to capital control barriers.

Considering the aforementioned challenges of ISDS that could possibility affect GCC states, other significant challenges may arise in relation to the ICSID. Van Harten argued that "*The availability of investor-state arbitration under investment treaties creates powerful incentives for investors to engage in 'treaty shopping' by structuring investments to take advantage of favorable treaties, even if the connection between the investor and the host state is tenuous*" (Van Harten, 2007). Van Harten argument is a concern particularly for GCC states, that are eager to attract foreign investors. Therefore, a higher level of concern is created whereby some investors aim to abuse the ICSID procedures to gain higher level of compensation via arbitral awards. Furthermore, foreign investors might submit a dispute to the ICSID as a tactical tool to gain leverage or force settlement. Eberhardt and Olivet argued that "*Corporations have increasingly used investment arbitration not as a genuine legal mechanism to resolve disputes, but as a strategic tool to intimidate governments and extract compensation or concessions through settlement negotiations*" (Eberhardt & Olivet, 2012). The argument provides critical prospective on how foreign investors may adopt strategies to misuse their rights of submitting a dispute to the ICSID under the covenant of international investment law. It could be said that their core purpose shifts away

from settling the dispute with the host state and rather to exploit arbitration as a tool for financial gain. The *Vattenfall v. Germany (2009)* case demonstrated how submitting to arbitration within the ICSID can be exploited by foreign investors for financial gains. In his analysis of the case Khor argued that “the Vattenfall case is a clear example of how ISDS allows corporations to challenge sovereign decisions made for the public good, such as Germany’s nuclear phase-out, purely for financial gain” (Khor, 2015).

4. Measures for GCC states to overcome the challenges

The effectiveness and efficiency of ISDS mechanisms are imperative to its success. Measures taken by GCC states that addresses the challenges will provide a positive perception of the mechanisms, in particular of international arbitration. It is important to revise, renegotiate or terminate treaties that poses risk to the host state. Old and outdated treaties may contain vague and bored provisions of investor protection. Such provisions expose the state to an increasing number of claims that could affect sustainable development or regulatory rights. Therefore, clearer definitions must be introduced with regards to foreign investors protection, which would substantially lower the risk of claims. A case example of such measure was adopted by the South African government (Dagbanja, 2022). A comprehensive review of investment treaties was undertaken, which resulted in finding several old treaties that provided broad investor protection without safeguarding the south African regulatory autonomy. In response, the Promotion and Protection of Investment Act 2015 was introduced to ensure a balance between investor protection and the government's right to regulate, as well as reducing the risks of ISDS claims (Dagbanja, 2022).

Foreign investors prefer to utilize arbitration as dispute resolution method within the ICSID. However, it is important for GCC states to consider integrating other alternative dispute resolution methods prior to arbitration within its investment treaty provisions with other states. For instance, an investment treaty clause could force the parties to resolve their dispute via negotiation or mediation prior to submitting the dispute to arbitration. negotiation and mediation are considered less adversarial methods of dispute resolution and integrating such methods in investor-state disputes assists in avoiding costly and lengthy international arbitration procedures. Another alternative is to incorporate an exhaustion of local remedies provision prior to perusing international arbitration. This provides domestic courts with right to resolve the dispute firstly, thus limiting the number of cases submitted to arbitration. A clear and precise example is found under Article 10 of the Argentina -Spain Bilateral investment treaty which directs the parties to resolve the dispute amicably first. If the dispute is not settled within six months the matter can be submitted to the competent tribunal. Finally, the dispute can only be submitted to an arbitral tribunal if the domestic court fails to reach a decision within eighteen months.

5. Conclusion

Methods set forth to settle investor-state disputes have developed under the framework of international investment law and ensure a high degree of protection for foreign investors. GCC states utilize investment treaties as a mechanism to attract FDI for the purpose of development. However, ISDS poses several challenges and risks to the host state, particularly within treaty provisions that are considered to provide broad investor protection. These challenges include limiting the state's ability to regulate, which can lead to potential conflicts between the state and investors. It is imperative to address the challenges of ISDS to ensure legal certainty and long-term economic stability between the GCC states and foreign investors. Whilst institutional arbitration, such as ICSID, is the preferred mechanism for investors in settling disputes, it is important for host states to include other dispute resolution methods, such as mediation, within the treaty provisions to limit the risks of costly and lengthy international arbitration procedures.

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Multidimensional Study on the Revitalization of Macao's History, Folklore and Cultural Heritage

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Abstract

This article delves into the revitalization of Macao's history, customs, and cultural heritage, aiming to explore the role, challenges, and sustainable development strategies of cultural heritage revitalization in Macao's development through a multidisciplinary approach. On the basis of sorting out the historical development of Macao, this article discusses the diverse presentation of Macao's folk culture, evaluates the composition and value of Macao's cultural heritage, analyzes the theoretical basis and practical models of cultural heritage revitalization, as well as the challenges and opportunities faced by Macao's cultural heritage revitalization. It also discusses the strategies and path choices for Macao's cultural heritage revitalization. The main conclusions of this paper include that the historical folk culture of the Historic Center of Macao, which combines Chinese and Western culture, has bred the Macao historic district; The traditional Chinese festivals and the customs of the Macanese people, as well as their folk art and culinary culture, have jointly shaped the folk culture of Macao; The value of Macao's tangible and intangible cultural heritage is enormous, but it faces challenges such as aging inheritors, modern cultural impact, and foreign cultural impact; The revitalization of Macao's cultural heritage faces challenges such as relatively lagging policies and regulations, poor cross departmental communication and coordination, funding shortages and single sources, cognitive biases and insufficient protection awareness, as well as difficulties in management and maintenance. To better revitalize Macao's cultural heritage, it is necessary to improve the policy and legal protection system, expand funding sources, enhance social participation, innovate revitalization methods and management models.

Keywords: Macao, History, Folk Customs, Cultural Heritage, Cultural Revitalization, Heritage Protection

1. Introduction

Macao has a unique historical, geographical, and cultural background, and holds a special position in cultural exchanges between the East and the West. The revitalization of cultural heritage is of great significance for the sustainable development of Macau's society, economy, and culture. It helps to enhance the cultural identity of Macau residents and promote the development of Macau's tourism industry.

This article uses historical archives, folkloric materials, cultural department statistical data, and field research

materials to explore the connotations and interrelationships of Macau's history, folk customs, and cultural heritage. It also analyzes the existing models and effectiveness evaluations of Macau's cultural heritage revitalization, as well as the challenges and opportunities it faces.

2. Literature Review and Evaluation

At present, the research on Macao's history, folk customs and cultural heritage mainly focuses on the heritage significance and value of the Historic Center of Macao, Macao's folk customs and intangible culture, and the tourism development of Macao's cultural heritage. Social science and technology journals have published the most results, as shown in Figure 1.

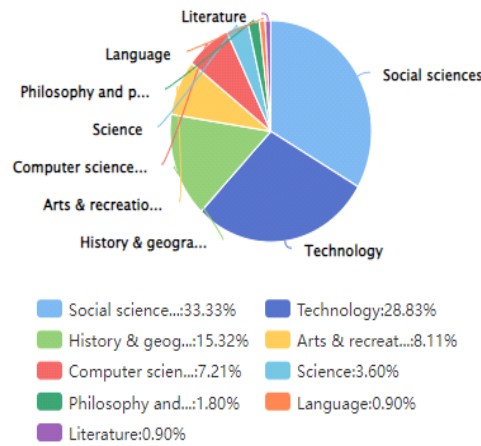


Figure 1: Disciplinary classification statistics of macro cultural heritage

From the perspective of academic development trends, the academic development curve of Macao's cultural heritage books from 1999 to 2024 was at a high level in 1999, 2004, and 2010, and tended to flatten out in other years. The specific situation is shown in Figure 2. The academic development trend of Macao's cultural heritage journals from 1994 to 2024 is expected to reach its peak in 2022-2023 and then decline in 2024. Please refer to Figure 3 for specific journals. The academic development trend of Macao's cultural heritage degree from 1998 to 2024 reached its peak in 2017 and has been declining since 2021. Please refer to Figure 4 for specific journals. The academic development trend of Macao's cultural heritage conferences from 2009 to 2024 reached its peak in 2016, declined in 2017, and gradually rose after 2018. The specific journals are shown in Figure 5.

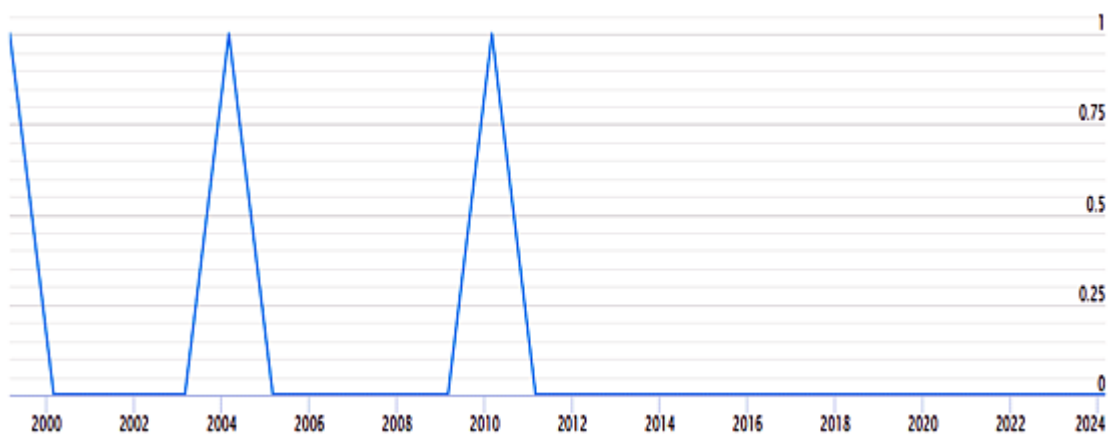


Figure 2: Academic Development Trends of Cultural Heritage Books in Macao from 1999 to 2024

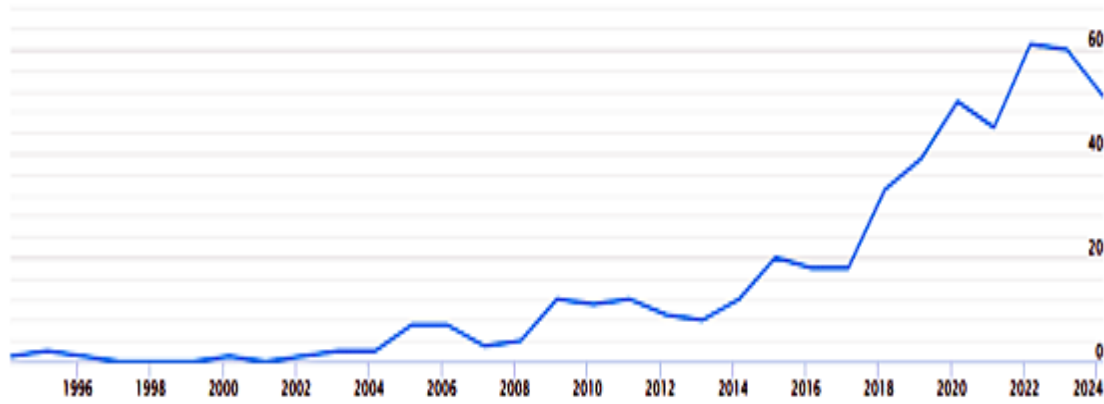


Figure 3: Academic Development Trends of Macao Cultural Heritage Journals from 1994 to 2024

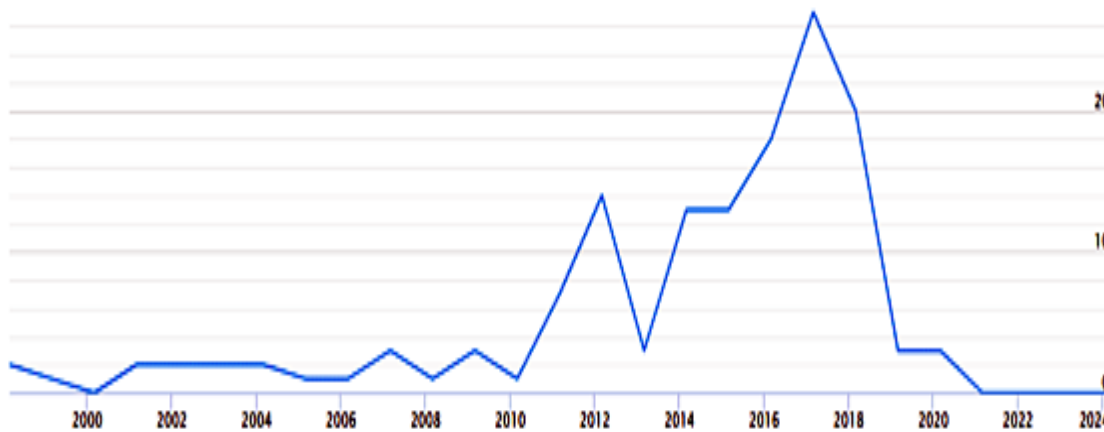


Figure 4 Academic Development Trends of Degree in Macao Cultural Heritage from 1998 to 2024

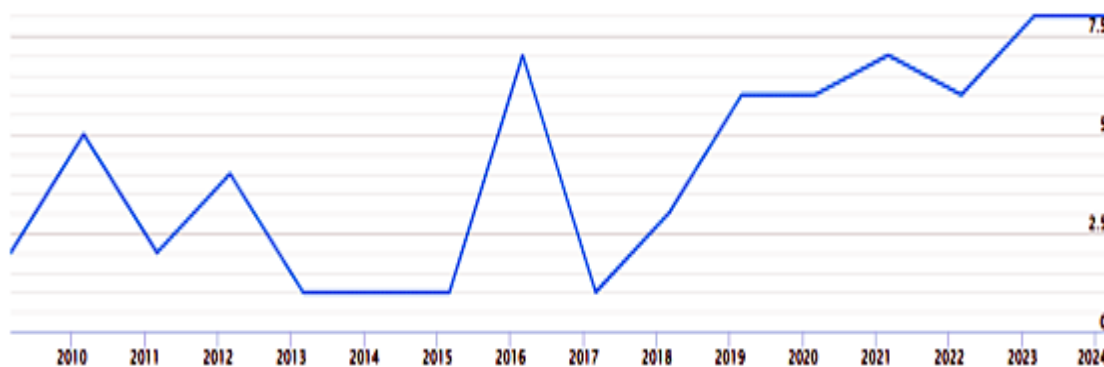


Figure 5 Academic Development Trends of Macao Cultural Heritage Conference from 2009 to 2024

Liu Xianbing (2003) believes that the lotus spirit of "emerging from the mud without getting stained" among the elderly residents of Macao, as well as the diverse and inclusive cultural landscape of multiple religions coexisting, respecting each other, and promoting ethnic harmony and tolerance in Macao society, are two rich historical heritages of Macao and invaluable spiritual wealth created by Macao's culture and education. Liu Xianjue and Chen Zecheng(2005)systematically summarized the development process of Macao's architectural cultural heritage over the past 400 years and analyzed the characteristics of various types of buildings. Wu Yao, Fan Feihao (Portugal), and Yong Meishu (Japan) (2009) succinctly, systematically, and vividly describe the unique style of Macao from the aspects of its urban historical background, historical architectural cultural heritage, formation and development of historical urban areas, urban and architectural features, and historical spatial renewal design. Tong Qiaohui and Zhang Jieru (2016) explored the conservation value of landscape architecture, established a value evaluation framework for modern landscape architecture in Macao, and proposed corresponding conservation strategies.

Liu Zhifeng(2012)used field survey data as a case study to compare and analyze the differences in traditional cultural heritage, historical appearance, activity methods, and behavioral effects between folk behavior and government behavior in the process of historical folk activities, in order to explore the scientific nature of government behavior in the protection of historical folk customs. Liang Meijuan(2019)believes that the forms of land worship in Macao's land customs and Hong Kong's land temples are different, but there is a commonality in people's psychology. Li Jitai and Li Min(2022)analyzed the development process, artistic characteristics, historical status, cultural heritage attributes, and several outstanding universal values that meet the World Heritage evaluation criteria of Jiasi Lan Garden.

Zhao Zheng(2009)believes that the historical and cultural heritage of Macao has become an important lever and competitive advantage for Macao to achieve urban economic transformation and social progress. Zhu Rong(2015)elaborated on the fundamental theories of the connotation, significance, and development process of the protection and management of world cultural heritage, and summarized the general rules and international experience of protection and management through the development of the protection theory and management practice of world cultural heritage in Edinburgh, UK. Deng Ru(2020)emphasized the three elements of overall protection, place spirit protection and community participation, analyzed the protection status of the Historic Center of Macao through comprehensive evaluation and SD semantic evaluation, and proposed corresponding protection strategies and methods. Li Jitai and Zhang Wenyong(2022)used a case study method to analyze and compare the renewal cases of historical districts in developed Western countries with the possibility of renewal in Macao's historical districts, and explored the renewal strategies for Macao's historical districts.

Wu Wenxue(2012)advocates that only by protecting heritage through tourism and promoting heritage through tourism can sustainable development of world heritage sites be achieved. Zhong Mengyan(2020)proposed three suggestions to improve the promotion of Macao's historical heritage resources: "exploring the added information value of historical heritage resources", "using appropriate communication technologies to highlight attractive information", and "broadening horizons and seizing all opportunities to attract audiences". Zhang Zhiqing et al.(2022)analyzed the diversity structure (Porosity) characteristics of Macao culture, emphasizing its diversity, inclusiveness, and openness. Le Wanyi and Yan Yu(2024)used the historical and cultural heritage of the Macao Special Administrative Region as the object, constructed a heritage spatial network using the minimum cumulative resistance model and GIS spatial analysis method, and analyzed its spatial structure and suitability. Wang Zhong and Li Laibin(2024), from the perspective of embeddedness theory, introduced three variables, namely cultural attachment, role identity and benefit perception, to build a structural equation model of the impact of social embeddedness on pro tourism behavior of community residents in cultural heritage tourism destinations. Taking the the Historic Center of Macao as a case study, based on 402 valid questionnaires, they tested the hypothesis using partial least squares method.

Vong(2012)hoda that from a tourism perspective, the critical factors that are essential to enhance tourist experience when visiting Macao's major heritage sites.Wong(2014)suggests that the difficulties of saving intangible heritage can be explained through rational human behavior amid political and demographic changes.Neuwirth(2023)assesses the role of underwater cultural heritage in diversifying its economy and stresses the need for greater policy coherence both between different cultural policies but also between cultural, commercial and other policy areas.Nguyen(2023)holds that any discussion on the relationship between planning and representation of heritage for tourism development and the notions of modernity, sustainability and identity from a Chinese perspective is of immediate academic and practical interest.

These representative research results provide useful references for the study of this article, which further expands the scope of this research.

3. Sorting out the historical context of Macao

3.1 Ancient Macao: From Fishing Village to Trade Port (Prehistory -1840)

3.1.1 Early Indigenous Peoples and Fishing Village Culture in Macao

(1) Archaeological discoveries of indigenous traces

Macao, a city that blends Eastern and Western cultures, has a history that can be traced back to ancient times. In recent years, archaeologists have conducted in-depth excavations at multiple sites in Macao, revealing traces of indigenous life. For example, archaeologists have discovered a large number of artifacts such as stone tools, pottery, and shells in places like Coloane Island and Black Sand Beach. These artifacts not only prove the early human settlement in Macao, but also reflect their lifestyle of fishing, hunting, and gathering. What is particularly noteworthy is that the production techniques of some stone tools are already quite exquisite, demonstrating the high survival skills and wisdom of the indigenous people.

(2) Early Indigenous Peoples of Macao Recorded in Literature

In addition to archaeological discoveries, ancient literature also provides valuable information for studying the early indigenous peoples of Macao. According to historical records such as "A Brief History of Macao", Macao had a relatively stable population during the *Ming* dynasty and *Qing* dynasty, including descendants of indigenous people. These documents not only record the living conditions of the indigenous people, but also describe the social structure and religious beliefs at that time, such as the widespread dissemination of *Mazu* belief among fishermen, reflecting the indigenous people's reverence and dependence on the ocean, as well as their interaction with foreign immigrants. For example, literature mentions that indigenous people were mostly engaged in fishing and agriculture, living a simple and hardworking life, forming a sharp contrast with later Portuguese colonizers. These records provide important clues for us to understand the diverse structure of early Macao society.

(3) Early fishing village culture and indigenous production and living customs in Macao

The early fishing village culture in Macao is an important manifestation of the production and living customs of the indigenous people. The indigenous people have developed a unique fishing economic system by utilizing abundant marine resources. They are not only good at fishing, but also adept at utilizing marine resources such as shellfish and seaweed, enriching their diet and life. In addition, indigenous peoples also engage in trade with surrounding areas through the exchange of fish catches, promoting economic and cultural exchange and development.

In terms of production and living customs, indigenous people follow strict seasonal and natural laws. They arrange fishing activities based on tidal changes and use seasonal catches to produce various types of food, such as salted fish, dried fish, etc., for emergency use. At the same time, indigenous people have also preserved rich folk beliefs and ritual activities, such as sea worship, prayer, fishing songs, fishing dances and other folk art forms. These customs not only reflect their reverence for nature, but also strengthen the cohesion and sense of identity within the community. In addition, fishermen have formed unique community organizations such as "fishing associations" to maintain community order and coordinate fishery production. These organizations played an important role in the early social governance of Macao.

In short, the early indigenous people and their fishing village culture in Macao are an important part of Macao's history. Through archaeological discoveries, documentary records, and the comprehensive display of indigenous production and living customs, they have revealed to us a vibrant and dynamic ancient society. Through comprehensive analysis of archaeological discoveries, literature records, and indigenous production and living customs, we can gain a deeper understanding of the structure and development of early Macao society.

3.1.2 Portuguese Eastward Arrival and Opening of Ports in Macao

(1) The specific historical process of Portugal's arrival and rental in Macao

At the beginning of the 16th century, European navigation technology developed rapidly, and Portugal, as a maritime power, actively expanded its routes to the East. In 1513, Portuguese Alvarez Cabral led his fleet to the

coast of Guangdong, China, marking the beginning of Portugal's eastward expansion. Subsequently, the Portuguese attempted to establish strongholds along the coast of China, but were hindered by the Ming Dynasty's maritime ban policy.

In 1533, the Portuguese bribed local officials in Guangdong to obtain the right to dock and reside at the southern end of the Macao Peninsula, which was the starting point for the Portuguese to officially rent Macao. In 1553, the Portuguese built a temporary residence in the South Bay of Macao under the pretext of drying goods, and gradually expanded their residence area. In 1557, the Ming government officially recognized the Portuguese's right of residence in Macao, making Macao the first overseas colony of Portugal in China.

(2) The Changes of Macao's Commercial Ports: From Fishing Villages to About Opening Commercial Ports and Foreign Trade Ports

Before the arrival of the Portuguese, Macao was just an ordinary fishing village with a sparse population and a backward economy. After the Portuguese rented Macao, they took advantage of its geographical location to develop maritime trade, gradually building Macao into an important commercial port in the Far East region.

In the late 16th and early 17th centuries, Macao became a hub for East West trade, attracting a large number of merchants, craftsmen, and adventurers to settle there. The Portuguese have built numerous churches, monasteries, and municipal buildings in Macao, forming a unique Portuguese style architectural complex. At the same time, Macao also became a gateway for European missionaries to enter China, promoting the exchange and integration of Chinese and Western cultures.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, with the arrival of Western powers and the relaxation of the Qing Dynasty's maritime ban policy, Macao gradually transformed from a treaty port to an officially open port to the outside world. Macao formed close trade relations with Hong Kong, Guangzhou and other places, becoming an important window for the Qing Dynasty's foreign trade.

(3) Macao Port and Foreign Trade Ports in the Ming and Qing Dynasties

During the Ming Dynasty, Macao, as a Portuguese settlement, although strictly managed by the Ming government, still became an important hub for Sino foreign trade. The Portuguese transported Chinese silk, porcelain, tea and other goods to the European market through Macao, while bringing back watches, glassware and other goods from Europe, promoting the prosperity of Sino-Western trade.

During the early Qing Dynasty, Macao continued to maintain its important position as a foreign trade port. During the Kangxi reign, the Qing government implemented a maritime ban policy, but Macao, as a chartered foreign trade port, still enjoyed trade privileges. During the *Qianlong* period, with the relaxation of the Qing Dynasty's foreign trade policy, the trade links between Macao and Guangzhou, Hong Kong and other places became even closer, becoming an important part of the Qing Dynasty's foreign trade.

In short, Portugal's arrival from the east and its profound impact on the opening of Macao not only changed the fate of Macao, but also promoted the exchange and integration of Chinese and Western cultures. The transformation of Macao from a fishing village to a commercial port has witnessed the prosperity and development of Sino-Western trade. The important position of Macao Port in foreign trade during the Ming and Qing dynasties has left valuable historical heritage for future generations.

3.1.3 Cultural Characteristics of Macao during the Ming and Qing Dynasties

(1) The Debate between Religious Propagation and Etiquette

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, Macao became an important base for the spread of Catholicism in China. In 1553, the Portuguese were allowed to settle in Macao, and subsequently Jesuits such as Matteo Ricci came to China one after another. They not only brought Western religious ideas, but also devoted themselves to

integrating Catholic doctrine with traditional Chinese culture. However, this process was not smooth sailing, but was accompanied by a fierce conflict with traditional Confucian etiquette, known as the "Battle of Etiquette" in history.

Matteo Ricci and other Jesuits advocated an "adaptive strategy" that respects traditional Chinese customs such as ancestor worship and Confucius worship, believing that this does not violate Catholic doctrine. However, this viewpoint has been strongly opposed by other denominations such as the Dominicans, who believe that these customs have an idol worship nature and are contrary to the Catholic faith. This debate not only affects the dissemination strategy of Catholicism in China, but also deeply reflects the collision and integration of Chinese and Western cultures in the field of religion.

(2) Initial formation of architectural style

With the settlement and trade activities of the Portuguese in Macao, Western architectural styles began to blend with local culture, forming a unique Macao architectural style. During this period, many buildings integrating Chinese and Western elements emerged in Macao, such as the memorial archway of Dasanba and the front of the Parliament Pavilion.

The memorial archway of Dasanba used to be the site of the front wall of a Catholic church (St. Paul's Cathedral). Its architectural style combines Baroque and Oriental traditional elements, and it has become one of the most representative landmarks in Macao. The area in front of the Senate is the center of the old town of Macao, with surrounding buildings incorporating both Portuguese colonial style and traditional Chinese architectural elements such as upturned eaves, blue bricks, and gray tiles, showcasing the harmonious coexistence of Chinese and Western cultures.

(3) Diverse convergence of language, cuisine, and customs

During the Ming and Qing dynasties, Macao was a melting pot of diverse cultures. In terms of language, multiple languages such as Portuguese, Cantonese, and Chinese coexist, forming a unique language environment. This diverse linguistic background not only promotes cultural exchange between the East and the West, but also provides convenience for Macao's international trade and cultural development.

In terms of cuisine, Macanese combine Chinese and Western cooking techniques to create many unique and flavorful dishes, such as Portuguese egg tarts and pork chop buns. These delicacies are not only loved by local residents, but also attract a large number of tourists to come and taste them.

In terms of customs, Macanese have not only preserved traditional Chinese festivals and customs such as Spring Festival and Mid Autumn Festival, but also absorbed Western festival culture such as Christmas and Valentine's Day. This diverse customs and habits not only enrich the cultural life of Macao people, but also reflect the mutual infiltration and integration of Chinese and Western cultures.

In short, during the Ming and Qing dynasties, Macao became an important window for cultural exchange between the East and the West with its unique cultural characteristics. The struggle between religious dissemination and etiquette, the initial formation of architectural styles, and the diverse convergence of language, cuisine, and customs together constitute the rich and colorful cultural landscape of Macao during this period. Thoroughly studying the cultural characteristics of this period not only helps to reveal the inherent laws of cultural exchange between China and the West, but also provides useful references for the protection and inheritance of contemporary cultural diversity.

3.2 Modern Macao: Development and Changes under Colonial Rule (1840-1949)

3.2.1 Changes in the Political Status of Macau after the Opium War

(1) The sovereignty of Macao is gradually losing

The Opium War (1840-1842), as the beginning of modern Chinese history, not only marked the decline of feudal society in China, but also profoundly influenced the political status of the Macao region. Before the war, although Macao was under the actual control of Portugal, it was still nominally part of Chinese territory and enjoyed a relatively independent sovereign status. However, with the signing of unequal treaties such as the Treaty of Nanjing, the Qing government gradually lost its actual control over Macao. Especially with the signing of the Treaty of Wangxia, Portugal's permanent residency and autonomy in Macaowere officially confirmed, marking the gradual transfer of sovereignty over Macao to Portugal.

(2) Portugal's colonial rule strengthened

After the Opium War, Portugal took advantage of the changes in the international situation to further consolidate and expand its colonial rule in Macao. They not only strengthened military defense, but also gradually built a complete colonial rule system through infiltration in various aspects such as economy and culture. For example, Portugal established the Governor General's Office in Macao, responsible for handling administrative affairs in the Macao region; At the same time, significant economic benefits were obtained through means such as monopolizing trade and imposing tariffs. In addition, Portugal actively promotes Portuguese language education, attempting to assimilate Macao residents culturally and further consolidate its colonial rule.

(3) Social changes resulting from the loss of sovereignty and governance over Macao under Portuguese colonial rule

With the strengthening of Portuguese colonial rule, the sovereignty and governance of Macao gradually lost, which triggered profound social changes. On the one hand, Portugal's colonial policy accelerated the singularity and dependence of the Macao economy, making Macao an important base and source of raw materials for Portuguese commodity exports. On the other hand, the social structure under colonial rule also underwent significant changes, with diverse ethnic groups such as Portuguese, Chinese, and Indian forming complex class relationships in Macao. Among them, although Chinese people make up the majority of the population, they have long been in a disadvantaged position in politics, economy, culture, and other aspects.

Taking education in Macao as an example, Portuguese colonizers promoted Portuguese language education in an attempt to cultivate pro Portuguese forces, while Chinese faced a crisis of cultural identity. This education policy not only exacerbates the cultural divide between Chinese and Portuguese, but also limits the autonomous development of Chinese society.

In short, the changes in the political status of Macao after the Opium War are an undeniable chapter in modern Chinese history. It not only reveals the erosion of China's territorial sovereignty by Western powers, but also reflects the profound impact of colonial rule on Macao society. In the face of this history, we should deeply reflect, strengthen our awareness of national sovereignty, promote ethnic unity and cultural confidence, and contribute to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

3.2.2 Changes in the Economic Structure and Cultural Alienation of Macao during the Portuguese colonial period

(1) The Economic Structure and Changes of Macao from 1840 to 1949

Since the Opium War in 1840, Macao gradually became an important trading port and stronghold for Portugal in the Far East. During this period, significant changes occurred in the economic structure of Macao. According to historical records, from the late 19th century to the early 20th century, Macao's foreign trade volume continued to grow, especially with mainland China, becoming its economic pillar. For example, in 1887, the transit trade volume between Macao and Hong Kong reached 27 million silver dollars, accounting for nearly half of its total trade volume.

However, with changes in the international trade environment and political turmoil in mainland China, traditional trade in Macao has gradually been impacted. At the end of the 19th century, Macao began to attempt economic diversification, but the results were limited. It was not until the early 20th century, with the aftermath of the Industrial Revolution and the introduction of Western technology, that Macao began to see the emergence of some small factories and handicraft workshops, but overall it still could not shake off its dependence on trade.

(2) The Rise and Development of Macao's Gaming Industry

Under Portuguese colonial rule, the gambling industry gradually became an important component of Macao's economy. In the 1930s, the Macao government began issuing gambling licenses, marking the legalization and commercialization of the gambling industry. According to statistics, the revenue of Macao's gambling industry was only 200,000 silver dollars in 1937, but by 1948, this number had skyrocketed to nearly 5 million silver dollars, with an astonishing growth rate.

The rise of the gambling industry has not only brought abundant tax revenue to Macao, but also promoted the development of related industries such as hotels, catering, and tourism. However, the prosperity of the gambling industry has also brought about social problems such as gambling addiction and rising crime rates. These issues attracted widespread attention and discussion in the Macao society at that time.

(3) Cultural alienation in Macao under Portuguese colonial rule and economic structural transformation

Under Portuguese colonial rule, the changes in the economic structure of Macao not only affected economic development, but also profoundly altered social structure and cultural traditions. With the influx of foreign cultures and the integration of local cultures, Macao has gradually formed a unique cultural landscape.

On the one hand, Portuguese culture, European architectural styles, and Western lifestyles have been widely spread and accepted in Macao. For example, the landmark buildings in Macao, such as the memorial archway of Da Sanba and the front of the Convention Pavilion, are all cultural heritage left by Portugal during the colonial period. On the other hand, traditional Chinese culture has also been preserved and developed in Macao, forming a unique cultural style that combines Chinese and Western elements.

However, the transformation of economic structure and cultural integration have also brought about the phenomenon of cultural alienation. Some Macao residents are gradually moving away from traditional culture and pursuing Western lifestyles and values. This cultural alienation phenomenon attracted attention and reflection from all sectors of society at that time, and also left valuable experience and lessons for the protection and inheritance of Macao culture in the future.

In short, the changes in the economic structure and cultural alienation of Macao during the Portuguese colonial period were a complex and profound historical process. Through the analysis in this article, we can see that the transformation of economic structure has had a profound impact on Macao's society and culture. In the future development, Macao should continue to strengthen cultural protection and inheritance work, promote the exchange and integration of Chinese and Western cultures, and lay a solid foundation for Macao's long-term prosperity and stability.

3.2.3 Social Changes in Modern Macao under Colonial Rule

(1) The changes and struggles of the Chinese community in Macao

Since the Portuguese settled in Macao in the 16th century, Macao has gradually become a colony of Portugal. During this period, the Chinese community in Macao experienced unprecedented changes. Economically, Chinese were forced into the colonial trade system, becoming cheap labor and living in dire straits. At the same time, with the influx of Western goods, traditional handicrafts have been impacted, and many Chinese have lost their livelihoods, further widening the wealth gap in society.

Politically, Chinese people have long been in a state of powerlessness, and a series of policies implemented by the colonial government, such as the "Portuguese rule over Australians" system, severely deprived Chinese people of their political rights. The unequal status of Chinese people in politics and law has exacerbated social unrest and dissatisfaction.

(2) The Awakening of Ethnic Consciousness among Chinese in Macao

Faced with the oppression and exploitation of colonial rule, the Chinese people in Macao gradually awakened and began to seek national independence and liberation. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, with the deepening of the national crisis, the ethnic consciousness of the Chinese in Macao was unprecedentedly high. They organized various forms of resistance activities, such as strikes, demonstrations, etc., attempting to express their dissatisfaction with colonial rule through collective action.

At the same time, a group of intellectuals with national sentiments began to advocate for national self rescue. They spread national ideas and stimulated the patriotic enthusiasm of the people through the establishment of newspapers, education, and other means. These efforts not only promoted the unity of the Chinese community, but also laid the ideological foundation for the later national liberation movement.

(3) Adhering to and integrating local culture in Macao

Under colonial rule, the local culture of Macao faced severe challenges. On the one hand, colonizers attempted to assimilate Chinese people through cultural infiltration, while on the other hand, Chinese people stubbornly adhered to their cultural traditions. For example, in terms of religious beliefs, although Catholicism has been widely spread in Macao, the folk beliefs of Chinese people are still deeply rooted, and the two have formed a unique cultural landscape through mutual collision.

However, the adherence to culture is not about being closed and self-sufficient, but about achieving integration and innovation through communication. During the colonial period, Macao became an important window for cultural exchange between China and the West. While absorbing Western culture, Chinese people have also integrated it into their local culture, forming a cultural phenomenon with Macao characteristics. The food culture and architectural style of Macao reflect the integration and coexistence of Chinese and Western cultures.

In short, the social changes in modern Macao under colonial rule are a microcosm of the Chinese society's pursuit of development through oppression and struggle. Through the discussion in this article, we can deeply understand that although colonial rule brought profound disasters to Macao, the resilience and wisdom demonstrated by the Chinese community in adversity not only promoted national awakening and unity, but also provided valuable experience for the preservation and integration of Macao's local culture. In the future, Macao should continue to promote this spirit and advance social harmony and progress.

3.3 Modern Macao: Historical Process before and after the Return (1949 present)

3.3.1 The Relationship between Macao and Mainland China from the Founding of the People's Republic of China to the Return of China

(1) Changes in the Relationship between Macao and Mainland China from the Founding of the People's Republic of China to the Reform and Opening Up Era

After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, Macao, as a colony of Portugal, maintained a certain distance from the mainland of China in terms of politics and economy. However, civil exchanges have not been interrupted as a result. According to historical records, during this period, there were many mainland residents who entered Macao through legal or illegal means to make a living, forming a unique "wave of immigration". Economically, although Macao relies on transit trade, the demand for its goods in the mainland market still has a

significant impact. However, due to differences in political systems and the complexity of the international situation, economic cooperation between the two regions is mostly limited to informal channels, and official exchanges are relatively limited.

(2) The relationship between Macao and mainland China during the post transitional period

In the 1980s, with the deepening of reform and opening up, the mainland economy developed rapidly, and the relationship between Macao and the mainland also reached a new turning point. In 1986, the governments of China and Portugal signed the Joint Declaration, which confirmed that Macao would return to China in 1999. This historical event marks the beginning of Macao's post transition period and the gradual normalization of relations between the two regions. During this period, the mainland has increased its support for Macao, including infrastructure construction, economic cooperation, and talent cultivation. At the same time, Macao actively utilizes the policy advantage of "One Country, Two Systems" to strengthen economic and trade exchanges with the mainland, achieving rapid economic growth and social stability and prosperity.

(3) Changes in Macao's international status before its return

Prior to its return, Macao's international status underwent significant changes. On the one hand, with the improvement of the comprehensive national strength of the mainland and the expansion of its international influence, Macao, as an inseparable part of China's territory, has achieved unprecedented international status. On the other hand, under the framework of "One Country, Two Systems", Macao has maintained a high degree of autonomy and a unique social system, becoming an important window for the international community to observe China's reform, opening up, and modernization construction. In addition, Macao actively participates in international exchanges and cooperation, especially in the fields of tourism, trade, culture, etc., and has achieved significant achievements, further enhancing its international reputation and influence.

In short, from the establishment of the People's Republic of China to the return, the relationship between Macao and mainland China went through a process from alienation to gradual integration. In the post transition period, the relationship between the two regions has achieved a qualitative leap, laying a solid foundation for the smooth return of Macao and the successful implementation of "one country, two systems". On the eve of its return, the elevation of Macao's international status is not only a recognition of its unique historical status, but also a vivid reflection of China's achievements in reform, opening up, and modernization.

3.3.2 Historical significance of Macao's return and significant events during the return process

(1) Historical significance

The historical significance of Macao's return is profound. It is not only a strong proof of the Chinese government's firm stance in safeguarding national sovereignty and territorial integrity, but also an important milestone in the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Macao has been a territory of China since ancient times, but in modern times it has been occupied by Portuguese colonizers for various reasons. With the establishment of the People's Republic of China and the continuous improvement of its comprehensive national strength, the Chinese government began to address the issue of Macao. The return of Macao not only restored China's territorial integrity, but also demonstrated to the world the determination and ability of the Chinese government and people to safeguard national interests.

Not only that, the return of Macao also reflects the successful practice of the great concept of "One Country, Two Systems". Under the guidance of the "One Country, Two Systems" policy, Macao has maintained its original social system and way of life, while enjoying a high degree of autonomy. This practice has not only brought long-term prosperity and stability to Macao, but also provided useful reference for the international community to solve similar problems.

(2) Major events

The process of Macao's return was full of twists and turns, but the Chinese government remained steadfast in advancing the negotiation process, ultimately achieving a peaceful return of Macao. The following are several major events during the process of Macao's return:

- ① Signing of the Sino-Portuguese Joint Declaration: On April 13, 1987, the governments of China and Portugal officially signed the "Joint Declaration on the Question of Macao" in Beijing, confirming that the Chinese government resumed exercising sovereignty over Macao on December 20, 1999. The signing of this statement laid a solid legal foundation for the return of Macao.
- ② Formulation of the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region: In order to ensure the stability and development of Macao after its return, the Chinese government has formulated the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. The Law was adopted at the first session of the Eighth National People's Congress on March 31, 1993, providing legal guarantees for the political, economic and cultural development of the Macao Special Administrative Region.
- ③ The establishment of the Macao Special Administrative Region: On December 20, 1999, the Macao Special Administrative Region was officially established, marking the historical moment of Macao's return to the motherland. On this day, the government of the Macao Special Administrative Region was sworn in and held a grand celebration.
- ④ Economic development and improvement of people's livelihood in Macao: After the return, the Macao Special Administrative Region government actively promoted economic development and social progress, achieving significant results. Macao's economy continues to grow, residents' living standards continue to improve, and public service systems such as education and healthcare are constantly improving.

In short, the return of Macao is one of the important events in modern Chinese history, with profound historical significance. By sorting out the major events, we can have a clearer understanding of the Chinese government's firm stance in safeguarding national sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the successful implementation of the great concept of "one country, two systems".

3.3.3 Development achievements of Macao under the "One Country, Two Systems" policy after its return

(1) Sovereignty Return: Successful Practice of 'One Country, Two Systems'

On December 20, 1999, Macao returned to the embrace of the motherland, marking a significant victory for the Chinese government in safeguarding national sovereignty and territorial integrity. After the return, the Macao Special Administrative Region has maintained long-term prosperity and stability under the principles of "One Country, Two Systems", "Macao people governing Macao", and a high degree of autonomy. This successful practice not only demonstrates the superiority of "One Country, Two Systems", but also provides a new approach for the international community to solve historical legacy issues.

(2) Improving Governance: From "Australians Governing Australia" and "High Autonomy" to "Patriots Governing Australia" and "Central Comprehensive Governance"

After the return of Macao, the governance system has been continuously improved. On the basis of "Australians governing Macao" and "a high degree of autonomy", the central government has gradually strengthened its comprehensive governance over Macao, ensuring the political stability and administrative efficiency of the Macao Special Administrative Region. At the same time, the establishment of the principle of "patriots governing Macao" has further consolidated the political foundation of the Macao Special Administrative Region and provided a solid guarantee for the long-term prosperity and stability of Macao.

(3) Economic development: actively integrating into the overall development of the country, moderately

diversifying the economy

Since its return, the Macao Special Administrative Region has actively integrated itself into the overall national development situation and actively participated in regional cooperation such as the construction of the "the Belt and Road", resulting in sustained and rapid economic growth. At the same time, the Macao Special Administrative Region government actively promotes moderate economic diversification, vigorously develops emerging industries such as tourism, exhibitions, finance, and traditional Chinese medicine, effectively reduces dependence on the gambling industry, and enhances the economy's ability to resist risks.

(4) Livelihood Services: Sunshine Government, Livelihood oriented, Relieving Difficulties and Difficulties

The government of the Macao Special Administrative Region has always adhered to the governance philosophy of "putting the people first", committed to building a transparent government, improving administrative transparency and credibility. In terms of livelihood services, the government has increased investment in education, healthcare, housing and other fields, effectively addressing the hot and difficult issues that residents are concerned about. Especially in response to emergencies such as the COVID-19 epidemic, the government acted quickly and took effective measures to ensure the life safety and health of residents.

(5) Cultural construction achievements

After the return, the Macao Special Administrative Region has made significant achievements in cultural construction. The government actively promotes cultural exchange and mutual learning between China and the West, and strengthens the protection and inheritance of cultural heritage. At the same time, the Macao Special Administrative Region actively participates in international cultural exchanges and cooperation, enhancing Macao's international reputation and influence.

In short, the rapid development of Macau after its return is a vivid portrayal of the successful implementation of the "One Country, Two Systems" policy. In the future, the Macao Special Administrative Region should continue to deepen exchanges and cooperation with the mainland, promote moderate economic diversification and sustainable development; At the same time, we will strengthen people's livelihood services and cultural construction, continuously improving residents' sense of happiness and belonging. This will lay a solid foundation for the long-term prosperity and stability of the Macao Special Administrative Region.

4. Diversified presentation of Macao's folk culture

4.1 Folk Festivals

4.1.1 Representative Traditional Chinese Festivals

(1) Spring Festival: This is one of the most important traditional festivals in Macao. During the Spring Festival, lights and decorations are hung everywhere in Macao. People will conduct a thorough cleaning, symbolizing the elimination of the old and the welcome of the new. On New Year's Eve, a family gathers together to have a reunion dinner, usually with dishes symbolizing good luck, such as seaweed, oyster sauce, and black beans (symbolizing wealth and prosperity). On the first day of the Chinese New Year, people will wear new clothes and go to temples to offer incense and pray for blessings. Temples such as A-Ma Temple are bustling with people, praying for a safe and smooth new year.

(2) Mid-Autumn Festival: Watching the moon and eating moon cakes are essential activities. Major bakeries in Macao will offer various flavors of mooncakes. In addition, there are traditional customs such as dancing fire dragons, and in some communities, fire dragons can be seen shuttling around, which is very lively. This festival embodies the cultural connotation of reunion.

4.1.2 Festival customs of native Portuguese people

(1) Parade of Our Lady of Fatima: This is an important religious festival for the Macanese people. The parade carried the statue of Our Lady of Fatima and set off from the church, with many believers following along the way. There is also a band playing traditional religious music in the team, with people holding flowers and a sense of ceremony, showcasing the religious beliefs and cultural traditions of the Portuguese people.

(2) Portuguese Tarta Festival: Although not strictly a traditional festival, it is related to Portuguese food culture. During the festival, there will be various competitions and tasting activities for making Portuguese tarts, where everyone can taste authentic Portuguese tarts and experience the continuation of Portuguese culinary culture in Macau.

(3) The Differences and Similarities between the Festival Customs of Macanese and the Local Customs of Portugall

1) Similarities

① The importance of religious festivals: The vast majority of Portuguese people believe in Catholicism, and religion occupies an important position in their culture. Many festivals are related to religion and are highly valued. Macanese born in Portugal also believe in Catholicism, and their celebration and emphasis on religious festivals are somewhat similar to those of mainland Portugal. For example, Easter is an important holiday in both Portugal and the Portuguese speaking community, where people engage in corresponding religious ceremonies and family gatherings.

② The tradition of family reunion: Both native and native Portuguese emphasize family reunion on some important festivals. For example, during Christmas in Portugal, families will reunite on December 24th; Macanese people also celebrate major holidays with their families to maintain family relationships and bonds.

2) Different points

① The integration and transformation of festival celebration forms

In terms of cuisine, Portugal has its own traditional food culture and specialty dishes, such as roasted turkey and cod on Christmas, as well as deep fried desserts such as emperor cake, "fílh ó s", "sonhos", and "rabanadas". The food culture of the Macanese people reflects the characteristics of diversity and integration. Their culinary skills are based on Portuguese cooking methods, integrating European, Asian, and African ingredients and cooking methods. For example, Macao's "Portuguese chicken" is made with ingredients such as chicken, curry, coconut milk, shredded coconut, potatoes, onions, black olives, and Portuguese sausages, combining Western cuisine and Southeast Asian style. However, this dish is not included in the local cuisine of Portugal.

In terms of celebration activities, some local festivals in Portugal have strong local characteristics and traditional ways of celebration. For example, in Porto, Portugal, on the Saint Joao Festival, people will celebrate in the whole city on the eve of the festival, with fireworks, street performances, and barbecued sardine. The festival celebrations of Macanese Macanese are influenced by other local cultures, and their forms are more diverse and integrated. For example, in some festivals, in addition to traditional Portuguese celebrations, Chinese or other Asian cultural elements may also be incorporated, such as music, dance, and other performance forms that may blend Eastern and Western artistic characteristics.

3) The Evolution of Cultural Connotation in Festivals

The cultural connotations of Portuguese festivals are mainly based on Portugal's history, religion, and traditional values, retaining relatively pure Portuguese cultural characteristics and historical heritage. Due to their long-term living in Macau, a region where Chinese and Western cultures blend together, the cultural connotations of their festival customs have been influenced to some extent by Chinese culture, exhibiting a characteristic of cultural integration between the East and the West. The festival customs of Macanese not only include the inheritance of

Portuguese traditional culture, but also reflect the adaptation and integration of local culture in Macau, forming a unique cultural phenomenon.

4.1.3 Cultural connotations and functions of Macao festival customs

(1) Cultural connotation: Macao's festival customs blend Eastern and Western cultures.

Chinese traditional festivals reflect the importance placed on concepts such as family reunion, ancestor worship, and good luck; The festivals of native Portuguese people showcase their religious and cultural traditions in Portugal. This fusion of diverse cultures reflects the unique charm of Macao as a place where Chinese and Western cultures blend together.

(2) Cultural function: These festival customs contribute to enhancing social cohesion in terms of social function. Traditional festivals bring the Chinese community closer together, encouraging everyone to participate in activities and inherit culture; The festivals of the Macanese also play a crucial role in maintaining their identity and cultural heritage as a group. At the same time, these festivals also have economic functions. During festivals such as the Spring Festival and the Mid-Autumn Festival, Macao's commercial activities such as tourism and retail will flourish and stimulate consumption.

4.1.4 Modern Inheritance and Changes of Religious and Folk Festivals in Macao

(1) Changes in religious beliefs

1) The trend of diversified beliefs is strengthening. Macao was originally a region where multiple religions coexisted. In addition to traditional religions such as Buddhism, Taoism, Catholicism, and Christianity, some emerging religions or religious groups are also constantly developing. For example, the Bah á 'í Faith has been spreading in Macao for a certain period of time and is relatively active, while other emerging religions such as the Soka Gakkai Society in Japan and the Guanyin Dharma sect in Taiwan have also carried out activities in Macao. This has made the religious landscape of Macau more diverse, but traditional religions still dominate.

2) The secularization tendency of religious beliefs. The influence of religion on people's daily lives is gradually shifting from strict adherence to doctrine to a more flexible and secularized direction. For example, although some religious festivals are still valued, people's motivation for participation may not only be purely based on religious beliefs, but also include factors such as cultural identity and social needs. In some religious activities, the integration of elements such as entertainment and cultural exchange also reflects the secularization of religious beliefs.

(2) Changes in holiday concepts

1) The integration of values from tradition to modernity. In the past, religious and folk festivals mainly carried traditional meanings such as religious beliefs, praying for blessings and disaster relief. In modern society, people's understanding of these festivals is more diverse. In addition to their religious significance, they also pay attention to the cultural value, family reunion, community cohesion, and other aspects that the festivals bring. For example, during the Spring Festival, people not only go to temples to pray for peace, but also consider it an important time for family reunion and visiting relatives and friends; Festivals such as Mazu's birthday are not only celebrations for religious believers, but also important events to attract tourists and promote Macao culture.

2) The mindset of young people has changed. The attitude of the younger generation towards religious and folk festivals is different from that of the older generation. On the one hand, some young people are influenced by modern culture and education, and their enthusiasm for religious beliefs is relatively low. Their enthusiasm for participating in religious and folk festivals may not be as high as that of the older generation; On the other hand, the younger generation tends to view and participate in these festivals from the perspectives of cultural experience, entertainment, and leisure. They are more concerned about the fun and sociality of festivals.

(3) Changes in celebration methods

1) Innovation in the form of activities: While preserving traditional religious rituals, the forms of celebration activities continue to innovate. For example, in the celebration of some religious festivals, in addition to traditional religious parades, masses and other activities, cultural performances, art exhibitions, food festivals and other projects are also added, attracting more people to participate. Like the Mazu Cultural Tourism Festival in Macao, in addition to religious ceremonies such as the Mazu Festival, there are also cultural activities such as special performances by the Tianjin Art Troupe.

2) The application of technological means: Modern technological means are widely used in celebration activities, such as light shows, audio equipment, multimedia displays, etc., adding new visual and auditory experiences to festivals. In some religious places, they also began to use the Internet, social media and other platforms for publicity and promotion, expanding the influence of the festival.

3) Diversity of participants: In the past, the main participants in religious and folk festivals were local religious believers and residents. Now, with the development of Macao's tourism industry, more and more tourists are also participating in the celebration activities of these festivals, making the participants of the festivals more diverse. The participation of tourists not only brings new vitality to the festival, but also promotes communication and integration between different cultures.

(4) Integration with the tourism industry

1) Tourism Festivalization

The religious and folk festivals in Macao have gradually become important tourism resources and have been included in the development plan of the tourism industry. The government and tourism organizations actively promote and publicize these festivals, turning them into distinctive tourism events that attract a large number of tourists to come and experience. For example, festivals such as Nezhua's birthday, Earth's birthday, and Mazu's birthday have become important highlights of Macao tourism, attracting many tourists to experience Macao's religious and folk culture.

2) Development of tourism products

A series of related tourism products and services have been developed around religious and folk festivals, such as religious and cultural themed tourism routes, specialty souvenirs, and food experiences. These tourism products not only meet the needs of tourists, but also bring new economic growth points to Macao's tourism industry.

3) Enhance the image of tourist destinations

The hosting of religious and folk festivals showcases the unique cultural charm and historical heritage of Macao, enhancing its image and reputation as a tourist destination. Through these festival activities, tourists can gain a deeper understanding of Macao's cultural traditions, enhance their sense of identity and goodwill towards Macau, and contribute to the sustainable development of Macau's tourism industry.

4.2 Folk Art

4.2.1 Cantonese Opera

(1) Characteristics

1) Performance characteristics: Cantonese opera has six types of roles: civil and martial arts performers, young performers, formal performers, second tier performers, ugly performers, and martial artists. The performances

are simple and rough, with a unique charm and style. Actors vividly showcase the personality traits and emotional changes of the characters in the play through their superb performances.

2) Vocal music: Cantonese opera has a rich and diverse range of vocal styles, with Banghuang (Xipi, Erhuang) as the basic melody, while also incorporating Gaoqiang, Kunqiang, Guangdong folk music, and current tunes, forming a unique musical style. Its singing style is beautiful and captivating, full of infectiousness, and can effectively express the emotions and atmosphere of the plot.

3) Costume props: Cantonese opera's makeup is concise, the colors are rich, and the costumes are mostly made of Guang embroidery, exquisite and gorgeous, rich in local characteristics. Exquisite costumes and props not only enhance the performance of actors, but also bring visual enjoyment to the audience.

(2) Case and Development Status

1) Performance venues and activities: Cantonese opera has a wide range of performance venues in Macao. Cantonese opera plays are often performed at the Macao Cultural Centre, Wing Lok Theatre, and other venues; During festivals, temporary theaters are also set up in temples and other places in Macao for Cantonese opera performances. For example, during traditional festivals such as the birthday of Mazu in Macao, Cantonese opera performances are often performed to add a festive atmosphere to the festival. In addition, the Macao Arts Festival is also an important stage for showcasing Cantonese opera. Cantonese opera has always held a place in the performances of the Macao Arts Festival, which has been going on for 30 years.

2) Inheritance and Innovation: There are many Cantonese opera performance groups in Macao, mostly amateur in nature, such as the Macao Cantonese Opera Quyi Association, Macao Neighborhood Association Cantonese Opera Training Center, Macao Lijin Cantonese Opera Society, Macao Workers' Cantonese Opera Troupe, etc. There are also dozens of Cantonese opera clubs that occasionally perform Cantonese opera. At the same time, Cantonese opera is constantly innovating and developing, such as the Cantonese opera "Mirror Sea Soul" jointly created by the Macao Cultural Bureau and Foshan Cantonese Opera House. In addition to the wonderful Cantonese opera singing style, it also integrates elements such as Cantonese nursery rhymes, saltwater songs, and Nanyin rap, showcasing the innovation and vitality of Cantonese opera.

4.2.2 Dragon Dance and Lion Dance

(1) Characteristics

1) Integration of skills: Macao mainly inherits the tradition of southern lions and integrates martial arts, dance, and music into one. Lion dancers need to have a solid foundation in martial arts. Through flexible movements and exciting performances, they can present different expressions of joy, anger, sadness, happiness, worry, thought, sorrow, fear, and surprise, vividly portraying the image of the lion.

2) Production process: The traditional lion dance production process is very particular. The production of lion heads requires multiple steps such as lion binding, lion catching, coloring, decoration, etc. Each bamboo and paper is handmade. A lion's head has about 1300 binding points, which require the use of bamboo to create a base frame for the lion's head. Then, small bamboo strips are woven into the shape of the lion's head, and materials such as gauze, mosquito net cloth, and silk are laid flat on the lion's corridor to make it more sturdy and durable. Finally, according to the Cantonese opera facial makeup and requirements, a base color is applied, and various auspicious patterns are painted. Then, accessories such as dental brushes, fluffy balls, and small copper lenses are installed to complete a majestic lion head.

(2) Case Study

1) Macao Fishing Drunken Dragon Festival: This is a unique and influential traditional folk festival in Macao.

On the evening of the seventh day of the fourth lunar month every year, residents engaged in wholesale or retail of fish in Macao gather at the market, sitting on the ground and dining around tables, forming the tradition of "Dragon Boat Head Longevity Rice". On the eighth day of April, all members of the guild will hold a Drunken Dragon and Lion Dance event at the Three Streets Guild Hall in Macao, including sacrificial ceremonies, Drunken Dragon and Lion Dance performances, street parades, and distributing dragon boat head meals. The dancers danced dragons and drank alcohol at the same time, with dance steps that seemed to be drunk but not drunk, as the saying goes, 'Drunk in form, drunk in intention, but not drunk in person', which is very interesting.

2) Festival celebrations and performances: Dragon and lion dance performances are indispensable in Macao's Spring Festival, Yuanxiao (Filled round balls made of glutinous rice-flour for Lantern Festival) and other major festivals and various celebration activities. The wonderful dragon and lion dance performance not only adds a festive atmosphere to the festival, but also showcases the unique charm of Macao's folk art. For example, during the Chinese New Year, exciting performances of dragon and lion dance teams can often be seen on the streets and alleys of Macao, attracting many citizens and tourists to stop and watch. In 2020, dragon and lion dance was included in the list of intangible cultural heritage in Macao.

4.2.3 Portuguese National Style Dance

(1) Characteristics

1) Cultural Integration: Portuguese folk dance is the most effective artistic expression that fully embodies the characteristics of the integration of Chinese and Portuguese cultures in Macau. It is based on Portuguese dance elements, while incorporating local cultural characteristics and elements of Macau, forming a unique style. The dancers are dressed in brightly colored traditional Portuguese costumes, dancing gracefully to the cheerful rhythm of music, with passionate and energetic movements.

2) Entertainment and interactivity: Portuguese folk dance has strong entertainment and interactivity, often attracting audiences to participate. Dancers will interact with the audience, inviting them to dance together, allowing them to enjoy the dance while also experiencing the joy and charm of the dance firsthand.

(2) Case Study

1) Music Festival Performance: Portuguese folk dance often appears as an important performance in some large-scale cultural events and music festivals. For example, in the "Hengqin Tianmu River Grassland Music Festival" hosted by the Livelihood Affairs Bureau of the Hengqin Guangdong Macao Deep Cooperation Zone and co organized by the Cultural Bureau of the Macao Special Administrative Region Government on February 18-19, 2023, the Portuguese national dance performance kicked off, showcasing the characteristics of cultural integration between China and Portugal in Macao to the audience and adding a different color to the music festival.

2) Tourism Culture Exhibition: Portuguese folk dance is also an important part of Macao's tourism culture, often performed in some tourist attractions and cultural activities to showcase Macao's unique cultural charm to tourists. For example, in some historical and cultural districts and tourist attractions in Macao, performances of Portuguese folk dance can often be seen, attracting many tourists to come and watch and experience.

4.3 Dietary Culture

4.3.1 Macao Food Culture and Its Characteristics

(1) Chinese cuisine

1) Cantonese cuisine: In Macao, Cantonese cuisine has a profound influence. Its characteristics are fine production and meticulous material selection. For example, White cut chicken, which is made of high-quality

chicken breeds, retains the freshness and original taste of the chicken through proper cooking. The skin is yellow and the meat is white, fat, tender and delicious; Another example is roasted meat, including roasted goose, roasted duck, char siu, etc. The skin is crispy, the meat is tender, the color is shiny, and the aroma is overflowing.

2) Tea snacks: Tea snacks in Macao are also very unique and are one of the favorite foods of local residents and tourists. Shrimp dumplings are a classic snack, filled with delicious shrimp meat and covered with thin and transparent skin, providing a smooth and refreshing taste; The stuffing of Cha siu bao is sweet and salty Grilled pork. The bun is soft and the stuffing is juicy; There are also custard buns, with a sweet but not greasy custard filling that flows through the heart. When you take a bite, the milk aroma is rich.

3) Special pasta: Macao has a wide variety of pasta, such as Zhusheng noodles, which are made of traditional bamboo noodles. They are very resilient and match with delicious soup and various side dishes, such as fresh shrimp Wonton noodles. The shrimp meat in Wonton is full and the soup is delicious.

4) Seafood cuisine: Macao is close to the ocean and has abundant seafood resources, making seafood cuisine naturally excellent. Steamed grouper can preserve the freshness and nutrition of grouper to the greatest extent possible, with fresh and tender fish meat and a sweet taste; Salt and pepper skin shrimp, the skin shrimp is fried and seasoned with salt and pepper, the shell is crispy, and the shrimp meat is delicious.

(2) Portuguese cuisine

1) Authentic Portuguese cuisine

①Portuguese Chicken: This is a representative Portuguese dish made by stewing chicken, potatoes, onions, curry, and other ingredients together. The curry has a strong aroma, and the chicken is tender and juicy. Paired with rice or bread, it is very delicious. Although it is called Portuguese chicken, it has actually been improved in Macao, blending local ingredients and flavors.

②Ma Jiexiu: Ma Jiexiu is a Portuguese specialty ingredient, which is actually marinated cod. Ma Jiexiu can have various methods, such as frying Ma Jiexiu balls. After chopping Ma Jiexiu's fish meat, add mashed potatoes and other seasonings to fry it into a ball shape, with a crispy outer skin and a soft inner texture; Also, Ma Jiexiu Fried Rice, which was cut into small pieces and fried with rice, was salty and delicious.

③Portuguese style Seafood Rice: Based on rice, various seafood such as shrimp, crab, shellfish, etc. are added, and then cooked with seasonings such as tomatoes, onions, olive oil, etc. Rice absorbs the freshness of seafood, with a rich taste and bright colors.

2) Macao style Portuguese cuisine (Macanese Portuguese cuisine)

This is a unique culinary culture in Macao, which is based on Portuguese cuisine, combined with local ingredients and cooking methods, as well as spices and flavors from other parts of Asia. For example, African chicken is marinated and grilled with various spices, resulting in a golden and crispy outer skin, a tender and juicy interior, and a strong flavor of spices; There is also Wuluo chicken, which is stewed with onions, potatoes, tomatoes and other ingredients, and then added with some special spices for a unique taste.

(3) Fusion of Chinese and Portuguese cuisine and snacks

1) Pork Chop Bun: Bread is a Western style dish, baked crispy and filled with Chinese pork chops. Pork chops are marinated and grilled, resulting in tender and juicy meat. Paired with vegetables such as lettuce and tomatoes, and a special sauce, they have a rich taste that combines the aroma of bread with the deliciousness of pork chops.

2) Portuguese tarts: Although egg tarts originated in Portugal, Macao's Portuguese tarts have been improved to better suit the taste of Asians. The outer layer is crispy, the layers are distinct, the filling is tender and smooth, and the aroma of egg and milk is rich. It is one of the most representative snacks in Macao.

3) Mugu Pudding: This is a dessert with Portuguese characteristics, but has been improved and innovated in Macao. Using crushed cookies as the main ingredient, a layer of crushed cookies and a layer of cream are spread together, with a delicate taste, sweet and delicious, like ice cream, and melts in the mouth.

4.3.2 Factors contributing to the formation of Macao's culinary culture

(1) Historical factors

1) The impact of Portuguese colonial rule

Since the 16th century, Portuguese people began to settle in Macao, and Portuguese culinary culture followed suit. For hundreds of years, Portuguese cooking techniques, ingredients, and dietary habits gradually took root in Macao. For example, the Portuguese brought bread making, wine making techniques, and typical Portuguese ingredients such as mackerel, which became a part of Macao's culinary culture.

2) Inheritance of Traditional Chinese Cuisine

The main residents of Macao are Chinese, who have inherited Chinese culinary culture. Chinese culinary culture has a long history, and in Macao, the traditional techniques of Cantonese cuisine have been preserved and developed. Techniques such as roasted meat and seafood cooking in traditional Cantonese cuisine play an important role in Macao cuisine, and their production techniques have been passed down through generations to this day.

(2) Geographical factors

1) Coastal geographical advantage

Macao is located on the southern coast of China and is a natural harbor. The abundant marine resources provide a large amount of fresh seafood ingredients for local cuisine, such as grouper, shrimp, crab, shellfish, etc. This geographical advantage makes seafood an indispensable and important part of Macao's cuisine. For example, simple cooking methods such as steaming and blanching can maximize the deliciousness of local seafood, forming the characteristics of Macao seafood cuisine.

2) Close connection with surrounding areas

Macao is geographically close to other regions in Guangdong and Southeast Asian countries, which facilitates the exchange of food culture. This close connection enables Macao to absorb the culinary characteristics of surrounding areas and enrich its own culinary culture. For example, some cooking methods and ingredients in Macao cuisine are influenced by the Chaoshan region of Guangdong and the Minnan region of Fujian, while also reflecting some Southeast Asian culinary culture.

(3) Diversity of ingredients brought by maritime trade

1) The Status of Trade Ports

Macao was once an important maritime trading port with frequent trade activities. Merchants from all over the world gather here, bringing a variety of ingredients. In addition to local Portuguese ingredients, ingredients from other countries and regions in Europe, Africa, and Asia also appear in Macao. The gathering of these ingredients provides a material foundation for the innovation of Macao's culinary culture. For example, spices introduced

from India and other places have enriched the seasoning of Macao cuisine, making it more diverse in taste.

2) Exchange and integration of ingredients

The convergence of ingredients from different regions in Macao promotes the integration of culinary culture. Chefs combine these new ingredients with local ingredients based on the taste and dietary habits of local residents to create innovative dishes. Curry ingredients commonly found in Macau fusion cuisine are introduced from India or Southeast Asia and combined with local chicken, seafood, and other ingredients to form curry dishes with Macao characteristics.

(4) The Diversity of Ethnic Dietary Culture

1) Multi ethnic settlement environment

Macao is a region inhabited by multiple ethnic groups, including not only Portuguese and Chinese, but also Malays, Indians, and others. Different ethnic groups have their own unique food cultures, which interact and influence each other in Macao. For example, native Portuguese are descendants of intermarriage between Portuguese and other ethnic groups, and their culinary culture blends the characteristics of multiple ethnic groups such as Portugal, China, Malaysia, and India, forming a unique native Portuguese cuisine.

2) The driving role of cultural integration

In a multi-ethnic environment, cultural integration is not only reflected in the integration of population, but also in the integration of food culture. The exchange and integration of various ethnic culinary cultures have resulted in a rich and colorful presentation of Macao's culinary culture. In the street snacks and restaurant dishes of Macao, one can see the blending of Portuguese cooking style, Chinese ingredient use, Malay spice selection, and Indian seasoning methods.

4.3.3 The Role of Macao's Food Culture

(1) Attracting tourists to Macao for tourism

1) The attractiveness of food festivals: Macao hosts various food festivals, such as the Macao Food Festival. These food festivals bring together local and global cuisine from Macao, with Macao's signature cuisine being a highlight. Specialty snacks such as Portuguese tarts and pork chop buns, as well as classic dishes like Portuguese chicken, have attracted a large number of tourists to come and taste. During the food festival, tourists can experience a variety of delicious food in one stop and feel the charm of Macao's food culture. According to statistics, the Macao Food Festival receives a large number of tourists every year. For example, in 2019, the number of visitors to the Macao Food Festival exceeded one million, which has a significant driving effect on Macao's tourism industry.

2) The temptation of specialty dining: Macao's specialty restaurants and street snacks have also become important factors in attracting tourists. From the time-honored Chinese teahouse, tourists can taste authentic Cantonese morning tea, such as shrimp dumplings, Cha siu bao, etc; Visiting exotic Portuguese restaurants allows tourists to experience the flavors of Portuguese cuisine. These specialty restaurants not only satisfy the taste buds of tourists, but also provide them with a window to deeply experience Macao culture.

(2) Promote moderate diversification of Macao's economy

1) The economic contribution of the catering industry: The prosperity of Macao's food culture has driven the flourishing development of the catering industry. Numerous restaurants, snack stalls, cafes, and other establishments have created a large number of job opportunities for the local area, benefiting from the prosperity of the catering industry, from chefs, waiters to food suppliers. Meanwhile, catering revenue accounts for a

certain proportion of Macao's economy. According to relevant data, the revenue of the catering industry has been increasing year by year, contributing to Macao's economic growth.

2) Linked development with other industries: Food culture is also interconnected with industries such as tourism, hotels, and retail. Tourists come for food and also make purchases in terms of accommodation, shopping, and other aspects. For example, a famous Macao restaurant may attract tourists to choose nearby hotels to stay, while tourists purchase specialty souvenirs from nearby shops, etc. This linkage effect promotes the moderate diversification of Macao's economy.

(3) Promote the exchange and mutual learning of human civilization

1) The integration of food culture reflects communication: Macao's food culture is a vivid manifestation of the exchange of Eastern and Western civilizations. For example, dishes that combine Portuguese and Chinese cooking characteristics, such as Portuguese tarts, not only have the basic form of Portuguese desserts, but also adapt to Chinese preferences in terms of production technology and taste. This fusion of cuisine has become a carrier of cultural exchange, allowing people to understand the characteristics and mutual influence of different civilizations through food.

2) Catering venues become communication platforms: Restaurants, snack shops, and other catering venues in Macau are platforms for people from different cultural backgrounds to communicate. Here, tourists, local residents, foreign businessmen, and others gather together to taste delicious food while sharing different cultural concepts. For example, in a Portuguese restaurant, customers may hear stories about the fusion of Portuguese and Chinese cultures, promoting mutual understanding between different cultures.

(4) Building a shared spiritual home for the Guangdong Hong Kong Macao Greater Bay Area

1) The role of food culture as a link: Macao's food culture has close connections with other cities in the Guangdong Hong Kong Macao Greater Bay Area. As an important part of the Cantonese cuisine cultural circle, Chinese cuisine in Macao echoes the culinary culture of other regions in Guangdong. Cantonese style tea snacks are very popular in Macao and other cities in the Greater Bay Area. This common food culture has become a link in building a shared spiritual home for the Guangdong Hong Kong Macao Greater Bay Area, enhancing the cultural identity and sense of belonging of residents in the Greater Bay Area.

2) Food exchange activities promote integration: Through food exchange activities within the Greater Bay Area, Macau's food culture can be better shared with other cities. For example, in activities such as the Great Bay Area Food and Culture Festival, Macao's featured food display can deepen other cities' understanding of Macao, while Macao can also absorb the essence of food culture of other cities in the Great Bay Area, and promote the cultural integration of the Great Bay Area.

(5) Strengthening the awareness of the Chinese national community and building a Chinese national community

1) The role of inheriting Chinese culinary culture: The traditional Chinese parts of Macao's culinary culture, such as Cantonese cuisine and Chinese snacks, are important components of Chinese national culture. The inheritance of these culinary cultures in Macao helps to enhance the local Chinese people's sense of identity and pride in Chinese national culture. Through cuisine, Chinese people in Macao can remember their cultural roots and pass on this culture to future generations, thereby forging a sense of community for the Chinese nation.

2) Cultural exchange promotes community building: In the exchange of food culture with other ethnic groups and regions, Macao's food culture also plays a role in showcasing the charm of Chinese culture. When foreign tourists taste Chinese cuisine in Macao, they are also learning about Chinese culture. This cultural exchange helps to make the world aware of China and promote the construction of a community of the Chinese nation.

5. Composition and Value Assessment of Macao's Cultural Heritage

5.1 Material Cultural Heritage

5.1.1 Heritage Value and Cultural Characteristics of Historical Buildings such as Chinese Temples, Western style Churches, and Ancient Residential Buildings

(1) Chinese temples

1) Heritage value

① Historical value: Chinese temples in Macao have a long history, such as the A-Ma Temple, which has a history of more than 500 years and is the oldest among the three ancient temples in Macao. It witnesses the development and changes of Macao and carries the historical memory of Macao.

② Religious Value: It is the center of religious belief for the people of Macao. The Mazu enshrined in the Mazu Pavilion is regarded as a maritime protector, reflecting the close connection between Macao and maritime culture, as well as the belief culture of the Chinese people. It is of great significance for the study of Chinese religious beliefs and folk belief systems.

③ Architectural artistic value: The unique architectural style of the temple combines the characteristics of Lingnan architecture with the local architectural style of Macao. Its layout is rigorous and its architectural craftsmanship is exquisite, with exquisite decorative arts such as brick carving, wood carving, stone carving, etc. It is a precious heritage of traditional Chinese architectural art.

2) Cultural characteristics

① Religious culture: Represented by the Mazu faith, it reflects the Chinese reverence for the ocean and their pursuit of peace and happiness. Every year, numerous believers come to worship and pray, forming a unique religious and cultural atmosphere.

② Folk culture: closely related to the folk activities in Macao, such as the site in front of the Mazu Temple near the Mazu Pavilion, which was the first place where the Portuguese landed in Macao and the starting point of the integration of Chinese and Portuguese cultures. The surrounding folk activities are rich and colorful, becoming an important exhibition place for Macao's folk culture.

③ Regional culture: It reflects the regional characteristics of Macao in terms of architectural style, decorative arts, etc., and also integrates elements of Central Plains culture, which is the inheritance and development of Central Plains culture in Macao.

(2) Western style church

1) Heritage value

① Historical value: Most Western style churches in Macao were built during the colonial period and are important witnesses to Macao's history. For example, St. Paul's Church was built in 1602. After many times of construction and fire, the existing memorial archway of Da Sanba is the front wall of the church, which has witnessed the historical changes of Macao and the cultural exchanges between China and the West.

② Artistic value: The architectural style is unique, blending European Renaissance architectural styles with Eastern elements, and has extremely high artistic value. The architectural structure of the church is complex, with exquisite art decorations such as sculptures and paintings, such as the oil paintings and sculptures in the Rose Hall and the Gothic church spire in the Western facing Yangshan Cathedral, all of which are outstanding

representatives of Western architectural art.

③ Religious and cultural value: It is an important place for the spread of Catholicism in Macao, with a large collection of Catholic cultural relics, which is of great significance for studying the spread and development of Catholicism in Asia.

(2) Cultural characteristics

① Religious culture: It is the core venue of Catholic culture in Macao, where religious ceremonies, festivals, and other activities are rich and colorful, attracting numerous believers and tourists to participate and forming a strong religious and cultural atmosphere.

② Architectural Culture: Its architectural style reflects Western architectural culture and aesthetic concepts, and has had a profound impact on the architectural style of Macao, becoming an important component of the city's landscape.

③ Cultural exchange: The existence of Western style churches reflects the exchange and integration of Chinese and Western cultures in Macao, and is an important carrier of cultural exchange between the East and the West.

(3) Ancient dwellings

1) Heritage value

① Historical value: For example, the Lu Family Mansion was completed around the 15th year of the Qing Dynasty's Guangxu reign (1889), and the Zheng Family Mansion was first built in 1869. These ancient dwellings are witnesses to the historical development of Macao, reflecting the social landscape and lifestyle of its residents at different times.

② Architectural artistic value: The architectural style combines elements of Chinese and Western architecture, incorporating both the layout and decorative features of Lingnan dwellings such as courtyards, oyster shell windows, brick carvings, and Western architectural elements such as false ceilings, cast iron railings, and blinds, reflecting the fusion of Chinese and Western architectural art and possessing unique architectural artistic value.

③ Humanistic value: It is an important carrier of Macao family culture and traditional way of life. Through ancient dwellings, one can understand the rise and fall of Macao families, social structure, as well as the living habits and cultural traditions of residents.

2) Cultural characteristics

① Family culture: Ancient dwellings are places where families gather, reflecting the family culture and values of Macao. Cultural traditions such as family inheritance, rules, and teachings are reflected in the dwellings.

② Life culture: It reflects the daily life culture of Macao residents, such as the layout of courtyards and the functional division of rooms, all of which reflect the lifestyle and wisdom of Macao residents.

③ Regional culture: It reflects the regional characteristics of Macao in terms of architectural style, decorative arts, and is an important component of Macao's regional culture.

5.1.2 Heritage value, artistic value, historical, geographical and cultural value of the Historic Center of Macao

(1) Heritage value

1) Historical integrity: It is the oldest, largest, most well preserved, and most concentrated historical city zone in

China where Chinese and Western characteristic buildings coexist. It retains a large number of historical buildings and blocks, such as Ma Ge Temple, Zheng Jia Big House, Lu Jia Big House, Da Sanba memorial archway, etc. These buildings and blocks are connected with each other, forming a complete historical city zone, which truly reflects Macao's 400 year history of cultural exchanges and coexistence between China and the West.

2) Cultural diversity: It integrates cultural elements from both the East and the West, including religious culture, architectural culture, folk culture, etc., and is an important witness to cultural exchange between the East and the West. Different cultures blend and influence each other in the the Historic Center of Macao, forming a unique cultural landscape, which is of great value for the study of cultural exchanges between China and the West and the coexistence of multiple cultures.

(2) Artistic value

1) Diversity of architectural styles: The historical urban area has a diverse range of architectural styles, including Chinese temples, traditional residences, as well as Western style churches, squares, and streets. These buildings have different styles, which reflect the characteristics of architectural art under different cultural backgrounds. For example, the cornice arch of wooden architecture and carved beams and painted rafters of Chinese architecture, the Gothic spire of Western architecture, and the Baroque style decoration are all treasures of architectural art.

2) Artistic urban planning: The urban planning of historic urban areas also has high artistic value, with reasonable street layout, spacious plazas, and coordinated architecture and environment, forming a unique urban landscape. For example, the square in front of the Convention Center is exquisitely designed and the surrounding buildings have a unified architectural style, making it an outstanding representative of Macao's urban planning.

(3) Historical, geographical, and cultural value

1) Geographical importance: Macao is located on the southeast coast of China and is an important gateway connecting mainland China and overseas. It has always been an important hub for trade and cultural exchanges between the East and the West in history. The unique geographical location of the Historic Center of Macao reflects its important position and role in history, which is of great significance to the study of China's foreign exchanges and marine culture.

2) Cultural heritage: It is an important carrier of Macaulay culture, carrying the historical memory and cultural traditions of Macao. The buildings, neighborhoods, and customs within the historic district are important components of Macao's culture. By protecting and inheriting the historic district, we can better promote Macao's cultural traditions and enhance the cultural identity and sense of belonging of Macao residents.

5.1.3 The current status and historical significance of the protection of material cultural heritage such as archaeological sites and fortresses in Macao

(1) Protecting the current situation

1) Archaeological Sites: Archaeological sites in Macao have been well protected and studied. The government and relevant agencies have systematically excavated and protected archaeological sites, formulated strict protection measures and management regulations to ensure the safety and integrity of the sites. Meanwhile, through archaeological research, we continuously deepen our understanding and comprehension of Macao's history.

2) Battery: Most of the batteries in Macao are well preserved, such as the Dongwangyang Battery, which is listed as a cultural relic protection unit. The government has carried out repairs and maintenance on the battery, strengthened the improvement and management of the surrounding environment, and enabled the battery to be

better preserved. In addition, some fortresses have been developed as tourist attractions to showcase Macao's history and culture to visitors.

(2) Historical significance

1) Military defense significance: Battery is a military defense facility in the history of Macao, witnessing the historical changes and development of military defense in Macao. They have played an important role in resisting foreign invasion and safeguarding the security of Macao, and are an important component of Macao's military defense system in history.

2) The significance of historical witness: Archaeological sites and fortresses are both witnesses of Macao's history, providing important physical materials for studying Macao's history, culture, society, and other aspects. By studying these material cultural heritages, we can better understand the development process and cultural traditions of Macao, which is of great significance for inheriting and promoting Macao's historical and cultural heritage.

5.2 Intangible Cultural Heritage

5.2.1 Types, Values, and Characteristics of Macao's Intangible Cultural Heritage

(1) Type

1) Performing Arts category

Including Cantonese opera, Taoist ritual music, eight tone gongs and drums, Portuguese folk dance, etc. Cantonese opera is a cultural treasure shared by Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao, with extensive influence and a strong mass base in Macao; Taoist ritual music has a strong religious and cultural color and a unique musical style; Ba Yin Gong and Drum is a traditional folk music performance form in Macao, usually played during festivals and events; Portuguese folk dance has distinct cultural characteristics of Portugal, with a passionate and unrestrained dance style.

2) Traditional handicrafts

For example, wood carving - statue carving, porcelain micro carving techniques, Chinese skirt and coat making techniques, silverware making techniques, etc. The exquisite carving technique of the statue combines the characteristics of sculpture art from both the East and the West, and occupies an important position in the religious culture of Macao; Ceramic micro carving technique is the creation of micro carvings on porcelain, which has high artistic value; The production techniques of Chinese style skirts and coats inherit the traditional clothing making techniques of China, and their exquisite embroidery and unique design showcase the charm of Chinese traditional culture; The craftsmanship of silverware has a long history, and the silverware produced is exquisite and unparalleled.

3) Festival and Folk Customs

There are Fish Drunken Dragon Festival, Mazu Belief Customs, Nezha Belief Customs, etc. The Fish Drunken Dragon Festival is a unique traditional folk festival in Macao, held on the eighth day of April every year. The performance of the Drunken Dragon Dance is unique, accompanied by the custom of delivering dragon boat meals, reflecting Macao's profound cultural heritage and people's longing for a better life; The Mazu belief and customs are widely spread in Macao, and Mazu Temple is an important religious site in Macao. People express their prayers for peace and happiness through worshipping Mazu; The belief and customs of Nezha also have a profound historical origin in Macao, and Nezha Temple is one of the characteristic temples in Macao.

4) Food and cooking category

The culinary skills of the Macanese people, who are native to Macao, blend elements of Portuguese, Southeast Asian, and Chinese cuisine to form a unique Macao culinary culture. Portuguese chicken and other dishes are typical representatives of this culture.

(2) Value

1) Cultural Value

① Witness of multicultural integration: Macao's intangible cultural heritage is a vivid reflection of the exchange and integration of Eastern and Western cultures, reflecting the mutual influence and infiltration of different cultures in Macao. For example, Portuguese cuisine and cooking techniques, as well as Portuguese folk dances, have obvious elements of Portuguese culture, while Cantonese opera, wood carving, and statue carving are the inheritance and development of traditional Chinese culture. These intangible cultural heritages together constitute the unique cultural landscape of Macao's diverse culture.

② The carriers of historical inheritance: They carry the historical memory and cultural traditions of Macao, and are the crystallization of the wisdom and creativity of the Macao people. Through these intangible cultural heritages, we can gain insights into the historical changes, social development, as well as the way of life and values of the people in Macao. For example, the Fish Drunken Dragon Festival, whose origin legend is closely related to the folk history of Macao, has been passed down for hundreds of years and has become an important part of Macao's historical and cultural heritage.

2) Artistic value

① Exquisite craftsmanship: Whether it is traditional handicrafts such as carving, embroidery, and micro carving, or performing arts such as music, dance, and drama, they all demonstrate superb artistic level and unique artistic style. The delicate craftsmanship of statue carving, the exquisite skills of porcelain micro carving, and the beautiful singing and body performance of Cantonese opera all provide people with aesthetic enjoyment and have high artistic appreciation value.

② Unique artistic aesthetics: Macao's intangible cultural heritage has formed its own unique artistic aesthetic system, integrating the characteristics of Chinese and Western art. It combines the implicit and introverted nature of traditional Chinese art with the unrestrained and passionate nature of Western art. This unique artistic aesthetic provides rich materials and inspiration for artistic creation and research.

3) Social Value

① Enhancing community cohesion: Many intangible cultural heritage projects are jointly participated and inherited by Macao community residents, such as festival and folk activities, which can enhance the connection and cohesion among community residents and promote the harmonious development of the community. In activities such as the Fish and Drunken Dragon Festival, community residents participate in dance performances, preparations for events, etc., which enhances their relationship with each other.

② Promoting economic development: Intangible cultural heritage can become an important resource for Macao's tourism industry, attracting tourists to come and experience, and promoting the development of Macao's tourism industry. For example, tourists can visit statue carving studios, enjoy Cantonese opera performances, and taste Portuguese cuisine, all of which have brought new opportunities for Macao's economic development.

③ The bridge of cultural exchange: Macao's intangible cultural heritage plays an important role in foreign cultural exchanges and is an important window to showcase Macao's culture to the world. The display and exchange of intangible cultural heritage can promote cultural understanding and friendship between different countries and regions, and enhance Macao's international influence.

(3) Features

- 1) The combination of Chinese and Western cultures: This is the most prominent feature of Macao's intangible cultural heritage. In Macao's intangible cultural heritage, we can see elements of traditional Chinese culture, such as Confucianism, Taoist beliefs, and traditional handicrafts, as well as the influence of Western culture, such as the language, music, dance, and cuisine of Portugal.
- 2) Active inheritance: Intangible cultural heritage is continuously inherited and developed in people's production and life, closely connected to the daily life of the people of Macao. Many intangible cultural heritage projects are still passed down in Macao's communities and families, and are constantly innovating and developing in the process of inheritance to adapt to the changes and needs of the times.
- 3) Distinctive regional characteristics: Macao's intangible cultural heritage has strong regional characteristics, reflecting the historical, geographical, and social features of Macao. For example, the architectural style, dietary habits, language, and other aspects of Macao have had a significant impact on the formation and development of intangible cultural heritage, giving it a unique Macao charm.

5.2.2 Challenges faced by the inheritance and protection of intangible cultural heritage in Macao

(1) The aging of inheritors

- 1) The inheritance team is in short supply: Many inheritors of intangible cultural heritage projects are older, and the younger generation has low interest and enthusiasm for intangible cultural heritage, and is unwilling to learn and inherit these skills. For example, some traditional handicraft projects require long-term learning and practice to master, and young people often lack patience and perseverance, leading to a gap in the inheritance team.
- 2) The way of inheritance faces difficulties: the traditional way of inheritance between master and apprentice has been challenged in modern society, and young people's lifestyle and values have changed. They are more inclined to acquire knowledge and skills through modern education systems and the Internet and other channels. The traditional way of inheritance between master and apprentice is difficult to attract young people. In addition, some inheritors are unable to effectively impart skills due to age and physical reasons, which also affects the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

(2) The Impact of Modern Culture

- 1) Changes in cultural consumption concepts: In modern society, cultural consumption concepts are becoming more diversified and fast food oriented. People tend to pursue fashionable and popular cultural products, and their attention and interest in traditional intangible cultural heritage have decreased. For example, young people prefer modern entertainment such as watching movies and listening to popular music, while their interest in traditional performing arts such as Cantonese opera and Taoist ritual music is not high.
- 2) The influence of foreign cultures: With the development of globalization, foreign cultures have had an impact on Macao's intangible cultural heritage. Some foreign cultural products and activities have occupied the cultural market in Macao, squeezing the living space of intangible cultural heritage. For example, Western festivals, music, movies, etc. are popular among young people in Macao, while local intangible cultural heritage projects in Macao face the risk of marginalization.

6 Theoretical basis and practical model for revitalizing cultural heritage

6.1 Relevant theories of cultural heritage revitalization

6.1.1 Cultural Capital Theory

(1) Theoretical connotation

Cultural capital refers to the capital composed of corporate culture (values, beliefs, behavioral norms, and patterns) and the material carriers of culture. It is divided into three levels, including external material capital such as employees' mental state, clothing, and company image; The institutional capital that supports the effective operation of the company, such as sound systems and efficient management mechanisms; The capital formed by the deep core driving forces such as the core values and historical mission of the enterprise and all employees. The formation of cultural capital includes both monetary forms of investment, such as establishing formal norms and shaping corporate image through training, education, and cultural activities; This also includes non monetary forms of investment, such as leadership style, energy, time, and level of attention.

(2) The significance of revitalizing Macao's cultural heritage

The theory of cultural capital can help explore the unique value contained in local cultural heritage. For example, historical buildings in Macao, such as the Zheng Family Mansion and the A-Ma Temple, have valuable cultural capital in terms of their architectural style and decorative arts. By identifying and evaluating these cultural capitals, we can better understand the value of Macao's cultural heritage and provide a foundation for revitalization. Meanwhile, the theory of cultural capital also emphasizes the importance of education in cultural inheritance. Macao can strengthen education and training on cultural heritage related knowledge, cultivate residents' and tourists' awareness and appreciation of cultural heritage, thereby increasing the attractiveness and influence of cultural heritage.

(3) Practical application

On the one hand, Macao's cultural heritage can be transformed into cultural products and services, such as developing cultural and creative products related to cultural heritage, hosting cultural exhibitions and performances, etc. These activities can not only spread the value of cultural heritage, but also create economic benefits, providing financial support for the protection and revitalization of cultural heritage. On the other hand, establishing and improving the management and protection system of cultural heritage, enhancing the management level and protection effect of cultural heritage, is also an important manifestation of institutional capital. For example, establishing strict regulations for the protection of historical buildings and regulating the development and utilization of cultural heritage.

6.1.2 Theory of Cultural Sustainable Development

(1) Theoretical connotation

Emphasis should be placed on providing space for future generations to survive and develop while meeting the various needs of contemporary humanity. This theory focuses on the rational utilization of resources and environmental protection, and believes that economic and social development should be carried out under the constraints of resources and environment, and cannot meet current needs at the expense of sacrificing the future. In the field of cultural heritage, the theory of sustainable cultural development requires the reasonable development and utilization of cultural heritage while protecting its authenticity and integrity, so that cultural heritage can continue to contribute to the development of human society.

(2) The significance of revitalizing Macao's cultural heritage

For a city like Macao with rich cultural heritage, the theory of sustainable cultural development has important guiding significance. The cultural heritage of Macao is a precious asset of the city and an important resource for attracting tourists and promoting economic development. Guided by the theory of cultural sustainable development, it is possible to ensure that the protection and revitalization of cultural heritage are coordinated with the economic, social, and environmental development of cities, achieving long-term sustainable development. For example, when developing cultural tourism projects, it is necessary to fully consider the

impact of tourist numbers on cultural heritage and avoid excessive development that may cause damage to cultural heritage.

(3) Practical application

In the process of revitalizing Macao's cultural heritage, attention should be paid to ecological environment protection and rational utilization of resources. For example, in the restoration and renovation of historical buildings, environmentally friendly materials and energy-saving technologies are used to reduce the impact on the environment. At the same time, strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of cultural heritage, timely identify and solve problems, and ensure the sustainable development of cultural heritage. In addition, by developing cultural and creative industries, cultural heritage can be combined with modern design, technology, etc. to create innovative and sustainable cultural products and services.

6.1.3 Traditional Cultural Renaissance and Cultural Reproduction Theory

(1) Theoretical connotation

The theory of traditional cultural revival emphasizes the re understanding, inheritance, and development of traditional culture in order to restore its important position in social life. The theory of cultural reproduction emphasizes that education uses culture as an intermediary to achieve social reproduction functions, and believes that cultural processes are important in maintaining the socio-economic structure. Cultural reproduction not only includes the inheritance and continuation of culture, but also the innovation and development of culture. Through continuous reproduction, culture can adapt to social changes and development.

(2) The significance of revitalizing Macao's cultural heritage

Macao is a city that blends Eastern and Western cultures, with a unique traditional culture. The theory of traditional cultural revival can help Macao explore and promote local traditional culture, enhance residents' cultural identity and pride. At the same time, the theory of cultural reproduction can provide theoretical support for the revitalization of Macao's cultural heritage. Through education and cultural activities, cultural heritage can be passed down to the next generation, achieving the reproduction and continuation of culture. For example, Macao can carry out traditional cultural education activities, such as holding traditional craft training classes, folk culture lectures, etc., to cultivate young people's interest and love for traditional culture.

(3) Practical application

On the one hand, strengthen the research and collation of Macao's traditional culture, excavate its essence and characteristics, and provide theoretical support and cultural materials for the activation of cultural heritage. For example, conducting systematic research and organization on traditional music, dance, drama, etc. in Macao, and publishing relevant academic works and cultural materials. On the other hand, combining traditional culture with modern life to create cultural products and services that meet modern aesthetics and needs. For example, integrating traditional architectural elements of Macao into modern architectural design to create a city landscape with Macao characteristics; Innovate and improve traditional cuisine, and launch food products that are suitable for modern tastes.

6.1.4 Comprehensive Guidance and Practice of Cultural Heritage Revitalization Theory for Macao's Cultural Heritage Revitalization

(1) Comprehensive guidance

The above three theories are interrelated and complementary, providing comprehensive theoretical guidance for the revitalization of Macao's cultural heritage. The theory of cultural capital provides methods and ideas for the value assessment and development of Macao's cultural heritage; The theory of sustainable cultural development

provides principles and directions for the protection and development of Macao's cultural heritage; The theory of traditional cultural revival and cultural reproduction provides theoretical support and practical approaches for the inheritance and innovation of Macao's cultural heritage. In the actual process of revitalizing cultural heritage, it is necessary to comprehensively apply these three theories to achieve the organic unity of protection, inheritance, and development of cultural heritage.

(2) Practical Cases

The Wangxia Mountain House Revitalization Project in Macao is a good example. In the process of revitalization, Wangxia Mountain House fully considers the historical value and cultural characteristics of cultural heritage, preserves the original style and structure of the building, and integrates modern design elements and functional requirements, making it a cultural venue that integrates cultural exhibitions, artistic creation, and leisure and entertainment. In this process, the value of cultural capital is reflected, and the principle of sustainable cultural development is followed, while also achieving the reproduction and innovative development of traditional culture.

6.2 Reference to International Cultural Heritage Revitalization Practice Models

6.2.1 Revival of European Ancient Cities

(1) Source of Funds

Firstly, there is government investment. For example, the French government spent 209 million euros to restore the Ville de Cotte Castle for the protection of historical and cultural heritage.

Secondly, there is support from financial institutions. The European Investment Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and other institutions provide funding for infrastructure projects, such as the construction of the E60 highway in Georgia.

The third is the participation of private institutions. Private organizations such as the Toledo Foundation in Toledo, Spain, are involved in the preservation and revitalization projects of the ancient city.

The fourth is the return of tourism revenue. By developing the tourism industry and investing a portion of tourism revenue into the maintenance and development of ancient cities, we can achieve the recycling of funds, such as ancient cities like Bologna in Italy.

(2) Management mechanism

One is government led. In the renovation of Paris, France at different times, the government played a leading role in formulating plans, policies, etc., promoting the renewal of the ancient city, such as the Paris renovation plan led by Osman, which opened avenues, built squares, etc.

The second is to establish specialized institutions. Poland establishes a state-owned cultural relic protection enterprise responsible for restoring and protecting various cultural heritage and historical sites, and sets up multiple dedicated departments; Toledo, Spain has established an urban development consortium responsible for managing the ancient city, project planning, financing and investment.

The third is to follow the principle of protection. Italy follows the principles of "maintaining the original appearance" and "restoring the old as before", stipulating that the external structure of ancient buildings belongs to the government, and businesses or individuals only have the right to use the internal buildings. Any changes must be approved by the cultural relics department

The fourth is partition management. Italian cities have set up restricted areas in historic centers to restrict the

movement of unregistered vehicles, avoid excessive commercialization, and maintain the vitality and unique charm of old cities.

(3) Community participation

Firstly, residents participate in decision-making. Bologna, Italy focuses on seeking a balance between public resources and community residents in urban development, allowing residents to participate in decision-making for the protection and development of the ancient city, enhancing their sense of belonging and responsibility, and enabling 90% of residents to stay after the renovation of the historical center of the ancient city.

Secondly, it is to protect the way of life. Bologna proposed the concept of "protecting people and houses together", which not only protects ancient buildings but also preserves the original living conditions and ways of residents, preserving the charm of the ancient city.

Finally, there is the inheritance of community culture. In the protection of the ancient city of Krakow, Poland, a deep understanding of the formation process and cultural characteristics of the community's historical buildings is carried out, and comprehensive renovation and development are carried out to excavate and inherit community culture, making the ancient city more meaningful and dynamic.

(4) Experience and lessons learned

One is the successful experience. Combining overall protection with dynamic inheritance, maintaining the original layout and style of the ancient city, while integrating modern functions, such as the Kazimierz Historical District in Krakow; Pay attention to balancing the interests of tourists and residents, avoiding the negative impact of excessive tourism development on residents' lives and the sustainable development of the ancient city, such as Toledo's development strategy plan.

The second is the lesson of failure. The transformation of the Champs - Élysées in Paris has led to issues such as pollution, traffic congestion, and tourism consumerism, indicating the need for more forward-looking and comprehensive planning that fully considers various factors such as the environment, transportation, and society.

6.2.2 Renovation of Historical Blocks in Other Asian Regions

(1) Nanjing Old Town South Gate East Historical and Cultural Block

1) Activation mode: Following the policy of "overall protection, organic renewal, government leadership, and cautious use of the market", adopting the "repair as before" method, quantitative surveying and mapping of components such as building flooring, doors and windows, beams and columns are carried out, and a technical atlas of repair is compiled as a reference to preserve historical information.

2) Funding source: Mainly funded by the government for protection and restoration.

3) Management mechanism: The planning department of Qinhuai District, Nanjing City, in conjunction with professional institutions such as the School of Architecture at Southeast University, jointly develops repair plans and plans, with the government leading the entire renovation process.

4) Community participation: From the perspectives of material space and residents, protect the "authenticity" of the block, achieve "seeing people, seeing things, and seeing life", and integrate residents' lives with the protection of historical and cultural blocks.

(2) Wuxi Qingmingqiao Historical and Cultural Block

1) Activation mode: Under the guidance of the architectural master Academician Wu Liangyong, the principle of

"overall creation, organic renewal" is formulated to classify and activate cultural relics, historical buildings, and traditional style buildings, such as transforming kiln sites into museums and introducing business forms that meet protection requirements.

2) Funding sources: mainly government investment and participation of social capital such as cultural and tourism enterprises.

3) Management mechanism: Professional cultural and tourism enterprises such as Wuxi Liangxi Cultural and Tourism Development Group Co., Ltd. are responsible for specific operation and management, following the principle of combining protection and utilization.

4) Community participation: By developing tourism and other means, it drives the economic development of surrounding communities, benefits residents from the revitalization of the neighborhood, and supports and participates in the protection and development of the neighborhood.

(3) Guangzhou Yongqing Fang

1) Activation mode: Innovatively realizing the project mode of four-dimensional synchronous compilation of block protection planning, implementation plan, architectural design, and industrial operation, promoting the integration of historical culture and modern commerce.

2) Funding source: Adopting a government led and market-oriented approach, introducing social enterprises for catering operations, etc., to broaden the sources of protection funds.

3) Management mechanism: The government takes the lead in planning and policy-making, while enterprises are responsible for specific operational management. Multiple parties participate together to form a mutually beneficial and win-win model.

4) Community participation: The project respects the existing property rights structure and complex land patterns, fully considers the interests of residents and businesses, mobilizes the enthusiasm of all parties, and achieves a positive interaction between historical and cultural protection and community development.

(4) Zhongshan Congshanfang Historical and Cultural Block

1) Revitalization mode: On the basis of preserving the historical style, the infrastructure is renovated and new formats such as "food, clothing, housing, culture, education, and exhibition" are introduced to bring new vitality to the historical and cultural blocks.

2) Funding source: Guided by the government, funds are raised from various sources, including government fiscal funds, social donations, corporate investments, etc.

3) Management mechanism: The government plays a guiding and coordinating role, the project team attaches importance to residents' opinions, invites professional teams to participate in planning, and ensures that the renovation plan is scientific and reasonable.

4) Community participation: Residents, overseas Chinese, experts and scholars and other forces participate together. Residents actively participate in the decision-making of the renovation, while overseas Chinese provide suggestions and resources such as housing for the renovation of the neighborhood.

(5) Nantou Ancient City, Shenzhen

1) Revitalization mode: With the positioning of "the capital of eastern Guangdong and the source of Hong Kong and Macao", through three major ways of historical and cultural reproduction, urban vitality enhancement, and

diversified content implantation, while improving cultural relics protection, it injects fresh blood into the ancient city, achieving spatial and content upgrading.

2) Funding sources: government investment and attracting social capital to participate in the renovation.

3) Management mechanism: Led by the government, relevant policies and plans are formulated, and various departments collaborate to promote the protection and renewal of the ancient city.

4) Community participation: Pay attention to listening to the opinions and suggestions of community residents, fully consider the interests and needs of residents during the renovation process, improve the quality of life and happiness of residents, and enhance their sense of identity and support for the renovation of the ancient city.

6.3 Existing Models and Case Studies for the Revitalization of Macau's Cultural Heritage

6.3.1 Main modes of revitalizing Macao's cultural heritage

(1) Museumization

Firstly, it is necessary to build themed museums, such as the Poly MGM Museum, which use technological means to make cultural relics "touchable" and "able to speak", telling the story of the combination of Chinese and Western cultures and the fusion of ancient and modern times through the combination of reality and culture and technology.

The second is the transformation of historical buildings into museums. Like the New Central Hotel, after restoration and revitalization, it has preserved and restored its original appearance and characteristics, incorporating retro and nostalgic elements into hotel services. It also has dedicated tour guides to narrate the building's history and culture, allowing visitors to experience it.

(2) Tourism development

One is to hold characteristic festival activities. During important festivals and celebrations, various activities will be held in cultural heritage sites, such as the Mid Autumn Festival Concert of "Full Moon at Three Buses Night" held at the memorial archway of Dasanba on Mid Autumn Night, and the light show and music performance held at the Grand Battery Garden.

The second is to create cultural and tourism routes. Integrate multiple cultural heritage sites, design and launch distinctive cultural tourism routes, allowing tourists to experience Macau's history and culture more comprehensively and deeply.

The third is to improve tourism supporting facilities. Provide convenient transportation conditions, add parking lots, bus routes, etc; Improve the signage system, rest areas, dining and shopping facilities in the scenic area to enhance the tourist experience.

(3) Utilization of cultural and creative industries

One is creative activities and experiences. Set up art tour points and organize impromptu art experience areas in the former site of Yilong Cannon Factory and the Litchi Bowl Shipyard area, allowing the public to participate and unleash their creativity.

The second is the development of cultural and creative products: using cultural heritage as elements, developing various cultural and creative products with commemorative significance and practical value, such as the Yilong Cultural and Creative Gift Store showcasing creative products designed with Yilong Cannon Bamboo Factory elements.

The third is the renovation and utilization of historical areas: through government enterprise cooperation, the historical areas will be renovated and transformed, incorporating cultural and creative industry elements, such as the "Macao No. 8" project, bringing together international and local brands while retaining old building elements, achieving the integration of old and new.

6.3.2 Typical Case Analysis

(1) Revitalization Case of Macao Museum

1) Poly MGM Museum

The activation mode of the museum is to integrate traditional intangible cultural heritage technology and new exhibition planning mode with innovative technology, and enable traditional intangible cultural heritage technology through modern architectural language. For example, the indoor colonnade presents cloisonne filigree enamel technology and Chinese arch of wooden architecture design features; By utilizing self-developed OLED screen interactive cultural relic display cabinets and directional speaker systems, cultural relics can be "touched" and "spoken".

As a brand new world-class cultural and tourism landmark, its debut exhibition "Blue Ribbon - Exploring Mysterious Seas and Encountering Silk Road Treasures" is themed around the Maritime Silk Road. Through four themed spaces, it systematically showcases relevant historical and cultural heritage, attracting a large number of tourists. This museum not only serves as an important platform for inheriting excellent traditional Chinese culture and presenting the charm of intangible cultural heritage, but also promotes the integration of culture, art, technology, cultural exchange, and mutual learning of civilizations, enhancing Macao's influence in the field of cultural tourism.

2) Macao New Central Hotel

The revitalization method of the hotel is that Lixing Group has invested heavily in the acquisition, comprehensively repairing, maintaining and revitalizing the foundation, structure, etc. of the building, maximizing the preservation and restoration of its original appearance and characteristics, integrating retro and nostalgic elements into various services of the hotel, and setting up dedicated guides to tell the story of the building's past.

After the hotel resumed its trial operation, it welcomed a large number of guests. Its nostalgic environment makes tourists feel like they have traveled through time and space, becoming a new highlight of Macao's cultural tourism. At the same time, as a historical building, the stories it carries have been better inherited and disseminated, further highlighting the historical and cultural value of Macao.

3) Zheng Guanying Memorial Hall

The revitalization method of this memorial hall is to build a new Zheng Guanying Memorial Hall next to the Zheng family's mansion, which looks like a giant wheel, symbolizing the revival of modern China. It not only learns advanced Western technology, but also remembers Chinese cultural traditions. The "Zheng Guanying Cultural Relics Exhibition" is held in the museum, showcasing over 100 exhibits with multiple themes, and adding multimedia equipment such as projection, touch screen interaction, analog telegraph machine, interactive sand table, AR virtual reality, etc.

In terms of effectiveness, the memorial hall has become an important place for people to understand Zheng Guanying and his thoughts. Through modern display methods, it allows the audience to more intuitively feel the influence of "The Scare of a Prosperous Age" on future generations, and also makes positive contributions to inheriting and promoting the historical and cultural celebrity spirit of Macao.

4) Virtual Reality Experience Art Creation in the Historic Center of Macao

Its activation mode is related training projects held by City University of the Historic Center of Macao. The trainees created six groups of design works, including Creative City: Cultural and Science Popularization Interaction System of the Historic Center of Macao, with the help of virtual reality technology, to reinterpret the unique style and features of Macao Historic District from a new perspective.

From the perspective of effectiveness evaluation, it not only cultivates professionals, but also provides new ways and means for the spread of Macao's history and culture. Through virtual reality experience, more people can deeply understand the cultural connotation of the Historic Center of Macao, and enhance the public's attention and participation in the protection of cultural heritage.

(2) Typical case of tourism development projects in the vicinity of Ruins of St. Paul's

1) "Time and Space Shuttle, Three Buses Tour" Big Three Buses memorial archway Immersive Digital Experience Exhibition

The digital restoration of Dasanba memorial archway is carried out by using naked 3D, VR and other technologies, and the Cathedral of the Mother Catholic Church of St. Paul's College in its heyday is revived, so that tourists can have a new experience of "traveling through", feel its historical style through time and space, enhance the interest and interaction of cultural heritage through scientific and technological means, make the ancient buildings "live", and better present the historical and cultural characteristics of Macao, which is a mixture of Chinese and Western cultures.

2) Reconstruction of blocks around the memorial archway of Dasanba

The ancient temples such as Nezha Temple and Nuwa Temple around the memorial archway of Dasanba have retained the traditional architectural style and cultural connotation, and set off with the memorial archway of Dasanba, which together demonstrate the charm of Macao's multiculturalism. After the renovation of Guanqian Main Street, it retains a retro atmosphere and hides many old brands, Han style small shops, and creative graffiti, becoming a good place for tourists to experience Macao's history, culture, and unique style.

3) Macao No.8

It was transformed from the staff dormitory of the Macao Post and Telecommunications Office, surrounded by 8 world cultural heritage sites within a radius of over 100 meters, and is a microcosm of Macao's history. The project retains many old building elements, such as old laundry sinks, old railings, old spiral staircases, etc., and combines them with modern commercial elements, gathering over a hundred international and local brands. It also has cultural exhibition spaces and has won multiple international professional awards.

4) Fulong New Street Pedestrian Area Revitalization Plan

Fulong New Street has a history of hundreds of years and retains the traditional Chinese style residential style. The pedestrian area activation plan has optimized the road paving, lighting and environmental sanitation, combined with enterprises to inject elements such as commercial display, artistic performance, leisure catering, etc., and connected the core tourist areas such as Dasanba memorial archway to attract tourists with colorful activities, revitalize the community economy, and promote tourism consumption.

6.3.3 Analysis of factors contributing to the successful revitalization of Macao's cultural heritage

(1) The government values and supports it. The government places cultural heritage protection and development in a prominent position and invests a large amount of special funds. For example, in 2007, the SAR government spent 1.2 billion Macao dollars on culture and religion, accounting for 6.5% of the government's public expenditure, providing strong financial support for revitalization work. In addition, the Macao SAR government

has launched a series of revitalization plans for historical areas through government enterprise cooperation. The revitalization of the new Central Hotel in Macao was acquired and renovated by Lixing Group at a huge cost, and the government included it in the protection list. While preserving its historical features, modern service elements were integrated to give it a new lease on life.

(2) Integrating diverse cultures. As a place where Chinese and Western cultures intersect, Macao's cultural heritage integrates Chinese and Western characteristics. For example, the "Macao No. 8" project cleverly integrates elements of Chinese and Portuguese culture, which attracts a large number of tourists with its unique cultural charm and provides rich cultural resources for innovative revitalization models. In addition, during the revitalization process, projects such as the New Central Hotel and M8 Macao No. 8 have maximally preserved the original style and historical elements of the buildings, such as old tiles and railings, allowing tourists to feel a strong historical atmosphere and inherit Macao's historical memory.

(3) Innovative activation concept. Adopting various innovative methods to revitalize cultural heritage, such as Wangxia Shanfang's concept of "cultural inheritance and integration innovation", preserving the historical memory and regional characteristics of architecture and culture; Through the integration of old and new, "Macao No. 8" preserves the elements of old buildings, attracts young people to take photos, and revitalizes cultural heritage. Poly MGM Museum integrates culture and technology, with the theme of the Maritime Silk Road. Through innovative curation and high-tech display methods, such as transparent OLED interactive display cabinets, it presents cultural relics and artworks, achieving a fusion of Chinese and Western cultures and a fusion of ancient and modern.

(4) Emphasize the application of technology. Using technological means to promote the revitalization of cultural heritage, such as the Poly MGM Museum making cultural relics "touchable" and "able to speak", telling stories through a combination of virtual and real, cultural and technological integration, enhancing tourists' experience and participation.

(5) Combining with tourism: Deeply integrating cultural heritage with tourism, attracting a large number of tourists to visit through holding characteristic festival activities, creating cultural and tourism routes, improving tourism supporting facilities, etc., driving the economic development of surrounding areas, and also allowing cultural heritage to be better inherited and spread in tourism. In front of the memorial archway of Dasanba, activities such as the Mid Autumn Festival Concert of the Full Moon and Three Buses Night were held, and elements such as commercial display, artistic performance, leisure catering were injected into the pedestrian area of Fulong New Street. Through a variety of cultural activities, a large number of tourists were attracted, the deep integration of culture and tourism was promoted, and the community economy was revitalized.

(6) Community participation and identification: Emphasis is placed on community participation, allowing residents to benefit from the revitalization of cultural heritage, enhancing their sense of identity and protection awareness of cultural heritage, and encouraging them to actively support and participate in revitalization work, such as the "Youth Bureau - Macao Youth Architecture Culture Camp" activity, which allows young people to understand and protect Macao's history and culture. In addition, communities and clubs are encouraged to participate in tourism development projects, such as the "Huahui North District" event, which is jointly created by the government and the community. Activities such as setting up check-in devices and connecting food shops not only showcase the charm of traditional communities in Macao, but also promote the development of community economy.

(7) Professional management and operation. The introduction of a professional management team and operational model has improved the management level and operational efficiency of cultural heritage revitalization projects, ensuring their sustainable development. For example, the "Macao No. 8" project, representing Macao, has won more than ten international professional awards, and its professional operational management has laid the foundation for the success of the project.

7 Challenges and Opportunities Faced by the Revitalization of Macao's Cultural Heritage

7.1 Challenge

7.1.1 Insufficient policies and regulations

(1) The policy of balancing protection and activation is lacking. At present, policies and regulations mainly focus on the protection of cultural heritage, and there is a lack of clear and actionable guidance policies on how to moderately activate and utilize it on the basis of protection, in order to fully realize its economic and social value. This has led to many restrictions and controversies in the implementation of some revitalization projects.

As the former residence of the Zhao family in Macao, the Zhao Family Mansion has high cultural value, but it has fallen into disrepair. Although the Macao SAR government has initiated preliminary work for restoration, its revitalization faces challenges from insufficient policies and regulations, such as a lack of clear policies and supporting funds for revitalization and utilization, resulting in slow progress in restoration and difficulty in fully realizing its cultural value. Meigao Meiji aims to turn Magotang District into a landmark, but faces restrictions on cultural heritage protection policies. When conducting artistic creation and event planning, strict adherence to cultural heritage protection regulations is required, and there is a balance between innovative display and utilization of cultural heritage and protecting its authenticity.

(2) The supporting policies are not perfect. There is a lack of systematic supporting policies in terms of funding support, tax incentives, talent cultivation and introduction for the revitalization of cultural heritage. The main source of funding relies on government investment, with low participation of social capital, which limits the scale and quality of revitalization projects; At the same time, the shortage of professional talents also affects the innovation and sustainability of revitalization projects. For example, after the revitalization of the Mazu Temple area, the Mazu Temple parking lot was transformed into a tourist rest area, causing inconvenience in parking and leading many domestic travel agencies to cancel Mazu Temple itineraries, resulting in a decrease in tourists. This reflects a lack of overall consideration for the construction of supporting facilities in the revitalization of cultural heritage, incomplete policies, and insufficient balance between protection and development, as well as the needs of tourists and merchants. As the first historical building revitalization project, although Wangxia Mountain House conforms to the concept of multicultural coexistence, it also faces the problem of insufficient policies and regulations, such as a lack of clear policy support and norms in fundraising, operation and management, mainly relying on government investment and limited social sponsorship, unstable funding sources, and affecting the long-term sustainable development of the revitalization project.

(3) The supervision and evaluation mechanism is not sound. There is a lack of effective supervision and evaluation mechanisms for the implementation process and effectiveness of cultural heritage revitalization projects. Some projects may face issues such as overdevelopment and destruction of cultural heritage authenticity due to a lack of regulation; However, the evaluation of project effectiveness is insufficient, and it is difficult to summarize lessons learned and provide reference for subsequent projects. Since 1991, the successive owners of the Six Nations Hotel have failed to fulfill their legal obligations to protect cultural relics, resulting in serious disrepair and almost abandonment. The cultural and engineering departments have not held them accountable in a timely manner, leading to the elimination of related responsibilities due to time constraints. After the new Cultural Heritage Law came into effect, the Cultural Bureau initially did not impose administrative penalties on property owners who did not fulfill their obligations to protect cultural heritage and notify them, and the engineering department did not effectively exercise specific powers and administrative penalty powers over illegally demolished assessed real estate, highlighting issues such as insufficient coordination between departments and insufficient enforcement of cultural heritage laws. As the M8 commercial city renewal and reconstruction project is located in the core area of the the Historic Center of Macao, the activation of Zhao Family Mansion needs to follow strict laws and policies in terms of architectural transformation, commercial operation, etc. If there is a contradiction between retaining the characteristics of historical buildings and meeting the needs of modern commercial functions, it needs to coordinate the interests of all parties, and while attracting investment and tourists, it needs to avoid the negative impact of excessive

commercialization on cultural heritage.

7.1.2 Difficulties in departmental coordination

(1) Poor communication across departments. The revitalization of cultural heritage involves multiple government departments such as culture, tourism, planning, construction, and economy. There are differences in responsibilities and goals among these departments, which can lead to poor communication and information sharing, resulting in cumbersome project approval processes, low decision-making efficiency, and affecting project progress.

(2) Lack of overall coordination mechanism. In the revitalization project of cultural heritage, due to the lack of a unified coordination mechanism, it is difficult for various departments to form a working force, which can easily lead to a situation of each department acting independently. For example, in the revitalization of historical urban areas, the cultural department focuses on the protection of cultural relics, while the tourism department focuses on tourism development. If there is a lack of coordination, it may lead to conflicts between protection and development, affecting the overall effectiveness of cultural heritage revitalization.

7.1.3 Shortage of Funds and Single Source

(1) The cost of repair and maintenance is high. Many cultural heritage buildings in Macao are old, with outdated structures and materials. The restoration of traditional Chinese temples and Portuguese style buildings requires professional ancient architectural restoration techniques and expensive materials. For example, the restoration of traditional tile roofs requires not only finding matching old tiles, but also skilled craftsmen who are proficient in traditional craftsmanship, which greatly increases the cost of restoration.

(2) The activation project requires a large investment of funds. When transforming cultural heritage into museums, art spaces, or cultural tourism integration projects, a large amount of funds are needed for internal decoration, equipment procurement, environmental creation, etc. To build a modern historical and cultural themed museum, in addition to the renovation of the building itself, it is also necessary to purchase exhibition equipment, security systems, and design and produce multimedia interactive display content.

(3) Government led but with limited budget. At present, the revitalization of cultural heritage in Macao mainly relies on government funding, and the government arranges budgets through departments such as the Cultural Bureau. However, the government budget needs to be allocated to numerous social affairs areas, and the funds for revitalizing cultural heritage are relatively limited. For example, the government needs to allocate funds annually in various areas such as education, healthcare, and social welfare, and the growth rate of funds that can be specifically used for cultural heritage revitalization projects is limited.

(4) Low enthusiasm for social capital participation

One is investment risk awareness. Cultural heritage revitalization projects are subject to strict restrictions from various policies and regulations, such as the need to follow protection principles in terms of building appearance and functional settings, which makes investors believe that investment flexibility is limited and risks are high. For example, conducting commercial activities within historical buildings may have special regulations regarding business formats, operating hours, etc.

The second is the return cycle and uncertainty of returns: the return cycle of cultural heritage revitalization projects is often long, and the returns are influenced by various factors, such as the volatility of the tourism market and changes in tourist preferences. Taking a newly developed historical building cultural and tourism project as an example, it may take several years to attract enough tourists to achieve a balance of income and expenditure, which makes social capital hesitant.

7.1.4 Cognitive bias and insufficient protective awareness

(1) Public cognitive bias

One is a one-sided understanding of the value of cultural heritage. Many Macao residents and tourists often only see the tourism and commercial value of cultural heritage. For example, most people like to take photos in front of the memorial archway of Dasanba and regard it as a popular tourist attraction, but they ignore its profound religious culture, architectural art, historical changes and many other values.

For some non-famous cultural heritage sites, such as the traditional old houses in the streets and alleys of Macao, the public may only consider them ordinary old buildings, without realizing that they carry the unique local culture and traditional way of life memories of Macao.

Secondly, there is a misunderstanding about the activation method. Some members of the public simply equate the revitalization of cultural heritage with commercial development. When seeing many shops and restaurants around some cultural heritage sites, it is believed that this is an excessive use of cultural heritage and destroys its original cultural atmosphere. For example, commercial activities around some alleys in the the Historic Center of Macao have aroused some people's concern about excessive commercialization.

Thirdly, for some innovative ways of activation, such as using modern technology to digitally display or creatively transform cultural heritage, the public may find it difficult to accept at the moment. For example, when renovating traditional buildings internally and adding modern multimedia display devices to tell the history of the building, some members of the public may feel that this renovation destroys the original antique style of the building.

(2) Protection awareness

1) Regarding residents

In daily life, some residents may not be aware of the potential impact of their actions on cultural heritage due to a lack of sufficient educational guidance. For example, randomly stacking debris around some ancient buildings, or engaging in destructive behavior such as improper graffiti on the walls of ancient buildings. When cultural heritage revitalization projects involve residential living areas, such as in the process of renovating old neighborhoods, some residents may be more concerned about personal interests, such as demolition compensation, and overlook the overall interests of cultural heritage protection.

2) Regarding tourists

Tourists may engage in behaviors that are detrimental to the protection of cultural heritage due to a lack of relevant behavioral norms education when visiting cultural heritage. For example, touching cultural relics, taking photos in prohibited areas, or making loud noises inside ancient buildings. Tourists have a relatively weak understanding of the responsibility of cultural heritage protection, believing that protection is mainly the responsibility of local governments and management departments. They are only temporary visitors and have not integrated protection awareness into their tourism behavior.

7.1.5 Management and maintenance challenges

(1) Shortage of professional talents

One is the shortage of repair skilled personnel. Macao's cultural heritage includes various types of traditional Chinese architecture, Portuguese style architecture, and requires professionals who are proficient in the restoration of ancient buildings, such as craftsmen who master traditional Chinese wood carving and stone carving techniques, and experts who are familiar with the restoration of colored ceramic tiles in Portuguese architecture. But these traditional skilled talents are becoming increasingly scarce in modern society, and

inheritance is facing difficulties.

Secondly, there is a shortage of management and operation talents. Projects that revitalize cultural heritage require operational talents with comprehensive knowledge in culture, tourism, business management, and other areas. For example, a museum that has undergone revitalization and renovation of a historical building requires talents who understand both cultural relic management and market promotion to operate effectively. However, such versatile talents are relatively scarce in Macao.

(2) Building aging and environmental issues

One is the aging of the building structure. Many cultural heritage buildings in Macao are of ancient age, and their building materials and structures have long been influenced by natural factors such as weathering and rainwater erosion, as well as human factors such as early overuse. The wooden structures of some traditional temples in Macao have decayed and cracks have appeared on the walls, posing significant challenges to maintenance.

The second is the pressure of the surrounding environment: changes in the surrounding environment of cultural heritage can also have an impact on it. For example, with the development of the tourism industry, the flow of people around popular attractions such as Ruins of St. Paul's has increased, leading to environmental pollution, increased ground wear and tear, and the construction of new buildings in the surrounding area may affect the landscape and lighting of cultural heritage sites.

(3) Complex management and coordination

One is the difficulty of cross departmental collaboration: the management and maintenance of cultural heritage involves multiple departments such as the Cultural Bureau, Tourism Bureau, and Municipal Administration. For example, the Cultural Bureau is responsible for the protection and appraisal of cultural relics, the Tourism Bureau focuses on the tourism development and utilization of cultural heritage, and the Municipal Administration is responsible for the surrounding environmental sanitation. These departments have different work priorities, which may result in poor communication and unclear division of responsibilities in actual work, affecting the efficiency of management and maintenance.

The second challenge is the interweaving of public and private property rights: some cultural heritage buildings have separate property rights belonging to private individuals and the government, which can easily lead to conflicts in management and maintenance. For example, private property owners may be more concerned about economic benefits and have a lower willingness to invest in building protection, while the government faces many difficulties in regulating and promoting private property owners to fulfill their protection obligations.

7.2 Opportunities

7.2.1 Cultural exchanges and cooperation between countries and regions along the "the Belt and Road"

Cultural exchanges and cooperation between countries and regions along the "the Belt and Road" have brought many new opportunities for the activation of Macao's cultural heritage, which are mainly reflected in the following aspects:

(1) Expand cultural display platform

The increase in cultural exchange activities among countries along the route has provided a broader platform for showcasing Macao's cultural heritage. For example, Poly MGM Museum, based on the design concept of multi-cultural symbiosis, integrates the cultural relics and artistic elements of the "the Belt and Road" countries. Through various exhibitions, it shows the achievements of Macao's cultural heritage and cultural exchanges and integration of different countries, and improves the international popularity and influence of Macao's cultural

heritage.

(2) Promote the integration of cultural elements

The collision of cultural elements from different countries and regions injects new vitality into the revitalization of Macao's cultural heritage. Macao can draw on the cultural creativity and forms of expression of countries along the route to enrich the means and content of revitalizing cultural heritage. In some traditional architectural revitalization projects in Macao, art exhibitions, performances, and other activities from other countries can be introduced to combine local culture with foreign culture, creating more attractive and innovative cultural experiences.

(3) Attracting diversified capital investment

Strengthening cultural exchange and cooperation can attract more funds from countries and regions along the route to invest in Macao's cultural heritage revitalization projects. On the one hand, cooperation projects in the cultural industry may have related investments and sponsorships; On the other hand, with the increasing attractiveness of cultural tourism in Macao, it will also drive more commercial investment and provide financial support for the protection and revitalization of cultural heritage.

(4) Promote the development of cultural tourism

The "the Belt and Road" initiative has promoted tourism cooperation between countries and regions along the line. As an important node, Macao's cultural heritage has become an important resource to attract tourists. For example, as a world cultural heritage, the the Historic Center of Macao integrates Chinese and Western architectural cultural characteristics, which has great attraction for domestic and foreign tourists. The development of cultural tourism can bring more resources and impetus to the activation of cultural heritage and promote the development of related cultural industries.

(5) Strengthen talent exchange and cooperation

The deepening of cultural exchanges enables Macao to engage in talent exchange and cooperation with countries and regions along the Belt and Road. In terms of cultural heritage protection, revitalization, management, etc., we will introduce advanced technology and experience, cultivate and introduce professional talents, improve the professional level and innovation ability of Macao's cultural heritage revitalization, and promote the high-quality development of cultural heritage revitalization projects.

(6) Enhance public awareness of protection

Through cultural exchange activities with countries and regions along the route, it can enhance the public's awareness and sense of identity towards the protection of their own cultural heritage in Macao. At the same time, it also makes more people aware of the importance of cultural heritage protection, creates a good atmosphere for the whole society to participate in the protection and revitalization of cultural heritage, and lays the foundation for the sustainable development of cultural heritage.

7.2.2 The Role and Revitalization Opportunities of Macao's Cultural Heritage in the Construction of the Guangdong Hong Kong Macao Greater Bay Area

(1) Important role

One is the role of cultural bridge. As a crossroads of Eastern and Western cultures, Macao can leverage its unique historical and cultural background and extensive network of external connections to promote cultural exchanges between the Greater Bay Area and Portuguese speaking countries as well as other overseas regions, helping Chinese culture to go global, while introducing diverse cultures and enriching the cultural connotations

of the Greater Bay Area.

The second is the role of resource integration. Actively integrating cultural resources within the Greater Bay Area, such as organically combining with Hong Kong's film and entertainment resources, Guangdong's historical and cultural resources, etc., to form complementary advantages and jointly promote the development of cultural industries in the Greater Bay Area.

The third is to demonstrate and lead the role. With its experience in cultural heritage protection and revitalization, it provides reference and demonstration for other cities in the Greater Bay Area, leading the protection, inheritance, and innovative development of cultural heritage in the Greater Bay Area, and jointly enhancing the influence and value of cultural heritage in the Greater Bay Area.

(2) Activate opportunities

One is the opportunity for cultural resource sharing. By sharing the cultural resources of various cities in the Greater Bay Area, such as historical buildings, folk culture, art exhibitions, etc., Macao can enrich its cultural tourism product supply, provide tourists with a deeper and broader cultural experience, and also help improve the overall utilization efficiency and effectiveness of cultural resources in the Greater Bay Area.

The second is the opportunity for the development of cultural tourism routes. Jointly developing characteristic cultural tourism routes with other cities in the Greater Bay Area, such as the "Guangdong Hong Kong Macao Greater Bay Area Cultural Relics Theme Tour", connecting scattered cultural attractions to form an attractive tourism product portfolio, extending tourists' stay in the Greater Bay Area, increasing tourism consumption, promoting the coordinated development of the cultural tourism industry in the Greater Bay Area, and enhancing the competitiveness of the Greater Bay Area as a world-class tourism destination.

Thirdly, there are opportunities for the development of cultural industries. Taking advantage of the opportunity of coordinated cultural development in the Greater Bay Area, we aim to attract more cultural and creative talents, enterprises, and projects to settle in Macao, promote the deep integration of culture, tourism, technology, finance, and other industries, promote the diversified development of Macao's cultural industry, create internationally influential cultural brands and cultural industry clusters, and inject new impetus into the moderate and diversified development of Macao's economy.

The fourth is the opportunity for infrastructure construction. With the advancement of infrastructure connectivity in the Greater Bay Area, such as the completion and trial operation of the Hengqin Line extension of the Macao Light Rail Transit, it will further strengthen the transportation connection between Macao and other cities in the Greater Bay Area, provide more convenient transportation conditions for the development of cultural tourism, promote personnel mobility and resource sharing, and advance the coordinated development of culture in the Greater Bay Area to a deeper level.

The fifth is policy support opportunities. The "Outline of the Development Plan for the Guangdong Hong Kong Macao Greater Bay Area" and other policy documents provide clear policy support and direction guidance for Macao's development in the cultural synergy of the Greater Bay Area. Macao can fully utilize these policy advantages, strive for more resource allocation and project support, accelerate the construction of cultural infrastructure, the hosting of cultural activities, and the landing of cultural industry projects, and enhance Macao's position and role in the cultural synergy of the Greater Bay Area.

7.2.3 Technology empowers Macao's cultural heritage revitalization opportunities

(1) Immersive experience of historical scenes

Through accurate 3D modeling and environmental simulation, VR technology can deeply restore the historical scenes of Macao, such as the construction process of Ma Ge Temple, Dasanba memorial archway and other

buildings, and the prosperous street scenes in the past, making people feel the past culture and lifestyle through time and space, and greatly enhancing the understanding and feeling of history and culture.

(2) Innovative forms of cultural heritage display

The use of VR technology can create virtual cultural heritage exhibition spaces, integrating scattered cultural heritage elements together to create virtual museums or cultural exhibition halls that are not limited by physical space. Viewers can freely browse, zoom in, and rotate exhibits in the virtual space, appreciate the details of cultural relics up close, and can also cooperate with voice explanations, text introductions, etc. to obtain a richer and more personalized visiting experience.

(3) Assist in the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage

For some intangible cultural heritage in Macao, such as the Drunken Dragon Festival and silverware making techniques, VR technology can record their production process and details, enabling them to be preserved and passed down.

(4) Enhance the attractiveness of cultural tourism

Applying VR and AR technology to cultural tourism to provide visitors with a new way of navigation. For example, when tourists wear AR glasses to visit the the Historic Center of Macao, when they reach a specific place, the glasses will automatically display the historical information and related stories of the building, making the tour more interesting and educational.

(5) Promote cultural exchange and cooperation

With the help of VR and AR technology, people from different cultural backgrounds can break through geographical limitations, experience the characteristics and charm of Macao's cultural heritage, enhance their understanding and respect for Macao culture, and provide new platforms and opportunities for cultural exchange and cooperation between Macao and other regions, promoting the integration and development of diverse cultures.

(6) Stimulating cultural creativity and industrial development

Artists and designers can use these technologies to create new forms of art and cultural products, such as developing VR games and AR interactive art works themed around Macao's cultural heritage. This not only injects new vitality into cultural heritage, but also drives the development of related cultural and creative industries, creating more economic value.

(7) Case study of technology empowering the revitalization of Macao's cultural heritage

1) Poly MGM Museum. The world-class cultural and tourism landmark in Macao, jointly created by Poly Culture and MGM China, will open on November 2, 2024. Its debut exhibition "Blue Ribbon - Exploring Mysterious Seas and Encountering Silk Road Treasures" is themed around the Maritime Silk Road and utilizes various innovative technologies. The augmented reality technology that combines OLED interactive cultural relics display cabinets with directional sound systems allows cultural relics such as Yuan blue and white phoenix flower patterns, jade pots, and spring vases to be manually controlled to move, zoom, and flip. They can also touch the screen to "erase" the coral on the cultural relics, reproducing their beautiful glaze colors and patterns

2) Macao Cultural Bureau's online VR tour. To strengthen the construction of smart culture, the Cultural Bureau has added 10 online VR guided tours of cultural heritage sites, including A-Ma Temple and Sanjie Guild Hall. The public can browse the virtual exhibition hall online through the website of the Cultural Bureau. In addition to providing multilingual guided tours, the square also offers introductions to surrounding world heritage sites

and VR guide links. Temple attractions have online experiences of "scenic area interaction" and "exhibit interaction", and users can enhance their sensory experience of cloud visits by using VR glasses.

3) MGM2049 conceptual performance. The conceptual performance "MGM 2049", directed by Zhang Yimou and produced by MGM China Holdings Limited, will officially begin in December 2024. The performance features traditional intangible cultural heritage dialogue technology, consisting of seven or eight paragraphs, each showcasing an intangible cultural heritage project. It will invite intangible cultural heritage inheritors from remote areas to participate in the performance and integrate modern technology to create an immersive viewing experience. At the same time, as the first dynamic theater in Asia, the MGM Theater has also undergone significant upgrades in its hardware facilities.

4) Why Civilization "Digital Museum. The museum is located in the Hengqin Guangdong Macao Deep Cooperation Zone and is scheduled to open in early December 2024. The first exhibition theme is a series of digital exhibitions showcasing the achievements of the Chinese Civilization Exploration Project. It showcases cultural relics through digital technology, expands the application scenarios of digital information technology in the cultural field, and interprets the beauty of cultural relics.

5) Canglan Jue VR Immersive Experience Hall. On August 9, 2024, it was unveiled at the Galaxy Resort in Macao, jointly developed by Galaxy Entertainment Group and iQiyi. It is the largest real-life+full sensory VR immersive experience project in Macao. The experience center utilizes globally leading VR full sensory technology, 3D modeling, and generative artificial intelligence technology to construct the world of "Canglan Jue" immortal heroes, allowing visitors to experience the integration of technology and culture.

8 Strategies and Path Selection for the Revitalization of Macao's Cultural Heritage

8.1 Improve the policy and legal protection system

8.1.1 Improve the laws and regulations on the revitalization of Macao's cultural heritage and clarify the rights and responsibilities of each responsible party

(1) The direction of improving laws and regulations

One is to formulate a specialized law for revitalizing cultural heritage. Currently, there are laws related to the protection of cultural heritage in Macao, but the regulations on revitalization and utilization are not detailed and comprehensive enough. Laws specifically targeting the revitalization of cultural heritage should be formulated, clarifying the definition, scope, objectives, and principles of revitalization. For example, the revitalization of cultural heritage is defined as the rational utilization of cultural heritage while protecting its authenticity and integrity, enabling it to realize its economic, educational, cultural, and other values in contemporary society.

The second is to refine the approval process for activation projects. Detailed regulations on the approval departments, approval conditions, and approval time for different types of cultural heritage revitalization projects (such as transforming historical buildings into museums, developing cultural tourism in traditional neighborhoods, etc.). For example, for projects involving the exterior renovation of world cultural heritage buildings, they need to be jointly approved by multiple departments such as the Cultural Bureau and the Urban Planning Department. The approval process should be open to the public and subject to supervision.

Thirdly, establish strict supervision and evaluation mechanisms. Establish a specialized cultural heritage revitalization supervision agency, or assign existing agencies with supervisory responsibilities. The institution is responsible for regularly checking whether the revitalization projects are carried out in accordance with laws, regulations, and approval requirements, establishing an evaluation index system, and evaluating the revitalization projects from multiple dimensions such as cultural heritage protection, social and economic benefits, and public satisfaction.

(2) Clarify the rights and responsibilities of each responsible party

1) Government departments

Firstly, as the core department for the protection and revitalization of cultural heritage, the Cultural Bureau should be responsible for evaluating and recognizing the value of cultural heritage, and formulating overall plans and policies for the revitalization of cultural heritage. For example, conducting a comprehensive census and value assessment of all historical buildings, traditional crafts, and other cultural heritage in Macao, and developing a graded and classified revitalization strategy based on the assessment results. At the same time, conduct preliminary feasibility study approval for the activation project and provide professional guidance and supervision during the project implementation process.

Secondly, the main responsibility of the tourism bureau is to combine the revitalization of cultural heritage with the tourism industry, and formulate cultural tourism development plans. Design tourism routes with cultural heritage as the core, promote Macao's cultural tourism brand, and supervise the business activities of tourism enterprises in cultural heritage areas to ensure that they meet the requirements of cultural heritage protection and revitalization.

Once again, the urban planning department is responsible for the planning and construction management of the surrounding areas of cultural heritage. When approving construction projects, full consideration should be given to the impact on cultural heritage, ensuring that the landscape environment and spatial pattern of cultural heritage are not damaged. For example, it is stipulated that the height, style, color, etc. of newly built buildings within a certain range around cultural heritage should be coordinated with the cultural heritage.

Finally, the economic sector encourages social capital to participate in the revitalization of cultural heritage by formulating economic policies such as tax incentives and fiscal subsidies. For example, enterprises investing in cultural heritage revitalization projects will be granted tax exemptions, and special funds will be established to support small-scale cultural heritage revitalization creative projects.

2) Cultural heritage owner (private or institutional)

One is to maintain and reasonably utilize responsibility. The owner of cultural heritage is the direct responsible party for the daily maintenance and rational utilization of cultural heritage. For privately-owned historical buildings, owners must carry out daily maintenance and repair in accordance with the requirements of cultural heritage protection. When carrying out internal renovation and utilization, approval from relevant departments must be obtained, and the renovation plan must comply with the principles of protecting the authenticity and integrity of cultural heritage.

The second is the obligation to provide information. Owners have the obligation to provide relevant information on cultural heritage to government departments, such as historical records of buildings, current issues, etc., to assist the government in researching and protecting cultural heritage.

3) The general public

One is supervisory responsibility. As the ultimate beneficiaries of cultural heritage, the public has the right to supervise the revitalization projects of cultural heritage. The government should establish smooth public supervision channels, such as setting up dedicated reporting hotlines, online platforms, etc., to facilitate the public to report behaviors such as damaging cultural heritage and illegal revitalization.

The second is the obligation to participate. Encourage public participation in the protection and revitalization of cultural heritage, such as participating in daily maintenance and promotion of cultural heritage through volunteer activities, and fully listening to public opinions and suggestions during the planning stage of cultural heritage revitalization projects.

8.1.2 Establish and improve policy evaluation and adjustment mechanisms to ensure the scientific and effective nature of policies

(1) Establish an evaluation index system

1) Cultural value protection indicators

① Integrity: Evaluate whether the material and non-material elements of cultural heritage have been fully preserved. For example, for historical buildings, check whether the building structure, decorative details, internal furnishings, etc. maintain their original style; For traditional skills, it depends on whether the skill process, tools, and inheritance methods are fully inherited.

② Authenticity: Measuring whether the revitalization process of cultural heritage truly reflects its historical, cultural, and social background. For example, whether the cultural display content is based on accurate historical research, and whether the restoration materials and techniques conform to traditional practices.

2) Social impact indicators

① Public participation: By counting the number and frequency of participants in cultural heritage revitalization related activities (such as cultural festivals, volunteer services, public consultation meetings, etc.), as well as conducting surveys on the public's awareness and satisfaction with revitalization projects, the degree of public participation in cultural heritage revitalization can be evaluated.

② Community Integration: Observing whether cultural heritage revitalization projects promote cohesion and identity in local communities. For example, does the revitalized cultural space provide a place for community residents to communicate, and does it drive community economic development, such as increasing employment opportunities and enhancing surrounding commercial vitality.

3) Economic benefit indicators:

① Direct economic benefits: Accounting for direct economic benefits such as ticket revenue, sales of cultural and creative products, and rental income from cultural heritage revitalization projects.

② Indirect economic benefits: Evaluate the driving effect on related industries (such as tourism, catering, accommodation, transportation, etc.), analyze the comprehensive contribution of factors such as the increase in tourist numbers and the extension of tourist stay time to the local economy.

4) Environmental sustainability indicators:

① Physical Environmental Impact: Check the impact of the cultural heritage revitalization process on the surrounding natural and built environment, such as whether it increases energy consumption, pollution emissions, and damages the coordination of the surrounding landscape.

② Resource utilization efficiency: Evaluate the rationality of cultural heritage revitalization projects in terms of resource utilization, such as water resource recycling, sustainability of building materials, etc.

(2) Selection of evaluation methods

1) Combining regular evaluation with irregular inspections: setting a fixed evaluation cycle, such as conducting a comprehensive evaluation of all cultural heritage revitalization policies once a year or every two years. At the same time, special inspections will be conducted irregularly to conduct in-depth investigations into specific cultural heritage projects or hot issues.

2) Collaboration between internal and external evaluations: Relevant government departments (such as the Cultural Bureau, Tourism Bureau, etc.) form an evaluation team to conduct self-assessment based on policy objectives and evaluation indicators. At the same time, professional third-party evaluation agencies such as university research teams, independent consulting firms, etc. are commissioned to conduct evaluations from a professional and objective perspective, and comprehensively evaluate the results of both parties.

3) Both quantitative and qualitative analysis are emphasized: for quantifiable indicators such as economic benefits, statistical data, financial statements, etc. are used for quantitative analysis. For indicators such as cultural value protection and social impact that are difficult to quantify, qualitative methods such as on-site observation, interviews, and case analysis are used to evaluate and ensure comprehensive and accurate evaluation results.

(3) Policy adjustment strategy

1) Fine tuning based on evaluation results: If the evaluation finds that the policy is not effective in certain aspects but the overall direction is correct, local adjustments can be made to the policy. For example, if it is found that the policy support for the development of cultural and creative products is insufficient, financial subsidies or tax incentives can be appropriately increased.

2) Adaptive adjustment based on new circumstances: adjust cultural heritage revitalization policies in a timely manner with changes in social, economic, technological, and other environments. After the emergence of new technologies (such as virtual reality technology for cultural heritage display), policies should be revised in a timely manner to encourage and regulate the application of new technologies in revitalization.

3) Prudent decision-making for major adjustments: For major adjustments involving policy objectives, basic principles, etc., sufficient research and argumentation, public consultation, and legal procedures must be conducted. When changing the dominant direction of cultural heritage revitalization from tourism development to cultural inheritance, it is necessary to solicit opinions widely to ensure that the adjusted policies are in line with the long-term interests of Macao's cultural heritage protection and social development.

8.2 *Expand funding sources and channels*

8.2.1 Government increases investment

(1) Establish special financial funds. The Macao government can establish a special fund for the revitalization of cultural heritage, which will be used exclusively for the restoration, maintenance, research, and preliminary planning of revitalization projects. For example, a fixed proportion (such as 5% -10%) of the government budget is allocated annually for the revitalization of cultural heritage to ensure the stability of the funds.

(2) Issuing cultural heritage bonds. The government can raise funds by issuing special bonds. These bonds can be issued to local residents, businesses, and financial institutions. Investors who purchase bonds can receive principal and interest returns after a certain period of time, and the funds raised will be used entirely for cultural heritage revitalization projects, such as large-scale restoration and renovation of historical buildings.

8.2.2 Attracting Social Capital

(1) Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. Through the public-private partnership model, the government collaborates with enterprises to jointly carry out cultural heritage revitalization projects. For example, in the project of transforming large historical buildings into hotels or museums, the government provides land and policy support, while enterprises are responsible for the funding, construction, and operation of the project. Both parties share the profits in a certain proportion, which can fully leverage the company's financial advantages and operational management experience.

(2) Cultural Heritage Trust Fund. Establish a cultural heritage trust fund to attract donations from various sectors of society and enterprises. These donated funds can be managed by professional trust institutions, invested in stable financial products, and the proceeds generated can be used for cultural heritage revitalization projects. At the same time, donors can receive corresponding honorary titles or tax incentives based on the donation amount, which can increase the enthusiasm for social donations.

(3) Cultural and Creative Industry Investment Fund. Attract venture capital and private equity investment into the cultural and creative industry, providing financial support for cultural and creative projects centered on cultural heritage. For example, for cultural and creative products, films, games, and other projects developed using Macao's cultural heritage elements, investment funds can provide funding to help the projects be implemented, and the profits will be shared according to the agreed proportion after the projects become profitable.

8.2.3 Carry out international cooperation projects

(1) Collaborate with international organizations. Macao can cooperate with international organizations such as UNESCO to apply for special funds or project assistance for the protection and revitalization of cultural heritage. These international organizations typically provide financial support for projects of significant cultural value, while also offering technical and expert resources for the revitalization of Macao's cultural heritage.

(2) Collaborate with other countries to develop cultural tourism projects. Develop cultural tourism projects with other countries (especially those along the "the Belt and Road") to attract foreign investment. For example, jointly developing a tourism route with the theme of "Sino Portuguese Cultural Exchange History" with Portugal, both sides jointly investing in the construction of related tourism facilities, sharing tourism benefits, and utilizing foreign investment to promote the revitalization of Macao's cultural heritage.

(3) International crowdfunding platform for cultural heritage revitalization. Utilize international crowdfunding platforms to showcase the charm and value of Macao's cultural heritage revitalization project to the world, and attract funding support from the international community. By creating exquisite project promotional videos, detailed project plans, and other materials, we aim to introduce the background, goals, expected returns, and other aspects of the project to the global public, encouraging individuals and businesses to make small donations or investments.

8.3 Enhancing Social Participation

8.3.1 Strengthen cultural heritage education, enhance public awareness and protection consciousness of the value of cultural heritage

(1) Integrating cultural heritage into the education system

1) In terms of school education

One is to incorporate knowledge related to Macao's cultural heritage into the regular curriculum system of schools. Add special chapters or units in history, geography, art and other subjects, for example, in history class, describe the formation background and development process of Macao's cultural heritage in detail, including the religious changes in Macao witnessed by the memorial archway of Dasanba; In the art class, guide students to appreciate the artistic style of Macao's traditional buildings, such as the Chinese temple cornice arch of wooden architecture in paintings and the colored tiles of Portuguese buildings.

The second is to organize experts to write cultural heritage textbooks with local characteristics, which can include various aspects of Macao's historical architecture, traditional skills, folk culture, etc. Adding a large number of pictures, stories, and interactive elements to the textbook, such as asking students to guess the steps of making traditional Macao cuisine, makes the textbook lively, interesting, and easy for students to understand.

Thirdly, schools can regularly organize students to visit cultural heritage sites. For example, field trips to historical sites in the Historic Center of Macao and activities such as sketching and archaeological experience were carried out. Cultural heritage protection experts and inheritors can also be invited to the school to hold lectures and workshops, such as inviting traditional woodcarvers from Macau to showcase their woodcarving skills and guide students in making simple woodcarving works.

2) Social education aspect

One is to offer courses related to cultural heritage protection and inheritance in community colleges. The course content can cover multiple fields such as cultural heritage legal knowledge, restoration technology foundation, and cultural heritage tourism. These courses are aimed at people of different age groups and social backgrounds, with the main purpose of popularizing cultural heritage knowledge and raising awareness of conservation.

The second is to carry out short-term training and further education projects on cultural heritage themes through adult education institutions. For example, offering in-depth training on Macao's cultural heritage for tourism practitioners to enhance their professional competence in cultural tourism services and enable them to better disseminate cultural heritage knowledge to tourists.

(2) Diversified cultural heritage promotion activities

1) Media promotion

One is to collaborate with traditional media such as television, radio, and newspapers to produce cultural heritage themed programs and reports. Television stations can produce a series of documentaries that detail the stories and current status of Macao's cultural heritage, such as filming the architectural features, religious rituals, and maritime cultural legends behind Macao's A-Ma Temple; Newspapers can set up cultural heritage columns, regularly publishing the latest developments, expert opinions, and public participation cases on cultural heritage protection.

The second is to use new media channels such as social media platforms and official websites for promotion. Establish an official social media account for Macao's cultural heritage, regularly publishing exquisite pictures and short videos, such as 3D animations showcasing the internal structure of Macao's traditional architecture, and short videos documenting the work scenes of Macao's intangible cultural heritage inheritors, to attract public attention. Meanwhile, through online interactive activities such as cultural heritage knowledge competitions and online voting to select the most popular cultural heritage sites, public participation can be increased.

(3) Organize themed events

One is the Cultural Heritage Day event. Establish a dedicated Macao Cultural Heritage Day and hold a variety of colorful activities on this day. For example, traditional song and dance performances, traditional handicrafts display and other activities will be held in front of the memorial archway of Dasanba, and cultural heritage protection knowledge publicity and volunteer recruitment will be carried out at the same time.

The second is cultural heritage themed exhibitions: cultural heritage themed exhibitions are held in museums, cultural centers and other places, and the exhibition content can include historical relics display, cultural heritage protection achievements report, etc. At the same time, interactive experience areas will be added to the exhibition, such as using virtual reality technology to allow visitors to experience the ancient urban life scenes of Macao, enhancing their intuitive perception of cultural heritage.

(3) Establish a mechanism for public participation

1) Volunteer service project: Establish a cultural heritage protection volunteer team and recruit volunteers through official websites, community promotion, and other channels. Volunteers can participate in the daily

maintenance of cultural heritage, such as assisting in cleaning historical buildings, organizing cultural relics materials, etc; You can also participate in cultural heritage promotion activities, such as serving as a volunteer guide at tourist attractions, introducing cultural heritage knowledge and protection significance to tourists.

2) Public Opinion Collection Platform: Establish a public opinion collection platform that combines online and offline channels, and widely solicit public opinions in the planning of cultural heritage revitalization projects, the formulation of cultural heritage protection policies, and other processes. For example, before renovating and revitalizing a historical building, public suggestions and expectations for the renovation plan can be collected through online questionnaires, on-site discussions, and other methods, allowing the public to participate in cultural heritage protection decisions and enhance their sense of responsibility and protection awareness.

8.3.2 Encourage community residents to participate in cultural heritage revitalization projects

(1) Community participation in the survey of cultural heritage resources

One is training and organization. Government cultural departments or relevant professional institutions provide training on cultural heritage resource census knowledge and skills to community residents, including how to identify ancient architecture, traditional skills, folk culture, etc. Then, based on the community, organize residents to form a census team and conduct comprehensive and detailed census work in every corner of the community, such as old streets and alleys, traditional dwellings, etc. For example, residents of a traditional community in Macao, after receiving training, take detailed records and photos of the ancient temples, family ancestral halls, and distinctive traditional handicraft shops in the community, providing basic information for the comprehensive sorting of cultural heritage resources.

The second is information collection and feedback. Community residents collect various information during the census process, such as the location, current status, and historical origins of cultural heritage, and provide timely feedback to relevant government departments. Meanwhile, residents can also provide some little-known cultural heritage clues. For example, the unique folk rituals or traditional handicraft production methods inherited by a certain family within the community can help enrich the cultural heritage resource pool of Macao, and enable more potential cultural heritage to be protected and valued.

(2) Community participation in the maintenance of cultural heritage

One is daily maintenance work. Organize community residents to participate in the daily simple maintenance work of cultural heritage, such as cleaning the surrounding environment of historical buildings, wiping cultural relics display facilities, etc. In some historic districts of Macau, community residents can regularly clean the exterior walls of ancient buildings, remove debris and garbage around the buildings, and maintain the cleanliness and beauty of cultural heritage. At the same time, residents can also participate in some small-scale maintenance projects, such as replacing sealing strips for doors and windows of ancient buildings, pruning and tidying up green plants in the courtyard, etc. These works can not only reduce the government's maintenance pressure, but also enhance residents' sense of belonging to cultural heritage.

The second is supervision and reporting. Encourage community residents to take on the role of "guardians" of cultural heritage and supervise its daily status. Once cultural heritage is found to be damaged, pose safety hazards, or engage in illegal development activities, report to relevant departments in a timely manner. For example, when community residents discover tourists scribbling on historical buildings or unauthorized construction around them that may affect the safety of cultural heritage, they should immediately report to the Cultural Bureau or Municipal Bureau and other departments, so that relevant departments can take timely measures to stop and deal with it.

(3) Community participation in folk activity organizations

One is to inherit and innovate folk activities. Community residents are the inheritors and practitioners of folk

culture, and they can organize various folk activities and carry out innovative development. During traditional festivals, community residents in Macao hold folk activities such as dragon and lion dance performances and Mazu parades, inviting tourists and other community residents to participate together. On the basis of inheriting traditional folk activities, residents can also innovate by combining modern elements, such as adding modern music and lighting effects to dragon and lion dance performances, or using social media for online live broadcasts to expand the influence and dissemination of folk activities.

The second is the integration of folk activities and cultural tourism. Community residents can combine folk activities with cultural tourism to develop unique tourism products and routes. For example, a community centered around local traditional temples organizes folk activities such as performances, traditional handicraft exhibitions, and specialty food experiences, and connects these activities into a cultural tourism route to attract tourists to visit and experience. Community residents can not only act as event organizers, but also participate in tourism service work, such as serving as tour guides, providing homestay accommodation, etc. While promoting the revitalization of cultural heritage, they can also drive community economic development.

8.3.3 Establish a public supervision mechanism to ensure transparency and rationality in the process of revitalizing cultural heritage

(1) Construction of Information Disclosure Platform

One is to establish a dedicated website. The relevant departments of the Macao government, such as the Cultural Affairs Bureau, should establish a dedicated website for the public disclosure of information on the revitalization of cultural heritage. The website should comprehensively display detailed information about various revitalization projects, including project background, goals, planning schemes, budget arrangements, implementation progress, and other content. For example, for a project to transform a historical building into a museum, the website should publish the historical value assessment report of the building, the functional layout map after the renovation, the expected investment details, and the time nodes of each construction stage.

The second is the expansion of social media. In addition to the official website, social media platforms (such as WeChat official account, Facebook page, etc.) should also be used for information release and interaction. Regularly push the latest progress of cultural heritage revitalization projects, such as posting photos and videos of construction sites, introducing newly adopted protection technologies, or showcasing upcoming public participation activities. At the same time, set up a comment section and online Q&A function to promptly respond to public questions and suggestions.

(2) Smooth supervision channels

One is to establish a reporting hotline and email. Establish a dedicated hotline and email for the supervision and reporting of cultural heritage revitalization, and assign a dedicated person to answer and handle it. The public can report illegal and irregular behaviors, unreasonable development and utilization phenomena, or other situations that damage cultural heritage discovered during the process of cultural heritage revitalization by calling the hotline or sending emails. For example, if the public discovers that a revitalization project has changed the exterior structure of a historical building without permission, or carried out non compliant construction activities within the scope of cultural relics protection, they can provide timely feedback through reporting channels.

The second is the setting of on-site suggestion boxes: suggestion boxes should be set up at the site of cultural heritage revitalization projects (such as historical building construction sites, cultural heritage protection areas, etc.). Regularly collect opinions and suggestions submitted by the public on-site to ensure that they can understand the problems discovered by the public during on-site observations in a timely manner. For the feedback information in the suggestion box, it is necessary to organize and reply in a timely manner, so that the public can feel that their supervisory opinions are valued.

(3) Improve the supervision and feedback mechanism

One is timely investigation and handling: relevant departments should quickly carry out investigation and verification work for public supervision reports and feedback. Establish a clear investigation process and division of responsibilities to ensure that every issue is promptly and fairly addressed. If the report is true, the responsible party shall be punished according to law and regulations, and shall be required to rectify within a specified period of time. For example, if a construction unit of a certain revitalization project is found to have violated cultural relic protection regulations, relevant departments should order it to stop construction, carry out rectification, and impose corresponding administrative penalties according to the severity of the situation.

The second is the feedback processing result. Timely feedback the investigation and handling results to the informant or the public who provided feedback. Feedback can be provided through phone calls, emails, or posting processing result announcements on information disclosure platforms. At the same time, we thank the public for their supervision and support, and encourage them to continue paying attention to cultural heritage revitalization projects, creating a good atmosphere of supervision and interaction.

The third is the evaluation of the effectiveness of public supervision: regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the public supervision mechanism, collect indicators such as the number of participants in public supervision, the types and quantities of reported issues, and the satisfaction of the handling results. Based on the evaluation results, continuously optimize the supervision mechanism, such as adjusting the publicity methods of reporting channels, improving the investigation and handling process, etc., to enhance the effectiveness and enthusiasm of public supervision.

8.4 Innovative activation methods and management models

8.4.1 Utilizing modern technological means to enhance the display and experiential effects of cultural heritage

(1) Development of a Digital Display Platform for Cultural Heritage

One is to establish a three-dimensional model database. Using laser scanning, photogrammetry and other technologies, high-precision 3D modeling of Macao's various cultural heritage, such as historical buildings such as the memorial archway of Dasanba, the Ma Temple and traditional handicrafts. These 3D models can not only accurately reproduce the appearance of cultural heritage, but also showcase its internal structure and detailed textures. For example, through the 3D model, you can clearly see the carved patterns on the memorial archway of Dasanba and the sense of hierarchy of the building structure. Users can freely rotate and scale the model on the platform to appreciate the charm of cultural heritage in an all-round way.

The second is to integrate multimedia resource display: on the digital display platform, in addition to 3D models, multiple multimedia resources are also integrated. For example, adding voice explanations to historical buildings, telling their construction background, historical changes, related legendary stories, etc; Insert historical photos and video materials to showcase the appearance of cultural heritage in different periods. For traditional handicrafts, such as the Portuguese tart making technique in Macau, the production process can be demonstrated through video, accompanied by text introducing the raw materials, process steps, and cultural connotations, allowing users to experience the rich cultural heritage through multiple senses.

(2) Virtual tourism project development

One is to build an immersive virtual tourism environment. Utilize virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies to create a virtual tourism project for Macao's cultural heritage. By wearing VR equipment, tourists can walk on the ancient streets of the Historic Center of Macao as if they were in the scene, and enter the interior of historical buildings to visit. For example, in virtual tourism, realistic light and shadow effects, environmental sound effects, and interactive elements can be set up. For example, tourists can light virtual candles in the virtual A-Ma Temple, experience traditional prayer ceremonies, and increase the fun and

immersion of tourism.

The second is to develop mobile virtual tourism applications. Develop a specialized virtual tourism application for Macao cultural heritage targeting smartphone users. Users can use the gyroscope and positioning function of their mobile phones to overlay virtual cultural heritage elements in real scenes, achieving an augmented reality experience. For example, when the user walks near the memorial archway of Dasanba and opens the application, the mobile phone screen will display the historical information, related stories and virtual historical scene reappearance of the memorial archway. The user can interact with these virtual elements through the mobile phone screen, such as taking photos, viewing detailed introductions, etc., to provide tourists with a convenient and personalized cultural heritage experience.

8.4.2 Introducing advanced management models to improve the operational efficiency of cultural heritage revitalization projects

(1) Public Private Partnership (PPP) model

1) Clear division of labor and complementary advantages

One is the role and advantages of the government: the government is mainly responsible for planning, guiding, policy-making, and supervising cultural heritage revitalization projects. For example, the Macao government can evaluate the value and classify the protection level of cultural heritage through departments such as the Cultural Affairs Bureau, and formulate overall revitalization strategies and goals. At the same time, the government provides public assets such as land and cultural resources as inputs to ensure that projects comply with public interests and cultural heritage protection requirements.

The second is to leverage the responsibilities and advantages of enterprises: attract companies with professional operational experience and financial strength to participate. The enterprise is responsible for the fundraising, construction, and daily operation management of the project. For example, in the project of transforming historical buildings into hotels or commercial complexes, enterprises can utilize their professional knowledge in architectural design, engineering construction, and hotel management to improve the construction quality and operational efficiency of the project. Meanwhile, the market sensitivity of enterprises helps projects better meet market demands and develop more attractive cultural products and services.

(2) Risk sharing and benefit sharing mechanism

One is the reasonable arrangement of risk allocation: in the public-private partnership model, the risk responsibilities of the government and enterprises are clearly divided. Generally speaking, the government bears the risks of policy and regulatory changes, as well as adjustments to cultural heritage protection standards; Enterprises bear risks such as market demand fluctuations and poor management. For example, if the introduction of new cultural heritage protection policies requires the project to adjust its construction plan, the government should provide certain policy support or compensation to the enterprise; If the enterprise's market positioning is incorrect and leads to poor management, the enterprise shall bear the economic losses on its own.

The second is fair and reasonable distribution of benefits: establish a reasonable mechanism for distributing benefits, and determine the proportion of income distribution based on the input and contribution of both parties. A fixed return model can be determined through negotiation, such as the enterprise receiving a certain proportion of project operating income within a certain period of time, and then dynamically adjusting the profit distribution ratio based on the project's operating situation and market changes. This not only ensures that enterprises can obtain reasonable investment returns, but also safeguards the public interests represented by the government.

(2) Community led model

1) Community mobilization and capacity building

One is to enhance community awareness and participation enthusiasm: through community promotion, educational activities, and other means, enable community residents to fully understand the value of cultural heritage and the significance of revitalization projects. For example, organizing cultural heritage knowledge lectures and community workshops, inviting residents to participate in cultural heritage research and recording work, and enhancing their sense of identity and responsibility towards local cultural heritage.

2) Cultivate community management talents: Provide training for community residents in cultural heritage management, project operation, and other aspects, and cultivate a group of community talents who can lead cultural heritage revitalization projects. We can collaborate with universities and professional training institutions to offer targeted courses, such as cultural tourism management and intangible cultural heritage inheritance, to enhance the professional competence of community residents.

3) Community led operational management

One is that project planning and decision-making are led by the community: during the planning phase of cultural heritage revitalization projects, the opinions and suggestions of community residents are fully listened to. For example, the community can organize a residents' congress to discuss the functional positioning and service content of cultural heritage revitalization projects. If it is decided to transform an abandoned traditional building into a community cultural center, community residents can participate in the design of functional layout and determine which cultural activity spaces to set up, such as traditional handicraft exhibition areas, folk performance stages, etc.

The second is the community participation method in operation and management: encourage community residents to participate in the project operation process. Various forms such as volunteer service and community stock cooperation can be adopted. For example, community residents can participate as volunteers in the daily management of cultural centers, such as lectures, event organization, etc; It is also possible to share the benefits of project operation through community shareholding cooperation, while also assuming corresponding responsibilities, forming a good operating model of self-management and self-monitoring among community residents.

8.4.3 Strengthen the integration of cultural and creative industries with cultural heritage, and expand the economic value of cultural heritage

(1) Exploring cultural elements for creative design

One is the utilization of architectural cultural elements. Deeply explore the architectural features of Macao's historical buildings (such as the memorial archway of Dasanba, Ma Ge Temple, etc.), including their unique shapes, exquisite carvings, color matching, etc. Taking inspiration from these elements, design a series of cultural and creative products. For example, the architectural outline of the memorial archway of Dasanba is designed into the shape of jewelry, which is made into necklaces and earrings; Alternatively, the carved patterns on buildings can be transformed into prints and applied to textiles such as scarves and handkerchiefs.

The second is the integration of folk cultural elements. Integrating the rich folk culture of Macao, such as dragon and lion dances, Mazu customs, etc. Based on the theme of dragon and lion dance, design dynamic dolls and ornaments, or develop a board game with Mazu's beliefs and customs as the background. Through game rules, reflect the sacrificial and blessing activities in Mazu culture, allowing players to understand Macao's folk culture during the entertainment process.

(2) Create cultural and creative brands and series of products

One is brand building. Create cultural and creative brands with Macao characteristics, emphasizing the design of brand image and the storytelling of brand stories. The brand name can be related to the historical, geographical, or cultural characteristics of Macao, such as "Haojiang Impression" and "Macao Charm Cultural and Creative". Brand stories can revolve around the inheritance and innovation of Macao's cultural heritage, allowing

consumers to experience the profound cultural heritage behind the brand while purchasing products.

The second is the development of a series of products. Develop a series of cultural and creative products with brand as the core. For example, with the theme of traditional Macao cuisine culture, the "Macao Flavor" series of products has been launched, including scented candles inspired by Portuguese tarts and ceramic tableware with pork chop buns as patterns. By launching a series of products, enriching the product line, meeting the needs of different consumers, and enhancing the brand's market competitiveness.

(3) Expand sales channels and market promotion

One is to build an online sales platform. Establish a dedicated online sales platform for cultural and creative products in Macao, integrating the product resources of local cultural and creative enterprises and designers. Attract domestic and foreign consumers through exquisite product displays, detailed cultural background introductions, and convenient shopping processes. At the same time, utilizing the big data analysis capabilities of e-commerce platforms to understand consumer preferences and purchasing behavior, providing data support for product development and marketing.

The second is the establishment of offline experience stores and cooperative stores. Open offline experience stores for cultural and creative products in tourist attractions, cultural heritage protection areas, and other places in Macao. These experience stores are not only sales venues, but also spaces for cultural display and interactive communication. Consumers can personally experience the production process of cultural and creative products here, such as participating in hand drawn ceramic cups with Macao characteristics. In addition, we cooperate with local hotels, shopping malls, etc. in Macao to distribute and sell cultural and creative products, and expand sales channels.

The third is cultural tourism activity marketing. Market promotion in conjunction with cultural tourism activities in Macao. Organize cultural and creative product exhibitions, themed markets, and other activities during peak tourism seasons or cultural festivals. For example, during the Macao International Fireworks Festival, cultural and creative products with fireworks as the theme are simultaneously launched to attract tourists to purchase. By increasing the popularity of cultural tourism activities, we aim to enhance the exposure and sales of cultural and creative products, and expand the economic value of Macao's cultural heritage.

9. Conclusion and Prospect

9.1 Research Conclusion

This article summarizes the main achievements of research on the revitalization of Macao's history, customs, and cultural heritage, including a clear overview of Macao's cultural development, evaluation of cultural heritage value, in-depth analysis of opportunities and challenges faced by cultural heritage revitalization, as well as revitalization models and other issues. Based on the previous discussion and analysis, this article draws the following preliminary conclusions:

Firstly, the unique historical process and the transformation of economic and social structure of the Historic Center of Macao have had a profound impact on the history, folk customs and culture of Macao.

Secondly, the traditional Chinese festivals and the customs of the Macanese people, as well as their folk art and culinary culture, have jointly shaped Macao's folk culture and become an important carrier and content of Macao's intangible cultural heritage.

Thirdly, historical buildings such as Chinese temples, Western style churches, and ancient residences in Macao, as well as material cultural heritage such as historic districts, archaeological sites, and fortresses, have high heritage value, artistic value, and historical geographic and cultural value; The intangible cultural heritage of Macao, including performing arts, traditional handicrafts, festive customs, and culinary arts, has significant

value. However, it faces challenges such as aging inheritors, modern cultural impact, and foreign cultural impact. Therefore, it is necessary to draw on international experience and revitalize it through museum building, tourism development, and the utilization of cultural and creative industries.

Fourthly, the revitalization of cultural heritage in Macao faces challenges such as relatively lagging policies and regulations, poor cross departmental communication and coordination, funding shortages and single sources, cognitive biases and insufficient awareness of protection, as well as difficulties in management and maintenance. At the same time, there are also opportunities for revitalization such as national strategies and technological empowerment; We need to improve the policy and legal protection system, expand funding sources, enhance social participation, innovate revitalization methods and management models in order to better revitalize Macao's history, customs, and cultural heritage.

9.2 Future Outlook

Looking ahead to the future, the revitalization of Macao's history, customs, and cultural heritage will be a display of cultural confidence and a key to sustainable urban development. The revitalization of Macao's cultural heritage requires a balance between innovation and protection. Under the new historical opportunities, it is worth further exploring how to deepen the revitalization strategy and achieve sustainable development of cultural heritage. Using digital technology to recreate historical scenes and create immersive experiential spaces; Strengthening international exchange and cooperation, promoting Macao culture to the world, and enhancing international influence should be an effective strategy and method.

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The Social Issue of Migration from Afghanistan: Tendencies and Supporting Factors

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Abstract

Why people migrate abroad and its explanation in the framework of economic approaches, factors of attraction and repulsion and duality of poverty and migration have been the subject of migration studies. Migration among the people of Afghanistan has a long tradition, however, during the last few decades, these continuous flows of migration and return have taken an unprecedented collective and scale form. This article seeks to explain the social issue of migration from Afghanistan with emphasis on the tendencies and supporting factors. The investigated factors are on three levels: micro (individual characteristics), medium (transnational networks) and macro (a person's understanding of the economic, social and political conditions of the countries of origin and destination). The research method is quantitative and survey-based, and the data was collected through a questionnaire among 850 people aged 18 years and above, who were selected by multi-stage sampling method. The results showed that people's attitude towards Afghanistan's economic, social and political situation at the macro level and transnational migration networks at the intermediate level have a significant effect on the tendency to migrate. At the micro level and among the social characteristics, the variables of age, education and ethnicity have the most effect on the desire to migrate. From this article, it can be concluded that there is a negative attitude towards the current conditions and the future of Afghanistan, the migration culture, as well as the Afghan diaspora and transnational migration networks in the neighboring countries Iran's Mullahs have a great role in the formation of migration abroad among the mindset of Afghans.

Keywords: Social issue of Migration, Tendency to Migrate, Transnational Networks, Political Situation, Ethnicity, Afghanistan

1. Introduction and Problem Statement

Why do people emigrate? Most of the research literature in the field of immigration is in search of a comprehensive answer to this question. Researchers try to examine the determinants of migration at different levels. They provide conceptual frameworks and a comprehensive view of this matter to draw a multifaceted and complex picture of international migration. Of course, as (Carling, 2002:5) says, as much as they talk about the

"age of immigration" in today's world, they can talk about the "age of forced settlement." This is partly due to the fact that most researches focus on the post-immigration phase, that is, the time when a person has reached the destination country or started his journey. What happens before the migration and what factors affect people's desire and decision to migrate has been paid less attention.

The desire to migrate is one of the things that has attracted a lot of attention in the migration literature in recent years. In the definition of this term, someone who has a tendency to migrate is someone who considers migration preferable to staying [in the country of origin] (Carling and Collins 2017:4).

1: It is an inseparable part of the dynamics of migration in the sense that all those who intend to migrate have a tendency to migrate, while it is possible that all those who have a tendency to migrate cannot, because existing obstacles to immigrate; 2. The tendency to migrate can affect the allocation of resources in different ways (Carling and Collins 2017:1), for example, in developed or poor societies, the few resources that families only spend on Unsuccessful migrations can lead to the worsening of their situation, while successful migrations usually reduce poverty and transfer goods with the help of remittances and financial investment in the country of origin. People move between the countries of origin and destination (Hindman, H.; Oppenheim, R. 2014).

Migration among the people of Afghanistan has a long tradition and forced migrations due to war and Ethnic and religious repressions and voluntary migrations for the purpose of pilgrimage and education can be witnessed throughout the historical periods of this country. However, during the last few decades, these continuous flows of migration and return have taken an unprecedented collective and quantitative form. During the two decades from 1981 to 2001, about 30 percent of the population of Afghanistan left their country. Only during the 1360s, more than six million people immigrated from Afghanistan and immigrated to 72 countries (mostly Iran and Pakistan) (Turton and Marsdin, 2002 and Saito, 2008).

In recent years, political, security and economic crises have increased again, so that in recent years, the highest rate of non-military casualties has been recorded in the country (UNAMA, 2017) and the economic situation as well. It would get worse. The mixed nature of many of these displacements points to the various motives of immigrants and refugees, as well as their individual characteristics, so that now, in addition to fleeing from war and unrest, factors Others are looking for better job opportunities, education, safety and well-being, escape from ethnic and religious discrimination, family pressures, etc. (MMC, 2017, Asia Foundation).

Currently, the results show that three out of four people in Afghanistan have experienced internal or international migration in their lifetime. (ICRC, 2009; Majidi 2017). In such a situation, it is possible to talk about the formation of "immigration culture" in which, according to (Christiane and el, 2014:499) migration in society is a natural thing, a kind of habit, instead of will be This culture has been formed over time and with its dynamics, it keeps influencing the values and behaviors of the people of Afghanistan. It is in this dynamic framework that the motivations, purposes, mechanisms and patterns of migration change continuously. In addition, many studies have indicated the importance of the role of support networks and extramili diaspora in strengthening or weakening migration flows (for example: Sheffer,2003; King and Christo, 2010; Feist, 2010; Nimkar and Farous 2017), in such a way that, for example, by presenting an ideal image of many destination countries, they have encouraged many to immigrate and created a desire to immigrate in them.

Moreover, it is possible to highlight the existing restrictions in the destination countries and the difficult living conditions there and suppress or limit such a desire to migrate. Studies on the causes of migration focus more on the push and pull factors or the decision-making mechanism for migration and the factors that influence it, and focus more on the immigrants who have reached their destination or those who are the future of the immigration program is definite and focused. This causes that there is not much information about the stage before deciding to migrate; In this sense, why some people have a desire to emigrate, while others do not show such a desire and prefer to stay over emigration (Creighton, Mathew J. 2013).

Addressing this topic, willingness or unwillingness to migrate, requires finding answers to questions such as: What level of willingness to migrate exists among the people of a society? What are the social characteristics of

those who show their desire or unwillingness to emigrate? What factors at different levels of micro, medium and macro affect the level of desire to migrate? Considering the importance of the issue of immigrants and refugees in today's world and the different policies that the countries of origin, transit and destination take to deal with it, the answers to these questions can be of importance. It will be a lot of fun. Civil wars, the rich-poor gap, natural disasters, etc., have created a wave of refugees and asylum-seekers all over the world and created a complicated situation in which politics is not a simple matter (Gurak, D. T.; Caces, F. 1992).

For example, the failure of many immigration policies of destination countries in keeping asylum seekers away from their borders is a proof of this claim. This is partly due to the lack of sufficient information about the different dimensions of these migrations; Including what happens before deciding to migrate. Paying attention to the pre-decision stage has the advantage that policies focused on the countries of origin will be able to follow policies at an appropriate level (Abbasi et al. 2016).

In this direction, this article explains the social issue of migration from Afghanistan with emphasis on the tendencies and supporting factors. In this sense, it uses the survey data, which was part of a larger project about the decision-making mechanism for migration among the people of Afghanistan. The importance of the present research is that it focuses on the pre-migration phase and deals with the determinants of the tendency to migrate at different levels. The main question of the article is: What factors on the macro, medium and micro levels affect the desire to migrate among the people of Afghanistan?

2. Experience Background

At the beginning of the 21st century, several studies focused on measuring the tendency to migrate and how to decide to migrate in societies began (for example, Carling, 2002; Papadopoulos and Sianos, 2007, Czaika and Vatkenchet 2012; Carling 2013, Creighton, 2013) (Timmerman and others, 2014; Estrelkoski and Bilan, 2016; Carling and Collins 2017, Van Mol and others, 2017); Cairns and others, 2017, Carling and Shull, 2018; May 2018, Schiebelhofer 2018, Collins, 2018. In the international migration research literature, there are few studies that have focused on the tendency to migrate from the model they have used the second step of willingness/ability.

Carling (2002) studied a case of emigration from Cape Verde by presenting his two-stage model. In this article, he examined the link between the desire to migrate with individual characteristics and the migration environment and tried to answer the question of how potential migrants find the ability to migrate. According to the findings, each potential immigrant, in order to become a real immigrant, has different abilities and financial and human capitals, and must overcome various obstacles and challenges. In an article, Carling (2014) examines the nature and functions of the tendency to migrate in the migration process.

According to his reasoning, desire plays an important role in the whole migration process, although in different ways. The desire to migrate is a part of a person's general desires in life, so that if other desires are more important and are fulfilled, the desire to migrate may be pushed aside. Otherwise, emigration is preferred over staying, and if there is an ability to emigrate, real emigration will take place.

Carling and Shull (2017) in re-examining the willingness/ability model in international migration, address the theoretical and methodological problems related to this model, for example, how to understand the willingness to migrate? How can you measure these concepts in experimental studies? And is it possible to say that people who prefer to stay have the ability to migrate? By examining two-stage models, they try to build a foundation for new researches in the field of international migration by expanding the theoretical, methodological and experimental basis.

Carling and Collins (2017) in the study of the tendency to migrate, examine the theoretical approaches to the concept of the tendency to migrate and examine its relationship with the migration industry.

Also, while examining the relationship between the desire to migrate and the desire to migrate, it analyzes the meanings and differences in the meanings of various terms used in this field, and further, it analyzes the factors influencing migration.

Some researchers have also investigated the tendency to migrate in different contexts. Timmerman et al. (2014) focused on the importance of migration culture in understanding the desire to migrate among Turkish people. By focusing on two regions with different immigration backgrounds in Turkey (one with a strong immigration culture and another with a weak immigration culture), he examines the tendency of the residents there to immigrate to Europe. According to the findings of this research, the desire to migrate to a region that has a strong culture of migration is lower than another region.

Also, people's perception about the economic opportunities, work and living conditions of immigrants in Europe has a negative effect on the desire to migrate to the region with a strong migration culture. Venmol et al. (2017) also investigate the relationship between the migration culture and the desire to migrate in Ukraine's immigration system. They are looking for an answer to the question of how to explain the tendency of people to migrate to two different regions with their international networks (family and friends) in the destination countries. The findings of this research clearly show that the characteristics of regional migration and transnational networks play an effective role in reducing or increasing migration from Ukraine.

Czaika and Wetkenchet (2014) by analyzing why internally displaced persons are more inclined to than non-immigrants. For migration in Indonesia, they measure the relationship between migration experience and the desire to migrate. Based on their findings, the variables of age, education and socio-economic base affect not only the desire to migrate but also the ability to migrate. In addition, they found that migration, in addition to being economically beneficial, can cause a greater gap in the willingness to migrate between refugees and non-migrants.

Strielkowski and Bilan (2016) also studied the perception of Europe among the people of Turkey and Ukraine as countries of origin and its effect on the desire and decision of potential immigrants to migrate. By examining the social, structural and socio-cultural determinants, they came to the conclusion that potential immigrants can be divided into two groups: those who have a positive view of Europe and those who have a negative view of Europe. They have divided.

This difference depends on factors such as social background and community characteristics. A review of the research literature on the issue of migration, its motivations and drives show that many studies have investigated this topic in different conditions. However, what has been ignored in the meantime is considering different factors at different levels in a single model and analysis. Based on the survey data, this research examines the effect of independent factors simultaneously, at different micro, macro and medium levels on the tendency to migrate.

Also, the present research has the advantage of focusing on the stage before the actual migration, something that has been neglected in the literature on international migration of Afghans so far (Collins, 2018).

3. Theoretical Framework

Traditional approaches to immigration can be divided into two groups: functional and structural (Strielkowski and Bilan, 2016:19-20), the first group includes approaches such as neoclassical microeconomics and macroeconomics and focuses on labor force migration.

In these approaches, people immigrate to another economic system based on a rational decision and to obtain a higher salary (Goss and Lindquist, 1995). In the second group, there is a focus on macro trends that lead to social inequality among people. In fact, the difference between these approaches and the first group is that the level of analysis is transferred from individual decisions and actions to social structures. However, these approaches have faced many criticisms.

For example, regarding the theory of micro-economics, although the unemployment rate of developed and industrialized countries has been very high in some periods, still immigration to these countries continues. (Massy et al, 1993), new approaches tried to compensate for these shortcomings. The approach of the new economy, focusing on the family, considered migration as a family strategy to increase profit and income and reduce the risks of unemployment (Strielkowski and Bilan, 2016).

The theory of migration systems also added to the analysis the exchange of resources, capital and people between the countries receiving and accepting immigrants by addressing macro and micro structures. While the social network theory focuses on the role of transnational networks and direct and indirect communication between immigrants in the destination country and potential immigrants in the origin country (Massy et al., 1993, Christiane et al., 2014).

However, these theories alone cannot explain the truth about this multifaceted phenomenon. One of the issues that are ignored in many approaches is people's perceptions, meaning that due to technological progress and the expansion of mass communication means, migration distances are shortened and increased. Facilitating migration (such as migrant smuggling networks, labor force employment agencies and cross-border marriages) people in They are exposed to the concept of migration. Perceptions and attitudes related to immigration are social and cultural constructs (Christiane et al., 2014: 497), which can be analyzed at different levels.

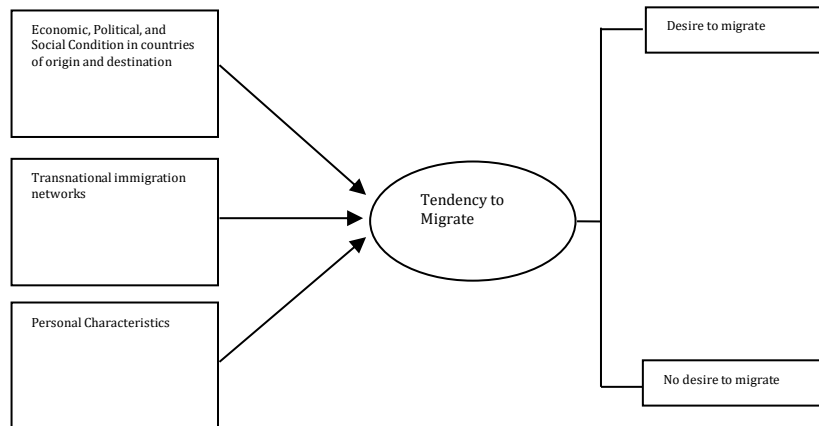
One of the recent efforts in the direction of explaining people's perception of migration and its effect on international migration is the use of two-stage models to explain migration. For example, (Carling and Collins 2017) in designing the model of willingness/ability to migrate, say that the pre-migration period is divided into two stages.

1: Evaluating migration as a possibility, and 2. Finding/not finding migration in a particular moment. Although these models use different terms such as desire, attitude, desire, intention or need (for example: Alpes, 2014; Black and Collier, 2014; Carling and Collins, 2017), but they all refer to thoughts and ideas.

According to these models, the desire to migrate may end up in real migration, and it is possible that it does not end in real migration and the person remains in the original society. As mentioned before, the tendency to migrate can be defined as the preference of migration to stay. Therefore, people are divided into two general groups: those who have a desire to emigrate and those who lack this desire.

Among the first group, some have the ability to migrate and their desire leads to real migration. Those who do not immigrate, or those who have no desire to immigrate, or if they have the desire to immigrate due to their inability to immigrate (for various reasons), are forced non-immigrants. Carling's willingness/ability to migrate model is affected by two groups of factors: the environment and conditions of migration at the macro level and individual characteristics at the micro level (Carling, 2002:12; Carling and Collins 2017:2).

In their model, other factors are added at the middle level, which includes local and transnational networks and local cultures (Christiane and others, 2014:497).



Picture number 1: Research model: Determining factors of the tendency to migrate

In the present research, after reviewing the research literature and based on the models of Carling (2002) and Christiane and, Colleagues (2017) presented a conceptual model to investigate the tendency to migrate among the people of Afghanistan and its determinants (Figure 1).

According to this model, various factors on three levels, macro, micro and medium, affect people's desire to migrate. At the macro level, the political, economic and social situation of the target countries and the origin of the main factors have been mentioned. At the micro level, the individual characteristics of individuals are among the things that cause the difference in the level of desire to migrate. At the middle level, the strength of transnational networks affects the tendency to migrate.

4. Research Method

The research method of the article is quantitative and based on the sample survey method, and it is based on a set of data about the decision-making mechanism for migration among the people of Afghanistan, which was collected in the framework of the MORE research project.

This project aims to understand the influencing factors on the decision-making process of the people of Afghanistan to migrate abroad, following the collection of quantitative data in two stages. The questionnaire designed in this project includes four sections: demographic characteristics, tendency to migrate, respondent's understanding of migration culture, migration intention and influencing factors on the decision-making mechanism.

The data was collected in April and May 2017 in four provinces of Afghanistan (including Kabul, Herat, Nangarhar and Kandahar). Access to the respondents was provided using a multi-stage sampling method. Considering the ratio of 43 percent for migration based on Afghanistan's population survey (Asia Foundation, 2019), the confidence coefficient is 95 percent and the error is 5 percent, the sample size is 652 people, which is 1.3 for an estimated number of samples is about 850 people became:

$$n = \frac{Z_{1-\frac{\alpha}{2}}^2 P(1-P)}{d^2} = \frac{6.65^2 \cdot 0.43(0.57)}{0.0025}$$

The dependent variable of this research is the level of desire to migrate, which is a rank scale and with this question. The survey was decided: if a suitable opportunity is available in the next year, how much would you like to move abroad? In this way, a three-choice dependent variable was obtained that measures the desire to migrate (code = 0 means no or little desire to migrate, code = 1 has a moderate desire to migrate, and code = 2 has a strong desire). to immigration).

Another question was asked for the group of respondents who have a tendency to emigrate, based on which country they prefer as their destination. As mentioned in the conceptual framework section, three groups of independent variables were considered. The first group is the social characteristics of the individual: gender, age, marital status, place of residence (city/village), religion, ethnicity, employment status, and education level. The second group includes two variables: one is the respondent's understanding of the economic, social and political conditions of Afghanistan, and the other is the respondent's understanding of the economic, social and political conditions of the destination country. In order to create these two indicators, seven questions were asked about access to health and medical facilities, job opportunities, educational opportunities, security situation, existence of discrimination, women's quality of life and men's quality of life. In both countries, the origin and purpose were asked.

The answers were in the form of a Likert scale and were coded from 0 to 2 (bad, not bad and not good, good). Then, each person's scores were added to different items and according to the scores obtained, they were placed in one of three groups. Cronbach's alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the items designed for the respondent's understanding of the economic, social and political conditions of the country of origin and destination, and for each of them, the coefficients were 0.78 and 0.78, respectively. 0.74 was obtained.

These coefficients indicate that the statements have an acceptable internal consistency in the measurement of the mentioned two indicators. In the third group, to measure the index of the strength of transnational networks, two questions about frequency Annual contacts with family members and friends abroad were asked: Question 1: How many times do you contact your family members abroad during the year? Second question: How many times do you call your friends abroad during the year? The answer items are in this order: code 0 = I don't call at all or finally once or twice a year, code 1 = I call every six to four months, code 2 = I call both or three months, code 3 = I call every month, code 4 = I call every week.

Here again, after scoring the answers to two questions, the scores were collected and according to the scores obtained, people were divided into one of the groups of individuals with a weak transnational network, individuals with an average transnational network, and individuals with A strong transnational network took place. The obtained alpha coefficient for this index was equal to 0.7. Due to the multivariate nature of the dependent variable, two bivariate (chi-do) and multivariate (multivariate logistic regression) tests were used to analyze the effect of independent variables. In the multivariable test, in the first stage, the effect of social factors was examined. In the second stage, the effect of the variables of the individual's understanding of the conditions of the country of origin and destination, as well as the transnational network, was measured. Finally, in the third stage, all these variables were entered into the model.

5. The Findings

The findings of this research indicate that the majority of the respondents are male (71%) and are from the age groups of 25-25 and 26-35 years old. The ratio of married and single people (50.3% and 49.7%, respectively) and those who live in the village and city (51.1% and 48.9%, respectively) is almost equal.

In terms of ethnicity, the respondents were selected from among the three main ethnicities of Pashtun, Hazara, Tajik and other ethnicities (24.1, 26.4, 29.8 and 19.6 percent, respectively). Approximately two-thirds of the respondents have primary, secondary or secondary education, while 15.6 percent are university graduates. The rest of the respondents (18.6%) are illiterate and lack any education. One quarter of the respondents are unemployed and the rest are employed. In terms of socio-economic base, half of the respondents (44.2%) are in the low level and 37.8% are in the middle level. Only 18 percent of the people have a high level of socio-economic base (Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of demographic characteristics of the sample under review, Afghanistan 2017

Demographic Characteristics		Number	Percentage
Gender	Female	246	28.9
	Male	605	71.1
Age Group	18-25	379	44.5
	26-35	345	40.5
	35-46	90	10.6
	46+	37	4.3
Marital Status	Married	428	50.3
	Single	423	49.7
Living Area	Rural	435	51.1
	Urban	416	48.9
Ethnic Group	Pashton	254	29.8
	Tajik	550	44.1
	Hazara	222	22.6
	Others	167	19.6
Education	Illiterate	158	18.6
	Primary	231	24.5
	Secondary	455	35
	University	133	15.6
Employment	Unemployed	228	26.8
	Employed	623	73.2
Socioeconomic Status	Lower Class	376	44.2
	Middle Class	322	37.8
	Upper Class	153	18.0

As it was said in the research method section, in order to obtain the level of people's desire to migrate, a question was asked in this regard; Based on the answers received, 58 percent answered that they have a strong desire to migrate abroad if a suitable opportunity is available, while 22 percent said that they have a desire to migrate to some extent.

Also, only 20 percent of the respondents did not show any desire to immigrate or their desire to immigrate was very little (Table 2). These ratios indicate the prevalence of the phenomenon of migration among the people of Afghanistan, so it can be safely said that the majority of the people of Afghanistan have the desire to migrate. However, the purpose of migration is not the same for these people. In response to the question about the destination they prefer for migration, it became clear that most Afghans have a tendency to migrate regionally, mainly to neighboring countries. Iran (23%), Turkey (22%) and Pakistan (8%) are the main destinations of regional migrations.

In terms of extra-regional migrations, European countries are the new destinations where many Afghans have immigrated or are willing to immigrate in recent years. In the current sample, Germany is counted as the preferred destination for Afghans in Europe with 19 percent. European countries as a whole are the desired destination of 38 percent of the respondents. The remaining 12 percent also chose other countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia.

Table 2: The level of willingness to migrate abroad among the respondents

	Number	Percentage
I have no tendency to migrate	171	20.1
I have some tendency to migrate	188	22.1
I have strong tendency to migrate	492	57.8
Total number of respondents	851	100

Based on the results of the bivariate test (Table 2), the variables of age, marital status, ethnicity and Education at the micro level, evaluation of the country of origin at the macro level and the strength of transnational migration networks at the medium level have a significant relationship with the tendency to migrate. Among the

respondents, the age group of 18-25 years old, singles, millennials and university students have the most desire to emigrate from the country, while the age group of 46 years and above, married people, Pashtuns and illiterate people. They have the greatest reluctance to immigrate compared to the rest.

Also, those who misjudge the general situation of Afghanistan and those who have strong transnational migration networks show a stronger desire to emigrate than the rest. On the other hand, those who evaluate the country's situation well and those who have weak transnational migration networks show a greater unwillingness to migrate or a low desire to migrate.

Table 3: The results of the bivariate test of the relationship between micro, medium and macro level variables with the tendency to migrate (%)

Variables		No tendency	Moderate tendency	Strong Tendency	Percentage Total	Sample	Chi-Square Test
Age Group	18-25	12.7	23.0	64.4	100	379	
	26-35	25.8	20.0	54.2	100	345	
	36-45	18.9	23.3	57.8	100	90	Chi: 40.999 Phi: 0.219
	46+	45.9	29.7	24.3	100	37	
Gender	Female	20.7	23.6	55.7	100	246	Chi: 0.686
	Male	19.8	21.5	58.7	100	605	Phi: 0.028
Marital Status	Married	25.7	21.0	53.3	100	428	Chi: 16.987
	Single	14.4	23.2	62.3	100	423	Phi: 0.141
Living Area	Rural	21.0	23.6	55.3	100	435	Chi: 2.194
	Urban	19.2	20.6	60.3	100	416	Phi: 0.051
Ethnic Group	Pashton	28.0	17.3	54.7	100	254	Chi: 18.278
	Hazara	13.3	24.9	61.8	100	225	Phi: 0.147
	Tajik	19.0	24.4	56.6	100	205	
	Others	18.6	22.8	58.7	100	167	
Education	Illiterate	29.1	21.5	49.4	100	158	Chi: 18.095
	Primary	23.3	22.3	54.4	100	215	Phi: 0.146
	Secondary	17.1	22.6	60.3	100	345	
	University	12.0	21.1	66.9	100	13	
Employment	Unemployed	18.4	25.0	56.6	100	228	Chi: 1.708
	Employed	20.7	21.0	58.3	100	623	Phi: 0.045
Socioeconomic Status	Lower Class	19.7	22.1	58.2	100	376	Chi: 0.083
	Middle Class	20.5	0.22	57.5	100	322	Phi: 0.010
	Upper Class	20.3	22.2	57.5	100	153	
Strength of Transnational Immigration Networks	Weak	31.2	21.5	47.3	100	205	Chi: 26.486
	Neither Weak nor Strong	16.0	25.8	58.3	100	326	Phi: 0.176
	Strong	17.2	18.8	64.1	100	320	
Evaluation of country of Origin	Bad	14.0	21.2	65.0	100	551	Chi: 49.234
	Neither Bad nor Good	29.0	32.2	47.4	100	241	Phi: 0.241
Evaluation of	Good	40.7	27.1	32.2	100	59	
	Bad	27.3	24.2	48.5	100	33	Chi: 2.274

country of Destination							
	Neither Bad nor Good	21.0	21.0	58.0	100	271	Phi: 0.052
	Good	18.8	22.8	58.4	100	447	

Note: ns is meaningless. * Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level *** Significant at the 0.001 level

In the multivariate test, since the dependent variable (inclination to migrate) is a multivariate variable, the reference category of "disinclination to migrate" was considered based on macro, medium and micro level variables. The probability of the tendency to migrate was given. As can be seen in Table 4, the effect of dependent variables was examined in three models. In model 1, examine the effect of micro-level variables (population characteristics) and in model 2, the effect of macro-level variables (the respondent's understanding of the situation of the countries of origin and destination) and medium (strength of transnational migration networks).

In model 3, the effects of all independent variables were examined. Based on the obtained results, in comparison with the lack of desire to migrate, the probability of having an average desire to migrate among the age group of 46 years and above is less than that of the age group of 25-18 years, singles are more than married people, Hazaras and Tajiks More camels than Pashtuns, more universities It is illiterate.

Regarding the probability of having a strong desire to migrate, compared to not having a desire to migrate, groups 35-26 years old and 46+ years old are less likely to have a strong desire to emigrate compared to the 25-18 age group. Also, Hazaras and other ethnic groups have a strong desire to migrate more than Pashtuns. People who have the level of guidance, secondary and university educations are more likely to have a strong desire to emigrate than illiterate people.

In model 2, the effect of intermediate and macro variables was examined, and based on the results, those who evaluated the situation in Afghanistan as good or not good or bad were less likely than those who evaluated the situation badly. The average plateau has a tendency to migrate. Those who have medium (neither strong nor weak) transnational migration networks are more likely to have a medium level of desire to migrate, compared to those who have weak transnational migration networks.

In the case of a strong desire to emigrate, the probability of its existence among those who have a good or not-bad-not-good evaluation of the situation in Afghanistan is less than among those who consider the situation to be bad. This possibility is more among those who have strong or medium (neither weak nor strong) transnational networks than respondents with weak transnational migration networks.

Table 4: The results of the multivariate logistic test of the effect of different factors on the tendency to emigrate from the country

Variables		Moderate Tendency to Migrate Exp(B)			Strong Tendency to Migrate Exp(B)		
		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Age Group	18-25 (R)						
	26-35	0.515		0.494	0.141		0.133
	36-45	1.069		0.829	0.891		0.613
	46+	0.581		0.531	0.467		0.407
Gender	Female (R)						
	Male	0.950		1.059	1.022		1.246
Marital Status	Married (R)						
	Single	1.754		1.745	1.385		1.423
Living Area	Rural (R)						
	Urban	1.275		1.329	1.023		1.047
Ethnic Group	Pashton (R)						
	Hazara	2.894		2.887	2.244		2.199
	Tajik	1.950		1.908	1.329		1.339

	Others	2.410		2.515	1.954		2.069
Education	Illiterate (R)						
	Primary	1.248		1.300	1.210		1.218
	Secondary	1.533		1.662	1.744		1.856
	University	2.230		2.356	3.037		3.073
Employment	Unemployed (R)						
	Employed	1.157		1.133	0.920		0.923
Socioeconomic Status	Lower Class (R)						
	Middle Class	1.032		1.081	1.021		1.043
	Upper Class	1.065		1.185	1.089		1.289
Strength of Transnational Immigration Networks	Weak (R)						
	Neither Weak nor Strong		2.228	2.106		2.164	1.891
	Strong		0.142	1.399		2.211	1.872
Evaluation of Country of Origin	Bad (R)						
	Neither Bad nor Good		0.570	0.495		0.378	0.304
	Good		0.452	0.358		0.178	0.129
Evaluation of Country of Destination	Bad (R)						
	Neither Bad or Good		1.149	0.951		1.583	1.381
	Good		1.1476	1.263		1.874	1.603
In Final Model	Pseudo R2	18.9%					

Note: (R) reference group; ns is meaningless. * Significant at the 0.05 level ** Significant at the 0.01 level *** Significant at the 0.001 level

Finally, in model 3, all the independent variables were analyzed at the same time so that their effect on the dependent variable was analyzed. At the small level, the variables of age, marital status, ethnicity, and education have the greatest effect on the tendency to migrate:

The 46-year-old and above age group is less likely to have a moderate or strong desire to migrate compared to the 25-18-year-old age group. Moreover, the age group of 35-26 years is less likely to show a strong desire to emigrate compared to the age group of 25-18 years.

Single people are more likely to show a medium level of desire to migrate compared to married people. Among ethnic groups, Pashtuns are less likely to migrate than other ethnic groups. Those who have the level of university, guidance and secondary education have a strong desire to immigrate compared to the illiterate. (International Committee of the Red Cross, 2009).

At the intermediate level, however, those who have medium transnational migration networks are more likely to have a medium level of intention compared to those who have weak transnational migration networks. Also, people with strong and medium transnational migration networks are more inclined than people with Transnational migration networks show themselves to be weak. At the macro level, evaluation variables from the country of origin have a significant effect on the dependent variable: those who evaluated the country's situation as good or not-bad-and-not-good, compared to those who evaluated the country's situation badly have done, the probability is less who have a strong desire to emigrate.

6. Conclusion

Changing the nature and scale of international migrations and displacements of people across borders is one of the dynamics and realities of the contemporary world. Now, migrations have become multi-dimensional and complicated, and in the migration flows, not only economic migrants, but also refugees and asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, students, etc. are seen. These immigrants usually include all age groups and women and families have also accompanied them.

In many parts of the world, there is talk of "feminization of migration." In addition, migration routes and mediators are no longer the same as before. If in the past, migration routes were limited to commercial and caravan routes, today, with the politicization of the immigration issue and the severity of the government's deterrent and punitive policies to prevent immigrants from entering Raf" from various paths and hidden from the eyes of the governments, the only progressive option of many It has been created.

In addition, new legal and illegal mediators have been opened as a facilitator in the migration process; Just like migrant smuggling networks, employment agencies, family reunification laws, etc. In such a situation, the management of migration flows has become one of the main priorities of governments and international organizations.

Encouraging or inhibiting policies at the national and international level always try to encourage migration through legal channels and prevent irregular migrations, but they are less successful in achieving this goal. The difficulty is partly due to the changing nature of this phenomenon - which we mentioned earlier - and the return of one-sidedness in the field of immigration policy.

Most of the policies are generally made in the highly political space and in the direction of achieving the specific goals of the dominant parties in the immigrant-receiving or immigrant-receiving countries, without considering the existing realities (Meyer, F.2018).

For example, in most of these political views, an immigrant is seen as a passive individual who lacks willpower, and economic, political, or social factors pull them this way and that. What is ignored among them is their role in the migration process and their operations. The same situation can be observed in Afghanistan and related migration literature. In most of the researches that has been done about the migration of people in Afghanistan, they focus more on insecurity and war or economic problems as the main drivers of people's migration, not on facts such as culture Emigration among the people of Afghanistan was noticed.

Migration is a deep-rooted phenomenon among the people of Afghanistan, and today it is rare to find someone who himself or one of his family members has not had the experience of cross-border migration (Turton and Marsdin, 2002, Saito, 2008).

In addition, the formation of diaspora and transnational migration networks of Afghanistan in neighboring and distant countries is an important factor in the strengthening of this culture and the evolution of the daily life of the Afghan people. It is in such conditions that the issue of "willingness to migrate" is of particular importance. According to the findings of the present research, in Afghanistan, younger age groups, especially 18 to 25 years old, unmarried and educated people are more willing to migrate. This finding is consistent with the dimensions of characteristics in the theory of attraction and repulsion of Everett Lee (1966) and the results of the studies of Carling (2002) and Czaika and Wetkenchet (2014).

Young people, single and educated people, have more access to technology and social media, and they are faced with the lack of work and education opportunities. Hazaras are also among the groups that show a strong desire to emigrate from Afghanistan. However, these are not the only social factors that affect the desire to migrate. Transnational migration networks are among the factors that have a strong effect on this desire. According to the findings, the presence of family members in the destination countries or diaspora can play a determining role not only in the desire to migrate, but also in the entire migration process.

By knowingly or unknowingly giving an ideal image of the destination countries or encouraging their relatives to immigrate, they increase the desire to immigrate among the people of Afghanistan (Mixed Migration Centre, 2017).

This finding is consistent with the theoretical arguments of social network (1991) and the results of some studies such as (Stark, O.1991).

However, friendship networks did not show much effect on the desire to emigrate in the present study. Also, at the macro level, it was found that the people of Afghanistan immigrate more because of their negative attitude towards the economic, social and political conditions of Afghanistan rather than considering the attractions of the destination countries. In general, it can be said that in the past three decades, despite the restraining policies of neighboring countries and Europe to prevent Afghan immigrants from entering their countries, the migration of Afghans from the country is still going on. About one fourth of the surveyed people have the desire to immigrate to Iran. In fact, what policies of the Afghan government and what policies of the target governments have been encountered in this direction (Scheibelhofer, 2017).

This is partly due to the ineffectiveness of the traditional view of the phenomenon of migration in the Afghan society and the lack of inclusion of its different dimensions in the analyzes and policies. Simplifying the phenomenon of immigration in Afghanistan, both war and extreme poverty, dooms previous immigration policies to failure.

Adoption of effective and efficient policies is necessary to take into account the existing realities in the society of Afghanistan. The immigration culture of the same and the role of the immigrant as an active actor and independent decision-maker are some of the facts that have been paid less attention so far (Monsutti, 2008).

Not only today, but in the past, migration has affected all aspects of the daily life of the people of Afghanistan. In fact, as other researches have shown, in Afghanistan, migration can be one of the survival strategies in difficult periods (Monsutti, 2005), or a special function of people's social life (Monsutti, 2007).

In fact, the desire to emigrate is very high among the people of Afghanistan; In fact, migration has become a normal thing or a kind of habit. Individual perceptions are also affected by the environment, and then this environment, due to the presence of the media and technological progress, covers a much larger scope than before.

In view of such a situation, the prevention of migration and the preventive measures and policies in the countries. Transit and destination are not only effective and not correct actions, but they make the situation more difficult for immigrants.

Some of the people who intend to emigrate may give up their decision due to the deterrent measures, but many others still decide to emigrate and for this purpose, they are forced to use illegal means Tuberculosis migrates to smuggling networks, which in turn It helps for various dangers and their misuse. Governments and politicians should first accept migration as a kind of culture among the people of Afghanistan, and then in the next step, think about managing these displacements. Of course, we should not forget the diaspora and the networks - that this management will not be very effective without the support and help of the transnational Afghan society.

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