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Editorial Team

Purpose of the journal

The ***Journal of Social Policy, Social Change and Development*** is Academic journal of Faculty of Social Administration, Thammasat University Journal are published articles on all dimensions of social policy, social change and development. the academical, phillosophical, theoretical, empirical and methodological intuitive understanging and knowledge building in the social policy, social change and development arena. Also, welcome articles from young researchers, Ph.D scholars, and academicians to submit articles to the journal.

The journal change scheduled to be published twice a year:
Issue 1: January – June
Issue 2: July - December

Deans Forwarding Message

Dear Colleagues,

I am honored to present to you the second issue of the Journal of Social Policy, Social Change and Development for June 2024.

Our editor in chief, editorial team and expert reviewers have worked diligently to bring you insightful and groundbreaking research that spans various aspects of social policy, social justice, and development. This issue continues our tradition of exploring these themes through diverse perspectives, encompassing different countries, multi-cultural societies, and varied socio-economic settings.

In this edition, you will find contributions from top scholars across the globe, offering practical research and findings that enhance our understanding of complex social changes and their implications for policy. These articles not only contribute to academic discourse but also provide valuable insights for practitioners and policymakers working to address social challenges.

We hope that the research presented in this issue will inspire you, provoke thoughtful discussion, and contribute to your own work in the field.
Thank you for your continued support and engagement with the Journal of Social Policy, Social Change and Development.

Warm regards,

Associate. Prof. Dr. Auschala Chalayonnavin
Dean of Faculty of Social Administration
Thammasat University
Bangkok, Thailand

Editorial Letter

We the editorial team and expert reviewers of the Journal of Social Policy, Social Change and Development, welcome you all to the second issue of the journal in June 2024. We still aim at looking at different lenses towards social policy, social justice and development in diverse countries, multi-cultural societies and socio-economic settings as we produce another edition. In this second issue, top scholars from different nations lead us through practical research and findings that inform our understanding about complex social change as well as policy implications.

The article "The Long Path from Periphery to Core: Social Mobility in Southern European Countries" by Ildefonso Marqués-Perales, Manuel Herrera-Usagre, and Carlos J. Gil-Hernández is the lead piece. It provides a detailed analysis of absolute and relative social mobility in southern Europe by looking at issues such as why some societies are more equal than others. The authors thoroughly discuss how people who are on peripheries gradually move up higher within the society's hierarchy.

Sukhuma Aroonjit's "Theoretical Foundations for Social Justice Ethics in Social Policy by John Rawls and Robert Nozick" revisits the philosophical foundations of social justice. Through contrasting John Rawls' and Robert Nozick's theories, Aroonjit enlightens readers of the ethical factors that determine how policies on societal issues are made, thus creating a comprehensive criticism as well as merging this into ongoing debates on equal social governance.

Nguyen Le Hoai Anh's article, "A Thorough Literature Review on Dating Violence among University Students: Prevention Policies and Recommendations for Vietnam" is an important piece of work that focuses on a vital part of our social policy today. It is a comprehensive literature review which looks at the extent to which dating violence occurs in universities in Vietnam and provides some recommendations for policy interventions as well as preventive approaches towards creating a safer college environment.

In the article "Examining the Socioeconomic Ramifications of the Shift from Combustion Engine to Electric Vehicle Industry on Labor Well-being in Thailand: An In-Depth Economic Welfare Analysis", Chanakarn Hongchan looks at how sustainable technologies are implemented. The paper gives an elaborate economic welfare analysis of how labor wellbeing in Thailand changes as the country transitions to electric vehicles, thereby providing invaluable knowledge for policymakers dealing with such a momentous movement.

Lastly, Channaveer R.M. explores the "Effectiveness of Competency-based Training of Village Rehabilitation Workers in Strengthening Their Community-based Rehabilitation Domains: A Policy Implication." This study evaluates the impact of competency-based training programs on village rehabilitation workers, emphasizing the importance of such initiatives in enhancing community-based rehabilitation efforts and broader implications for policy development.

We are thrilled to share these articles which contribute to knowledge advancement in social policy, social change and development. We highly believe that these article's insights will encourage thoughtful debates and stimulate more research works within these crucial areas. Our deepest appreciation goes to our contributors and to our readers for their continued support and engagement with our journal.

Sincerely,

Dr Mahesh Chougule
Editor-in-Chief
Journal of Social Policy, Social Change and Development
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Editorial Letter

The Long Path from Periphery to Core:
Social Mobility in Southern European Countries

Ildefonso Marqués-Perales[1]

Manuel Herrera-Usagre[2]

Carlos J. Gil-Hernández[3]

Abstract

This article analyzes absolute and relative social mobility patterns in Southern European Countries (Spain, Greece, Italy and Portugal) through three cohorts of men and women who reached occupational maturity from 1969 to 2004, a period of profound economic, political and cultural transformations. Previous research literature on these countries has been scarce. The main objective of this study is to test the two most common hypotheses applied in research on social mobility by using constrained and unconstrained log-linear models: First, the Invariance hypothesis (H1), which postulates that relative social mobility rates undergo no or only insignificant change; secondly, the Industrialism hypothesis (H2), which posits that relative social mobility rates have experienced a profound or moderate but significant change towards a more open society. The results show a small but significant intergenerational improvement in social fluidity, confirming what we have called the Weak Improvement hypothesis (H3). This improvement has been more acute in women than in men, and differences can be found among selected countries, with Italy being the country where social mobility rates have improved the most.

Introduction

Until the crisis of 2008, the countries of Southern Europe were successful models of the arduous path that leads from underdevelopment to modernization. It was thought that Greece, Italy, Portugal, and, particularly, Spain could serve as examples to nations of Latin America and Eastern Europe in the challenging process of democratic transition and economic liberalization (Espina, 2007; Thomadakis, 2006). During the last third of the twentieth century, these countries had overcome adversities linked to long periods of dictatorship and belonging to the economic periphery. Thus, at the beginning of the 1990s, the debate about European convergence reached its zenith. We must bear in mind that convergence, integration, and even Europeanization, have been synonyms of modernization. Ortega y

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Gasset, the famous Spanish philosopher, summarized this idea superbly when he said, "If Spain is the problem, Europe is the solution". During this decade, the debate over the uniqueness of Southern European Countries (SEC from now on) was especially important. In The Three Worlds of Capitalism (Esping-Andersen, 1990), Esping-Andersen included Italy as a corporative welfare regime. In response, many scholars pointed out the need to create a new model to describe the welfare regimes of SEC (Abrahamson, 1995; Castles and Obinger, 2008; Ferrera, 1993; Jones, 1993; Lessenich, 1996; Rhodes, 1996; Saint-Arnaud and Bernard, 2003; Sotiropoulos, 2004).

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the intergenerational social class mobility in SEC from the late 1960s to the early 2000s. Two hypotheses will be explored. The first hypothesis is the Constant Social Fluidity, which suggests that the equality of class attainment opportunity, or relative social mobility, remains almost unchanged. The second is the Industrialism hypothesis, which proposes that societies undergo notable or moderate changes towards a more open society. It is important to note that, apart from research on Italy, previous studies have been limited and have focused on more descriptive studies instead of analyzing the real chances between classes over time.

The paper is structured as follows: The next section provides a brief introduction to the concept of intergenerational social class mobility and its importance.

The second section justifies the study's focus on Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Greece. It will also examine the literature's results regarding social mobility in Southern European countries and explain the main resulting hypotheses.

The third section introduces the data and the applied methodology, while in the fourth section, we will discuss the absolute and relative social mobility rates. Finally, there is a section of conclusions and questions for further research.

Theoretical Overview

Intergenerational Social Class Mobility, commonly referred to as Social Mobility, has been an extensively studied phenomenon in many Western countries. It refers to the movement between social classes across generations, whether upward, downward, or remaining the same (social immobility) in the social hierarchy. Social Mobility is closely related to the concept of Social Inequality, but it offers a different perspective. It is a critical concept for assessing the quality of a society as it measures how open or closed a society is over time in terms of equality of opportunities.

The concept of social mobility suffers from a multiplicity of meanings that further complicate its public debate. In the first place, we find its homonym in human geography, which is used to study population movements and migratory phenomena. This concept logically, we will discard from this entry. Secondly, social mobility -whether of educational levels, income, or social classes- can be approached from the perspective of individual trajectories -intragenerational social mobility- thus observing people's capacity to improve throughout their lives, or by looking at family trajectories - intergenerational social mobility-. Intergenerational social mobility refers to the movement of people within the scale of societal positions. Sociological analysis on the subject is based primarily on survey data - where people are asked what their father's and mother's profession was when they were 14 or 16 years old - but not only. There are cases, especially in northern Europe, where censuses and birth and death certificates have been used, thus creating an account of social mobility that takes us back to the 18th century.

As if that were not enough, this concept of intergenerational social mobility suffers from another double aspect with extraordinarily 'original' adjectives: absolute and relative social mobility. Both are closely related but measure very different aspects of a society. Absolute social mobility looks at how many people move from one class to another, generation after generation. It is primarily descriptive and is the most easily discernible at the individual level. For example, in 50 years, the class structure of our country has changed radically, and the perception of an increase in upward social mobility, by virtue of our own experience and that of our relatives, has had its historical foundation. Ultimately, any significant economic change will have an impact on the class structure of a society. Thus, social mobility, particularly relative social mobility, is a faithful indicator of how equal opportunity has improved over time.

However, there is a question of considerable political, and not only economic, implications. We refer to relative social mobility. Relative addresses not so much the absolute change in class structure but the probability of a street food vendor's daughter becoming a doctor relative to the probability of a doctor's daughter becoming a doctor. In this way, sociology can observe, generation after generation, whether the probabilities become equal, become more distant, or remain the same. Let us explain this with an example. Imagine a given society where 50 years ago there were five white-collar professional positions (doctors, lawyers, engineers, etc.). Of these, only two of those five people were daughters of unskilled workers (day laborers, waiters, construction workers, etc.). In contrast, the other three positions were occupied by descendants of doctors, lawyers, and engineers. Logical, in part the class position is "inherited". This is a classic effect. Today we know that there has been a change in the social structure of that society, and it already enjoys not five, but ten such jobs. Progress and modernization have arrived. However, of those ten jobs, only four are held by daughters of unskilled workers and six are still held by daughters of white-collar professionals. The proportions have not changed. There has been no improvement in social mobility in relative terms. Even so, there remains a latent substratum in the collective imagination that there has been an improvement in mobility and equality of opportunity because we see more daughters and sons of peasants getting good jobs at the city.

Understanding these concepts allows for a nuanced analysis of how social class dynamics evolve and affect individuals across generations.

Now some brief context of the Southern Europe Countries (SEC) and its context. Let's start with Italy. To date, social mobility research in Italy has yielded mixed results. In the mid-1980s, Cobalti and Schizzerotto (1994) highlighted significant social mobility disparities across classes, showing consistent societal openness throughout the 20th century. Comparisons with later surveys confirmed modest increases in relative mobility (Pisatti & Schizzerotto, 1999, 2004), driven by educational equality and regional economic successes (Ballarino et al., 2008). Conversely, labor market rigidity limited mobility (Barbieri & Scherer, 2009).

In SEC labor markets are highly segmented (Bentolila, Dolado & Padilla, 1994). "Partial de-regulation policies" created dual labor segments: protected, stable jobs and volatile, precarious employment (Adam & Canziani, 1998). Strong familial ties in Italy and Spain impact mobility, with high intergenerational support affecting women's employment (Jurado & Naldini, 1996). Late industrialization slowed economic modernization and welfare state development, influencing mobility (Tortella, 1994). Studies show modest relative mobility in Spain, with stable rates despite improved educational outcomes (Marqués-Perales & Herrera-Usagre, 2010). In Greece, case studies suggest limited mobility due to small sample sizes and methodological constraints (Petmisidou, 1991; Themelis,

2013). Portuguese studies reveal moderate openness and upward mobility, particularly towards managerial and technical roles (Estanque & Mendes, 1999; Fonseca & Guimarães, 2009).

The purpose of this paper is to examine whether the SEC has experienced a significant improvement in its relative social mobility rates. In other words, it aims to determine whether the SEC societies have become more inclusive and offer more equal opportunities until the crisis of 2008.

Hypotheses

Our aim is focused on the verification of the most common hypotheses applied to the social mobility field with new data.

H1. In Southern European Countries, social fluidity experienced a profound or moderate but significant change towards a more open society in the period from 1960 to 2005. Referred to as the Industrialism Hypothesis

It postulates that, as a particular society moves from a pre-industrial to an industrial period, its structure of opportunities becomes more open (Lipset and Zetterberg, 1959). The assumption is that, given the intense use of industry and machinery, firms must make more intense use of education in the interest of remaining competitive. If industry is replaced by service and education by human capital this thesis may be re-named the Postindustrial Hypothesis. Here, the key issue is the consideration that social positions are the product of achieved status rather than ascribed status. In its harder version, the Industrialism Hypothesis shapes history. In recent decades, this hypothesis has been questioned by a number of scholars (Grusky, 1982; Jonsson and Mills, 1993; Luijkx and Ganzeboom, 1986).

According to Breen and Luijkx, social mobility has experienced an increase in France, the Netherlands, Hungary, Sweden and Poland (Breen and Luijkx, 2004). Given that such a hypothesis reduces the scope and the depth of the changes, suggests that we refer to it as the Weak Improvement hypothesis (H3, which is a variation of H1). Regarding Southern countries, it might be expected that social mobility has achieved a vast degree of social fluidity or that the temporal trend has been small but significant. In fact, from 1970 to 2005, the Southern European countries' social scenario was dramatically transformed. Paramount political and economic changes occurred. Three of these countries underwent a transition from dictatorship to democracy and then joined the European Union. Their GDP underwent an unparalleled increase, reducing the distance from the rest of Europe; educational enrollment increased; income inequality was reduced, and social spending increased.

H2. In Southern European Countries, relative social mobility rates do not undergo any or insignificant change in the period from 1960 to 2005

The second hypothesis, in contrast, suggests that social mobility has not experienced any change over time (Hauser, Dickinson, Travis, and Koffel, 1975). The Invariance Hypothesis posits that, once marginal distributions are controlled for, relative mobility patterns are stable over time. This means that mobility changes are due to macro-structural changes that are exogenous to mobility (Wong and Hauser, 1992). This theoretical supposition may be relaxed, if specific changes may occur, but they are not in a direction toward a greater degree of openness or closedness in a given society. This argument is derived from the Trendless Fluctuation Hypothesis originally established by Sorokin. For instance, it may be considered that social mobility declined and later recovered due to the Europeanization process after the intense impact suffered by SEC from the petrol shocks in the 1970s. Conversely, it can be

thought that social mobility rates suffered a decline due to the end of industrialization. Either way, the fundamental idea is that "if there is an increase (or decrease) in social fluidity openness, it should be interpreted as a sporadic and short-term phenomenon rather than an intrinsic part of comprehensive developmental tendency" (Sorokin, 1998, p. 152). Regarding Southern European countries, the most substantial evidence to support this hypothesis is that in the early 1970s, the industrial age was coming to an end. Some researchers have pointed out that since the first period of industrialization ended, social fluidity rates have remained constant or have not undergone significant alterations. Table 1 outlines the hypotheses regarding social fluidity.

Table 1 Hypotheses regarding social fluidity

Hypothesis	Hard version	Weak versions
Temporal change	*Industrialism/post-industrialism*	*Weak Improvement hypothesis*
No Temporal Change	*Invariance hypothesis*	*Trendless Fluctuation*

Materials and methods

Data and measurement

The survey covers three generations that reached working age between the late 1960s and the early 21st century. Although birth cohorts do not perfectly align with historical periods due to mortality events, they are considered reliable indicators of actual mobility processes. Table 2 displays the cohorts to be analyzed, the years in which they reached working age, the collected samples, and some significant historical events. The first cohort, which reached working age during 1969-1979, coincided with the end of dictatorship and the onset of the "third wave of democratization" (Huntington, 1991). When the second cohort in Spain, Greece, and Portugal reached working age, social democrat parties came into power. In 1987, Italy surpassed the GDP of the United Kingdom in what was known as "Il sorpaso". The third cohort, born between 1963 and 1974, reached working age during 1993-2004, a period characterized by what economists referred to as "the Great Moderation", during which the world economies reduced the volatility of business-cycle fluctuations.

Table 2 Birth Cohorts, Occupational Maturity Years, Sample size by Countries and Historical Landmarks

Cohorts	Ocupacional Maturity	Sample-size	Italy	Spain	Portugal	Greece	Landmarks
1939-1950	1969-1979	Male	3,436	2,062	710	899	Third wave" of democratization
		Female	2,852	1,528	751	644	
		Total	6,288	3,590	1,461	1,543	
1951-1962	1981-1992	Male	4,004	2,717	894	1,109	Socialist parties came to power
		Female	3,454	2,513	908	948	"Il sorpaso".
		Total	7,458	5,230	1,802	1,857	Greece, Portugal Spain members of European Union.
1963-1974	1993-2004	Male	4,475	2,878	828	1,147	The Great Moderation period
		Female	4,068	2,842	819	998	
		Total	8,543	5,730	1,647	2,145	
TOTAL			**22,889**	**14,550**	**4,910**	**5,545**	

Source: (Italy: Income and Living Conditions of Families Survey; Spain: Living Conditions Survey; Portugal: Living Conditions Survey; and Greece: Income and Living Conditions Survey, 2005)

Table 3 The Correspondence between the Original Social Classes and Six Social Classes

Original Social Classes	Definition	Six Social Classes
I	Higher-grade professionals, administrators, and officials; managers in large industrial establishments; large proprietors	I+II
II	Lower-grade professionals, administrators, and officials, higher-grade technicians; managers in small industrial establishments; supervisors of non-manual employees	
IIIa	Routine non-manual employees, higher grade (administration and commerce)	IIIab
IIIb	Routine non-manual employees, lower grade (sales and services)	
IVa	Small proprietors, artisans, etc., with employees	IVab
IVb	Small proprietors, artisans, etc., without employees	
V	Lower-grade technicians; supervisors of manual workers	V+VI
VI	Skilled manual workers	
VIIa	Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers (not in agriculture)	VIIa
IVc	Farmers and smallholders; other self-employed workers in primary production	IVc+VIIb
VIIb	Agricultural and other workers in primary production	

To attain comparability across cohorts and countries, some of the extended versions of the EGP scheme, which formerly consisted of eleven social classes (Table 3), must be reduced.

A set of four different European Union Surveys of Incomes and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) from 2005 have been used for the analyses (Table 4). The sampling strategy included the following selection criteria:

1) Both men and women from 30 to 65 years of age for different subsets.

2) Last job specified coded using ISCO-88 (two digits); their fathers' job when they were 15 years old coded using ISCO-88 (two digits); country: Spain, Italy, Greece or Portugal. To explore the pattern of association between origin and destination a set of log-linear and log-multiplicative models have been performed for each country and each gender.

Table 4: Country and Collected Surveys

Country	Survey (2005)
Italy	Income and Living Conditions of Families Survey
Spain	Living Conditions Survey
Portugal	Living Conditions Survey
Greece	Income and Living Conditions Survey

Methods

Most studies of social mobility employ log-linear and log-multiplicative models or models of association to analyze relative rates of social mobility. Such models tell us if the intergenerational association between fathers and their children has experienced a higher degree of openness or closeness. Ganzeboom and Luijkx's (2004) research strategy will be implemented.

The model that combines the totality of odds-ratio association in a cross-table is the so-called saturated model, unconstrained association model, or independence model. Another variant of this model is the quasi-independence model (QI). Both models are widely used by researchers as baseline models. In the QI model, social class transmission is mainly random, apart from the tendency to inherit the parental class. Cell frequencies are a function of marginal and diagonal parameters (Li and Singelmann, 1999).

There are two ways to constrain odds ratios to find a sociologically more meaningful and more robust statistical adjustment. First, we can introduce constraints between tables to test for trends (without using within-table constraints). Second, we can introduce constraints within tables to find a parsimonious and interpretable pattern of social mobility flows (Ganzeboom and Luijkx, 2004). These ways of constraining tables will be explained below.

Unconstrained models

• Independence Model

The first model is called the independence model, and it will be used as a baseline in which there are no interaction effects.

$$\log F_{ij} = \mu + \lambda_i O + \lambda_j D \tag{1.1}$$

• Independence Conditional Model

With the second model, we assume 'perfect mobility' in which all odds ratios defining the net association between origins and destinations equal 1:

$$\log F_{ijk} = \mu + \lambda_i O + \lambda_j D + \lambda_k C + \lambda_{ik} OC + \lambda_{jk} DC \tag{1.2}$$

Where F_{ijk} is the expected frequency in cell ijk, i represents the rows, j the columns and k the periods of a three-way table comprising origin (O), destination (D) and Cohorts (C). On the left-hand side of the equation, μ represents the scale factor, whilst $\lambda_i O$, $\lambda_j D$, $\lambda_k C$ represent the main effects of the distribution of class origin, class destination and cohorts, respectively. The last two terms, $\lambda_{ik} OC$ and $\lambda_{jk} DC$, relate to corresponding associations.

• Constant Social Fluidity

The most straightforward constraint between tables is the assumption that similar odds ratios are identical between tables

$$\log F_{ijk} = \mu + \lambda_i O + \lambda_j D + \lambda_k C + \lambda_{ik} OC + \lambda_{jk} DC + \lambda_{ij} OD \tag{1.3}$$

With this model we add another parameter related to the association between origin and birth period ($\lambda_{ij} OD$) to the independence model. The model is known as Constant Social Fluidity (CnSF) and is widely used to test changes over time without calling for changes within the tables. In other words, this model measures the influence of the cohort plus the influence of origin and destination.

• Unidiff with Linear Trend Model

Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992) and Xie (1992) developed a CnSF model to test changes over time called Unidiff (Uniform Difference), or the log-multiplicative layer effect model. The Unidiff model is set in a position between CnSF (same pattern and association strength over time) and an

independence model (different pattern and association strength over time), using as constriction that each odds ratio could change from one cohort to another through a multiplicative scaling factor. In addition, we have added a linear trend parameter, which is to say, these over-time differences follow a linear function:

$$\log F_{ijk} = \mu + \lambda_i O + \lambda_j D + \lambda_k C + \lambda_{ik} OC + \lambda_{jk} DC + \beta_k X_{ij} + \beta_k \qquad (1.4)$$

X_{ij} represents the general pattern of the association between origins and destinations, and $\beta_k = 1 + \beta C$ where C is the number of cohorts. The test of whether there are significant differences between Constant Fluctuation (CnSF) and Linear Trend (Unidiff) indicates whether there are deviations from a linear trend (Ganzeboom and Luijkx, 2004).

Constrained models

The scaled association model (Goodman, 1979) is a powerful tool for studying within-table constraints. Thus, a developed version of the uniform association model will be implemented. The main advantage of more well-known Row and Column models lies in their capacity to provide information about the pattern of association. It permits us to know if diagonals the people who keep the same class as their parents (immobile), behave in a different way than the rest of the cells, that is, people who have a different class from their parents (mobile). The distances will be estimated posteriori to permit them to be estimated from the data. Odds ratios are constrained to be dependent upon distances among categories. Since 6 x 6 categories form each table, we have 25 odds ratios.

$$\log F_{ij} = \lambda + \lambda_i + \lambda_j + \varphi \ (\mu_{i+1} - \mu_i) \ (v_{j+1} - v_j) + \delta_k \qquad (2.1)$$

Where φ is the index of association or scaled parameter, μ_i and v_j are the row and column scores respectively. δ_k is an additional term that is applied to special regions of the table, in this case, to diagonals. To gain parsimony and to achieve a more sociological interpretation, row and column scores will be scaled equally. This model declares that tendencies to form relationships are ordered by their proximity (product of $\mu_i v_j$) on a single-dimension distance (Goodman, 1984; Marsden, 1988).

$$\mu_i = v_j \qquad (2.2)$$

The component φ_k of the scaled association model is a simple heterogeneous, which gives a log-multiplicative interaction structure for each level of the joint grouping variable (Vermunt, 1996, 1997; Xie, 1992). However, a restriction to shape a linear form will be added.

$$\varphi_k = \varphi * (1 + \beta Y) \qquad (2.3)$$

In consideration of the δ_k component two different approaches will be considered. On the one hand, diagonals will be equal to those observed frequencies. On the other hand, diagonals may shape a different form, as the independence model does: Such a model is similar to blocking out some regions of the table.

Adjustment measures

The log-likelihood ratio X^2 (L^2) will be used as the primary goodness of fit measure. Moreover, the Bayesian Information Criteria (BIC) (Raftery, 1995) will be considered. Raftery argues that comparative social mobility studies used to have large sample sizes, making it difficult to find models that adjust data to ordinary probability levels.

Nonetheless, it is important to highlight that the L2 is sensible to tables with scarce information cells with one or zero cases (Ganzeboom, Luijkx and Treiman, 1988). As Ganzeboom, Luijkx and Treiman did before (1988), we will restrict our interpretations to the differences between statistical results, not to the absolute values. Our models will be estimated using lEM software (Vermunt, 1997).

Results

Class structure

Two events are prone to occur when a society evolves from an agriculturally based economy to an industrial and, subsequently, to a post-industrial one (Breen and Luijkx, 2004). First, the most common path of change is a sharp decline in the proportion of the population in agricultural classes and growth in manual working classes and, to a lesser extent, white-collar classes. Secondly, once the consolidation of the industrial structure has been completed, a decline within manual working positions takes place through the expansion of non-manual classes and the passage toward a post-industrial economy. However, the Southern European Countries, except Italy, have followed a different trend, in which their social structures have experienced an abrupt transition from a vast agricultural sector to a post-industrial society without an intermediate industrial stage.

Table 5 shows the share of each social class broken down into parents and children (whose respective distributions are shown for both men and women together and men and women separately) over the three cohorts covered by this study within SEC in comparison to the EU-21 figures.

Table 5 Social class structures

1939-1974* in percentages		EU-21	SEC	Spain	Italy	Greece	Portugal
I+II	Fathers	16.59	10.16	10.02	12.21	5.71	6.34
	Children	29.39	19.45	18.27	21.77	18.03	14.08
	Men	28.45	19.18	18.62	21.11	16.25	15.10
	Women	30.33	19.76	17.88	22.52	20.20	13.10
IIIab	Fathers	11.70	11.87	12.28	12.12	10.86	10.70
	Children	29.12	29.59	33.64	27.49	25.18	32.31
	Men	14.35	17.70	17.99	17.88	16.88	16.97
	Women	43.96	42.99	51.14	38.52	35.26	47.31
IVab	Fathers	12.39	16.82	14.68	18.19	21.17	11.34
	Children	11.62	17.86	14.27	20.19	20.19	15.01
	Men	15.25	21.79	17.16	24.34	25.81	18.68
	Women	7.97	13.42	11.05	15.43	13.37	11.43
V+VI	Fathers	20.49	17.95	18.20	19.42	8.95	21.55
	Children	12.37	14.09	14.44	13.53	12.16	17.61
	Men	19.22	18.73	20.69	17.06	15.46	24.66
	Women	5.48	8.87	7.45	9.48	8.15	10.71
VIIa	Fathers	17.23	13.65	15.50	14.64	7.44	10.97
	Children	11.43	11.03	11.84	11.34	8.03	10.52
	Men	16.22	15.10	17.19	14.66	11.58	15.10
	Women	6.61	6.44	5.86	7.54	3.73	6.05
VIIb+IVc	Fathers	21.59	29.54	29.32	23.42	45.87	39.10
	Children	6.08	7.98	7.53	5.68	16.40	10.46
	Men	6.51	7.50	8.35	4.95	14.02	9.50

1939-1974* in percentages	EU-21	SEC	Spain	Italy	Greece	Portugal
Women	5.65	8.52	6.62	6.52	19.29	11.39

*In the appendix each cohort's figures are shown independently.

Three salient elements may be outlined about the class structure of the EU-21 and SEC for fathers compared to their children (both men and women). First, there was a dramatic decline in the farming sector (VIIa+IVc), constant through the origin and destination cohorts. From fathers to their children (1939-1974), the EU-21 agricultural sector was reduced by 16 percentage points (21.6 to 6), whereas the Southern European Countries suffered a more significant reduction of 22 percentage points (29.5 to 7.9). Secondly, non-manual positions (I+II and IIIab) grew by over 25 percent in both EU-21 and SEC countries. Third, blue-collar classes (V+VI and VIIa) fell slightly both in SEC (32 to 25 percent) and EU-21 (37 to 23 percent).

As Table 5 (see appendix for further information) depicts, considering both men and women conjointly over the three cohorts, SEC present significant differences in the shares of three social classes compared to the EU-21. 29 percent of the population in EU-21 countries is in classes I+II, whereas SEC are considerably below that figure at 19 percent. On the other hand, the petty bourgeoisie in the SEC accounts for almost 18 percent, contrasting with the EU-21 figure at 11 percent. Thirdly, agricultural workers make up a moderately higher percentage in the SEC than in the EU-21 countries, especially in Greece (10%) and Portugal (16%).

If we look at the evolution across cohorts, the strongest changes in children's class structures took place between the first and second cohort periods. White collar classes underwent a significant increase in the SEC, whilst in the EU-21 they increased minimally. The percentage of manual workers in the SEC fell slightly, whereas in the EU-21 this percentage remained constant. Finally, the proportion of petty bourgeoisie in most EU-21 and SEC countries remained stable, except for Greece, where they experienced a dramatic rise. There are enormous differences by sex in the share of specific social classes. Both women of the EU-21 and SEC countries were massively placed in class IIIab, approximately 43 percent (they entered this class primarily during the second cohort), whilst between 14 and 18 percent of men were in this class. Nevertheless, women are under-represented in manual worker and small owner positions, representing around half the proportion as men in SEC and EU-21 countries.

Table 6 Origin-destination dissimilarity indices

1939-1974*		EU-21	SEC	Spain	Italy	Greece	Portugal
Fathers-children		30.21	28.05	29.62	26.93	30.45	29.77
	Men	17.36	22.05	20.97	20.83	31.81	29.61
	Women	46.00	40.72	46.72	36.71	38.89	43.47

*In the appendix each cohort's figures are shown independently.

As can be seen in table 6 (see appendix for further information), between the second and third destination cohorts, the diminishing of the origin-destination dissimilarity indices in most countries, considering men and women together, should be noted. This trend suggests a sort of stabilization in structural class change. EU-21 and SEC women experienced the most important structural changes, displaying a dissimilarity index at over 40 percent across the three cohorts and fluctuating across them, whereas the changes for men were between 17 (EU-21) and 22 (SEC) percent, following a marked downward path. Likely, the main reason why the women's indices are at such a high level is the steady

expansion of women's participation in the labor force since the late 1970s across most European countries, as well as the fact that most of them entered non-manual classes (the vast majority into class IIIab), thus contrasting substantially with their fathers' positions.

Table 7 Between-country dissimilarity indices

1939-1974*		ITALY	PORTUGAL	GREECE	SEC	EU-21
SPAIN	Fathers	6.92	15.68	23.04	2.51	10.6
	Children	9.42	13.96	14.8	5.22	11.11
	Men	9.67	6.64	14.32	5.19	9.83
	Women	12.73	8.61	18.01	8.15	13.2
ITALY	Fathers		22.44	25.43	6.13	8.05
	Children		21.13	10.73	4.96	9.74
	Men		12.59	10.54	4.66	12.62
	Women		14.9	12.78	6.48	13.26
PORTUGAL	Fathers			16.77	17.3	21.67
	Children			16.03	17.04	19.02
	Men			12.81	7.93	14.48
	Women			16.94	9.04	17.79
GREECE	Fathers				20.68	33.06
	Children				10.76	18.9
	Men				10.54	20.6
	Women				11.21	21.71
SEC	Fathers					12.55
	Children					10.34
	Men					10.88
	Women					11.71

*In appendix each cohort's figures are shown independent.

Table 7 compares the dissimilarity scores of each pair of countries over the three cohorts for the EU-21 and SEC for fathers and children. As the table shows, a pattern of convergence can be found in the SEC's class structures in comparison to the EU-21 figures, fluctuating from 12.55 in fathers to 10.34 percent in their children across the three cohorts. Nonetheless, if we look at individual countries, there are specific trends. Italy and Spain are the two countries most like the EU-21, whereas Portugal and Greece are the countries with the most significant differences, which is not surprising given that both countries retained considerable agricultural sectors.

In general terms, it could be said that there is a convergence process within the SEC towards the EU-21 class structure over the three cohorts. The second and third cohorts of women certainly played the leading role in this process. However, taking everything into account, the data suggest that the class structure of each Southern European country is more similar to the overall SEC class structure than it is to the EU-21 benchmark.

Absolute mobility

Table 8 shows the components into which absolute mobility can be broken down. It includes total mobility rates (which are made of upward, downward, and horizontal rates), immobility or

inheritance rates, and vertical mobility rates, which are the result of adding up both upward and downward rates.

Table 8 Absolute mobility rates through the cohorts

Country*		ES	IT	PT	GR	SEC	EU 21	ES	IT	PT	GR	SEC	EU 21	ES	IT	PT	GR	SEC	EU 21
Absolute Mobility	Cohort	Men and Women						Men						Women					
Inmobility	1939-50	26.9	24.7	28.6	36.4	27.2	26.4	28.5	24.4	29.4	31.3	27.0	28.3	24.7	25.0	27.7	43.6	27.4	24.5
	1951-62	26.2	23.4	25.3	26.3	24.9	26.3	29.7	25.8	28.0	26.6	27.3	29.8	22.5	20.7	22.3	26.3	22.6	22.9
	1963-74	26.4	27.1	26.4	28.0	26.9	28.7	31.6	30.2	31.4	31.1	30.8	32.2	21.2	23.6	21.2	24.5	22.7	25.3
	1939-74	26.5	25.1	26.7	30.3	26.3	27.1	29.9	26.8	29.6	29.6	28.4	30.1	22.8	23.1	23.9	31.4	24.1	24.2
Total Mobility	1939-50	73.1	75.3	71.5	63.6	72.9	73.6	71.5	75.5	70.6	68.7	73.0	71.6	75.3	75.0	72.3	56.4	72.6	75.5
	1951-62	73.8	76.6	74.7	73.7	75.1	73.7	70.3	74.3	72.0	73.4	72.7	70.2	77.5	79.3	77.3	74.0	77.9	77.1
	1963-74	73.6	73.0	73.7	72.0	73.1	71.3	68.4	69.8	68.6	69.0	69.2	67.8	78.8	76.4	78.8	75.4	77.3	74.7
	1939-74	73.5	74.9	73.3	69.7	73.7	72.9	70.1	73.2	70.4	70.3	71.6	69.9	77.2	76.9	76.6	68.8	75.5	75.8
Upward	1939-50	41.7	43.3	42.7	40.8	42.5	42.9	38.7	43.2	41.5	46.7	42.1	41.4	45.8	43.4	43.8	32.6	42.9	44.4
	1951-62	41.8	43.0	43.6	46.5	42.2	41.5	39.2	39.3	41.5	45.8	40.3	38.2	44.5	43.1	45.7	47.3	44.4	44.8
	1963-74	37.8	34.8	39.4	40.8	36.9	37.2	33.5	32.1	34.4	35.9	33.2	33.6	42.1	37.7	44.7	46.6	40.7	40.6
	1939-74	40.4	39.7	41.9	42.7	40.5	40.5	37.1	38.2	39.2	42.8	38.6	37.7	44.1	41.4	44.7	42.1	42.7	43.3
Downward	1939-50	10.2	11.0	8.2	6.9	10.0	12.2	10.3	11.3	7.0	5.4	9.8	12.8	10.2	10.6	9.2	8.9	10.1	11.5
	1951-62	9.8	13.3	8.5	7.1	10.9	13.4	11.0	14.2	9.2	7.3	11.8	15.1	8.5	12.3	7.9	6.9	9.9	11.7
	1963-74	12.4	16.9	10.3	10.5	14.1	15.6	14.5	18.5	11.5	12.2	15.9	17.8	10.4	15.1	9.0	8.6	12.3	13.4
	1939-74	10.8	13.7	9.0	8.2	11.7	13.7	11.9	14.6	9.2	8.3	12.5	15.2	9.7	12.6	8.7	8.1	10.8	12.2
Vertical	1939-50	51.9	54.2	50.9	47.7	52.5	55.0	48.9	54.4	48.6	52.2	52.0	54.1	56.0	54.0	53.0	41.5	53.0	55.9
	1951-62	51.5	54.3	52.2	53.6	53.1	54.9	50.2	53.5	50.7	53.1	52.1	53.2	53.0	55.3	53.6	54.1	54.2	56.5
	1963-74	50.2	51.6	49.7	51.3	51.0	52.7	48.0	50.6	45.9	48.1	49.1	51.4	52.5	52.8	53.5	54.9	53.0	54.0
	1939-74	51.2	53.4	50.9	50.9	52.2	54.2	49.0	52.8	48.4	51.1	51.1	52.9	53.8	54.0	53.4	50.2	53.4	55.5
Horizontal	1939-50	21.2	21.1	20.6	15.9	20.4	18.6	22.6	21.1	22.0	16.6	21.1	17.5	19.3	21.0	19.3	14.9	19.6	19.6
	1951-62	22.2	22.3	22.5	20.1	22.0	18.8	20.1	20.8	21.4	20.3	20.6	17.0	24.5	24.0	23.7	19.8	23.6	20.6
	1963-74	23.4	21.3	24.0	20.7	22.1	18.6	20.4	19.2	22.7	20.9	20.1	16.4	26.3	23.6	25.3	20.5	24.3	20.7
	1939-74	22.3	21.5	22.4	18.9	21.5	18.7	21.0	20.4	22.0	19.2	20.6	17.0	23.4	22.9	22.8	18.4	22.5	20.3

*Notes: ES=Spain; IT=Italy; PT=Portugal; GR=Greece; SEC=Southern European Countries.

Men's total mobility rates across all the countries covered by the data fluctuated between steadiness from the first to the second cohort and a minimal reduction between the second and the third cohort. Since immobility rates are the inverse reflection of total mobility rates, it is not surprising that they followed the opposite trend, that is, no significant change between the first and second cohorts and a slight climb from the second cohort to the third.

Regarding vertical mobility, upward mobility rates declined gradually across the three cohorts while downward mobility increased steadily. Last, horizontal rates remained almost stable except for Greece, where figures increased significantly from the first to the second cohort to finally level out in the third.

Women's total mobility rates followed an upward trend across the first and second cohorts and then stabilized or decreased minimally among the third cohort. Consequently, immobility rates went down from the older to the middle-aged cohort to finally level out at the youngest.

Despite the significant growth in women's total mobility rates, it was not due to a boom in upward mobility but to a considerable increase in horizontal mobility rates within the second cohort

and a smaller rise in the third. Upward mobility remained constant over the first and second cohorts to decline in the third. In contrast, downward mobility rates went down minimally in the second cohort and slightly increased in the youngest cohort. However, the oldest cohort of Greek women experienced a completely different pattern in comparison with their counterparts in other Southern European countries. For the first cohort, the immobility rates reached a strikingly high 45% percent. However, from the second to the third cohort, there was a dramatic boom in terms of upward and horizontal mobility rates, reaching a higher level than the other Southern European countries, and it finally stabilized among the youngest cohort.

Relative Social Mobility through the Cohorts

Table 9 shows the results of relative social mobility obtained for men and women through the analyzed cohorts. The contrasts for the association models of the previous section are introduced. The models have been split into two sections. In the first one, unconstrained models are exhibited, and in the second one, constrained models. The following statistics are presented: BIC, L2, X2 and a dissimilarity index. The tables display the degree of freedom as well. Given their more desirable comparison properties, the focus will mainly be on BIC statistics. Before continuing, it should be noted that Raftery estimates that 10 points may be considered strong evidence in favor of the model with the more negative BIC value (Raftery, 1995) and less than 5 points must be regarded as indeterminate (Wong, 1994).

The first model is the Independence Model (Equation 1.1), whose parameters will be taken as a baseline. It is not surprising to observe that such a model does not fit for either men or women. The second model is the Conditional Independence Model (Equation 1.2). Here, origins and destinations are statistically independent, but the marginal distributions of mobility tables are allowed to change. As expected, this model provides a better fit than the Independence Model; however, it does not acquire proper statistical significance.

The Constant Social Fluidity model (Equation 1.3) keeps an invariant structure of origin-destinations through cohorts. Based on the BIC parameter, the Constant Social Fluidity model does not provide an acceptable fit in any country for either men or women. This deficiency results in a rejection of the Invariance Hypothesis.

If we change the association between origin and destination by cohorts, we obtain the Unidiff parameters (Equation 1.3). Except for Italian and Spanish women, these parameters reveal little difference between cohorts. Consequently, the impact of cohorts on the strength of association between parents and children has largely remained constant over time. On the other hand, when linear restriction is added, the distance between both models is reduced. In the case of Italy, the five points required to reject the model are overcome.

To know whether there are changes not only between tables but within tables, scaled association models are introduced. A Heterogeneous Simple Model with Homogeneous Diagonals (Equation 2.1) has a more satisfactory fit than the Constant Social Fluidity and Unidiff models. As noted above, such a model consists of a log-multiplicative interaction structure, a multiplicative scaling factor for each cohort. Because the heterogeneous model has obtained a poorer fit than the equal model it is not necessary to deal with the diagonal frequencies in a different way than the off-diagonal frequencies or, put in another way, the temporal change between tables is going to be articulated in a single parameter

in a simple heterogeneous way. At the same time, it permits social classes to differ in immobility and scaling that remains constant over time.

Despite the decrease in the intrinsic association index in all countries across cohorts, women have experienced a more profound change than men. Portuguese and Italian women experienced a monotonic weakening in intergenerational mobility rates. In Spain, women experienced an increase when the first cohort was compared with the second one, with the third cohort achieving a remarkable improvement. The result for Greece yields a decline in the association between origins and destination only for the women who reached occupational maturity in the 1970s and 1980s and not in the 1990s. The case of Portuguese women is particularly noteworthy since the intrinsic association index reveals a strong link between the social positions of fathers and daughters. It should be noted that the strength of association is powerful for the first cohort in Portugal and Greece and notably weaker for Spain and, particularly, Italy. In addition, men undergo a decline; however, the evolution is not as marked as for women in the case of Portugal it is minimal.

The last model, Equal with a Linear Constriction (Equation 2.3), best fits all SEC for both women and men. This means that the strength of the origin-destination association has declined over the years. This improvement leads us to think that the Weak Improvement hypothesis is more accurate than the Trendless Fluctuation hypothesis. Notwithstanding, it should be said that while the Linear model improves significantly on the Equal model for Italy, reaching around ten points (both men and women); in Portugal the difference is reduced to five points (both men and women). It is worth emphasizing the fact that association indexes do not provide a large reduction. That means that the Industrialism hypothesis is inferior to the Weak Improvement hypothesis in explaining the temporal trend for Southern European Countries.

All in all, two different conclusions can be drawn, one regarding women and one regarding men. Concerning the relative rates of female mobility, it should be stressed that it increased in all analyzed countries. The decline in the association is noteworthy in Italy and Portugal (and to a lesser extent in Spain). It must be noted that the intensity of the link between origins and destinations for the first cohort of Italian women is very weak compared to Portuguese women. Concerning men, one can conclude that Italy, Spain and Greece have experienced a limited decline in mobility rates.

Table 9 Models of Relative Social Mobility

Models	MEN						WOMEN					
	BIC	L^2	X^2	Δ	df	p-value	BIC	L^2	X^2	Δ	df	p-value
SPAIN												
Panel A: Unsconstrained Association Models												
Independence	1359.43	2209.05	2454.23	0.1978	95	0.000	619.76	1459.25	1688.24	0.1708	95	0.000
Conditional Independence	1183.58	1854.34	2031.81	0.1807	75	0.000	315.82	978.59	1052.40	0.1244	75	0.000
Constant	-387.13	60.03	58.98	0.0309	50	0.156	-384.99	56.84	56.26	0.0304	50	0.235
Unidiff	-369.92	59.36	58.25	0.0305	48	0.1260	-372.18	51.97	51.74	0.0288	48	0.322
Unidiff Parameters	1.0000	0.9846	1.0343				1.0000	1.1254	0.9404			
Linear Restriction	-378.51	59.71	58.74	0.0307	49	0.140	-376.95	56.04	55.39	0.0305	49	0.227
Panel B: Constrained Association Models												
Equal Diagonals	-461.03	93.45	91.80	0.0368	62	0.006	-469.03	78.84	78.31	0.0334	62	0.073
Free Diagonals	-372.86	74.30	71.44	0.0297	50	0.014	-371.09	70.74	70.54	0.0280	50	0.028
Linear and Equal	-469.72	93.71	92.30	0.0368	63	0.007	-473.63	83.08	82.37	0.0358	63	0.046
Intrinsic Association Index	2.5458	2.399	2.2585				2.8064	2.6222	2.446			
ITALY												
Panel A: Unsconstrained Association Models												
Independence	1431.74	2323.36	2623.55	0.1642	95	0.000	1073.3	1951.50	2422.91	0.1595	95	0.000
Conditional Independence	999.69	1703.60	1906.70	0.1419	75	0.000	432.83	1126.36	1223.4	0.1147	75	0.000

Constant	-422.31	46.96	46.68	0.0227	50	0.596	-393.39	68.95	67.59	0.0283	50	0.039
Unidiff	-406.82	43.68	43.32	0.0216	48	0.650	-378.69	64.26	65.16	0.0272	48	0.050
Unidiff Parameters	1.0000	0.9436	1.0529				1.0000	0.8669	0.8803			
Linear Restriction	-413.85	46.04	45.79	0.0224	49	0.594	-386.63	66.47	65.37	0.0276	49	0.049
Panel B: Constrained Association Models												
Equal Diagonals	-442.86	139.03	140.61	0.0379	62	0.000	-451.73	121.58	124.64	0.0371	62	0.000
Free Diagonals	-346.66	122.60	124.05	0.0322	50	0.000	-357.49	104.85	107.70	0.0312	50	0.000
Linear and Equal	-451.17	140.11	141.87	0.0387	63	0.000	-460.93	121.62	124.58	0.0372	63	0.000
Intrinsic Association Index	1.984	1.8443	1.7107				2.1749	1.870	1.5783			
GREECE												
Panel A: Unsconstrained Association Models												
Independence	111.95	877.34	900.69	0.2054	95	0.000	229.83	976.47	1167.37	0.2334	95	0.000
Conditional Independence	28.63	632.89	649.57	0.1656	75	0.000	-110.93	478.51	477.72	0.1587	75	0.000
Constant	-333.52	69.31	67.86	0.0509	50	0.036	-338.68	54.28	54.10	0.0413	50	0.314
Unidiff	-318.75	67.96	66.86	0.0494	48	0.030	-322.99	54.25	51.01	0.0416	48	0.248
Unidiff Parameters	1.0000	1.0228	1.1347				1.0000	0.9758	0.9836			
Linear Restriction	-326.63	68.14	67.14	0.049	49	0.036	-330.84	54.27	51.07	0.0415	49	0.280
Panel B: Constrained Association Models												
Equal Diagonals	-408.44	91.07	90.84	0.0575	62	0.009	-415.46	71.81	67.49	0.0501	62	0.184
Free Diagonals	-341.26	61.56	61.09	0.0383	50	0.126	-331.91	61.06	57.65	0.0384	50	0.136
Linear and Equal	-416.41	91.15	90.99	0.0578	63	0.012	-422.45	72.69	67.77	0.0504	63	0.189
Intrinsic Association Index	2.3644	2.2134	2.0688				1.9778	1.9138	1.8525			
PORTUGAL												
Panel A: Unsconstrained Association Models												
Independence	128.34	869.01	985.77	0.2128	95	0.000	14.88	757.33	856.88	0.1893	95	0.000
Conditional Independence	53.67	638.41	689.37	0.1849	75	0.000	-103.96	482.17	505.13	0.1358	75	0.000
Constant	-340.03	49.79	46.08	0.0442	50	0.482	-342.88	47.87	42.18	0.0378	50	0.559
Unidiff	-324.63	49.59	45.84	0.0443	48	0.409	-327.82	47.30	42.08	0.0374	48	0.501
Unidiff Parameters	1.0000	0.9503	0.9842				1.0000	1.1075	1.0743			
Linear Restriction	-332.24	49.78	46.09	0.0442	49	0.442	-335.31	47.63	41.91	0.0375	49	0.528
Panel B: Constrained Association Models												
Equal Diagonals	-401.55	81.82	79.89	0.0544	62	0.046	-396.20	88.34	81.12	0.0574	62	0.016
Free Diagonals	-317.80	72.01	68.03	0.0439	50	0.022	-310.73	80.02	74.96	0.0500	50	0.004
Linear and Equal	-409.14	82.03	80.05	0.0541	63	0.054	-403.66	88.68	82.19	0.0575	63	0.018
Intrinsic Association Index	2.6754	2.6713	2.6674				5.3334	5.0794	4.8364			

Conclusions

During this period, Southern European Countries (SEC) slightly reduced the strength of association between origins and destination. The structures of opportunities in the SEC underwent a slight linear change between 1970 and 2005. These results have confirmed what we have called the Weak Improvement hypothesis. In other words, there has been a small but significant intergenerational improvement in social fluidity, despite specific differences among selected countries.

Compared with previous research, our findings reveal certain dissimilarities regarding the weight of social inheritance. Our confirmed hypothesis for Italy validates the results reached by Schiezzerotto and Marzadro (2008) and Meraviglia and Ganzeboom (2006) for Italy, while it refutes those reached by Marqués and Herrera-Usagre (2010) and Carabaña (1999) for Spain, as they concluded that no change had occurred. Two main differences may explain these different findings for Spain. First, these researchers have used a different class scheme. Secondly, they did not apply constrained association models, which have demonstrated a more powerful fit than unconstrained models, such as the Constant Social Fluidity and Unidiff models. In the case of Portugal and Greece, ours are the first results devoted to the subject as far as we know.

Considering all the above, the trend in intergenerational social mobility has been more acute for women than men, but this does not apply to all women because Greek women exhibit similar rates to Greek men. The period after entering the European Union does not modify the strength of the

association. The last cohort (1993-2004) continued changing following a slight decline in the association.

It should be noted that regarding the overall European context, several studies have shown that Italy exhibits lower mobility rates than its European neighbors. However, within the Southern European countries, Italy is where social mobility rates have improved the most despite the rapid industrialization process there having been consolidated sooner, leaving less room for improvement.

This research has examined how various economic, social, and political factors can impact intergenerational social mobility. It suggests that further research in other regions, such as ASEAN countries, is needed to understand how different economic growth patterns and democratic developments can influence opportunities for current and future generations. Any country that aspires to a better, more inclusive, and equal society should prioritize social protection and promote a model of educational system that ensures equal access regardless of people's social origin (Khemaphat, 2022).

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Theoretical Foundations for Social Justice Ethics in Social Policy
by John Rawls and Robert Nozick

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Abstract

The transformation of social welfare and social policies requires an understanding of the philosophical principles and fundamental concepts to guide the direction of social welfare and welfare policies toward the goal of social justice. This article aims to examine the intellectual concepts of justice as proposed by John Rawls and Robert Nozick. Comparative analysis was performed to reflect the differences and similarities of the two concepts. Rawls' conception represents the social democratic ideology, while Nozick's perspective represents the new libertarianism ideology. Utilizing document analysis, Rawls' principles of justice emphasize two central tenets: (1) the principle of equal fundamental liberties for all individuals and (2) the difference principle, which advocates for benefiting the least advantaged in society. Rawls' theory posits that societal inequalities can be rectified by redistributing economic benefits to the disadvantaged. On the other hand, Nozick's principles of justice include (1) the principle of just acquisition, stating that resources must be acquired fairly, and (2) the principle of just transfer, which entails voluntary exchanges without state intervention. Both ideologies prioritize individual liberties and oppose utilitarianism, emphasizing the importance of justice and its outcomes. These perspectives underscore the underlying philosophical foundations and divergent policy paradigms based on contrasting worldviews.

Keywords: Justice, John Rawls, Robert Nozick, Ethics, Social policy

Introduction

Challenging questions often posed when people face critical problems and strive to solve them at a societal level include whether the government should be the first-handed instrument used to solve problems, how they should find the solution, whether it is effective, to what extent the responsibility should be given to the government sector, and whether allocating this responsibility to the government may actually lead to more problems. In contrast, questions are also asked as to whether that instrument is the responsibility of the people in terms of taking care of themselves and sharing the responsibilities with all sectors, how much risk or impact they can accept with minimum assistance or interference from state power, how the resources are distributed for solving or responding to the problems and needs of the people, how much the shares could be, and what criterion is used as a reference. The resource distribution is always subject to conflict (Kelsen, 1975, cited in Pakeerut, 2011, p. 331). These questions are

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all worth careful consideration as they are embedded with different political, philosophical, and economic ideologies.

The global social issue that must be addressed is inequality, which leads to injustice. In Thailand, inequality ranks first among 20 countries globally (Jitsuchon, 2015). This significant statistic indicates that inequality in Thailand is closely linked to the crucial variable of social injustice, reflecting societal unfairness. The establishment of a justice society, often referred to as a fair or equitable society, is a recurring theme. Justice or fairness is not only a concept but also a principle, means, and ends within itself (Rawls, 1999). Justice is also metaphorically likened to the core of social welfare and welfare work (Nontapatamadul, 2022; Aroonjit, 2014).

Understanding the concept of justice can either be straightforward or challenging. Due to its multifaceted complexity, justice cannot be indicated or defined (Tejapira, 2013; Pakeerut, 2011). It also depends on societal norms, legal principles, moral ethics, social conditions, economic factors, technical definitions, practices, time, geography, social conditions, and individual perspectives (Nelson, Palonsky, & Mccathy, 2010). The concept of justice is as old as politics itself. Justice is fundamental to political science, ethics, law, and philosophy. It has also been interpreted differently. Some perceive justice as a virtue, while others equate it with equality. What may be fair for one person may not necessarily be the same for another (Pandey and Jaiswal, 2020). Scholars not only attempt to define justice but also propose various theories related to it. Justice seems appropriate in one context but may vary in another. Therefore, the study, interpretation, and reflection on the definition of justice or fairness represent the exploring of the value of human life from different perspectives. Everyone's viewpoint may differ, but all aim to uncover the value of life and dignity by utilizing wisdom and reasoning as their principles. However, human lives do not effortlessly and consistently align. Conflicts of values may arise in human thoughts and actions. These conflicts entail dual or multiple disputing feelings that may lead to decision-making challenges (Nuremram, 2002). For instance, assigning value to justice reflects the diverse concepts of fairness among scholars from the past to the present. Ultimately, thoughts and actions require ethical considerations to reflect on the valuation of justice or fairness according to the fundamental perspectives of individuals.

Social justice has been widely discussed over the past 200 years. Scholars advocating for ethical theories based on duties or significant regulations of individual justice include John Rawls, the author of "Theory of Justice," published in 1971. Rawls' work challenged the utilitarianism paradigm, sparking extensive debates and discussions. Three years later, Robert Nozick, Rawls's colleague at Harvard University (Schaefer, 2008), responded directly to Rawls's ideas through his work "Anarchy, State, and Utopia" in 1975. Nozick's notable contribution, often referred to as the Entitlement Theory, provided a contrasting perspective based on natural rights, mainly influenced by Locke's ideas (Salahuddin, 2018) within the framework of libertarianism. Both Rawls and Nozick have been acclaimed as leading contemporary political philosophers of the 20th century. Rawls constructed his theory on the foundation of Kantian moral principles, which underpin the concept of the welfare state. In contrast, Nozick developed his theory based on Locke's natural rights philosophy, emphasizing new libertarian ideals to challenge Rawls's ideas. Both theories significantly influence the understanding of public policy (Chaiyaporn, 2022), serving as frameworks for shaping public and social policies.

The transformation of social welfare, social security, and social policies requires a thorough investigation and understanding of the philosophy, ideology, and political framework of society, politics, and economics. This transformation is essential to discern the direction of change or reform in social welfare and social security towards the goal of social justice. The underlying perspectives of

ethical principles diverge in social policies. It is necessary to understand ideologies, such as Social Democracy, which broadly interprets social welfare and emphasizes comprehensive benefits, and an understanding of Neoliberalism or the New Right, as a significant global influence (Nontapattamadul, 2022). This article, therefore, aims to study the ethical concepts of John Rawls and Robert Nozick and to analyze and compare both perspectives. John Rawls represents the social democratic ideology, while Robert Nozick represents the new liberal ideology. By examining related literature, this article presents examples illustrating similarities and differences, leading to different perspectives on social policy planning.

1. Theoretical foundations for social justice ethics in social policy

Theoretical foundations in social policy on the ethics of John Rawls and Robert Nozick, including arguments based on ethical foundations between both perspectives, are detailed as follows:

1.1 Ethics based on the concept of justice by John Rawls

The theory of John Rawls has gained significant attention in academia. Over the past several years, Rawls has proposed a theory of justice rooted in the traditional social contract theory, originally proposed by John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Immanuel Kant, who rejected utilitarianism that aimed at the greatest sum of satisfaction. Rawls' theory prioritizes equality and fairness, acknowledging the differences among individuals. He asserts that individuals should mutually agree on the starting point, known as the original position, where the veils of ignorance shroud the knowledge of one's characteristics, such as gender, economic status, social class, ethnicity, beliefs, religion, and politics (Rawls, 1999). Citizens can have choices within a systematically established set of criteria. These criteria are constructed from what Rawls refers to as the "original position of equality" concept, which leads to the formation of a social contract. This contract is based on two principles: 1) The Principle of Equal Liberty, which entails providing equal fundamental liberties for all individuals, and 2) The Difference Principle, which permits inequalities in society and the economy only if they benefit everyone equally (Equal Opportunity), and provisions of those benefits are for the least advantaged individuals in society (the Least Advantaged). Rawls believes that to address natural inequalities, a society must prioritize the primary benefits to those who are economically disadvantaged.

John Rawls argued that caring for the most disadvantaged is not merely a societal duty but a moral imperative that must be enacted through fair institutional structures. Rawls thus emphasizes the significance of welfare extensively to enhance the capabilities and opportunities of those who benefit the least in society. The welfare distribution enables them to attain equal potential and abilities to seize opportunities in the same way as others. The state is responsible for establishing a welfare system that grants social welfare as a universal entitlement to ensure equal opportunities or social status for everyone (Santikul, 2020), thereby striving for egalitarianism in society.

1.2 Ethics based on the concept of justice by Robert Nozick

The concept proposed by Robert Nozick acknowledges inequality as a necessity within a market economy system. He contends that individuals should receive rewards appropriate to their differing abilities, which is a system that must remain free from state intervention (Iatridis, 1994). Each person has the right to live their own life as they wish without interference while simultaneously respecting the rights of others. These rights include 1) the right to non-interference, 2) the right to

property acquired fairly, 3）the right to make contracts, and 4）the right to enforce contracts (Koven, 2015). These principles must always be considered.

Based on these grounds, Nozick thus disagrees with providing welfare for any specific group within society funded by taxes imposed on another group. Such a practice is unfair. Delegating governmental responsibilities for service provision to citizens is seen as over-empowering the state, potentially leading to inefficiency (Pandey & Jaiswal, 2020). Consequently, Nozick agrees with the concept of the Minimal State.

The concept of fairness in Robert Nozick's theory of distributive justice comprises two conditions (Koven, 2015): 1) Justice in initial holding refers to whether resources are initially acquired in a just manner, meaning whether the acquisition of resources for generating wealth occurs fairly (e.g., without theft). 2) Justice in transfer relates to whether resources are acquired through voluntary exchanges in the market or whether the individuals providing them do so willingly. If both conditions are met, it can be concluded that there is justice in the distribution of benefits. The state cannot legitimately seize property without consent from the rightful owner according to principles of distributive justice, which dictate that any distribution of resources to society for charitable purposes or any other benefits must occur through voluntary exchanges with the willing consent of individuals. Even though inequalities and disparities may arise, they are deemed acceptable if people exchange freely and with willing consent.

1.3 Arguments on ethics based on the concept of justice by John Rawls and Robert Nozick

Rawls prioritizes the optimization of benefits for the individuals who receive the least benefits. He agrees with redistributive policies and comprehensive welfare provision as the duties of the state and views the state as the best solution for rectifying inequalities by redistributing resources. However, according to Nozick's perspective, individuals do not primarily seek the best for those who receive the least benefits from the state. Instead, they desire basic welfare guaranteed to ensure a decent quality of life. They also seek freedom without state interference. As the size of the state increases, its power and control over citizens grow. Consequently, individual freedoms diminish. A minimal state, therefore, is preferable (Wuttichai, 2022), as it maximizes individual freedoms, aiming to afford citizens full liberty.

The endorsement of policies, which is aimed at the redistribution of resources to ensure comprehensive welfare benefits, particularly for marginalized groups in society, and support for the state in resource allocation under Rawlsian principles, has been contested by Nozick. Nozick argues that agreeing with such principles would entail a higher tax burden for everyone. Individuals would be compelled to contribute to a system whereby the state redistributes resources according to its post hoc vision. This contribution may not necessarily be fair or genuinely beneficial to society. It also disregards the consent of individuals' preferences (Pandey and Jaiswal, 2020). It is also considered unfair (Koven, 2015) due to their violation of fundamental principles for short-term gains, causing long-term societal damage and infringing individual rights. Acceptance of such infringements implies a tacit endorsement of their perpetuation, potentially leading to the acceptance of unfair practices.

Nozick argues that economic inequality does not necessarily cease or vanish within society, even when resources are distributed equally. Those who work diligently and utilize their abilities continue to work within the societal framework, while those who remain unemployed or show reluctance continue in their behavior. Economic inequality reemerges within society (Pandey and Jaiswal, 2020). Consequently, Nozick disfavors social welfare systems. The state primarily assumes the

responsibility of tax collection and resource allocation or service provision to the people, especially if it prioritizes the social disadvantage over others within society.

Rawls rebuts Nozick's notion that adhering strictly to individual rights is excessive. Rawls argues that society does not exist solely to affirm the pre-existing rights of individuals in isolation but rather as a collective endeavor where everyone strives for a better life within the shared societal framework (Yezzi, 1986). Therefore, the concept of justice encompasses setting conditions for fair social cooperation. Individuals who are equal in freedom and rationality agree upon conditions from the original position, which involves ignorance. This rational veil leads to reaching agreements on social cooperation by establishing a relatively neutral starting point. In this way, both principles of justice fulfill the task of formulating a social contract.

Rawls and Nozick also disagree regarding the significance of naturally acquired assets and socially advantageous circumstances that afford individuals disparate advantages. From Rawls' ethical standpoint, there is no justification for why individuals should be entitled to more benefits simply because they possess innately acquired assets, are luckier, or benefit from socially advantageous circumstances. Rawls contends that accepting this concept would lead to an acceptance of the principle of difference or the second principle of justice to a greater extent. Conversely, Nozick sees no reason why individuals should not have a right to possess their naturally acquired assets, such as being born into wealthy families or reaping benefits from socially advantageous circumstances, e.g., individuals engaging in commerce and growing rich through the sale of goods or provision of services. The individual's economic growth meets market demands and aligns with prevailing societal conditions. On the other hand, those with fewer or no assets might feel unfortunate, which does not necessarily entail injustice (Yezzi, 2020). The foundational concepts of both thus differ.

Nozick's conceptual framework has been critiqued theoretically as his foundational principles render him an advocate of libertarianism. He also sought to separate the state from politics and the people over which the state holds no control of authority. Furthermore, he has been criticized for being indifferent to the suffering of others (Pandey and Jaiswal, 2020). The rationale behind this critique is that poverty management is the state's responsibility. It is argued that the state should act to break the cycle of suffering, ensuring that the people do not suffer.

2. The comparative analysis of frameworks between John Rawls and Robert Nozick

The frameworks proposed by Rawls and Nozick exhibit both similarities and distinctions as follows:

2.1 Similarities of frameworks between John Rawls and Robert Nozick

Although the perspectives on justice by Rawls and Nozick present contrasting arguments, there are notable similarities in their frameworks as follows:

Firstly, both Rawls and Nozick emphasize the preservation of basic fairness principles in their theories, notably the principle of preserving individual liberties (Salahuddin, 2018), prioritizing the importance of universal freedom for all individuals. That freedom cannot be violated before considering other principles.

Secondly, both philosophers diverge from certain aspects of the utilitarian principle (Gališanka, 2019), particularly in sacrificing the benefits of the minority for the satisfaction of the majority and

claiming ethical concerns (Santikul, 2020). Maximizing overall satisfaction for the majority may result in suffering, sacrifice, and burden-bearing by certain groups of people (Rawls, 1999) without genuinely addressing individual differences.

Thirdly, Rawls and Nozick acknowledge that their theoretical speculations may have practical implications for justice or fairness in human nature at a low level (Pandey and Jaiswal, 2020), as individuals tend to act according to their desires.

Table 1 Comparability between the frameworks of John Rawls and Robert Nozick

Similarities	John Rawls and Robert Nozick
Major principles	The principle of preserving freedom is paramount, with no individual capable of transgressing it.
Disagreement	The utilitarian ideology aims to maximize benefits for the majority, albeit at the expense of disadvantage to the minority.
Awareness of the attributes of the theory	The theory is merely a prediction that may not affect the true nature of humanity in the natural world.

Source: the author's analysis

2.2 Distinctions of frameworks between John Rawls and Robert Nozick

The frameworks proposed by Rawls and Nozick differ as follows:

Point 1: Rawls' conception of justice asserts that everyone possesses inherent rights akin to freedom. The control of inequality is permissible if it benefits the most disadvantaged individuals in society. Such control compensates for inequalities (Sari, 2020). Conversely, Nozick argues that fair exchange aligns with the moral virtues of diligence, industriousness, and individual effort, culminating in rights to property ownership and inheritance (Nozick, 1973). Those rights characterize absolute ownership derived from individual creation.

Point 2: Rawls' theory emphasizes fundamental principles of equal basic freedoms, equal opportunities, and the principle of difference. Rawls rationalizes that societal inequalities arise only if the disadvantaged group benefits the most. In contrast, Nozick's entitlement theory emphasizes the acquisition and transfer of property, highlighting individuals' rights to acquire and transfer property freely, leading to fair exchanges through voluntary transactions.

Point 3: Rawls's conception emphasizes the significant role of the state in fostering societal justice. Rawls advocates for a welfare state to address social inequalities. In contrast, Nozick argues that the state should primarily safeguard fundamental rights by considering any form of wealth redistribution as unfair and a violation of individual rights.

Point 4: Rawls advocates for an equal distribution of resources and opportunities to benefit those disadvantaged in society. Conversely, Nozick underscores the significance of individual rights and liberties. He contends that individuals inherently possess rights to their work. Any redistribution of resources constitutes a fundamental infringement upon individual rights.

Point 5: Rawls's framework relies on tax-based mechanisms to ensure fairness in resource distribution (Pantasen (translator), 2003), while Nozick's perspective places confidence in market

mechanisms to establish justice or fairness. Nozick posits that an efficient market system can administer effective welfare provisions (Aroonjit, 2014).

Point 6: Rawls prioritizes the state's provision of social welfare, believing that the state can comprehensively aid in alleviating the various hardships the people face. He contends that welfare states can effectively mitigate societal inequalities. Conversely, Nozick opposes state-driven welfare as any interventions infringe on individual liberties. He suggests that the state may exploit welfare to consolidate political power, aggravating societal inequality.

Point 7: Rawls perceives property rights as a societal construct that should be controlled by state regulation to ensure fairness. He claims that individuals lack inherent, absolute property rights and urges for the distribution of property beneficial to society. Conversely, Nozick asserts the fundamental nature of property rights, arguing that individuals possess inviolable property rights. The state intervention, instead, endorses universal welfare provision. (Nozick, 1999)

Point 8: Rawls' theory prioritizes the overall well-being of society. Everyone should prioritize benefiting those who are most disadvantaged in society. On the other hand, Nozick prioritizes individual rights and liberties, arguing that individuals have the right to pursue their benefits and that society should not interfere with individuals' choices.

Point 9: The outcomes of Rawls' principle of justice as fairness or equality contrast with Nozick's (Santikul, 2020). It posits that equality entails quantitative fairness. Although fairness may not strictly indicate quantitative equality, it ensures that individuals have equal opportunities.

Table 2 Distinctions of the frameworks between John Rawls and Robert Nozick

Distinctions	John Rawls	Robert Nozick
Justice and fairness	Benefits must be provided to those most disadvantaged in society to redress inherent inequalities.	The exchange of fairness based on individual capabilities leads to the acquisition of property ownership rights by consent.
The focus of the principle	The foundational principles of equality and diversity benefit marginalized individuals within society.	The principle of acquisition and transfer of property rights freely occurs through voluntary exchanges.
State's role	The state's crucial role in fostering justice through providing welfare to the people cultivates social equity.	The state's responsibility to safeguard and uphold fundamental rights is essential. The state's redistribution of wealth is construed as infringing upon personal freedoms and equity.
Resource distribution	Resource distribution is the equitable distribution of resources and opportunities to benefit marginalized individuals within the societal framework.	The lack of support for resource distribution is considered a violation of individual rights, as individuals inherently possess rights to their intellectual output.

Distinctions	John Rawls	Robert Nozick
Mechanics for justice	Tax system mechanism	Market system mechanism
Social welfare perspective	Emphasizing the significance of social welfare, the state endeavors to comprehensively alleviate the various hardships the people face.	The state's welfare provision is regarded as violating individual freedom.
Rights of property	The entitlement to property constitutes a societal framework warranting regulation by the state. Individuals inherently lack absolute entitlements to property. Distribution should be arranged for the collective societal benefit.	Property rights are considered fundamental and inherent. Individuals possess absolute property rights. The state lacks the authority to intervene or infringe upon these rights.
Prioritization	Focus on society	Focus on individuals
Ethical consequence	Equality and equity in justice	Equality of justice

Source: The author's analysis

3. The foundation of transforming social welfare programs and social policies

The foundation of ideas in transforming social welfare and social policy requires understanding the fundamental concepts of social and economic foundations. This understanding leads to the goal of social justice. Prioritizing and recognizing the benefits of welfare in any form will add value to the welfare concept. The state must identify the responsibilities of welfare. Social welfare should be based on a consensus of political, economic, and social ideologies, as it can reflect the principles, formats, characteristics, and fundamental welfare mechanisms according to real-life conditions. It should be combined with considerations of appropriateness, aligning with social contexts in various dimensions.

To create a clearer understanding of the application, The author would like to provide the following examples. Suppose we accept and desire social policies that focus on providing social welfare to the people, primarily benefiting disadvantaged groups in society to create social justice. In that case, we must accept the burden of higher tax rates. The government then can manage the expenditure incurred from the necessity of providing social welfare, such as redistributing resources to provide welfare to the unemployed homeless. The state will determine the tax rate to collect from working people. The more they work hard and earn, the more taxes they will have to pay proportionately. As can be seen in the welfare states in Denmark, Norway, and Finland, which greatly prioritize welfare for the people, citizens must pay high taxes, resulting in a high proportion of income from taxes, ranging from 37-41% of GDP (Na Ranong, 2014; Chaimongkol Suprom-in, cited in Santikul, 2020). If Thailand transformed into a welfare state, the people must accept and agree to higher tax rates to achieve comprehensive welfare policies that benefit the underprivileged. This action aligns with Rawls' fundamental ethical theory. However, Thai people cannot accept the high tax rates imposed by the state because they see that the tax they must give to the state is their income earned and exchanged according to the abilities and efforts of each individual. Therefore, imposing high tax rates is considered unfair. Thai people can only accept social policies prioritizing basic welfare as necessary for everyone.

Acceptance of the policy depends on reciprocal exchanges in the market system, or what is known as welfare in the market system, such as working and receiving benefits from social security, purchasing health insurance, and so on. This is akin to accepting the fundamental ethical theory of Nozick, which undoubtedly leads to different foundations of ethical theory and thus affects the formulation of other social policy directions.

Considerations for the transformation of social policies involving various components may be considered. An exemplary case in Thailand is the health policy, which has undergone significant changes, from the "30 Baht to Cure All Diseases" initiative to the current "Gold Card" system. The transformation has faced considerable criticism and academic scrutiny regarding its impacts. This health insurance policy in Thailand reflects an explicit state welfare provision aligning with Rawls' concept of social democracy, emphasizing welfare state provisions and healthcare as a fundamental right of the people. This policy positively impacts society by improving public health, assisting low-income households, and supporting non-working household members (Na Ranong, Wongmontha & Na Ranong, 2006). The mortality rate of children and infants in rural areas decreased, while income and savings were indirectly inclined (Puey Ungphakorn, Institute for Economic Research, 2017). However, some data reflect the reality of Thai society, indicating that the tax revenue may not sufficiently support comprehensive welfare policies (Tachotiussanee, 2023). This shortcoming is caused by the low tax payment at 16-17% of the GDP (Na Ranong, 2014; Chaimongkol Suprom-in, cited in Santikul, 2020). The country is also experiencing an aging society and rising healthcare costs due to advancements in medical technology, leading to the higher cost of healthcare (Na Ranong, Wongmontha, Na Ranong, 2006), inadequacy compared to health expenditure and efficiency (Puey Ungphakorn Institute for Economic Research, 2017), decline in healthcare service quality (Na Ranong, 2014), corruption in the procurement of medical equipment (Thai PBS, 2020), and so on. Due to the impacts mentioned above, many sectors have proposed changing the primary health insurance program back to one that only helps the poor or disadvantaged groups (Na Ranong, Wongmontha & Na Ranong, 2006). Changing social policy regarding the healthcare system should be considered appropriate and aligned with the reality of society and the economy in the present era. This concept is based on the Nozick's neo-liberalism. The country's healthcare system may be adjusted to take the form of health welfare in which the people must be actively responsible for their health expenses through various savings funds or by contributing to healthcare service costs. In the case of disadvantaged groups or those unable to afford healthcare expenses, public and private sectors of society will have a role in aiding and care, as well as in promoting the purchase of health insurance by the public to establish a foundation of health security for themselves and their families.

These different political ideologies, theories, or principles lead to different outcomes in policy and practice, each with advantages and limitations. Rawls' concept has the advantage that social welfare is considered a basic social right that citizens are entitled to as it provides people with comprehensive life assurance and helps to alleviate the poverty of the people (Neuhaus, 1979 cited in Petprasert, 2003). However, the limitation of this concept may lead to interference with the liberty of the people and distract the mechanisms of the free market (Baldock, 1999). The state needs to allocate a high budget, and welfare may start to decline and may not adequately address the real needs of the people (Petchprasert, 2003). Providing welfare may be transformed into rights but may not be effective and binding. This provision might lead to complaints and ultimate conflicts. At the same time, Nozick's concept has the advantage of the incentive used for competition among private sectors to improve welfare quality. It also allows non-profit private sectors to organize welfare through charity organizations and communities to contribute to a better society. However, the limitation of welfare may

lead to social and economic inequalities (Touraine, 2001). No idea, theory, or ideology is perfect or "the best." There are only foundation principles that lead to methods for social goals, depending on perspectives, beliefs, and values. A global trend of changing welfare policies and social policies is emphasizing welfare neither in the ideologies of social democracy nor new liberal ideologies. Instead, there is increasing compromise between these two ideologies. For instance, the state prioritizes the concept of welfare through workfare rather than welfare per se like welfare states, but welfare is derived from work without rejecting the principles of free-market liberalism (Heron, Kevins and Kersbergen, 2022; Kemran Mestan, 2016). Changing social policy and organizing social welfare in Thailand should consider fundamental ideas, ideologies, and principles compatible and suitable for domestic and international social, economic, and political conditions. This change aims to reduce social inequalities and align with global situations.

This article points out that the underlying basis of social policies lies in political ideology, economics, and society. It is also rooted in ethics, behavior, human relationships, rights and responsibilities, and the allocation of benefits in society. All of these vary according to individuals' perspectives, ideologies, philosophies, or fundamental beliefs, which become the foundation for the diversity of social policies. These perspectives and ideologies are crucial for countries in shaping future social policy direction, forms, and clear objectives. However, the author would also wish to highlight that "nothing is free in the world; everything has a price to pay." This idea should remind the state not to fall into excessive indulgence in populism, leading to ultimately harmful consequences for society, as seen in the past in countries that once flourished but fell into ruin (Bunma, 2014) due to the manipulation of populist policies by politicians.

Conclusion

Social justice is the heart of social welfare work. The foundation of social policies is based on the concept of justice, with a crucial aspect of justice being the moral claims that connect human behaviors in society. Justice is part of the ethical duties related to moral principles, involving allocating and distributing various societal benefits. Ethical theories of justice are framed within the idea of impartiality towards fairness. Justice is also characterized as an inclusive and abstract concept. Definitions and meanings of justice may be similar or different depending on individual perspectives or fundamental beliefs. Therefore, valuing different ethical principles of justice leads to varying importance in designing, planning, and implementing various social policies. These practices create knowledge that leads to understanding fundamentals, critical thinking, decision-making, and developing appropriate social policies aligned with social structures and contexts.

Ultimately, the author remains of the view that no matter how much we study systems or fundamental ideologies, no matter what policies are implemented, we cannot escape the reality that these ideologies and policies cannot be valid if the fundamental democratic rights in the country are not fully realized.

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A Comprehensive Literature Review on Dating Violence Among University Students: Prevention's Policies and Recommendations for Vietnam

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Abstract

Dating violence (DV) represents a critical public health and safety concern and is global pervasive across diverse populations. It affects individuals irrespective of ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, occupation, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. Notably, youths are particularly vulnerable to experiencing dating violence compared to other demographic groups. Additionally, students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ), or those uncertain about their gender identity, face higher incidences of physical and sexual dating violence compared to their heterosexual peers. The repercussions of dating violence are profound, encompassing numerous adverse physical and psychological consequences for its victims. Despite the severity of this issue, research on DV, especially regarding prevention policies, remains insufficient in Vietnam. To enhance the well-being of DV victims, comprehensive research on their experiences and the development of effective prevention policies are imperative for Vietnamese universities.

Background

Dating violence (DV) has been a significant topic of interest in public health and social sciences (Jennings, 2017). DV is defined as "the display of behaviors by couples towards each other, including verbal, sexual, emotional, and physical violence in dating relationships, and imposing social restrictions on each other's lives" (Yilmaz et al., 2021). University students, who frequently develop intimate romantic relationships are particularly affected by DV (Sabina, 2008). The prevalence of DV among youth and young adults ranges from 21.8% in young men and 37.2% in young women to as high as 66.5% (Jennings, 2017). Studies show that young sexual minorities are more at risk of DV and experience higher rates of intimate violence and sexual assault than heterosexual college students (Olavarrieta, 2023; Edwards et al., 2016). These individuals experience significantly higher rates of intimate violence and sexual assault compared to their heterosexual counterparts. For instance, a study involving 4,129 college students in New England found that LGBTQ+ students reported substantially higher six-month incidence rates of sexual assault/coercion (heterosexual: 10.9%; LGBTQ+: 24.3%),

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physical IPV (heterosexual: 18.4%; LGBTQ+: 29.8%), and unwanted pursuit (e.g., stalking; heterosexual: 32.1%; LGBTQ+: 47.6%) victimization (Edwards et al., 2016).

DV can lead to serious, lifelong problems affecting the physical, psychological, and social functioning of young individuals. Victims often exhibit symptoms of depression and anxiety at higher rates, have an increased propensity for self-harm and suicide, and are more likely to engage in alcohol and substance use as well as risky sexual behaviors (Hinduja, 2020). Furthermore, negative psychological, physical, and academic outcomes are more prevalent among LGBTQ+ IPV victims compared to heterosexual victims (Edwards et al., 2016). Specifically, transgender young adults, particularly male-to-female transgender individuals, are at higher risk of DV compared to their cisgender peers (Reuter et al., 2017).

In Vietnam, research on DV, especially among women students, is limited. The 2019 Vietnam National Survey on Violence Against Women reported that young women aged 20-24 experienced high rates of sexual violence, with 7.4% experiencing it in the past 12 months and 15.2% over their lifetime (MOLISA, 2019). A 2023 UN Women study with 1809 female Vietnamese students found that 64% of young people aged 18-35 had experienced dating violence, comparable to national research on women's IPV experiences.

Prevalence of dating violence among university students

DV is a serious issue affecting approximately 20%–30% of college students in the United States (Brewer et al., 2018; Wood et al., 2020). Data from a nationally representative sample of 85,071 U.S. college students showed that 20% had experienced at least one form of IPV, including emotional, physical, sexual violence, or stalking (Brewer et al., 2018).

Regarding physical violence, Gover et al. (2008) found that 29% of participants at two U.S. universities had perpetrated physical violence against an intimate partner while 20% reported being victims. Comparable rates of emotional violence were observed by Gidycz et al. (2007), who found that approximately 25% of 425 male students perpetrated moderate verbal aggression and 60% perpetrated physical aggression towards their dating partners. Similarly, Gover et al. (2008) reported that approximately 54% of students had experienced psychological abuse within the previous 12 months, with 52% being victims of such abuse. In terms of sexual violence, Bhochhibhoya et al. (2019) found that 35% of 361 college students had been sexually abused by their dating partner at least once, while Gidycz et al. (2007) reported that 17% of participants had perpetrated some form of sexual abuse against intimate partners. Given the stigma associated with sexual violence, it is likely that participants underreported their behavior. Additionally, data from the CDC's 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicated that, among U.S. high school students who reported dating during the 12 months before the survey, female students experienced higher rates of physical and sexual dating violence than male students.

In Vietnam, although domestic violence is a well-researched topic, studies specifically focusing on dating violence are limited. Nevertheless, these studies indicate that acts of dating violence are quite common. Nguyen Thi Huong (2014) reported a relatively high rate of students experiencing violence, with mental abuse being the most prevalent, followed by physical abuse. Sexual and economic violence demonstrated lower rates of occurrence. Students living with a partner or in a dormitory or boarding house were at greater risk of experiencing physical, mental, and sexual violence compared to those living with parents, siblings, or friends (Nguyen Thi Huong, 2014). A 2016 study by the Y. Change

group surveyed 569 girls aged 18-30 and found that 64% had experienced at least one of six types of violence by their lover. Nearly 59% reported mental abuse, 23% experienced online harassment and violence, and 24% were victims of harassment and stalking after breaking up (Y. Change, 2016).

Recent research indicates that dating violence among young people is increasingly common. Survey results show that young people are quite aware of dating violence, with 94.1% recognizing sexual coercion, 93.1% recognizing physical violence, 88.4% recognizing threats, and 85.5% recognizing verbal abuse. Among respondents, 23% admitted to throwing objects at a partner, and 19% reported breaking or destroying things their partner liked, which is classified as object-related violence. This form of violence occurs more frequently than physical violence (Nguyen Khanh Huyen et al., 2022). In this study, 12.3% of young people admitted to forcing their partner to engage in unwanted sexual activity, and 12.7% reported experiencing technology-related violence. Emotional violence was reported by 22% to 33% of young people, economic and relationship violence by 20% to nearly 50%, and sexual and physical violence by 20% to 30%. Women were the group least likely to commit acts of violence, while men often reported being slandered, having their relationships controlled, and being made jealous. Notably, over 90% of respondents believed that verbal aggression during anger was harmless, and 26% felt that retaliation was necessary for respect (Nguyen Khanh Huyen et al., 2022).

More recent research by UN Women in 2023 involving 1,809 students and 350 staff and lecturers from three universities—Hanoi University of Education, Hong Duc University, and Thai Nguyen University of Education—revealed that 51.8% of students and 30.2% of staff and lecturers had experienced sexual harassment during a school year. The most common forms of harassment included verbal sexual harassment, such as flirting, making sexually suggestive comments or jokes, and making others feel uncomfortable. The survey highlighted that 64% of young people aged 18 to 35 had experienced dating violence (UN Women, 2023).

Rates of dating violence are significantly higher among lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth than among non-LGBT youth. While 29% of heterosexual youth surveyed reported experiencing physical violence by an intimate partner, 42.8% of LGBT youth reported the same. The rate of sexual victimization among LGBT individuals was 23.2%, nearly double that of heterosexual youth, with 12.3% reporting sexual coercion. Additionally, students who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ) or those unsure of their gender identity experienced higher rates of physical and sexual dating violence compared to their heterosexual peers (CDC, 2021). Rates of intimate violence among LGB college students are as high as 50%, and nine times greater among transgender students compared to their cisgender peers.

The issue of violence and dating violence against LGBT groups is also gaining attention from researchers. A study by Luong The Huy and his team in 2016 found that due to non-conformity with traditional gender norms, LGBTIQ+ students faced high rates of violence, harassment, punishment, discrimination, and exclusion at school, higher than other student groups (Luong The Huy et al., 2016). Similarly, research by the Hai Dang Community Support Center found that schools were the most common locations for gender-based violence (SGBV). Over 60% of psychological violence victims reported experiencing it at school, followed by 59.1% at home. Schools were also recorded as the place where the most physical violence incidents occurred (65%). More than 36% of sexual violence victims reported experiencing violence at school, with friends/classmates being the most common perpetrators (Hai Dang Community Support Center, 2023).

Risk factors for university dating violence victimization

The causes of dating violence (DV) are complex and multifaceted, encompassing various risk factors including individual characteristics (such as substance use, high-risk sexual behavior, personality traits, and attitudes), family-related factors (such as a history of violence or child abuse), and other peer and social risk factors (including the type of couple relationship and sports team membership) (Duval et al., 2018). In Vietnam, research by Ychange did not specifically address the causes of dating violence. However, reviews of other studies suggest that the causes of violence are associated with ideological factors, gender stereotypes, and societal belief systems (Nguyen Thi Hieu et al., 2010).

1. Individual risk factors

Substance use is a significant risk factor for dating violence, affecting both perpetrators and victims (Duval et al., 2018). This is corroborated by research on male perpetrators of dating violence (Malhi, 2020) and studies on young women at high risk of dating violence (Joly, 2016). University students' substance use is one of the most common correlates of college dating violence experiences (Baker & Stith, 2008; Shorey et al., 2011). Shorey et al. (2015) found that alcohol use was significantly associated with all forms of violence (physical, psychological, and sexual), while illicit drug use was associated with an increased risk of physical and psychological victimization (Duval et al., 2018).

Gender and self-control are personal characteristics closely linked to dating violence. Women are at a higher risk of being victims of dating violence than men, with female students being 2.2 times more likely to be victimized than males (Crane & Eckhardt, 2013). They also represent the most severely and frequently traumatized group of victims (Taquette et al., 2019). Male perpetrators of dating violence often operate under beliefs and attitudes about masculine norms, traditional gender roles, and male privilege (Malhi et al., 2020). These beliefs lead to power imbalances in relationships and negative health outcomes such as unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, mental health issues, and the perpetuation of gender inequality (Nydegger et al., 2017; Russell et al., 2014). Adolescent males who endorse unequal gender norms are at a higher risk of committing dating violence, including date rape, compared to those who do not hold these beliefs (Nydegger et al., 2017).

The ability to control emotions is a protective factor against dating violence. Students with psychological states such as anger, anxiety, and sadness are at a higher risk of violence and are more likely to become victims. Conversely, students with higher self-confidence are less likely to experience physical violence than those with low self-esteem (Duval et al., 2018).

2. Family risk factors

Experiencing or witnessing violence in the family is associated with being a victim or perpetrator of dating violence among students (Maldonado et al., 2014). In a survey conducted at a large public university, both men and women who experienced violence as children were more likely to experience or perpetrate some form of dating violence later in life. Female students who witnessed violence between parents were 72% more likely to experience physical violence than those who did not witness such violence (Gover et al., 2008).

3. Peer and social risk factors

College students are particularly vulnerable to sexual and dating violence due to their involvement in campus social activities, such as parties, "hookup" culture, and initiation into the Greek

system (Jozkowski & Wiersma-Mosley, 2017). The Greek system, in particular, fosters an environment where sexual and dating violence are common, with fraternity members more likely to engage in acts of sexual violence than non-members (Loh et al., 2005). Fraternity members also tend to endorse traditional gender norms, hostility toward women, and see themselves as less culpable, creating an environment conducive to sexual and dating violence (Canan et al., 2018; Seabrook & Ward, 2019; Seabrook et al., 2018). A survey at the University of Western Sweden showed that female students involved in the Greek system had 5.74 times more experiences of rape than those not involved in the system (Franklin, 2010).

Gender-based violence, including early marriage, sexual abuse, unemployment, and inheritance issues, is less recognized in certain cultures, leading to less frequent reporting of dating violence. Racism, poverty, and sexism are significant gaps in the literature on dating violence. The World Conference against Racism in Durban in 2001 emphasized the importance of addressing sexism, racism, homophobia, and class exploitation in the context of globalization. Alleyne-Green et al. observed that dating violence is more likely among girls of color. Higher rates of dating violence among non-whites were also found by Earnest et al. in a study of 75,590 students. Studies have shown that dating violence is more prevalent in poverty settings, particularly among African Americans and sexual minority couples. Higher rates of violence are reported among same-sex couples, with heterosexism and homophobia strongly associated with dating violence (Taquette et al., 2019). A study of 10,500 students from Massachusetts found higher rates of dating violence among sexual minority students (Martin-Storey, 2015). Bisexual youth are particularly vulnerable, with bisexual men at risk for all types of dating violence and bisexual women at greater risk for sexual violence compared to heterosexual youth (Freedner et al., 2002; Messinger, 2011). Research in Mexico showed that most gay men experienced dating violence (83.8%), though only 29.5% recognized these acts as violence (Alderete-Aguilar et al., 2021). A study of 50 gay students found higher prevalence of psychological, physical, and sexual violence among gay men than lesbians (Robles & Toribio, 2017).

4. Context in Vietnam

In Vietnam, the primary causes of dating violence include gender inequality and prejudice, exposure to parental violence, poor emotional control, substance use, and economic difficulties. Many young people do not recognize or understand the nature and consequences of dating violence, often justifying it as part of being in love. This lack of awareness leads to situations where individuals do not realize they are being abused or inflicting abuse on their partners (Nguyen Khanh Huyen et al., 2022).

Consequences of dating violence among university students

The impact of dating violence on university students is profound and multifaceted, encompassing physical, psychological, and academic dimensions. Victims often experience a range of immediate and long-term effects, which can significantly disrupt their lives and academic pursuits.

1. Physical and psychological consequences

Victims of dating violence frequently face physical injuries such as sprains, bruises, and black eyes, as well as chronic conditions like back or neck pain, frequent headaches, and sexually transmitted diseases (Amar & Gennaro, 2005; Coker, 2000). Additionally, dating violence is associated with severe psychological impacts, including an increased risk of depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Choi et al., 2017). According to a Vietnamese study by Ychange, 21% of respondents

reported physical or mental injuries due to dating violence, and over 6% expressed suicidal ideation (Ychange, 2016).

The negative effects on the physical, mental, and emotional health of women experiencing dating violence are particularly pronounced in a university setting, where the unique conditions can exacerbate these issues. Consequences include substance abuse, eating and sleep disorders, lack of physical activity, low self-esteem, PTSD, smoking, unsafe sex, self-harm, and suicide. Moreover, the impact extends beyond the individual to the broader campus community, potentially fostering an environment where violence is perceived as tolerated, if not adequately addressed (World Health Organization, 2019).

2. Academic Consequences

Dating violence can severely affect academic performance. Brewer et al. (2018) found that students who experienced stalking or emotional, physical, or sexual abuse by an intimate partner were at increased risk of poor academic performance. This finding is consistent with Brewer and Thomas (2019), who reported that abuse and subsequent physical or mental health symptoms negatively affected students' academic achievements. Additionally, Wood et al. (2020) identified that physical, psychological, sexual, and cyber abuse were significant predictors of lower academic performance.

3. Institutional impact

The repercussions of dating violence extend to the university institution itself. Inadequate prevention and response measures can perpetuate the problem, putting other students at risk and fostering a culture of tolerance towards violence. The lack of appropriate action not only endangers victims but also contributes to an environment where perpetrators may feel their behavior is acceptable, further increasing the likelihood of violence against women (World Health Organization, 2019).

In conclusion, dating violence among university students leads to significant adverse effects on physical health, mental well-being, and academic performance. Addressing this issue requires comprehensive prevention and intervention strategies to ensure the safety and well-being of all students, and to maintain a supportive and conducive academic environment.

University dating violence prevention policies

While substantial research has been conducted on sexual violence prevention at universities, dating violence has received comparatively less attention. Studies specifically examining university policies to prevent dating violence are particularly scarce, focusing minimally on the university student population (Wong et al., 2021).

The introduction of the Campus SaVE Act in 2013 in the United States marked a significant step in addressing this gap. The Act mandated that all postsecondary institutions implement prevention education policies targeting sexual assault, domestic violence, and dating violence, among others. This legislation has led to increased prevention programming across campuses and spurred research into the effectiveness of these initiatives. Several meta-analytic reviews have examined sexual violence prevention policies (Jouriles et al., 2018; Katz & Moore, 2013; Kettrey & Marx, 2019); however, reviews specifically focusing on the prevention of dating violence among university students remain absent. The current study aims to synthesize evidence on the effectiveness of college dating violence prevention policies.

1. Prevention and intervention strategies

Strategies addressing sexual and dating violence on university campuses typically fall into two categories: (1) general awareness/education and (2) bystander education.

General education/awareness programs:

These programs aim to increase knowledge and change attitudes by educating students about the various forms of violence, strategies for building healthy relationships, and countering harmful gender role stereotypes (DeGue et al., 2014). They often utilize small group discussions, classroom seminars, or large group presentations, incorporating interactive activities such as role plays and interactive videos. These sessions may be conducted as single or multiple sessions and are usually facilitated by trained program staff or student volunteers (Amar et al., 2015; Fenton & Mott, 2018).

Bystander education programs:

These programs encourage students to intervene when they witness signs of sexual or dating violence. They train participants to recognize warning signs and provide safe, appropriate ways to intervene. Bystander programs have been shown to improve bystander skills and attitudes towards intervening in potential violence situations (Katz & Moore, 2013; Kettrey & Marx, 2019, 2020).

Both approaches typically involve some form of interactive engagement, though the extent varies. Large lecture-format programs tend to be more didactic with less interaction, whereas smaller group sessions encourage more participant engagement (Borsky et al., 2018; Reid et al., 2013). Additionally, some programs are delivered entirely online or through a combination of online and offline methods.

2. Effectiveness of prevention policies

Comprehensive evaluations of dating violence prevention policies reveal that dating violence involves distinct behaviors and experiences compared to other forms of sexual violence. Thus, there is a critical need for research focusing specifically on dating violence prevention. Evidence suggests that prevention policies are effective in improving knowledge, attitudes towards dating and sexual violence, and bystander intervention skills. However, more activities are required to change actual bystander behaviors (Katz & Moore, 2013).

3. Context in Vietnam

In Vietnam, policies to prevent school violence exist primarily for primary to high school levels but not for universities. The Ministry of Education and Training's 2018 Work Program and Decision No. 5886/QD-BGDDT, issued on December 28, 2017, emphasize the prevention of school violence within preschool, general education, and continuing education contexts for the 2017-2021 period. These policies direct educational departments to survey, assess, and develop plans to prevent school violence, ensuring students' privacy rights. However, there are no specific policies targeting the prevention or intervention of dating violence among university students.

Suggested activities and policies to prevent dating violence in Vietnam

Research conducted by To Thu Ha and colleagues reveals strong support among students for training programs on safety in romantic relationships, with 90% of respondents considering it necessary, 6% agreeing, and only 4% deeming it unnecessary. Students expressed enthusiasm for participating in

these programs and a willingness to share knowledge about safe relationship practices (To Thu Ha et al., 2020).

Hoang Thi Bich Hong's research proposes several measures to guide students toward healthy relationship values. These measures include:

- Equipping students with basic knowledge about love: Students should be taught to understand the nature of love, how to nurture it, and its significant role in life.
- Orienting students to a proper value system: This involves guiding students towards appreciating long-term values over immediate gratification and avoiding materialistic and indulgent lifestyles.
- Educating students on the consequences of misconceptions about love: Students need to understand that incorrect or one-sided views on love can lead to negative consequences and personal regret.
- Raising awareness of personal responsibilities: Students should be made aware of their responsibilities towards themselves, their families, and society, encouraging them to strive in their studies and personal development (Hoang Thi Bich Hong, 2013).

School-Based interventions

School-based interventions can promote respectful relationships among adolescents through activities such as counseling, discussions, and sharing sessions aimed at fostering equality and changing attitudes related to dating. Universities have a responsibility to ensure the safety of female students and help them lead lives free from violence (WHO, 2019).

Proposed solutions for enhancing female students' safety:

- Curriculum Integration: Incorporate content on preventing sexual harassment into both curricular and extracurricular activities, utilizing union, association, and club activities. Schools should employ specialized staff skilled in supporting students facing violence (Le Thi Lam, 2019).
- Improving social services: Enhance the quality and diversity of social services for victims of sexual harassment, offering continuous and comprehensive support systems that include psychological counseling, legal assistance, health services, livelihood support, and communication services.
- Training support networks: Develop a network of experts and staff with specialized skills to support victims of sexual harassment.

Broader measures

To further support women and prevent future violence, it is crucial to build vocational, financial, and life skills for women, addressing systemic barriers to social, political, and economic integration such as unequal inheritance systems and property ownership rights. Establishing strong social networks and internal resources for women is also essential. Ensuring the provision of essential services, including law enforcement, legal assistance, health care, and social services, is necessary to meet the needs of women experiencing violence. These services should include care and support for victims, measures to prevent the recurrence of violence, psychological support, and initiatives to reduce substance abuse and improve mental health.

Creating safe environments in schools, workplaces, and public spaces where women and girls are free from fear, harassment, and other forms of violence is a fundamental goal (WHO, 2019).

In summary, while significant progress has been made in addressing sexual violence on university campuses, the prevention of dating violence remains under-researched and under-implemented. Effective prevention policies need to incorporate evidence-based techniques to change behavior and create a safer campus environment for all students.

Discussion

The phenomenon of dating violence (DV) among university students is an intricate and multifaceted issue that demands thorough exploration and intervention. This discussion aims to contextualize the findings presented in the literature review, elucidate the implications for policy and practice, and suggest directions for future research.

Prevalence and contextual factors

The prevalence rates of DV among university students highlight a significant public health concern. The studies reviewed indicate that DV affects a substantial proportion of the student population across various cultural contexts. In the United States, figures range from 20% to over 60%, depending on the type of violence and the specific population studied. In Vietnam, the prevalence is similarly alarming, with studies indicating that up to 64% of young women have experienced some form of DV.

Several contextual factors contribute to these high prevalence rates. The university environment, characterized by newfound independence, exploration of intimate relationships, and often increased substance use, creates a setting where DV can thrive. The high rates of DV among LGBTQ+ students and those uncertain of their gender identity underscore the additional vulnerabilities faced by these groups, often due to societal stigma and lack of support systems.

Risk factors and consequences

The risk factors for DV among university students are multifactorial, involving individual, familial, and societal elements. Substance use, particularly alcohol and drugs, emerges as a significant risk factor, exacerbating the likelihood of both perpetration and victimization. Gender norms and traditional masculine ideologies further perpetuate DV, as evidenced by the higher victimization rates among female students and higher perpetration rates among males.

Family history of violence also plays a crucial role, suggesting that early exposure to violence normalizes aggressive behaviors in intimate relationships. Peer and social influences, including participation in campus social activities and fraternity or sorority life, can increase exposure to high-risk situations, thereby elevating the likelihood of DV.

The consequences of DV are profound and far-reaching, affecting victims' physical, psychological, and academic well-being. The physical injuries and chronic health issues reported are just the tip of the iceberg, with many victims suffering from long-term psychological impacts such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The academic implications, including decreased performance and increased dropout rates, further highlight the pervasive impact of DV on students' lives.

Implications for policy and practice

The findings underscore the urgent need for comprehensive policies and intervention programs to address DV among university students. Prevention programs should be multifaceted, targeting the individual, relational, and community levels. Educational campaigns that challenge traditional gender norms and promote healthy relationship behaviors are essential. Additionally, universities should implement robust support systems for DV victims, including counseling services, legal assistance, and safe housing options.

Policy interventions should also focus on creating a supportive environment for LGBTQ+ students, who are disproportionately affected by DV. This includes anti-discrimination policies, inclusive campus resources, and training for staff and students on LGBTQ+ issues.

Directions for future research

While the existing research provides valuable insights, there are several areas that warrant further investigation. Longitudinal studies are needed to understand the long-term impacts of DV on university students and the effectiveness of various intervention strategies. Additionally, research should explore the specific experiences and needs of LGBTQ+ students and other marginalized groups, ensuring that interventions are inclusive and equitable.

In Vietnam, where research on DV is still emerging, there is a need for more comprehensive studies that explore the cultural nuances of DV and the effectiveness of locally adapted prevention and intervention programs. Comparative studies between different cultural contexts can also provide deeper insights into the universal and context-specific factors contributing to DV.

Recommendations for dating violence policy's prevention in Vietnamese universities

Based on the comprehensive literature review on dating violence (DV) among university students, the following recommendations are proposed to address and mitigate the prevalence and impact of DV in university institutions in Vietnam:

1. Implement comprehensive prevention programs

Universities should develop and implement comprehensive prevention programs that target the root causes of DV. These programs should include:

- Educational workshops and campaigns: Increase awareness about DV, its signs, and consequences. Workshops should promote healthy relationships, challenge traditional gender norms, and encourage respectful behavior.

- Bystander intervention training: Equip students with the skills to recognize and safely intervene in potential DV situations.

- Substance abuse education: Highlight the link between substance use and DV, and provide resources for substance abuse prevention and treatment.

2. Enhance support services for victims

To effectively support DV victims, universities should implement the following:

- Counseling and mental health services: Provide accessible, confidential counseling services for DV victims. Train counselors to handle DV cases with sensitivity and expertise.

- Legal assistance: Offer legal support to help victims understand their rights and navigate the legal system.

- Safe Housing Options: Connect and establish safe housing for students who need to escape abusive relationships.

3. Develop and enforce strong policies

Universities should establish clear policies regarding DV, including:

- Zero tolerance Policies: Implement strict policies against DV, with clear consequences for perpetrators.

- Reporting mechanisms: Create anonymous and easy-to-access reporting systems for DV incidents. Ensure that students feel safe and supported when reporting.

- Inclusive Policies for LGBTQ+ Students: Develop policies that specifically address the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ students. Provide training for staff and students on LGBTQ+ issues and ensure that campus resources are inclusive.

4. Promote a supportive campus environment

A supportive campus environment is crucial for preventing DV and supporting victims. Universities should:

- Peer support programs: Establish peer support groups where students can share their experiences and offer mutual support.

- Faculty and staff training: Regularly train faculty and staff to recognize DV signs and respond appropriately. Encourage them to create a supportive atmosphere in their interactions with students.

- Community partnerships: Collaborate with local organizations that specialize in DV to provide additional resources and support for students.

5. Conduct ongoing research and evaluation

To continuously improve DV prevention and intervention efforts, universities should utilize:

- Longitudinal studies: Conduct longitudinal research to track the long-term effects of DV on students and the effectiveness of intervention programs.

- Program evaluation: Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of DV prevention and support programs. Use feedback from students and staff to make data-driven improvements.

- Inclusive research: Ensure that research includes diverse student populations, particularly focusing on the experiences of marginalized groups such as LGBTQ+ students.

6. Cultural sensitivity and adaptation

Particularly in countries like Vietnam, where DV research is emerging, it is essential to:

- Adapt programs to local contexts: Develop prevention and intervention programs that are culturally sensitive and relevant to the local context.

- Engage local communities: Work with local communities to understand cultural attitudes towards DV and to develop community-supported initiatives.

Conclusion

Dating violence among university students is a critical issue with significant implications for public health, safety, and academic success. The high prevalence rates and severe consequences underscore the need for targeted interventions and supportive policies. By addressing the multifaceted risk factors and promoting a culture of respect and support, universities can play a pivotal role in mitigating the impact of DV and fostering a safer, more inclusive environment for all students.

Although limited, research in Vietnam indicates high prevalence rates, necessitating comprehensive studies and effective prevention policies. Future research should continue to build on the existing knowledge, ensuring that interventions are evidence-based and culturally sensitive, ultimately contributing to the well-being and success of university students worldwide.

Addressing dating violence among university students requires a multifaceted and culturally sensitive approach. By implementing comprehensive prevention programs, enhancing support services, developing strong policies, promoting a supportive campus environment, conducting ongoing research, and adapting to local cultural contexts, universities can significantly reduce the prevalence and impact of DV. These recommendations aim to foster safer, more inclusive university environments where all students can thrive free from the threat of violence.

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Examining the Socioeconomic Ramifications of the Shift from Combustion Engine to Electric Vehicle Industry on Labor Well-being in Thailand: An In-Depth Economic Welfare Analysis

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Abstract

This research article constitutes a review-oriented investigation that specifically examines the implications of the transition from internal combustion engines to electric vehicles (EVs) in Thailand on the labor market and worker well-being. The study systematically analyzes existing literature and reports exploring the historical evolution of the combustion engine industry, the emergence of EVs, and their impact on labor through an economic welfare assessment. The researchers highlight the imperative for government intervention and assistance in ensuring an equitable transition, underscoring the role of Chinese investments in advancing both the EV industry and workforce skills. The literature review reveals that Thailand's automotive sector is undergoing a transformative phase driven by the increasing global demand for EVs. While this shift presents new employment prospects in the EV sector, it also poses risks of job displacement and wage disparities in the conventional vehicle industry. In response to these challenges, the researchers propose a comprehensive approach involving collaboration among the government, private sector, educational institutions, and internal stakeholders. Key strategies encompass workforce retraining, social protection measures, labor policies, and targeted regional development to mitigate the adverse effects of the transition on workers. Significantly, the research paper accentuates the noteworthy role played by Chinese investments in Thailand's EV industry. These investments have strengthened manufacturing capabilities, expanded charging infrastructure, and facilitated research and development collaborations. When coupled with supportive government policies, Chinese investments are instrumental in expediting the transition to electric mobility in Thailand. This paper relies on a secondary literature review employing a systematic approach to synthesize and present the research findings.

Keywords: Electric vehicle, Labor market, Economic welfare analysis, Thailand, Government policy

Introduction

The global automotive industry is standing at the cusp of a transformative era, marked by the unprecedented shift from internal combustion engines to electric vehicles (EVs). This transition, driven by concerns for environmental sustainability, the urgency to mitigate climate change impacts, and a surge in technological advancements, is reshaping economies worldwide. Nations like Norway and China are leading in EV adoption through comprehensive policies and incentives (Zhang et al., 2014).

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Similarly, Thailand, a nation deeply intertwined with the automotive sector, is embracing strategic initiatives to lead in this transition. Key among these initiatives is the ambitious "30@30 Policy," aimed at making electric vehicles 30% of the nation's car production by 2023, and the supportive EV3.5 policy, both of which are integral to Thailand's vision for a sustainable automotive future (Thailand Ministry of Energy, 2021; Excise Department, 2023).

However, it is crucial to note that Thailand's move towards EV manufacturing is influenced by multiple factors, including economic imperatives and foreign investment pressures, rather than purely environmental concerns (Berkeley et al., 2017). The country faces significant challenges in enforcing environmental standards, as evidenced by ongoing PM 2.5 pollution issues. This paradox between the Thai government's environmental policy enforcement and the economic and environmental benefits of EVs highlights the complexity of Thailand's transition. Moreover, much of the EV manufacturing in Thailand is driven by foreign companies, which further emphasizes the external economic pressures shaping this shift (Schröder, 2021).

Thailand's automotive industry, a substantial contributor to its economic infrastructure, is undergoing a significant reorientation with the global EV evolution. This shift from combustion engine industry to the burgeoning EV sector holds profound implications for the labor market and the overarching economic welfare within the country. The labor force, an indispensable asset to the automotive sector, stands at the intersection of this industrial transformation, presenting a scenario riddled with both challenges and opportunities. Recognizing the need for a skilled workforce to support this transition, Thailand's 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP 2023-2026) outlines strategic goals and measures aimed at enhancing labor capacities and readiness for the emerging EV industry (Thailand Ministry of Labor, 2023).

This research delves into the multiple dimensions of this industry shift and its subsequent impact on labor well-being in Thailand. An in-depth exploration of the historical and contemporary landscapes of the combustion engine industry in Thailand lays the foundation context for this study, while the emergence and growth trajectory of the electric vehicle, alongside forward-looking policies, and development plans, are analyzed to discern their role in reshaping labor market dynamics. The National Economic and Social Development Planning 2023-2026, in relation to the Ministry of Labor, specifically addresses the realm of EVs. With goals such as enhancing existing operators' ability to adapt to automotive production and fostering investment in vehicle technology, the plan sets forth a proactive blueprint for Thailand's labor force to thrive in this new industrial paradigm. Indicators such as the targeted increase of skilled workers in the EV sector and strategic sub-strategies for labor skill development embed the comprehensive approach being undertaken to ensure a smooth and inclusive transition (Thailand Ministry of Labor, 2023). Furthermore, the economic rationale for Thailand's transition toward EVs includes environmental imperatives and economic opportunities. With the global push towards sustainability, EVs offer a path to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, aligning with Thailand's commitments and paralleling initiatives in other nations. Economically, the transition presents an opportunity for Thailand to position itself as a leader in the burgeoning EV market, attracting foreign investment, fostering technological innovation, and creating high-quality jobs. This research embarks on an economic welfare analysis to offer insights into the nuances of the labor market shifts and their repercussions on labor welfare within the EV industry. Elements such as workforce development, social protection policies, and regional development initiatives are brought into the analytical purview to generalize the future perspectives of labor welfare in the electric industry in Thailand.

Literature review

The global transition from combustion engines to electric vehicles (EVs) represents a pivotal economic and socio-labor transformation. Countries worldwide, including Thailand, with significant automotive industries, are at various stages of this transition, facing unique challenges and opportunities. The development of the combustion engine industry in Thailand, considered a cornerstone of economic growth and employment, is now navigating the increasing environmental and global pressures driving a shift towards more sustainable alternatives (Kohpaiboon, 2006; Wonglimpiyarat, 2016).

In Thailand, the EV industry, although in its infancy, is characterized by rapid growth, driven by increasing consumer demand and significant foreign investments. This mirrors global trends where the EV market is expected to reshape the traditional automotive sector (Lee et al., 2020). However, the transition brings forth the challenges alongside opportunities, requiring comprehensive strategic approaches to adeptly navigate this transformation (Zhong et al., 2022). The impact on labor and economic welfare emerges as a central concern, with potential ramifications for employment in the combustion engine sector signaling job displacements and a pressing need for expansive workforce development initiatives (Kulkolkarn, 2019; Acemoglu & Restrepo, 2018). Moreover, the Thai government launched the Automotive Industry Master Plan (2002-2006) and the Automotive Industry Master Plan II (2007-2011), which aim to establish Thailand as a regional production and export hub for automobiles and automotive parts. By the 2010s, Thailand had become one of the largest automotive producers in Southeast Asia, with the combustion engine industry playing a significant role in the country's economic growth and development (Natsuda & Thoburn, 2013).

Government policies and strategic plans are pivotal in shaping and supporting this transition. Thailand's "30@30 Policy" aims to make EVs 30% of the nation's car production. The Excise Department's EV3.5 policy, a continuation and enhancement of this vision, outlines specific measures and incentives over a 4-year period (2024-2027) to propel Thailand as a regional EV production hub and to promote a low carbon society (Thailand Ministry of Energy, 2021; Excise Department, 2023). Additionally, understanding Thailand's approach within the broader context of global transitions provides valuable insights. Comparative studies from countries like Norway and China, which have led in EV adoption due to comprehensive policies and incentives, help contextualize Thailand's journey within the broader narrative of the global shift to electric mobility (Haugneland, 2017; Zhong et al., 2022).

Research Methods

The research examines the socio-economic impacts of Thailand's transition from combustion engine to electric vehicle industries with a particular focus on labor well-being. To capture the multi-dimensional nature of this transition required a nuanced qualitative approach underpinned by a systematic comparative analysis and thematic content analysis. This methodology is chosen for its robustness in uncovering the intricate dynamics of industrial shifts and their broader socio-economic implications. The systematic comparative analysis examines the EV transition policies of Thailand, Norway, and China to identify best practices and lessons that can be applied to the Thai context. This involves comparing policy frameworks, implementation strategies, and socio-economic outcomes across the three countries. By drawing on the experiences of these countries, this analysis aims to highlight effective strategies and potential pitfalls that Thailand may consider in its transition. Thematic

content analysis was applied to analyze qualitative data from secondary sources, including industry reports, government publications, and academic articles. This method involves categorizing data to identify recurring themes and patterns. The analysis focused on key aspects such as policy effectiveness, labor market impacts, and workforce development initiatives. By systematically analyzing the data, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic impacts of Thailand's transition to EVs. The cornerstone of our approach is a comprehensive collection of secondary data meticulously selected to ensure relevance, credibility, and diversity. This includes industry reports detailing employment trends and policy impacts, government publications outlining strategic initiatives and legal frameworks, and academic articles offering theoretical insights and empirical studies. Such selection criteria prioritize recent, authoritative sources directly discussing Thailand's EV transition and its socio-economic dimensions. By incorporating a diverse source of documents, this study aims to construct a multifaceted view of the transition, capturing its complexities and varied implications. Ethical considerations are paramount in such an approach. I adhere to strict research ethics, ensuring proper attribution of sources, respect for intellectual property rights, and presenting information with accuracy and integrity. Moreover, I acknowledge the limitations inherent in relying solely on secondary data, including potential biases and the currency of information. To mitigate these issues, I employ exacting selection criteria and engage in cross-referencing of sources. Additionally, while comparative analysis provides insights, the unique socio-economic and political context of Thailand requires careful consideration when applying lessons from other countries.

Overview of Combustion Industry in Thailand

A.   History and development of the combustion engine industry

The history of the combustion engine industry in Thailand can be traced back to the early 1960s when the Thai government implemented the First National Economic and Social Development Plan (1961-1966) to promote domestic production of automobiles (Wonglimpiyarat, 2016). This plan aimed to reduce the country's reliance on imported vehicles and spur economic growth by fostering industrialization. Subsequent development plans continued to emphasize the importance of the automotive sector, leading to the establishment of a solid foundation for the industry. Over the years, the Thai government introduced several incentives to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) and foster the growth of the automotive industry. These incentives included tax breaks, tariff reductions, and preferential treatment for companies that set up manufacturing plants in the country (Kohpaiboon, 2006). As a result, Thailand attracted several major global automakers, which significantly contributed to the development of the combustion engine industry.

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the Thai automotive sector experienced rapid growth, driven by a combination of factors such as favorable government policies, a strategic location, an affordable and skilled labor force, and a robust supply chain of automotive parts manufacturers (Kohpaiboon, 2006). Moreover, the Thai government launched the Automotive Industry Master Plan (2002-2006) and the Automotive Industry Master Plan II (2007-2011), which aimed to establish Thailand as a regional production and export hub for automobiles and automotive parts (Economics, 2003). By the 2010s, Thailand had become one of the largest automotive producers in Southeast Asia, with the combustion engine industry playing a central role in the country's economic growth and development. The industry's success can be attributed to the strong partnerships between the public and private sectors, as well as the country's commitment to fostering a competitive and innovative automotive sector.

B. Employment trends in the combustion engine sector

The combustion engine sector has been a major contributor to employment in Thailand, providing a wide range of direct and indirect job opportunities (e.g., extensive automotive supply chain, logistics, mechanics, etc.) to the local population. As the industry has evolved and grown over the years, its impact on the Thai labor market has become increasingly significant. Moreover, the combustion industry has provided a changing dynamic whereby the global employment trend has shifted to increase labor to support the particular industry growth (Solomon & Krishna, 2011). The growth of the combustion engine industry has led to several spillover effects on the Thai economy, as the sector's success has positively influenced other industries (Lee et al., 2020). For example, the demand for high-quality infrastructure to facilitate transportation and logistics has created job opportunities in construction and engineering. Additionally, the increase in disposable income for workers in the automotive sector has boosted consumer spending in various other industries, leading to job creation in retail, hospitality, and other service sectors.

C. Key players and market share

Thailand's combustion engine industry has attracted several major global automakers, including Toyota, Honda, Nissan, Ford, and General Motors, among others (Schröder, 2021). These companies have established manufacturing plants and research and development centers across the country. Domestic automakers, such as Thai Rung and Mine Mobility, have also emerged, although with a smaller market share. Thailand's strategic location in Southeast Asia and its well-established automotive ecosystem has allowed the country to become a regional production hub, exporting a significant portion of its manufactured vehicles to neighboring countries and beyond.

Emergence and Growth of the Electric Vehicle Industry in Thailand

The global shift from combustion engine vehicles to electric vehicles is fueled by concerns around environmental sustainability, technological advancement, and government backing. This transition resonates strongly within Thailand's automotive perspectives. However, it is important to address the paradox between the Thai government's lack of enforcement of environmental standards and the positive economic and environmental benefits of EVs.

Acknowledging this change, Thailand is channeling investments into electrifying its vehicle industry, reflecting a strategic adaptation to the global automotive paradigm. Furthermore, Thailand's population is showing a burgeoning awareness and concern for the environmental implications of conventional fossil fuel usage (Zhao et al., 2020). This transition in perception is catalyzing a heightened demand for electric vehicles, acknowledged for their minimal carbon footprint and economic operation. This shift is compelling automakers to diversify and broaden their electric vehicle portfolio, reflecting changing consumer preferences.

Concurrently, Thailand's strategic geographical positioning, skilled labor force, and entrenched supply chains are drawing substantial foreign investment (Kohpaiboon, 2006). International automakers are forging alliances with local entities to institute electric vehicle manufacturing hubs. Such global-local partnerships are pivotal, driving technology exchange and enhancing the operational capacity for Thailand's electric vehicle sector. This technological influx is a foundation for Thailand's sustained and

competitive presence in the global electric vehicle arena. Beyond mere vehicle production, the Thai government's proactive stance is discernible in their push for a holistic electric vehicle ecosystem (Kohpaiboon, 2006). Encouraged investments are fortifying diverse segments including battery production, charging infrastructures, and ancillary services, solidifying the comprehensive electric vehicle network. This multifaceted development is instrumental for the seamless functioning and long-term stability of the electric vehicle industry within Thailand. However, the journey is not without its challenges. A crucial need for extensive infrastructure development, particularly in building charging stations, is prioritized to alleviate consumer apprehensions regarding electric vehicle range and to bolster widespread adoption. Additionally, the sector's expansion necessitates focused workforce development to meet the burgeoning demands of the industry, a strategy outlined in Thailand's National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP 2023-2027) (Thailand Ministry of Labor, 2021).

Notwithstanding these advancements, the journey is laden with challenges, notably the crucial need for extensive infrastructure development, especially in building charging stations. This is essential to ally consumer apprehensions around electric vehicle range and to bolster widespread electric vehicle adoption. The sector's expansion necessitates focused workforce development to meet the industry's burgeoning demands. Amongst these challenges, the electric vehicle shift presents ample opportunities for Thailand. The nation stands to attract further foreign investment, bolster employment, and stimulate innovation (Zhao et al., 2020). In essence, by capitalizing on its established automotive foundations and surmounting inherent challenges, Thailand is poised to emerge as a dominant force in the global electric vehicle landscape. This strategic transition not only augments Thailand's economic trajectory but also underscores its commitment to a sustainable and environmentally responsible future.

Economic Welfare Analysis: Impact on Labor Well-Being

The transition from the combustion engine industry to the electric vehicle industry in Thailand is a paradigm shift with profound implications for the labor market and workers' well-being. As Thailand embraces electric mobility, bolstered by strategic initiatives like the 30@30 Policy and EV3.5 plan, the labor market is poised for transformation (Thailand Ministry of Energy, 2021; Excise Department, 2023). New employment opportunities are anticipated to emerge in burgeoning sectors such as battery production, vehicle assembly, and charging infrastructure development. However, alongside these opportunities several challenges remain, notably the potential displacement of workers in the combustion engine sector as the demand for traditional vehicle production declines.

Furthermore, wage dynamics during this transition are complex, with potential wage stagnation or decline for low-skilled labor due to increased automation and capital-intensive production processes. In contrast, high-skilled workers with expertise in engineering, research and development, and advanced manufacturing may witness wage growth as their skills become increasingly valuable in the electric vehicle sector (Acemoglu & Restrepo, 2018).

Critical to this transition is the focus on skills development and training, as outlined in the 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP 2023-2027). Workers will need to adapt and acquire new competencies in areas such as battery technology, electric powertrain systems, and advanced manufacturing techniques. Collaborative efforts between the government, educational institutions, and private sector stakeholders are paramount in developing effective workforce

development and training programs (Thailand Ministry of Labor, 2021). This approach is essential for maintaining competitiveness and facilitating a smooth transition in the labor market.

Moreover, the electric vehicle industry may have positive implications for job quality and working conditions. Workers in this sector could experience safer working environments and fewer health risks compared to the combustion engine sector, given the cleaner technologies and materials involved in EV production (Kulkolkarn, 2019). However, comprehensive research is necessary to fully understand the transition's implications on job quality and working conditions within the Thai context, ensuring that the shift not only promotes environmental sustainability but also enhances worker welfare.

Such a transition from the combustion engine industry to the electric vehicle industry in Thailand has substantial consequences for labor market dynamics and workers' well-being. Challenges such as potential job displacement and wage inequality coexist with opportunities for skills development, employment generation, and improved job quality. The role of strategic planning, policy intervention, and stakeholder collaboration becomes increasingly vital to ensure a just and equitable transition that benefits both the economy and the labor force. By aligning national strategies with labor market needs, Thailand can navigate this transition effectively, ensuring that it not only capitalizes on the economic opportunities presented by the electric vehicle industry but also safeguards and enhances the welfare of its workforce.

Government Policies and Support for a Just Transition

Understanding the nuances and impacts of various government policies from Thailand, Norway, and China is crucial in shaping an effective and just transition from the combustion engine industry to the electric vehicle industry. This in-depth analysis explores the effectiveness of specific initiatives, the challenges faced, and their broader implications.

A. Tax Incentives and Financial Support:

Thailand: The "30@30 Policy" and EV3.5 initiatives reflect Thailand's commitment to boosting EV adoption. However, the effectiveness of these policies is contingent upon comprehensive implementation and public acceptance. While incentives reduce the financial burden on consumers, the lack of direct purchase tax exemptions, compared to Norway's approach, might limit their impact. Ensuring that incentives are substantial enough to sway consumer preference and that they are well-publicized and accessible is crucial (Thailand Ministry of Energy, 2021; Excise Department, 2023).

Norway: Norway's exemption from purchase taxes and zero VAT on EV purchases have been highly effective, evidenced by the country's world-leading EV adoption rates. These policies significantly reduce the cost barrier for consumers, making EVs a financially viable option. However, such aggressive tax exemptions require substantial government support and may not be feasible for all countries considering their economic contexts (Haugneland et al., 2017).

China: China's subsidies and tax incentives have successfully spurred domestic EV production and adoption. Yet, this approach has faced challenges, including dependency on government support and market distortion concerns. As subsidies taper off, the long-term sustainability of China's EV market growth reliant on these incentives is under scrutiny. Balancing financial support with market-driven growth is a critical consideration for policy sustainability (Graham et al., 2021).

B. Charging Infrastructure Development:

Thailand: While Thailand is investing in its charging infrastructure, the scale and speed of development are crucial to match the growing number of EVs. Norway's success illustrates that extensive and accessible charging networks are key to consumer confidence. Thailand must ensure that infrastructure development keeps pace with vehicle sales to avoid bottlenecks and maintain momentum in EV adoption (Excise Department, 2023).

Norway: Norway's investment in a comprehensive charging network has effectively mitigated range anxiety and supported its high EV adoption rates. The challenge for Norway moving forward is to maintain and expand this infrastructure to accommodate an increasing number of EVs, ensuring it continues to meet consumer needs and supports further adoption (Mersky et al., 2016).

China: China's rapid expansion of its charging infrastructure has played a significant role in supporting its burgeoning EV market. However, challenges such as ensuring the quality, interoperability, and geographic distribution of charging stations are critical for meeting the diverse needs of consumers across urban and rural areas. Balancing speed of deployment with these quality considerations is vital (Li et al., 2016).

C. Workforce Development and Social Policies:

Thailand: Thailand recognizes the need for targeted workforce development as it transitions to an EV-dominant future. The government's initiatives, as outlined in the National Economic and Social Development Plan No. 13, emphasize upskilling and reskilling workers to meet the demands of the EV industry. The plan sets forth goals for increasing the number of workers skilled in EV technologies and related fields. However, implementing these initiatives across diverse regions and industries presents challenges, including ensuring equal access to training and addressing the needs of workers in rural or underserved areas. Additionally, Thailand must balance the rapid technological advancements in EVs with timely and relevant training programs (Thailand Ministry of Labor, 2023). Social protection measures are also vital to support workers potentially displaced by the industry transition, including unemployment benefits and job placement services.

Norway: Norway's approach to workforce development in the EV sector is informed by its comprehensive social welfare system and emphasis on lifelong learning. The government supports retraining programs and continuous education to help workers adapt to new technologies and industries. As a result, Norway has managed to maintain low unemployment rates and high labor market flexibility even as it leads the world in EV adoption. However, ongoing challenges include ensuring that the fast-paced growth of the EV market does not outpace the development of necessary skills and that all sectors of the workforce have opportunities for advancement and retraining. Norway's success in this area is partly due to strong collaboration between the government, educational institutions, and industry stakeholders, creating a cohesive strategy for workforce development (Mapis, 2022).

China: China's rapid expansion of its EV industry is accompanied by significant investments in workforce development and training. The government has implemented various programs to cultivate a skilled labor force capable of supporting the growing EV sector, from engineers and technicians to manufacturing workers. China's approach emphasizes both technical education and on-the-job training, often in partnership with leading EV companies. These initiatives are crucial for sustaining the

industry's growth and ensuring that Chinese workers can compete in the global market. However, China also faces challenges, including the need to provide support for workers transitioning from traditional automotive sectors to new roles in EV production and ensuring equitable access to training and development opportunities across its vast and diverse population (Warner, 1996).

Challenges and Barriers to EV Implementation in Thailand

Thailand faces several significant challenges and barriers in implementing EV manufacturing. The country's education system has a poor reputation, particularly regarding its ability to produce a workforce with the skills and critical thinking necessary for the modern economy. This presents a significant barrier to finding and training workers for more complex EV manufacturing tasks. The Thai government must invest in improving the equality of education and vocational training to ensure a skilled workforce capable of supporting the EV industry (Schröder, 2021). Furthermore, the Thai government is often perceived as being somewhat chaotic and ineffective in policy implementation. This vulnerability could impact the successful implementation of EV manufacturing policies. Ensuring effective governance, transparency, and accountability in policy execution is critical to overcoming this challenge. Additionally, Thailand's public social welfare system is weak, which could impact the care provided for displaced workers and the goal of creating upskill training programs. Strengthening social protection measures, including unemployment benefits, job placement services, and retraining programs, is essential to support workers affected by the transition (Kulkolkarn, 2019). By addressing these challenges, Thailand can create a more conducive environment for the successful implementation of EV manufacturing and ensure a just and equitable transition for its labor force.

Discussion and Conclusion

The transition from the combustion engine industry to the electric vehicle (EV) industry in Thailand marks a significant turning point with wide-ranging implications for the labor market and workers' well-being. This study has explored the historical development of the combustion engine industry, the emergence and rapid growth of the EV industry, and the multifaceted impact of this transition on labor welfare through an economic welfare analysis.

As Thailand stands on the brink of this transformative shift, it faces a dual scenario of opportunities and challenges. The global rise in demand for electric vehicles heralds a new era for Thailand's automotive industry, promising economic growth and technological advancement. However, this transition also brings with it potential job displacement and wage inequality, underscoring the need for proactive measures to ensure a just and equitable shift for all labor segments. Moreover, a multi-pronged approach involving government, private sector stakeholders, educational institutions, and international partners is essential. Implementing workforce development and training programs is crucial to address the evolving skills requirements in the automotive sector. Similarly, social protection measures and labor market policies must be established to support affected workers, while targeted regional development strategies and industrial diversification will help mitigate adverse effects on local labor markets and communities.

The role of Chinese investments in Thailand's EV industry is significant, contributing to manufacturing capabilities, charging infrastructure, and fostering R&D collaborations. These

investments, coupled with supportive government policies, can catalyze Thailand's transition to electric mobility. However, it is essential to consider these developments within the broader international context. A comparative analysis with countries like Norway, which has successfully navigated a similar transition through robust policies and incentives, and China, with its aggressive EV market expansion, offers valuable lessons for Thailand. These comparisons highlight the importance of tailored strategies that consider local economic, social, and infrastructural realities while drawing on global best practices.

In conclusion, Thailand's journey towards an electric vehicle-dominated future is paved with both promises and challenges. By thoughtfully addressing the complexities of this transition, Thailand can foster an environment conducive to economic growth, innovation, and enhanced labor welfare. Future research should continue to monitor this transition, comparing Thailand's progress with other nations and evaluating the long-term effectiveness of policy interventions. Such an ongoing analysis will be crucial in understanding the evolving landscape of the EV industry and its socio-economic impacts, guiding policymakers and stakeholders towards a sustainable and equitable automotive future.

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Effectiveness of Competency-based Training of Village Rehabilitation Workers in Strengthening Their Community-based Rehabilitation Domains: A Policy Implication

Channaveer R.M[1]

Abstract

This research paper investigates the effect of a targeted capacity building intervention on Village Rehabilitation Workers (VRWs) within the context of Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Matrix domains in Kalaburagi, Karnataka, India. This research through its intervention approach is conducted to measure changes in VRWs' competencies across the CBR Matrix domains. Key CBR Matrix domains under consideration include health, education, livelihood, social development and empowerment. The capacity building intervention as human capital intervention to improve knowledge and skills of the VRWs in the CBR, is tailored to address specific challenges and gaps identified within each domain, aiming to empower VRWs to enact positive change within their targeted communities i.e. Persons with Disabilities (PWDs).

The findings indicate a significant improvement in VRWs' competencies following the capacity building training. This improvement is observed across various CBR Matrix domains, showcasing the intervention's effectiveness in enhancing VRWs' capacity to address the multifaceted needs of their communities. From the study, it was observed that during the baseline phase, 73% (n =117) of the VRWs had low level of Competency, and 27%, (n=50) of the VRWs had medium level of Competency. End-line status after the intervention, the level of competencies in all domains of CBR has increased. The intervention reversed the VRW's competencies as 69.2%, (n=128) of the VRWs achieved high level of competencies, and 30.8%, (n=57) of the VRWs achieved moderate level of competencies.

In conclusion, the research provides valuable insights into the competencies of VRWs attained to effectively implement the CBR-based programs for Persons with Disabilities in their locality. The findings aim to inform policy and practice dealing with the PWDs, guiding the development of targeted training programs and interventions to strengthen the capabilities of VRWs and foster a more inclusive and accessible healthcare environment for PWDs in rural communities.

Keywords: Competencies, CBR, Village rehabilitation workers, Training

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Introduction

The concept of Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) emerged in the 1970s as a response to the limitations of traditional, institution-based rehabilitation services. It aimed to provide a more inclusive, community-driven approach to addressing the needs of persons with disabilities, especially in resource-limited settings. The origins of CBR can be traced back to discussions within international organizations, including the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), in the 1970s. The impetus for CBR arose from the recognition that many people with disabilities, particularly in developing countries, were unable to access proper rehabilitation services due to factors such as distance, cost, and lack of trained professionals. The CBR approach was formalized in the Alma-Ata Declaration of 1978, where primary health care was endorsed as the key to achieving health for all. CBR gained further momentum in the 1980s when the WHO, in collaboration with various partners, including NGOs and disabled people's organizations, began to develop CBR guidelines and frameworks (Deepak, 2001).

In the early phase of CBR, it started providing rehabilitative services by providing primary health facilities by utilizing the resources of the community. Primarily, the programs were related to physiotherapy, assistive technology and surgical treatment. Many CBR programs started educational programs and livelihood programs by providing skill development training. WHO published a manual entitled "Training in the community for PWDs" in 1989. This manual aimed to guide and provide support services related to CBR programs and its stakeholders, including PWDs, family, teachers, CBR workers, governmental and non-governmental organizations (Helander, 2007). To benefit a larger population, the manual was translated into fifty languages and is considered as an essential document that is used in different low-income nations. David Werner published a manual entitled "Disabled village children: a guide for community health workers, rehabilitation workers and families" and it played a major role in the implementation of CBR programs particularly in low-income nations (Werner, 1987).

CBR is defined as a "strategy within general community development for the rehabilitation, equalization of opportunities, poverty reduction and social inclusion of PWDs". Furthermore, in 2005, the "World Health Assembly" focused on preventing disabilities and rehabilitation by encouraging nations "to promote and strengthen CBR program" (World Health Organization, 2005.) "CBR is a strategy that promotes collaboration at the community level to enhance social inclusion and participation, reduce poverty and create equal opportunities for all people in the community, including those with disabilities". CBR programs are executed by the joint efforts of PWDs, their family members, organizations and other CBR stakeholders. The principal goal of CBR is to guarantee that PWDs boost their physical and mental capacities, to get access to different facilities, and to develop dynamic support to contribute towards community. CBR also makes sure that there is safeguard of the rights of PWDs by eradicating barriers to make their active participation in society (WHO, 2004). PWDs in CBR programs receive rehabilitative services under five domains. These domains are "Health, Education, Livelihood, Social development, and Empowerment". Many experts dedicate their time and apply their knowledge to assess and provide rules and regulations to implement CBR programs effectively.

Studies focusing on CBR are largely contributed by the WHO through issuing guidelines from time to time. One such publication was released in 2010. The CBR guidelines focused

particularly on all types of disabilities. However, the guidelines were comprehensive enough to cover mental health and other disabilities, which were not covered in the earlier guidelines (WHO, 2010). There have been a very few studies that focused on CBR matrix through systematic review. The studies stated about the civil society organizations that implemented programs under the CBR matrix of WHO. The studies highlighted the fact that the intervention studies under the CBR matrix were very few that the NGOs conducted. The studies largely covered different types of interventions following random control trials. However, the experiments and initiatives could not cover CBR Matrix of WHO (Sue Lukersmith et al., 2013; Shaun Clever et al., 2014; Asher et al., 2017; Butura, et al., 2024). Hence, the present study comprehends the gap in the CBR matrix-based studies in the existing literature. The present study is also unique in the sense of contributing to the WHO matrix-based intervention through capacity building of the VRWs.

Village rehabilitation workers (VRWs) are appointed by the Government of Karnataka, India, to provide rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities and their families at village level. They have multiple roles to perform in the process of rehabilitation. Most importantly, they identify diverse needs of persons with disabilities in the areas of health, education, livelihood, social, and empowerment and assists them in executing daily living activities. They additionally perform a role of advocacy for persons with disabilities in education, health, and skill development and help them to have accessibility and inclusion. Village rehabilitation workers provide awareness about the availability of different assistive devices based on the needs of persons with disabilities to enhance their functioning. They help persons with disabilities to learn "sign language" and make them able to use wheelchair to go from one place to another. Village rehabilitation workers have the role to aware persons with disabilities regarding existing schemes and act as a facilitator between persons with disabilities and service providers.

Aim of the Study

The study aims to find out the effect of competencies-focused training on the Village Rehabilitation Workers (VRWs) across the CBR domains of health, education, livelihood, skill and empowerment. It intends to know how far the capacity-building interventions could produce desired outcome in terms of the competencies of the VRWs.

Method

Research Design

The present study used *one-group pre–post design* to identify the effect of training on the village rehabilitation workers in their CBR matrix domains. Pre intervention data was collected and analyzed. Based on need assessment, training modules were prepared. Training was imparted and after a gap of 45 days, post intervention data collection was completed.

One-group pretest–posttest design or A-B design

Pretest (A)	Intervention	Post-test (B)
O1	X	O2

O1 = Pre-test observation,

X = Intervention,

O2 = Post-test observation.

Variables

Independent variable: Socio demographic variables, CBR domain-based training

Dependent variable: Competency of Village Rehabilitation Workers, Community based Rehabilitation Matrix domains i.e. health, education social development, livelihood and empowerment.

Need assessment of the VRWs

Training needs of the VRWs have been assessed two times, before the intervention and post intervention. Intervention plan was prepared considering the pre intervention training needs of VRWs. Single subject design is the basis of assessing the baseline status for training need assessment, and outcome status to assess the impact of the training on the VRWs.

Method of categorizing the level of needs of VRWs

The training needs have been measured based on following criteria –

i. Responses were recorded based on 5-point Likert scale.

ii. To categorize training needs into low, medium and high, a range was set using the criteria - 5/3 = 1.6 i.e. 5 responses and 3 categories.

iii. The range of 3 categories was set as –

    a.   The values from 1 to 1.6 were considered as low

    b.   The values from 1.7 (+1.6) to 3.3 were considered as medium

    c.   The values from 3.4 (+1.6) to 5 were considered as high

Study area

Kalaburagi district is one of the backward districts of Kalyana-Karnataka region in the state of Karnataka, India. It has a total population of 25,66,326, in which 66,392 are persons with disabilities which constitute 2.58% of the total population. It has low literary rate, low per capita

income, less yield per hectare, and low life expectancy. In 2006, the Ministry of Panchayat Raj, Government of India, named Kalaburagi as one of the country's 250 most backward districts (Mamatha, 2018)**.** It is one of the five districts in Karnataka currently receiving funds from the Backward Regions Grant Fund Programme.

This research study has been conducted in Kalaburagi district of Kalyana-Karnataka. It comprises seven blocks, i.e. Kalaburagi, Chitapur, Aland, Jevargi, Chincholi, Afzalpur, and Sedam. Kalaburagi districts cover 220-gram panchayats in 7 blocks. There are 225 village rehabilitation workers working in the gram panchayats in Kalaburagi, India.

Sample

The population of the present study includes all the village rehabilitation workers working in Kalaburagi district at gram-panchayat level. A total of 185 village rehabilitation workers were recruited from 7 blocks using purposive sampling. List of village rehabilitation workers was prepared in consultation with the District Disability Welfare Office, Kalaburagi. VRWs themselves were persons with disabilities. 185 VRWs have been recruited based on their willingness to participate in the study as there were many who could not participate because of their visual and hearing impairment.

Inclusion criteria

Village rehabilitation workers with experience of not less than 3 years were selected for the study. Only those VRWs were recruited who has experience of working for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities in their respective Panchayats (local self govt. body).

Exclusion criteria

Village rehabilitation workers with hearing and visual impairment have been excluded from participating into the study.

Data collection procedure

The research was approved by Departmental Research Committee of Ethics at Central University of Karnataka, India, and the consent was taken from all the participants including the District Disability Welfare Office, Kalaburagi, Karnataka, India. After the consent from the concerned office, multipurpose rehabilitation workers (MRWs) have been approached. Multi-purpose rehabilitation workers have been appointed by the Government of Karnataka, at block level to monitor and supervise the functions of village rehabilitation workers in each *panchayat*. In Kalaburagi district, there are seven MRWs, one in each block. Multi-purpose rehabilitation workers have been informed about the pre-intervention data collection, followed by implementation of intervention programs and post-intervention data collection. They have been assigned responsibility to inform village rehabilitation workers in their respective blocks. All village rehabilitation workers were informed, and date of pre-intervention data was finalized with district disability rehabilitation officer, and accordingly all village rehabilitation workers participated in the study. It has been decided that pre-intervention data collection shall be completed at district headquarters Kalaburagi. Village rehabilitation workers from all the seven blocks were informed to be present at District Disability Welfare Office, Kalaburagi, for pre-intervention data collection. One hundred and forty village

rehabilitation workers have been selected for data collection, and data were collected by using questionnaire, which undergone the process of reliability and validity. All the village rehabilitation workers gave their consent to be a part of the study.

Group sessions conducted for the capacity building-training of the VRWs at the premises of the District Disability Welfare Office, Kalaburagi, where 140 village rehabilitation workers have attended the training sessions. The total number of training sessions held was 10, and each session lasted for 1 hour. On collaboration mode, between the Department of Social Work of Central University of Karnataka and the District Disability Welfare Office, conducted the training sessions.

Themes of training sessions for VRWs

Training sessions were designed considering the CBR domains on (a) Concept of disabilities. Typology (blindness, low vision, leprosy cured persons, hearing impairment (deaf and hard of hearing), locomotor disability, dwarfism, intellectual disability, mental illness, autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, chronic neurological conditions, specific learning disabilities, multiple sclerosis, speech and language disability, thalassemia, haemophilia, sickle cell disease, multiple disabilities including deaf-blindness, acid attack victim and Parkinson's disease.

(b) Characteristics, causes, and symptoms of 21 types of disabilities as per the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 in India.

(c) Models of disability – charity, medical, social, and biopsychosocial models.

Focus of the training sessions was knowledge, competencies, practice and training needs components of the VRWs to empower them to perform their role in a desirable and expected way.

Instrument

Socio demographic questionnaire:

The socio demographic sheet includes the details related to name, gender, age, education, monthly income, caste, religion, marital status, family type, house type. House ownership, land (in acres) and experience (in years).

CBR Matrix questionnaire: The questionnaire has been developed considering "CBR Matrix" of WHO (2004). The purpose of the tool was to assess the level of knowledge, competencies and needs of Village Rehabilitation Workers (VRWs). There are five domains in the matrix and items have been developed considering all five domains which included education, health, livelihood, social development and empowerment. For the preparation of questionnaire, the items have been reduced in consultation with the experts working in disability management. The items that are repeated/ not relevant were reduced. The questionnaire tool initially consisted of 104 items, after the face validity, content validity and pilot study, items were reduced to 47.

Education domain: The first domain of CBR matrix is education. The items in this domain measures knowledge and competencies related to early childhood education; primary, secondary and higher education, non-formal education and Lifelong learning. There are seven items in the domain. The responses were recorded on five-point Likert scale. i.e., strongly disagree, disagree, undecided,

agree and strongly agree. Here strongly disagree specifies low level of knowledge and competencies and strongly agree shows high level of knowledge and competencies. Reliability of the tool is 0.561.

Health domain: Health is the second domain of CBR matrix. The items in this domain measure knowledge and competencies related to health promotion, prevention, medical care, rehabilitation and assistive devices. There are five items in the domain. The responses were recorded on five-point Likert scale i.e., strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree. Here strongly disagree specifies low level of knowledge and competencies, and strongly agree specifies high level of knowledge and competencies. Reliability of the tool is 0.640.

Livelihood domain: Livelihood is the third domain of CBR matrix. The items in this domain measure knowledge and competencies related to skill development, self-employment, wage employment, financial services and social protection. There are seven items in the domain. The items are based on five-point Likert scale i.e. strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree. Here, strongly disagree specifies low level of knowledge and competencies, and strongly agree specifies high level of knowledge and competencies. Reliability of the scale is 0.577.

Social development: Social development is the fourth domain of CBR matrix. The items in this domain measure knowledge and competencies related to personal assistance, relationships, marriage and family, culture and arts, recreation, leisure and sports and justice. There are eight items in the domain. The items are based on five-point Likert scale i.e. strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree. Here, strongly disagree specifies low level of knowledge and competencies and strongly agree shows high level of knowledge and competencies. Reliability of the tool is 0.627.

Empowerment domain: Empowerment is the fifth domain of CBR matrix. The items in this domain measure knowledge and competencies related to communication, social mobilization, political participation, self-help groups, and disabled People's Organization. There are eight items in the domain. The items are based on five-point Likert scale i.e., strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree. Here, strongly disagree shows low level of knowledge and competencies, and strongly agree specifies high level of knowledge and competencies. Reliability of the tool is 0.445

Perceived training needs: There are twelve statements that assess the needs of VRWs in all the domains of CBR matrix. The items access disability knowledge and CBR matrix components. The responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale i.e., strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree. Here strongly disagree shows high level of training need and strongly agree shows low level of training needs.

Table 1 Socio-demographic details of the VRWs

Socio-demographic variables	Category	n	Percentage
Age (in years)	18-27	16	8.6
	28-37	78	42.2
	38-47	77	41.6
	48-57	14	7.6
	Total	185	100.0

Socio-demographic variables	Category	n	Percentage
Gender	Male	146	78.9
	Female	39	21.1
	Total	185	100.0
Education	SSLC	80	43.2
	PUC	58	31.4
	Graduation	47	25.4
	Total	185	100.0
Category	General	61	33.0
	OBC	78	42.2
	SC/ ST	46	24.9
	Total	185	100.0
Religion	Hindu	164	88.6
	Muslim	20	10.8
	Buddhist	1	.5
	Total	185	100.0
Marital Status	Married	140	75.7
	Unmarried	45	24.3
	Total	185	100.0
Family Type	Nuclear	110	59.5
	Joint	75	40.5
	Total	185	100.0
Experience (in years)	0-3	32	17.3
	4-9	30	16.2
	10 & above	123	66.5
	Total	185	100.0

Table 1 indicates socio-demographic details of the respondents. A Majority of the VRWs, 42.2% (n=78) belong to the age group of 28 to 37 years, 41.6% (n=77) belong to age group of 38 to 47 years, 8.6% (n= 16) belong to 18 to 27 age group, and 7.6% (n=14) belong to age group of 48 to 57 years. Gender distribution shows that a majority of the VRWs, 78.9% (n=146) belong to male category, while 21.1% (n=39) belong to female category. Education background of the VRWs indicate that 43.2% (n=80) VRWs have qualified SSLC, 31.4% (n=58) passed PUC, while 25.4% (n=47) VRWs are graduates. Caste-wise distribution shows that a majority of the participants 42.2% (n=78) belong to other backward castes (OBC), 33% (n=61) belong to general category followed by 24.9% (n=46) belong to scheduled tribes (SC/ST). Religion distribution of the VRWs shows that a majority of the participants, 88.6% (n=164) are Hindus, 10.8% (n=20) are Muslims followed by 0.5% (n=1) belong to Buddhism. Marital status of the VRWs observed that a majority of the participants 75.7% (n=140) are married, while as 24.3% (n=45) are unmarried. Family status indicate that a majority of the participants 59.5% (n=110) belong to nuclear families while as 40.5% (n=75) participants belong to joint families. Experience background of the VRWs show that a majority of the participants 66.5% (n=123) experience is 10 years and above, 17.3% (n=32) VRWs have the experience of 3 years followed by 16.2% (n=30) VRWs have the experience of 4-9 years.

Table 2 Level of Competencies of VRWs in Education domain

	Pre-Intervention		**Post-Intervention**	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Low	137	74.1	10	5.4
Medium	46	24.9	75	40.5
High	2	1.1	100	54.1
Total	185	100.0	185	100.0

Table 2 indicates the level of competency related to Education domain of CBR. Before intervention, it was found that 74.1%, (n =137) VRWs had low level of competency, 24.9%, (n=46) had moderate level of competency followed by 1.1%, (n=2) VRWs with high level of competency. After the intervention, the level of competency in Education domain of CBR has increased. 54.1%, (n=100) VRWs have high level of competency, 40.5%, (n=75) VRWs have moderate level of competency followed by 5.4% (n=10) VRWs with low level of competency.

Table 3 Level of Competencies of VRWs in Health domain

	Pre-Intervention		Post- Intervention	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Low	130	70.3	21	11.4
Medium	52	28.1	54	29.2
High	3	1.6	110	59.5
Total	185	100.0	185	100.0

Table 3 indicates the level of competency related to Health domain of CBR. Before intervention, it was found that 70.3%, (n =130) VRWs had low level of competency, 28.1%, (n=52) VRWs had moderate level of competency followed by 1.6%, (n=3) VRWs with high level of competency. After the intervention, the level of competency in Health domain of CBR has increased. 59.5%, (n=110) VRWs have high level of competency, 29.2%, (n=54) VRWs have moderate level of competency followed by 11.4% (n=21) VRWs with low level of competency.

Table 4 Level of Competencies of VRWs in Livelihood domain

	Pre-Intervention		Post Intervention	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Low	53	28.6	9	4.9
Medium	131	70.8	133	71.9
High	1	.5	43	23.2
Total	185	100.0	185	100.0

Table 4 indicates the level of competency related to Livelihood domain of CBR. Before intervention, it was found that 28.6%, (n =53) VRWs had low level of competency, 70.8%, (n=131) VRWs had moderate level of competency followed by 0.5 (n=1) VRWs with high level of competency. After the intervention, the level of competency in Livelihood domain of CBR has increased. 23.2%, (n=43) VRWs have high level of competency, 71.9%, (n=133) VRWs have moderate level of competency followed by 4.9% (n=9) VRWs with low level of competency.

Table 5 Level of Competencies of VRWs in Social development domain

	Pre-Intervention		Post Intervention	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Low	156	84.3	2	1.1
Medium	27	14.6	34	18.4
High	2	1.1	149	80.5
Total	185	100.0	185	100.0

Table 5 indicates the level of competency related social development domain of CBR. Before intervention, it was found that 84.3%, (n =156) VRWs had low level of competency, 14.6%, (n=27) VRWs had medium level of competency, followed by 1.1%, (n=2) VRWs with high level of competency. After the intervention, the level of competency in social development domain of CBR has increased. 80.5%, (n=149) VRWs have high level of competency, 18.4%, (n=34) VRWs have medium level of competency followed by 1.1% (n=2) VRWs with low level of competency.

Table 6 Level of Competencies of VRWs in Empowerment

	Pre-Intervention		Post Intervention	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Low	118	63.8	0	0
Medium	61	33.0	41	22.2
High	6	3.2	144	77.8
Total	185	100.0	185	100.0

Table 6 indicates the level of competency related to Empowerment domain of CBR. Before intervention, it was found that 63.8% (n =118) VRWs have low level of competency, 33%, (n=61) have medium level of competency, followed by 3.2%, (n=6) with high level of competency. After the intervention, the level of competency in Empowerment domain of CBR has increased. 77.8%, (n=144) have high level of competency where as 22.2%, (n=41) have medium level of competency.

Table 7 Competencies in CBR Matrix domains

	Pre-Intervention		Post Intervention	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Low	135	73.0	0	0
Medium	50	27.0	57	30.8
High	0	0	128	69.2
Total	185	100.0	185	100.0

Table 7 indicates the total level of Competency on different domains of CBR Matrix (Education, Health, Livelihood, Social and Empowerment). Before intervention, it was found that 73%, (n =117) VRWs have low level of Competency and 27%, (n=50) VRWs have medium level of Competency. After the intervention, the level of Competency in all domains of CBR has increased. 69.2%, (n=128) VRWs have high level of Competency and 30.8%, (n=57) VRWs have medium level of Competency.

Table 8 Paired sample t test for pre and post scores on CBR matrix domains of VRWs

	n (no. of participants)	Mean	SD (Standard deviation)	df	t (t value)	p (Significant value)
Pre- test scores of CBR matrix	185	50.8865	6.95585	184	-43.717	.000
Post- test scores of CBR matrix		90.7838	13.31462			

Table 8 shows the paired sample t test to compare the scores of CBR matrix domains of the VRWs before and after the intervention. There is a significant difference found in the level of CBR matrix between pretest (M= 50.8865, SD=90.7838) and post-test (M=6.95585, SD= 13.31462, df=184; t = -43.717, p<0.01) phases of the VRWs. The result indicates significant effect of the capacity building human capital intervention in improving the competencies of the VRWs.

Discussion

Community rehabilitation workers have a vital responsibility in imparting the services to disabled population. To provide better services, there is a need to be competent to organize outreach activities in society and provide awareness to the community about the prevention of diseases. They need to help PWDs to get benefitted from medical services and need to provide referral services and assistance to get social support. They need to have the competency to deliver training to PWDs about self-management to acquire their health-related targets.

From the findings, it is observed that competencies of the VRWs have increased after the intervention in all the domains of CBR matrix. Out of 185 VRWs, a large number of the VRWs (n=135) despite their work experience, they lacked in knowledge and skill domains of the CBR. The human capital in terms of knowledge and skills of the VRWs drastically improved during the post-training phase. Although, the RPD Act insists on the empowerment of the CBR at the grassroots, efforts have been minimal and not satisfactory. Unless the competencies of the VRWs improve, empowerment of the CBR is a mirage. The study rightly perceived the gaps in the system of CBR and intervened through capacity-building training for the VRWs. The study also emphasizes the need of stakeholder approach that through collaboration resilience and synergy is created to improve the functioning of the CBR system. (Gibson et al., 2010) reported that capacity building program has increased the level of knowledge among health workers. The training was effective in improving knowledge related to mental health among community rehabilitation workers. (Remington et al., 2010) discussed fundamental competencies that determine the actions and skills of a community health worker to provide rehabilitation. Competencies that need "to be learned on the job" depends on knowledge, skills and practices of rehabilitation workers. They have awareness regarding social issues and problems related to PWDs and their physical health-related problems. They possess complete knowledge about various mental illnesses and are aware of the difficulties in the functioning of such persons. Competencies include knowledge about different methods to maintain the status of mental health and wellbeing of PWDs. They are equipped with the information on community health resources and amenities.

Competencies can be developed by providing capacity building programs to CBR workers and need to be part of planning, implementation and delivery of the services. Capacity building programs need to be "context-sensitive" and adopt "rights-based approach". Training programs to enhance competencies of CBR workers need to be supervised and to be continuously observed so that their problems can be solved collectively. Moreover, CBR workers are dignified persons and need to be respected and should get an identity as professional workers who will enhance their decision-making process. CBR workers need to follow strategies for the effective delivery of services and adopt "integrated tiered system" in which professional rehabilitation workers, as well as ordinary rehabilitation workers, perform their roles. It is vital to involve PWDs in decision making of selecting CBR workers in the community. CBR workers need to get training related to "case management, social protection, the CBR Matrix, monitoring and recording." CBR workers need to develop and implement counselling skills while dealing with PWDs and their family members to provide rehabilitative services (Gilmore, et al., 2017).

CBR workers find their main competency as the capacity to perform "early identification and screening" of PWDs within the community so that they can be provided effective interventions to overcome disabilities. CBR workers can identify health conditions and impairments such as "cerebral palsy, epilepsy, learning disabilities, spinal cord injuries and mental illness". CBR workers usually work alone as in most of the areas there are no clinics, and therefore, they need to be equipped with clinical skills to identify the impairments of the persons and provide rehabilitation to such persons.

CBR workers have the competency to make negotiations for inclusive development of PWDs in the communities. They need to make sure that PWDs become the part of their families and communities in which they have been excluded. They possess the skills to take initiatives regarding inclusive education and self-employment of PWDs. They have skills to mobilize individuals, family

members, key persons in the community and identifying locally available resources for the economic development of PWDs and their families. CBR workers have competencies to organize awareness programs regarding disability. They play an essential role in educating community members regarding various diseases and impairments and provide intervention for their wellbeing. CBR workers follow inter-sectorial approach and coordinate in collaboration with other departments for an effective outcome of CBR programs. Community based Rehabilitation workers usually work in rural areas where there is a scarcity of professional services to provide services with great impact. CBR workers act as a rehabilitation therapist and provide essential support in the process of rehabilitation of PWD's. They have skills in project planning and management of CBR activities and work for the sustainability of such programs for the betterment of PWDs and their family members (Lorenzo et al., 2015).

Policy implications of the study

Results of the study have a strong bearing on the functioning of the government agencies and non-government organizations working for the rehabilitation of the PWDs, which are engaged in implementing the CBR at the grass-root level. The Rights of Persons with Disability Act, 2016, section 47 states the need for human resource development of the stakeholders working for the Persons with Disabilities. It states that the capacity-building training programmes in accordance with the need-analysis require conducting for the various stakeholders. VRWs are the main stakeholders to empower the community-based rehabilitation system at the grass-root level. The need-assessment conducted as part of the capacity-building training for the VRWs, indicated lacking in their competencies across the CBR domains, which set barrier in effective functioning of the VRWs. The present study shows a model of human resource development, and responsibility of the higher education institutions towards the effective implementation of the CBR system through a need-based training program designed to empower the VRWs. Non-government organizations working for the PWDs are also an important stakeholder in the CBR, working in collaboration with the government agencies. For such organizations, the present study provides a human resource development model to work with the VRWs and CBR system, through replicating the capacity-building training program.

Limitations of the study

The present study used one-group pre-test–post-test design. This design restricts the actual understanding of the effect as there was no control group to compare groups. The present study did not have a control over the variables such as experience and education of the participants. The present study did not select the participants according to the proportion of population in each taluka.

Conclusion

This research paper underscores the necessity of an integrated and community-driven approach to address the diverse needs of persons with disabilities in India. By advocating for the implementation of Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) and emphasizing the pivotal role of Village Rehabilitation Workers (VRWs), this paper aims to contribute to a more inclusive and empowering future for individuals with disabilities in rural India. The study also emphasizes the significance of integrating the capacity-building training in the RPD act in order to empower the grass

root functionaries and CBR system at the grass root level. The policy on the Persons with Disabilities need to clearly specify the role of human capital-based trainings that are CBR Matrix domain-specific to be integrated in order to empower the effective functioning of the CBR system.

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