

Proceedings

International Interdisciplinary Conference

“Wellbeing in Challenging Times”

19th International Annual Conference of Int. Partners

4th Annual Conference of School Leadership (CSL-AADE)

3rd Annual Conference of LTC & Bot. POLIS



AAB College, Pristine-KOSOVA
15-16 November 2024

- 161 Papers - Presentations • 254 Authors, Co-Authors, and Contributors • 23 Countries • Plenary Session, Special and Joint Sessions, Permanent Thematic Sessions
 - Ambassador for Peace Awards
 - Award for Excellence in Research and Practice
 - Best Partnership Award
 - Students for a Good Society



Proceedings

19th Annual International & Interdisciplinary Conference
of AIS-ALBSA and Institutional Partners
“ Wellbeing in Challenging Times”

4th Annual Conference of Center for School Leadership (CSL – AADF)
“ Leadership and Management in Education”
&
3rd Conference of LTC and Polis Publications:
“ Early Childhood Education”

Organizing Institutions:

AAB College, KOSOVO
CSL – AADF Center for School Leadership, ALBANIA (4th Annual Conference)
Universal Peace Federation, UPF
LTC & Boti's Polis (3rd Annual Conference)
University Luigj Gurakuqi Shkoder, ALBANIA
University Fehmi Agani of Gjakova, KOSOVO
University Haxhi Zeka Peje, KOSOVO
University Aleksander Moisiu Durres, ALBANIA
National Association of Sociologists ANS, ITALY
Public University Kadri Zeka Gjilan, KOSOVO
University Ismail Qemali of Vlora, ALBANIA
University Ukshin Hoti Prizren, KOSOVO
University of Mitrovica Isa Boletini, KOSOVO
University Fan S. Noli Korce, ALBANIA
Institute of Science and Technology, INSI, KOSOVO
Albanian Academic Diaspora, ITALY
Albanian Institute of Sociology - Albanian Sociological Association
(19th Annual International Conference)
Institute of Sociology, Demographic Research and Innovation - ISDI, KOSOVO
International Sociological Association, ISA

Place & Time:

AAB College Pristine, KOSOVO
15-16 November 2024

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ALL ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (2006-2025)

20th Annual International Conference

"Development in Turbulent Times"
University Luigj Gurakuqi Shkoder, ALBANIA, 14-15 November 2025

19th Annual International Conference

"Well-being in the Challenging Times"
AAB College, KOSOVA: 15-16 November 2024

18th Annual International Conference

"Social Capital and Public Sphere in Contemporary Society"
University Ismail Qemali Vlora, ALBANIA: 10-11 November 2023

17th Annual International Conference:

The role of Technology in the Shaping of Society
University of Gjilan Kadri Zeka, KOSOVO: 11-12 November 2022

16th Annual International Conference:

Education and Culture in Contemporary Society
University Fan S. Noli of Korca, Albania: 5-6 November 2021

15th Annual International Conference:

Comparative Studies in Modern Society: Balkans in European and Global Context
Universiteti of Prizren Ukshin Hoti, KOSOVO: 6-7 November 2020
(Postponed from November 2020 to 19-20 March 2021, due to Covid-19 Pandemic)

14th Annual International Conference:

Social institutions in Contemporary Society
[The Interaction between Education, Family, Religion, Politics, and Economy]
Durrës-Albania: 15-16 November 2019

13th Annual International Conference:

Continuity & Change: Balkans in European, and Global Context
[Balanced Perspective of Past, Present & Future]
Mitrovica-Kosovo: 16-17 November 2018

12th Annual International Conference:

Good Society – a multidimensional Approach
Tirana-Albania: 17-18 November 2017

11th Annual International Conference:

Education & Sustainable Development: the future we are creating
Skopje-Tetovo, North Macedonia: 18-19 November 2016

10th Annual International Conference:

How Migration is shaping the Contemporary Society?
Pristine-Kosovo: 20-21 November 2015

9th Annual International Conference:

Law and values in contemporary society
Tirana-Albania 21-22 November 2014

8th Annual International Conference:

Democracy in Times of Turmoil: A multidimensional approach
Durrës –Albania: 22-23 November 2013

7th Annual International Conference:

Identity, image, and social cohesion in our time of interdependence
Vlora-Albania: 26-28 November 2012

6th Annual International Conference

Education in turbulent times: The Albanian case in European and global context
Tirana-Albania: 21-22 November 2011

5th Annual conference:

The social problems: their study, treatment, and solutions; Albania in global context
Tirana-Albania: 7-8 June 2010

4th Annual International conference:

Twenty Years of Democratic Transformations: Albania in East European Context
Tirana-Albania: 10 December 2009

3rd AIS International Conference:

World Economic Crises and its impact on the Albanian Economic and Social Life
Tirana-Albania: 22 May 2009

2nd Annual International Conference:

Issues and Models of Communitarian Organization
Tirana-Albania: 27 June 2008

1st Annual International Conference:

Political pluralism and Albanian political thought
Tirana-Albania: 15 June 2007

Funding Meeting and the Founding AIS Conference:

Sociology in Albania and the need of its Institutionalization
Tirana-Albania: 21 November 2006; Tirana International Hotel

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I. SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE, CONFERENCE COORDINATORS & LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Chair of the Conference:

Blerim OLLURI – Rector, AAB College, KOSOVO

(In alphabetic order)

Apostolos G. PAPADOPOULOS – BSF, Harokopio University, GREECE

Armand KRASNIQI – University Haxhi Zeka Peje, KOSOVO

Artan DERMAKU – University Kadri Zeka of Gjilan, KOSOVO

Aurela SALIAJ – University Ismail Qemali Vlora, ALBANIA

Aylin TOPAL – Turkish Social Science Association, TURKEY

Besim GOLLOPENI – UMIB & Institute of Sociology, Demographic Research and Innovation - ISDI, KOSOVO

Borut RONČEVIĆ – School for Advanced Studies, SLOVENIA

Brunilda ZENELAGA – ALBSA, University of Tirana, ALBANIA

Drilon BUNJAKU – University Fehmi Agani of Gjakova, KOSOVO

Erenestina GJERGJI HALILI – University of Tirana, ALBANIA

Ermioni CEKANI – LTC & Bot Polis, ALBANIA

Franz KOK – University of Salzburg, AUSTRIA

Gani RROSHI – Universal Peace Federation, UPF, ALBANIA

Irena NIKAJ – ALBSA, University Fan Noli of Korca, ALBANIA

Ismajl BAFTIJARI – Institute for Science and Technology (INSI), KOSOVO

Jasminka LAZNJAK – University of Zagreb, CROATIA

Jola KEPI – Center for School Leadership, CSL-AADF, ALBANIA

Jonida LAMAJ – Albanian American Development Foundation, ALBANIA

Juliana LAZE – University Aleksander Moisiu Durres, ALBANIA

Klea FANIKO – University of Genevre, SWITZERLAND

Lea YPI – London School of Economics & Political Science, UNITED KINGDOM

Lorenc IKONOMI – University Fan S. Noli of Korca, ALBANIA

Mentor ALISHANI – University Ukshin Hoti Prizren, KOSOVO

Nurtene DEVA – University of Mitrovica Isa Boletini, KOSOVO

Olga KUTSENKO – University Taras Shevchenko of Kyiv, UKRAINE

Pietro ZOCCONALI – *National Association of Sociologists, ITALY*
Robert ÇITOZI – *University of Sports Tirana, ALBANIA*
Romina GURASHI – *Sapienza University of Rome, ITALY*
Sarina BAKIĆ – *University of Sarajevo, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA*
Sergiu BALTATESCU – *BSF, University of Oradea, ROMANIA*
Shkelqim FORTUZI – *University Aleksander Moisiu Durres, ALBANIA*
Svetla KOLEVA – *Bulgarian Academy of Science, BULGARIA*
Tonin GJURAJ – *University Luigj Gurakuqi Shkoder, ALBANIA*

Conference Coordinators:

Jola KEPI – *Center for School Leadership, CSL -AADF, ALBANIA*
Venera LLUNJI – *AAB College, KOSOVO*

Local Organizing Committee:

Vrullim BUJA – *Dean of Public Administration Faculty, AAB College KOSOVO*
Ina XHAKOLLI – *Center for School Leadership, ALBANIA*
Elda SOKOLI KUTROLLI – *Albanian Institute of Sociology, ALBANIA*

Coordinators of partner institutions:

Leke SOKOLI – *President of the Albanian Institute of Sociology (AIS) & UAMD*

Chair of the conference Secretary:

Elda SOKOLI KUTROLLI – *Albanian Institute of Sociology, AIS-ALBSA*

II. GENERAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

REGISTRATIONS (Online and in person):

Registration Desk: 15 November 2024, beginning 09.00

AAB College KOSOVO

Main Campus: Rr. "Elez Berisha", Zona Industriale Prishtinë – Fushë Kosovë 10000

[Conference program, conference book/proceedings, journals, and detailed information for the participants]

OPENING CEREMONY AND WELCOME ADDRESS

AAB Theater "Faruk Begolli"

Moderator:

Venera LLUNJI – Conference Coordinator, AAB College, **KOSOVO**

Welcome to Kosovo and AAB College

Blerim OLLURI - Rector, AAB College, **KOSOVO**

Welcome to the 4th Annual Conference "Leadership and Management in Education"

Jola KEPI - Executive Director of Center for School Leadership (CSL)

Welcome to the 2nd Annual Scientific Session "Peace - the Balkans in a European and global context"

Jacques MARION - Chairman of the Universal Peace Federation for Europe and the Middle East

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ORGANIZING INSTITUTIONS

Prof. Assoc. Dr. **Drilon BUNJAKU** – University Fehmi Agani of Gjakova, **KOSOVO**

Prof. Dr. **Armand KRASNIQI** – Rector, University Haxhi Zeka Peje, **KOSOVO**

Prof. Assoc. Dr. **Artan DERMAKU** – Rector, University Kadri Zeka of Gjilan, **KOSOVO**

Prof. Assoc. Dr. **Mentor ALISHANI** – Rector, University Ukshin Hoti Prizren **KOSOVO**

Prof. Dr. **Lorenc IKONOMI** – Rector, University Fan S. Noli of Korca, **ALBANIA**

Prof. Assoc. Dr. **Nurtene DEVA** – Rector, University of Mitrovica Isa Boletini, **KOSOVO**

Ismajl BAFTIJARI – President, Institute for Science and Technology (INSI), **KOSOVO**

Prof. Assoc. Dr. **Brunilda ZENELAGA** – President of ALBSA, University of Tirana, **ALBANIA**
Prof. Assoc. Dr. **Besim GOLLOPANI** – UMIB & Institute of Sociology, Demographic
Research and Innovation - ISDI, **KOSOVO**

AWARDS:

Ambassador of Peace (UPF)

Award for Excellence in Research and Practice

Award for Best Partnership

FROM PRISTINE – KOSOVO TO SHKODER ALBANIA

Next International Conference: “Development in Turbulent Time”

University “Luigj Gurakuqi” Shkoder, ALBANIA: 14-15 November 2024

Dr. Sc. **Blerim OLLURI** –Rector, AAB College, KOSOVO

Prof. Dr. **Tonin GJURAJ** - Rector, University “Luigj Gurakuqi” Shkoder, ALBANIA

Dr. **Jola KEPI** – CEO of School Leadership (CSL-AADF)

Presentation of the Conference Program

Prof. Assoc. Dr. **Venera LLUNJI** - Conference Coordinator

FIRST DAY OF THE CONFERENCE: 15 NOVEMBER 2024

4th Annual Conference of School Leadership (CSL – AADF)

Presentations

Parallel Sessions of the CSL 4th Conference

15 November 2024: 12.00-17.00

19th International & Interdisciplinary Conference of International Partners

Presentations of the first day: Conference Thematic Sessions (TS01-TS14), Parallel sessions

November 2024: 12.00-17.00

2nd Annual Scientific Session of Universal Federation of Peace and AIS

Chair:

Dr. **Saemira PINO**, Chair of International Association of Academicians for Peace (IAAP-UPF).

Keynote Speaker:

Mr. **Jacques MARION**, Chairman of the Universal Peace Federation for Europe and the Middle East

15 November 2024: 12.00-13.30

SECOND DAY OF THE CONFERENCE: 16 NOVEMBER 2024**Presentations of Second Day**

Conference Thematic Sessions of the second day (ST01-ST14),
16 November 2024: 10:00 – 13:00

Online presentations (with a special program)

Special and Joint Sessions

“Education in the Early Childhood” – 3rd Annual Conference

Chair:

Dr. Ermioni HOXHA CEKANI

16 November 2024: 10:00 – 13:00

Social Session of the Albanian Academic Diaspora, ITALY

Chairs:

Dr. Romina GURASHI & Dr. Shkëlzen HASANAJ

16 November 2024: 10:00 – 13:00

**CONCLUSIONS, CLOSING CEREMONY, and
CERTIFICATES “FOR PARTICIPATING AND PRESENTING THE PAPER”**

with the signature of AAB College - Rector and/or Conference Coordinator.
(After the last presentation of each Conference Session)

III. ABSTRACTS OR FULL PAPERS

“PEACE - THE BALKANS IN A EUROPEAN
AND GLOBAL CONTEXT”: 2ND ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC
SESSION OF UNIVERSAL PEACE FEDERATION (UPF)
& ALBANIAN INSTITUTE OF SOCIOLOGY (AIS)

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 142/ UPF & AIS

Prospects for Sustainable Peace in the Balkans

Jacques MARION

Universal Peace Federation for Europe and the Middle East

For centuries, the Balkans have been a crossroad of cultures and a strategic location for competing political and religious powers. Balkan nations represent a mosaic of ethnicities with distinct religious backgrounds. Religion and ethnicity played a key role in the wars that tore the region apart at the end of last century. Today, on Lund's curve of conflict, the Balkan region may be considered at a level of “unstable peace”. While peace is usually measured by social, economic and political indicators according to the Global Peace Index, this paper will focus on two indicators that are key to sustainable peace: the strength of the family as the fundamental unit to build a peaceful and prosperous society; and interreligious reconciliation and cooperation as a key element of conflict transformation. Such indicators are particularly relevant to the Balkans region. Ethnic solidarity, a strong Balkan feature, is based on family traditions, and within Europe, traditional family values remain particularly strong in the Balkans. On the other hand, historical experience with religious diversity and coexistence, although at times a cause of violent conflicts, has provided opportunities for interreligious reconciliation and cooperation in the region. At a time when we have the highest number of active conflicts in the world since the end of the Second World War, the Balkans provide unique resources, and a training ground, for sustainable peacebuilding.

Keywords: *The Balkans, Sustainable Peace, Global Peace Index, family, prosperous society*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 144/ UPF & AIS

Peace and the Prophets of Events that not Happened

Leke SOKOLI

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The idea for this topic came to me from the Russia-Ukraine war. Before Russia's attack on Ukraine began, the general consensus about the epilogue was clear: Kiev would fall very quickly. Russia itself was so convinced of a quick conquest of Kiev that the "victory parade" ceremony in the main square of Kiev was planned along with the attack. Even the US offered the Ukrainian president a ticket to flee the country, while Europe anxiously thought about Russia's next victim. Western "prophets" predicted that "the Ukrainian army would be destroyed within 30-40 minutes" (New York Times), that "Western weapons will not help Ukraine" (Foreign Policy), that "the leaders of Ukraine will be killed soon" (Royal United Services Institute, London), that "Kiev would be conquered within hours" (The Economist)... We are dealing with a prophecy based on myths (the myth of the Red Army, in this case) and not in the other way around, as it turns out. So with a prophecy of the event that does not happen. Furthermore, the "Arab Spring" was not predicted either. If foreseen, Mubarak in 2011, for example (like Ceausescu before him, 1989) had the potential to suppress the revolution in his country. Let's go further to make a generalization: once Malthus gave his apocalyptic forecast about population, development and welfare; Marx, after him, gave his apocalyptic prediction on capitalism itself, etc. That were not confirmed... Why so much inaccuracy in estimating dynamics? Why, even in the era of the 4th Industrial Revolution and AI, future events and developments are not accurately predicted? Even for AI itself (in addition to the feverish race of governments and enterprises to develop it), even the prophecies are extreme: from "AI will finally solve all the problems of humanity" (American investor Marc Andersen) to "AI can/would destroy our civilization, humanity itself" (apocalyptic prophecy of Elon Musk and Co.). From this approach, some conclusions have been drawn for the social sciences (especially related to their liberation from myths and the traditional status quo), for the educational system (based on values and not on technical components/competencies), for a (pro)active academicism, for a more realistic approach in the commitment to peace.

Keywords: *Peace, prophets, events that do not happen, education, proactive academicism*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 145/ UPF & AIS

About the Strong Correlation of Peace and Citizenship

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This paper explores the critical role of citizenship in mitigating ethnic tensions, focusing on the disconnection between citizenship as an identity-forming process and

the emergence of conflict. Ethnic tensions often arise in societies where citizenship is perceived as exclusionary, privileging certain groups while marginalizing others. This exclusion can intensify grievances, leading to conflict. In contrast, inclusive citizenship, where all ethnic groups are recognized and integrated into the political, social, and cultural fabric of a state, can reduce these tensions and promote lasting peace. Through an analysis of Kosovo’s post-conflict trajectory, this paper explores how ethnic tensions have persisted due to citizenship policies that fail to fully integrate minority groups. It highlights the role of citizenship as more than a legal status; it is an essential component of individual and group identity. When citizenship frameworks exclude or alienate certain populations, as in the case of Kosovo, the result is a heightened risk of inter-ethnic conflict and prolonged societal fragmentation. By examining peacebuilding efforts in Kosovo, this paper underscores the importance of inclusive citizenship models in conflict resolution and the prevention of further violence. It argues that for sustainable peace to be achieved, citizenship must be reconceptualized as a mechanism for unifying diverse ethnic groups and promoting social cohesion. Ultimately, the study advocates for a rethinking of citizenship as a critical tool in post-conflict settings, particularly in ethnically divided societies like Kosovo, to foster long-term peace and stability.

Keywords: *peace inclusive citizenship ethnic tension peacebuilding efforts in Kosovo sustainable peace*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 146/ UPF & AIS

Social Peace and the Respectful Treatment of the Elderly

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The experience of working with the elderly can be both rewarding and frustrating at times. Above all, it’s important to treat people with the respect and decency they merit. It may reassure you that you are carrying out a noble mission, but occasionally you may sense that things aren’t going as planned. You must take responsibility for your actions and show others respect. It is important to respect your patients’ individual needs, communicate effectively, and avoid displaying symptoms of irritation, regardless of how challenging the situation may be. If you are providing care, be truthful in your work and gain their trust. They deserve your respect, even though they might require your assistance. It’s easy to undervalue the knowledge and talents of older people in our fast-paced, constantly changing environment. However, we may promote a more sympathetic, caring, and peaceful society by showing the elderly our love and gratitude. Investigating the value of honoring and respecting elder generations and how doing so might result in a better world is vital. In a culture that frequently extols youth and energy, it is crucial to take a moment to consider the incalculable contributions that our senior citizens make to society. As they say, “Love and respect the elderly; being

old and wise is the greatest privilege, as not everyone will experience it.” These wise comments serve as a reminder of the priceless value of our older folks’ combined knowledge, experience, and fortitude. Not everyone has the opportunity to experience old age as a stage of life. It is a path characterized by the passing of time, full of pleasures and difficulties, and enhanced by the collection of knowledge. Additionally, family dynamics are significantly impacted by the elderly. Their insight, direction, and unwavering affection frequently act as the cornerstones of family harmony. They are the storytellers, the living encyclopedias, and the rock that families lean on when things are tough. Respecting the rights and welfare of senior citizens is a necessary part of loving them. This entails backing laws and programs that advance accessible and safe housing, reasonably priced healthcare, and safeguards against elder abuse. A society that values its senior citizens is one that acknowledges each person’s inherent worth, regardless of age. Mutual love and social harmony are the cornerstones of a society that takes care of its elderly.

Keywords: *Social Peace, elderly, respectful treatment, dignity, responsibility*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 147/ UPF & AIS

Peace, Social Movements and Reconciliation

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The topic entitled Peace, social movements and reconciliation focuses on a series of initiatives, activities and movements in certain political, social, cultural, etc. periods and contexts. The topic examines and deals with key events and movements, especially in the years 1989-1991, such as the student protests and the blood pardon in Kosovo, which mobilized the Kosovar society and helped raise awareness of the need for changes, serving as a basis and turning point for the processes that would follow at the end of the last century. Peace, more precisely its establishment, does not mean only the absence of violence, but also the creation of conditions that promote dialogue, understanding, tolerance and cooperation, despite diversities. Therefore, the active involvement of various individuals and groups in promoting a peaceful and stable environment is of particular importance. In this regard, the topic in question reflects the need and importance of organizing cultural activities that help strengthen and advance the ties between different groups. These, and the promotion of art and science as means of (identity) expression, are other ways to support a culture of peace. Also, this topic explores the different strategies and methods that can be used to help build stable and safe relationships, and raise awareness for social justice. Through practical experiences and case studies, it will be examined how individuals, organizations and institutions can contribute to maintaining and strengthening peace not only at the local level.

Keywords: *Peace, social movements and reconciliation, Stublla, Kosovo*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 148/ UPF & AIS

Pace Psychology

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This theoretical study introduces and examines the concept of “Pace Psychology” as a framework for understanding the psychological underpinnings of peace-building and conflict resolution. Rooted in social psychology, conflict theory, and peace studies, this framework explores how cognitive, emotional, and social factors contribute to individuals’ and groups’ capacities to engage in peace-promoting behaviours. Central to this framework is the examination of factors such as identity formation, intergroup empathy, trauma recovery, and the cognitive biases that influence perceptions of “us” versus “them.” Through an analysis of existing literature and theoretical constructs, this study proposes that psychological resilience, positive intergroup contact, and narrative reframing are key elements in fostering sustainable peace. Furthermore, it addresses the role of cultural narratives and historical memory in shaping peace-oriented mindsets, particularly in post-conflict settings like the Balkans. By advancing a theoretical model for Pace Psychology, this work seeks to bridge gaps in understanding how psychological processes can both hinder and facilitate peace, offering insights that apply to policymakers, educators, and peace-building practitioners globally. This study contributes to peace psychology by offering a conceptual lens for exploring the mental and emotional foundations of a more peaceful and cohesive society.

Key words: *Pace psychology, conflict resolution, resilience*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 149/ UPF & AIS

Facing Common Challenges, Strengthens Sustainable Peace in the Western Balkans

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The Western Balkans is a region marked by a complex history and has a diverse cultural, religious and ethnic composition. Unfortunately, the region still faces significant challenges that threaten its path toward sustainable peace. This paper explores how confronting shared issues, such as demographic changes, “brain drain”, declining birth rates, and family instability, can foster solidarity and resilience among communities and countries. Demographic changes in the region are characterized by an aging population and a youth exodus, leading to a “brain drain” that undermines economic and social development. As skilled, well-educated individuals and professionals leave their countries in search of better opportunities, the remaining population faces increased burdens in terms of care and support, further exacerbating family issues. The decline in birth rates

compounds this problem, creating an imbalanced demographic structure that jeopardizes future generations and strains social systems. Addressing these interrelated challenges requires an increased focus on public awareness and a collaborative approach among Western Balkan countries. By developing joint strategies that promote social cohesion, enhance economic opportunities, joint intercultural and interreligious programs, and support for families, countries can mitigate the adverse effects of these demographic trends. Collaborative efforts in education, employment, and social services can help retain talent and encourage family growth, ultimately contributing to a more stable and prosperous region. This paper argues that by recognizing and addressing these common challenges collectively, the Western Balkans can strengthen the foundations of lasting peace. Shared initiatives not only empower communities but also build trust and solidarity among nations, paving the way for a more integrated and resilient future. Through united efforts, the region can transform demographic challenges into opportunities for sustainable development and lasting peace.

Keywords: *Western Balkans, complex history, cultural diversity, initiatives for peace*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 150/ UPF & AIS

Clinton's Doctrine for Kosovo & the Morality of American Policy

Saemira GJIPALI PINO

There is a monument dedicated to the 42nd President of the USA in the middle of the capital of Kosovo, Europe's newest state. It is the gratitude of the people of Kosovo for its direct contribution to its independence. In the American system of government where the president is the only nationally elected official, coherence in foreign policy stems from presidential positions. The US led NATO intervention in Kosovo under President Bill Clinton's administration represents an important moment in American foreign policy. In the political literature, although rarely, this moment is considered as the practical implementation of the so-called *Clinton Doctrine*. From a doctrine, a set of principles is historically expected to justify certain policies. But sometimes even doctrine is simpler than a sophisticated political theory. This is the case. Clinton's doctrine justified military intervention in the face of human rights abuses by the Serbian regime. The administration's decision was based on the conviction that the international community had a responsibility to act against large-scale atrocities, challenging traditional concepts of state sovereignty. Today, after a quarter of a century, time shows that it was not a calculated strategy within geopolitical frameworks. The support of democratic institutions and values were and are priorities of American foreign policy. This paper aims to emphasize the morality of Clinton's policy in Kosovo, against the moralizations of non-interference in the internal affairs of a country. The issue of Kosovo was much more complicated than that.

Keywords: *Clinton's Doctrine, Kosovo Crisis, Morality of American Policy, Winning the Peace*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 151/ UPF & AIS

Peace in the Thought and Practical Activity of Academic Fehmi AGANI

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According to Professor Fehmi Agani, self-determination is the principle that no people should be forced to live under a sovereignty they did not choose. Every nation has the right to shape its political and administrative systems freely. This freedom lays the foundation for equality among nations, facilitating a peaceful and harmonious coexistence. Without securing this right, lasting peace is impossible. Albanians in Kosovo are not simply a minority; they are a distinct people with the inherent right to an independent state. Across pivotal moments in history, the Albanian nation has shown a deep-rooted sense of identity and unity. Kosovo's independence brings Albanians closer to the goal of achieving parity with other nations; yet, complete equality remains out of reach while Kosovo is prevented from uniting with Albania. For Albanians, the national consciousness and aspirations are foundational to their identity and have driven their national movements. Professor Agani views freedom and dignity as fundamentally interconnected, each enhancing the meaning of the other. When freedom is absent, peace is at risk. Without ethnic freedom, basic human rights lose their full significance. Only freedom can guide democratic societies away from decline and violence, leading them toward victory. Those who do not understand or value freedom will struggle to attain it. Conflicts among peoples are best solved through peaceful means, mutual respect, cultural and spiritual dialogue. Resolving the Albanian issue supports stability throughout the Balkans and beyond the region.

Keywords: *Fehmi Agani, Self-determination, Human Rights, Albanian issue, the Balkans*

4TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP (CSL – AADF)

**“LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
IN EDUCATION”**

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 28/CSL -AADF

**How much science we teach our undergraduate
preschool student-teachers?
(A national Comparison)**

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Drawing on a national comparison of study-guides, this study aims to compare the number of compulsory natural sciences courses, the course names, and their ECTS, in searching for any common model, regularity or principle used to construct the bachelor preschool curricula from different Higher Education Institution (HEI) in Albania; the data are complete with the case of Democritus University of Thrace (DUTH), Greece, which was evaluated as an international representative sample in region. The data, collecting from on line official website of 9 Albanian Higher Education Institutions, public and private, revealed that 8 out of 9 offer this study program; 1 out of 8 has not any study-guide published on line; 2 out of 8 offer 0 natural sciences courses; 2 out of 8 offer one full natural science course, with credits approximately the same (respectively 11 ECTS and 15 ECTS), the same approach that is used by DUTH, too, only that the science course offered by DUTH has 4.5 ECTS; 2 out of 8, offer courses in natural sciences and courses in didactics of science, but the later one can be found under a new name – science is substitutes with “knowledge about the science”, at both HEIs, a term or a concept entirely unknown at university level; 1 out of 8 offer only didactic of natural sciences. The main conclusion is that the current landscape of sciences courses in those program studies provides no option to formulate any common regularity or principle or to describe any model. We can only speculate about so many differences regarding

science courses at this study program – the absence of a national debate about preparation of preschool teachers and the need to cooperate at international level to introduce a new perspective for this program study.

Keywords: *natural sciences, preschool, teachers, curricula, principles*

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Basic care in early childhood and transition as a socio-cultural process

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If we keep in mind that systems change when people change, we will do more and better for the education of children, from the earliest days with more attention and professionalism. In this paper, we will pay attention to the transition as a socio-cultural learning process. Sociocultural learning refers to the various ways in which caregivers and communities enable children to achieve mastery of culturally recognized and valued behaviors. While the process of socio-cultural learning exists everywhere, the goals of these learning processes vary within communities and historical periods. This perspective does not deny the importance of universal maturational processes but encourages a closer examination of the meaning of ethno theories and contexts that inform childhood transitions and rites of passage. The origins of this approach can be found in part within social (or socio-cultural) constructivist perspectives. The theory put forth by Vygotsky breaks away from traditional developmental psychology by focusing on the importance of social interaction. It emphasizes the activity, rather than the individual, as the basic unit of analysis. This more dynamic vision of child development provides an interconnected picture of transition. In this view, children are actively involved in the timing and quality of their transition experiences. Vygotskian socio-cultural psychology has the advantage of recognizing all aspects of childhood shaped by social, cultural, and economic processes. This also applies to children’s environments, be they within the home, on the farm, or in preschool settings. Vygotsky understands learning as a process that results in development. The impact of learning on development occurs in the so-called “zone of proximal development” which refers to the distance between the most difficult task a child can do without help and the most difficult task he/she can do with support. Therefore, children learn and develop through guidance from teachers, adults, and more capable peers.

Keywords: *culture, history, social being, social interaction, sign and tool, higher mental functions*

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Creating the Vision for a Multifunctional Academic Incubator to Rethink Learning and the Future

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Today's global society is influenced by challenges that are interconnected, transformative, and require collaborative solutions. These challenges demand interdisciplinary and international approaches, encouraging strategies to explore and develop new methods to successfully address them and ensure a sustainable and peaceful future for all. Universities are a distinguishing feature of the European way of life and therefore must play a central role in the new wave of innovation and technology transfer. The purpose of this research is to develop a clear and comprehensive vision for the creation of a multifunctional academic incubator that rethinks the learning process in accordance with the needs of the 21st century. At its core, it constitutes a platform where new ideas, modern technologies, and experimental approaches in education are gathered and developed to tackle the challenges of the future. The methodology used focuses on a combination of theoretical and practical approaches; an in-depth review of the literature on interdisciplinary learning, academic incubators, innovation in teaching, and modern pedagogical approaches. The study includes an analysis of best practices from universities and global educational institutions that have applied similar concepts to academic incubators. Depending on the purpose and mission, incubators offer collaborative spaces, conference rooms, laboratories, workshops, training for professional development, and more. With a clear vision that integrates practical learning, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the use of technology, this incubator can prepare the next generation of leaders and innovators who will face the challenges of a rapidly developing world.

Keywords: *vision, academic incubator, multifunctional, learning*

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The education and wellbeing

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A quality education is the cornerstone of good health and well-being. People must be able to prevent sickness and disease in order to live healthy and productive lives. Children and adolescents must be well-nourished and healthy in order to learn. Education is both a growth accelerator and a health intervention in and of itself. According to the 2015 Incheon Declaration, education fosters the skills, values, and attitudes that enable individuals to

live healthy and fulfilling lives, make informed decisions, and respond to local and global concerns (Declaration 2015). The research’s significance is focused on philosophical and empirical questions about the relationship between education and well-being. Many of these connections are complicated and frequently not adequately supported or comprehended by a rigorous knowledge foundation. Moreover, the study will discover the outcomes of education if it is the health conditions, disabilities, and unhealthy behaviour, poor mental health, because sometimes bad health leads to poorer educational attainment and can also create educational setbacks and interfere with education.

Keywords: *education, student, well-being, mental health, children*

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Evaluating the Impact of Continuous Training Program of IAP Leaders (CTP) on School Principals’ Internal Assessment Practices: A Case Study from Albania

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This study seeks to analyze how the Continuous Training Program for School Principals (CTP) contributes to increasing the capacities of school principals in Albania in their school work practices. More specifically, this study is based on the examination of two key documents, the Manual of the Compulsory Training Program (CTP) for Principals of Pre-university Education Institutions (CSL, 2020) and the Internal School Assessment

Methodology (ASCAP, 2020). With the evolving demands on school leadership, especially in the areas of quality assurance and accountability, this research seeks to analyse how CTP supports principals in effectively assessing and improving their schools' conduct and performance. The study examines the alignment of CTP content with the needs of Albanian school principals, the challenges they face in internal evaluations, and the overall impact of CTP in fostering sustainable improvements in school governance. A content analysis of the two documents was conducted to find the commonalities and divergences between the tools and protocols offered to school principals in their work. This study is inspired by the LEA4SCHOOL project, part of the fellowship program Research Expertise from the Academic Diaspora (READ) founded by the AADF. By addressing these objectives, the research seeks to provide valuable insights into how CTP can be optimized to better serve the needs of school leaders in Albania, ultimately contributing to enhanced educational outcomes.

Keywords: *CPT, leadership, performance, pre-university, internal assessment*

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Digital leadership in education: How new technologies are transforming the role of school leaders

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The digital transformation has brought profound changes to the education sector, requiring school leaders to develop new skills and strategies to successfully manage technological innovation. This study aims to explore the role of digital leadership in schools and assess the impact of using new technologies to improve learning outcomes and create a learning environment suited to the needs of the 21st century. Through an analysis of existing literature and case studies, the key benefits and challenges faced by school leaders in integrating online platforms, blended learning, and the use of artificial intelligence for various educational purposes will be identified. The study highlights the importance of new leadership skills, such as technological proficiency, change management, and the ability to foster collaboration between teachers and students to maximize the benefits of digital technologies. Furthermore, it discusses how school leaders can create a school culture that promotes innovation, increases teacher participation in professional development training, and supports students in developing critical skills for the global job market. Additionally,

this study will analyze the key challenges that digital leadership faces in resource-limited settings and offers recommendations to ensure that digitalization is used inclusively and effectively. The results show that digital leadership in education has the potential to transform educational institutions by enhancing not only the quality of teaching but also the overall student experience and their preparation for global challenges. This topic provides a new perspective on the importance of digital leadership and prepares school leaders for a future where technology is integrated into teaching and learning.

Keywords: *Digital leadership, education, school leaders, technological innovation, change management, professional development*

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Leadership and Management in Education and Four Intelligences

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Today, everyone is talking about Artificial Intelligence (AI). With interest, but also with concern. AI will have a deeper impact on humanity than fire or electricity (this is how Google’s CEO predicted it), especially in economics, technology, health etc., even philosophy, social science and all systems of thought. Education is also one of the areas most affected by AI. This represents a challenge for management and leadership in education. However, in this paper it is argued that the success of students (the main object and main indicator of leadership in education) is related to four intelligences, which are: IQ, IE, IS and IA. They are analyzed in correlation, starting with ‘Success and Intelligence in the Studies of Lewis Terman’ and his books ‘Genetic Studies of Genius’. Some conclusions about working with talented (gifted students) emerge, especially related to the fact that IQ is only a prerequisite for success, and nothing more. Talent and success are far from being in perfect correlation. But, on the other hand, IQ does not measure practical intelligence, the ability to make things work, it does not measure creativity, curiosity, willpower, perseverance, courage, wisdom, it does not indicate emotional readiness, etc., so IE (measurable, test of Emotional Intelligence). A third form of intelligence is Social Intelligence (IS) related to the talent of organising groups (1), negotiation (2), personal connections (3), and social analysis (4) - measurable through the “Social Intelligence Test” - “Test of social intelligence”. The authors also suggest the use of the Sociometric Test in schools, as an element for knowing social relations and students’ tendencies - as elements of management in education. In this paper, some suggestions are given for the measurement and use of intelligence in function of academic achievements and school success.

Keywords: *Leadership and Management in Educational, IQ, Emotional Intelligence, Social Intelligence, IA, success*

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The importance of the Director's Cooperation with Collegial Groups in educational institutions and their efficient functioning

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The collaboration of the director with collegial groups in educational institutions is essential for efficient functioning and the improvement of the quality of education. These groups promote a collaborative approach to management, improve communication and engagement, and assist in the development of good policies and practices for student education. In this way, they contribute to creating a stronger and more efficient educational environment. By receiving opinions and suggestions from collegial groups, the director is better equipped to make informed decisions that reflect the needs of the school community. Policy review is an approach that ensures the school's policies and strategies align with common goals and are adopted by all stakeholders. Collaboration helps establish clear communication channels between leaders, teachers, parents, and students. This creates a culture of feedback, where the opinions of all school members are valued and taken into consideration. Strong collaboration builds trust between leaders and staff, contributing to a better work environment. A director who works closely with collegial groups increases parent and community engagement in the educational process. Parent councils and other groups encourage parents' involvement in education. These groups can also establish connections with local organizations and institutions, helping to create opportunities for students. Innovation and professional development driven by the director boost efficiency by organizing training sessions and professional development activities for teachers, based on needs identified by teaching councils. These groups can bring new and innovative ideas that enhance the teaching process. In the daily work of all levels within our educational institutions, proper planning is crucial. The director and collegial groups work together to design and implement clear and measurable strategic objectives. This helps in monitoring progress and identifying areas in need of improvement. The director, in collaboration with collegial groups, can better manage financial and material resources, allocating them where they are most needed. These groups can help plan and organize various activities involving teaching and student engagement. Strong collaboration helps promote school values and create a positive educational culture. The director and collegial groups help raise awareness of environmental, social, and cultural issues, which aids in the development of students as responsible citizens. Collegial groups in schools, such as teaching councils, parent committees, and working groups, play a significant role in the management and decision-making processes of educational institutions. The collaboration between the director and collegial groups is crucial for achieving quality education and creating a productive educational environment. This approach encourages the engagement of all stakeholders, increases the efficiency of processes, and contributes to the continuous development of the school and its students.

Keywords: *Director, collegial groups in schools, education, efficient functioning*

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Six-steps approach (framework) for successful curriculum implementation

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This paper claims that a holistic framework with six critical steps would guarantee successful enactment at the level of a national curriculum. The general aim of this paper is to examine how autonomy and flexibility could be given to schools for contextualizing and implementing a curriculum in ways that enhance effective educational leadership. This study aims to provide a systematic approach whereby schools can customize their curriculum strategies in a way that their focus remains on the attainment of national goals of education. The problem this paper intends to deal with is related to the observed gap between nationally evolved curriculum reforms and their implementation at the school level. It often happens that top-down reforms are not able to address the particular needs of the individual school; schools remain unsupported, unguided, or without enough autonomy to further contextualize the curriculum. In this line, the proposed methodology will involve an analysis of available literature on curriculum leadership and school-based approaches, complemented by case studies describing a number of educational systems. It will focus on how policies can be designed to provide pragmatic approaches that offer both flexibility and structure for school leaders. The study will also examine an education leadership development training program on how best to plan for and lead the implementation process. Predicted results of this six-step framework are a better alignment of policy and practice, increased innovation at the school level, and more predictable student outcomes from the entire educational system. In return, this model nurtures better leadership capacity in individual schools; this means that principals and teachers not only have the freedom to customize the curriculum but also make sure they are provided with enough support and vision to do so effectively. This will, in the end, contribute to the ultimate aim of establishing an adaptive, responsive, and effective national curriculum implementation framework.

Keywords: *national curriculum implementation, educational leadership, curriculum autonomy, school-level innovation, policy-practice alignment*

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Media Literacy Case for Educators

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Children today live in a rapidly changing world with expanding horizons. Technology has brought not only new experiences for them to enjoy, but a whole new dimension to

their daily life in an ethereal world that we know as “being online”. Of course, adults are free to participate in online life and a great many do, but not many of them are ready to integrate technology into their lives in the same way as children. They were not born “digital natives” and do not have the automatic acceptance of the digital environment as a natural, fundamental and unquestioned dimension of their existence. Adults, however, are aware of many of the dangers that children will face as they grow up and make their way through life. It is their responsibility to prepare young people for the trials that inevitably lie ahead. They now have the added task of making sure they prepare children for not only the physical world, but the digital world as well: education for life online as well as offline. From the adult perspective, a lot of work has already been done to set up policies to protect children online. Such work is valid and indeed absolutely necessary but the time has now come to move from measures to protect children to those that actively empower them. So far, many efforts to do this have been of an informal nature. What is needed now is a structural approach to provide children and young people with the competences they need to become healthy and responsible citizens in the online environment. Where should children obtain these competences? The Council of Europe believes that it is part of the role of formal education to consider children’s online and offline lives as parts of a whole. The digital revolution has not so much broken down as erased physical barriers. The online world takes no account of classroom boundaries or school walls, just as it ignores local, regional or national frontiers. Children bring their digital lives and experiences into school with them and it is our duty to assimilate this new reality into our education systems. This consideration was the starting point for the Education Department’s Digital Citizenship Education project. In order to guide its action, it identified three aspects of online life – being on line, well-being online and rights online – in which it can promote the Council of Europe’s fundamental principles of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. These principles apply just as much to human relations and behavior in the digital environment as they do in the physical world. Each person’s responsibility as a citizen is the same.

Keywords: *media, literacy case educator’s safe, internet, digital skills*

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Artificial Intelligence and the Learning Management System (Basic ideas)

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It has already been confirmed that the Artificial Intelligence (AI) has a significant potential to improve the effectiveness of learning, especially e-learning. According to Fortune Business Insights, the global market for AI-based Learning Management System (LMS) is projected to grow by 17% over the next decade. At the same time, LMS technology has rapidly advanced in terms of instructional content, technical

capabilities, and interactive methods. This paper examines, firstly, a number of benefits of AI in an LMS. An AI-powered LMS personalizes learning by using data to suggest relevant courses, helping employees develop skills rapidly, saving time and money while automating progress monitoring and evaluation to keep everyone up to date on developments, as well as creating something engaging and rewarding for learners, enhancing the learning experience and improving information retention, and help schools and organizations manage their workflows more efficiently etc. Secondly, in this paper are presented the differences between Standard LMS vs AI-Powered LMS. Thirdly, in the paper are presented the (nontraditional) Challenges and Considerations in AI – LMS correlations. And finally, some conclusions and recommendations for the improving the management of education, including the need for being prepared for this great step.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, Learning Management System, nontraditional Challenges, Education.*

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The Impact of Moral Leadership on Building Teacher Trust, Encouraging Constructive Conflict, and Enhancing Commitment

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Moral leadership plays a crucial role in providing a strong example for others. This study investigates the relationship between moral leadership and trust, constructive conflict, and commitment among teaching staff. The research is based on a quantitative analysis involving 393 teachers from AMU schools in the city of Durrës. The instrument used is a standardized questionnaire comprising two scales: the Moral Leadership Scale, adapted from the “Paternalistic Leadership Scales” by Cheng et al. (2004), and scales measuring the absence of trust, fear of conflict, and lack of commitment from “The Five Dysfunctions of Team Assessment” (Lencioni, 2007). The findings highlight a positive relationship between moral leadership and the absence of trust ($r = 0.552$), fear of conflict ($r = 0.545$), and lack of commitment ($r = 0.531$). Moral leadership is rated at moderate levels, with corresponding moderate levels of trust, productive conflicts, and commitment among teaching staff evident. It is recommended that school leaders promote a moral leadership model, which encourages open communication, vulnerability, and a willingness to learn from mistakes.

Keywords: *Moral leadership, trust, conflict, commitment, team learning*

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Challenges of Integrating Students with Different Disabilities in General Education: The Path to Effective Inclusion

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The inclusion of students with different abilities (physical, mental or developmental disabilities) in secondary education represents an important challenge for the education system and its actors. This study aims to identify the main challenges faced by teachers, counselors and educational staff in including these students in the mainstream classroom environment and analyze their impact on the academic, social and emotional experience. Using combined research methods, through interviews and questionnaires with teachers and parents, data have been collected regarding the lack of proper training of teachers to work with students with different abilities, insufficient infrastructural and didactic resources in schools, a number high level of differently abled students in the same class as well as prejudices coming from peers and the wider community. The results show that the lack of adequate resources and teacher training are among the main challenges that negatively affect the effective inclusion of differently abled students. Furthermore, classroom dynamics and the development of social competences in other students reflect a positive impact from the inclusion of these students. While the school has made efforts to improve inclusion and support, there is still a great need for reforms that include increasing sensitivity to diversity, improving staff training, and providing an environment of social inclusion and psycho-social support. The study concludes that to address these issues, an integrated approach is essential that includes clear educational policies for inclusion, increased financial resources and a close collaboration between schools, families and external structures to ensure an inclusive and fair education for all students.

Keywords: *inclusion, differently abled students, regular classes, challenges of education*

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Media technology in teaching requires the continuous training of teachers

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In today’s education environment, media technology has shown extraordinary potential to improve student engagement and achievement. The use of tools such as video, animation, and interactive presentations makes teaching more engaging and increases student involvement and motivation. These technologies contribute to a deeper understanding of abstract and complex concepts, while encouraging teamwork and collaboration among students. However, in order to maximize the benefits of technology, teachers need ongoing training to help them stay abreast of the latest developments and use these tools effectively in the classroom. A survey of teachers will identify their opportunities and needs to use media technology more effectively in the classroom. Observations will be made in classrooms where media technology is used and the reactions of students and teachers will be recorded. The study is supported by several theories such as Richard Mayer’s multimedia learning theory, active learning theory, Lev Vygotsky’s constructivist learning theory, David Kolb’s experiential learning theory, Albert Bandura’s social learning theory, John Sweller’s cognitive load theory, and Deci & Ryan’s self-determination theory of motivation. The use of technology in the classroom requires a well-defined strategy to achieve maximum benefit. Training teachers in the proper use of these technologies plays a critical role in the success of technology-based instruction.

Keywords: *media technology, teaching, multimedia learning, active learning, training*

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The well-being of the student, a challenge in everyday reality

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In the 21st century, as technology is advancing at a rapid pace, the whole world’s focus is precisely on that—on the latest developments in science and technology, on rapid advancements, where a part of this progress is also the one that is recently gaining

all the attention: artificial technology(AI). This technology is thought to ‘replace’ the human being in many aspects. Starting from this entire ‘technological chaos,’ what is most important is being forgotten—the very thing we have gained through this chaos. We are talking about the ‘human chaos’ that this has caused and continues to cause. The focus is on the student’s ability to acquire knowledge in the field of technology, how capable they are of keeping up with its evolution, and how quickly they absorb information. This has made us forget what is most important—the individual as a human being, their daily life, feelings, desires, dreams, communication, fears, difficulties in socializing, experiences, integration in the school environment, relationships with peers and teachers. The school is the second most important environment for students after their family. It is there that they form their social circle and spend most of their day; they play, have fun, grow, and shape themselves as individuals. The focus of this study is to get to know the students closely, to understand their perceptions regarding school, their relationships with friends, feelings, experiences, desires, preferences, and talents. In a way, the school itself must take on some ‘responsibilities’ in understanding and discovering their world. Because by closely uncovering their feelings, perceptions, desires, fears, and difficulties in socializing with their peer group, we can do the best for our students. We understand where our focus should be for their proper growth and development, both in the human aspect, and by investing in the human aspect, we are investing in a healthier future.

Keywords: *Well-being, safety, investment, chaos, technology, innovation, feelings*

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Multiple Intelligence as a tool in Career Orientation

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The theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI), introduced by Howard Gardner, redefines intelligence by recognizing a diverse range of cognitive abilities beyond traditional linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligence. This paradigm provides an innovative framework for career orientation, offering more personalized approaches to career counseling. By utilizing MI, career guidance can shift from standardized assessments to individualized evaluations, identifying strengths across various domains such as spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences. This paper explores the application of MI in career orientation, arguing that it fosters better alignment between individual aptitudes and career paths. Through an MI-informed approach, career counseling becomes more holistic, considering multiple dimensions of intelligence rather than relying solely on academic achievement or standardized metrics. The paper also discusses how MI theory can be integrated into educational and career counseling practices to create a more inclusive and adaptive workforce. Drawing on theoretical foundations and empirical evidence, this study demonstrates the efficacy of MI in career guidance through case studies that highlight its role in

improving career satisfaction and performance. The paper emphasizes the importance of recognizing diverse intelligences in shaping career decisions and supports the development of talent-driven labor forces that are responsive to the complexities of the global economy. By positioning MI as a central tool in career orientation, the study proposes a forward-looking approach to career counseling that better meets the needs of individuals and society.

Keywords: *Multiple intelligence, career orientation*

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Artificial Intelligence in school, challenges and potentials

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In a world where technology is a daily part of our lives, schools cannot be an exception. Artificial intelligence (AI) technology is on the rise in terms of its use in modern schools, raising great expectations and changes regarding learning and teaching. However, like any new technology, using AI in school presents many challenges and opportunities for students and teachers. The use of technology has significant challenges and potentials as great as the development of technology. Artificial Intelligence has already entered the educational scene. The benefits of AI in education include aspects of personalizing instruction by creating lesson plans tailored to each student, based on their strengths and weaknesses. It can improve performance by identifying students who need extra help and provide personalized support, and it can help automate tasks, saving time for teachers to focus on teaching. On the other hand, the main challenges of using AI in education are related to data privacy because the collection and processing of students' personal data raises serious concerns. AI algorithms can reinforce existing biases if not carefully trained by creating forms of discrimination. There is also a risk that AI will replace teachers in some tasks, reducing the importance of one-on-one interaction in the teaching process without forgetting the possibility of equal access. Not all students have access to the technology needed to take advantage of AI, creating a digital divide. Looking carefully at the challenges and benefits, in our view we can say that AI has the potential to revolutionize education, if schools and policy makers work together to ensure that AI is used ethically and benefits all students.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence (AI), education, technology, challenges, opportunities, access to technology*

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Active learning

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Taking a cue from the level of the place occupied by Albanian students in the PISA exam, we have to change something. Pisa is not a test but research, preparation for life, the ability to think creatively. It is noted that in countries that use inclusive methods, where students learn by moving, the classification in PISA is in the first group. Inclusive and active teaching methods are essential for creating a rich and stimulating environment for learning, improving the experience of students and underlining the importance of their engagement in the educational process. These methods are designed to improve teaching efficiency by including activities that require direct and engaged student participation. One of the main benefits of inclusive methods is that they enable a more balanced and equal approach to the teaching process. These methods are adapted to include all students, making learning inclusive for those with different needs. Active participants feel more engaged and motivated to learn when they are involved and interact with the learning material in different ways. Another advantage of active methods is that they encourage the use of all learning channels. When students are on the move and involved in hands-on activities, they have the opportunity to use different skills and apply knowledge to real situations. Practical activities, group discussions, educational games and various projects are some of the methods that help reinforce the teaching materials and develop the different skills of the students. Active participation in the lesson is also related to the development of social and emotional skills. These skills are valuable for their success in school and in everyday life. In addition, such methods help build a positive classroom climate where every student feels valued and motivated to contribute. Inclusive and active methods also help develop critical and creative thinking.

Keywords: *inclusive, active, participatory, motivation, social skills, critical thinking*

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The benefits of Wikipedia in ICT Clubs at school

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The use of such platforms encourages students to use the Internet for educational purposes, so that their attention is to increase their performance in the classroom,

their promotion with new findings and to move away from their attendance in social networks. Its use for educational purposes, where the students, while receiving the information, first understand which information is safe and which is not, so not all of it is correct to be served. Wikipedia can be used as an intertwining network of educational subjects, such as in the Albanian language, where articles can be edited using the language tools according to the rules that have been taught in this subject, being taught editing skills, the opportunity to be educated in the profession in geography, they can create knowledge about touristic places, guides that can serve for cultural and historical visits. In history, the type of article can be enriched with subject knowledge of the literature, when the knowledge in the texts is correct. Wikipedia directs you towards a profession nowadays as the people who can play the role of Cicero in the future, can create guides with rich and accurate information, to serve the tourists that he can accompany Wikipedia, although even in the Free version, can create opportunities for budgets, since the information that an individual can build during physical research through campaigns or open competitions, can be sold as authentic sources of information to researchers for study purposes who visit these countries. . The promotion that a Wikipedia club does for a country, with all its benefits, can also be of interest to agencies that deal with guides, that organize trips and need to know information on specific places that are worth attracting the attention of visitors, in order to increase and the profits of this business. How can we insert wikipedia into teaching as a methodical and pedagogical aspect? In terms of pedagogical methods, we can use Wikipedia as an optional subject for students, those who think they have the capacity, social infrastructure, and ability to do it. At school, according to the curriculum hours, we have included it in the subjects of SHQK and we can include it in JOM (Arts and Crafts), but also in subject projects such as Albanian language, geography, history, biology, chemistry, ICT, but also interweaving intercurricular projects where students and clubs come up with proven promotional tools evaluated by ZVA app MAS as a valuable new find for schools, citizens and individuals. Each school that cooperates, for example, can choose the region where they live to promote in Wikipedia with these projects, for example in Wikivoyage, or Wikicommon, to serve the enrichment of the region or the country where they work. Teachers should be trained to include this project in part of the curriculum. Teachers in their spare time plan topics related to this website and put students to work and use teaching methods to create products for this platform. The students who have worked best are given certificates for the respective school year they are working and the students who have contributed the most will be chosen and given a gift related to computer education.

Keywords: *the Wikipedia platform, the school's Wikimedia club, Benefits and disadvantages of Wikipedia in school*

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Perception of Vocational Education Students Regarding Their School Experience

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Professional education is viewed today as a practical solution for ensuring secure employment for young people, based on the needs of the labor market. How students perceive the quality of education in vocational schools is very important in this age of intensive communication on social networks among youth. Positive experiences and concrete outcomes of professional development influence the choices of young people in future generations, guiding them towards vocational education. This enables the employment of youth in the services sector, providing skilled professionals for whom there is a high demand in the labor market. The study aims to uncover the perceptions of students attending vocational schools in the city of Durrës (N=106) regarding the quality of service these schools provide through a quantitative approach. Data was collected through a Likert scale questionnaire, which aimed to highlight students' perceptions and experiences related to the quality of teaching, institutional support, infrastructural conditions, and opportunities for professional development. The analysis of the results was carried out using EXCEL 2010. The results demonstrate numerous challenges faced by students attending vocational education, such as a lack of material and didactic resources, inadequate infrastructural conditions, and a lack of cooperation between schools and the private sector for the realization of internships. The authors of this study offer several practical recommendations for improving the current situation.

Keywords: *Vocational education, school infrastructure, curriculum, professional development*

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**Improving school life significantly increase
every student’s performance
(Activities and activities both during the learning process)**

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One of the concerns of teachers, parents and society itself is the student’s concentration during the learning process. I think the time has come to improve:

- The way of evaluating knowledge.
- The use of activities and activities, with the participation of the students themselves during the learning process.

- The connection with reality should be as tangible as possible, using the senses to understand the main information of the new subject. Our biggest challenge, as teachers, is getting satisfaction when our students understand the new information, analyze this information and maintain their attitude towards the new information. First, every teacher must make possible the way in which new information of the relevant subject will be extracted from the students themselves. Second, the ordering of new information based on the time and place. Here we have in mind that the student must be taught how to capture every detail that this information contains. Thirdly the student’s attitude towards the new information, connecting it closely in three directions. - The way, how the problem in the text was solved, based on the information given. Given in the text by the student himself. - The comparison between the solution of the problem made by the text and the solution made by the student in a situation given in the text,(the student is in the role of the character of the problem in the text.) In order to achieve exactly the student’s concentration during the lesson, we, as teachers, have the duty not only to be innovative in activities and activities during the learning process, but also to think about beautifying their school life, studying well their dreams and their talents inside and outside school, (their behaviors and attitudes in the family, on the street and in cooperation with their peers and educational staff.) The school possesses all the possibilities, for the improvement, in a visible way, of the school life of the children in the following directions: favorable facilities to carry out any activity inside and outside the school.Cooperation with the community, using their capacities, to show successful experiences near the school. Increasing the quality of psycho-social services in the school, for the best possible emotional, mental and physical well-being of the student, every school day. These are the pillars on which my entire study is based, on the diversity of school life in the school, where i, with my experience, have achieved good results, which today i want you to share with all colleagues in Pre-University Education. in this study are the students, where i teach, the parents and the community, where the 9-year school “Eftali Koçi”,Durrës, is a part. This study was made possible by the experience I received during the Mandatory Preparatory Training Program for IAP Leaders.

Keywords: *school life, activity and activities, artistic clubs, community, artificial intelligence*

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**The role of the leader in the educational institution,
promoting innovation and new approaches
in the teaching and learning process**

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Many years of work in the field of teaching have created the possibility of knowing more and more deeply the interaction between the leadership in the educational institution and the teaching process. Through this analysis, we can penetrate into the complexity of the educational structure, into the dynamics of its development, where the main focus is on learning, on the shaping of the individual and, more broadly, of society, seeing this process in the new context, in which the reports of leadership in the educational institution and teachers, whether those with formal or informal experience in teaching, highly qualified or unqualified, have been established, bringing not only a new face to the curricula, but also to the role of the educational leader to the teachers, in the schools ours. The methodology of this work is based on the literature of the Ministry of Education and Sports, as in the Pre-University Education Legislation, the *Pre-University Education Curriculum of the Republic of Albania. National Education Strategy-Albania (2021-2026)* on the observations and research of many years of personal experiences in the field of teaching in pre-university education. *Conclusion:* The study confirms the importance and role of leadership in the educational institution, for the realization of national strategies in education, management and implementation of new approaches in teaching and learning which directly affect the increase in the efficiency of the educational system. Evidence of the role of the leader in the educational institution, the promotion of innovation with the common motto that learning in our schools should offer pupils and students a unique experience of social and humane values, for the future of Albanian citizenship in the framework European and beyond.

Keywords: *educational institution leader, innovation, process, teaching*

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A comprehensive analysis of stress factors among University students in Albania

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Introduction: University students in Albania suffer with a number of stress factors that affect their academic performance, mental health, and general well-being. This comprehensive analysis explores the primary sources of stress among university students, including academic workload, financial difficulties, social pressures, and career uncertainties. The study aims to provide a better understanding of these stress factors and offers recommendations for reducing their negative impact, with a focus on improving student support systems and mental health services within Albanian universities. **The purpose of the paper:** The purpose of this paper is to research, analyze concrete problems and provide recommendations in cases where students encounter stress level problems in their daily lives. **Methodology:** This study employs a quantitative research approach using a standardized stress questionnaire. Data were collected through an online survey distributed to a randomly selected sample of university students across Albania, including a significant number of participants to ensure a broad representation. **Findings:** The analysis reveals significant stressors affecting students, such as high academic demands, financial constraints, social expectations, and career-related concerns. Based on these findings, the study recommends enhancing student support systems, developing stress management programs, and improving mental health services within universities to better address these challenges and support student well-being.

Keywords: *stress level, university students, psycho-social factors, student health*

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Handwriting and its importance in today's education

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Although completing assignment using handwriting remains a widespread practice, in many elementary schools the use of handwriting is being undermined by technology. Studies show that handwriting affects reading, writing, language development and critical thinking, and as a result, it is necessary to find effective teaching strategies. The purpose of this study is to highlight the importance of learning and using handwriting in the child's development. This study was carried out through research in the theoretical aspect and quantitative and qualitative analysis of materials collected based in the work of students with handwriting as well as questionnaires including classes of pre-university

education. It was noticed that students write by hand more in primary education. They admit that they find it difficult to use handwriting, especially in scientific subjects. Albanian language teachers must pay attention to find the appropriate methods to teach handwriting combining them with motivation, encouragement and persistence so that students use handwriting as an important part of their development.

Keywords: *handwriting, student, teacher, development, education*

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Transforming Education: The Impact of Science, Technology and Innovation on Learning

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This paper examines the impact of technological advancements and digitalization on the educational system, focusing on the effects on teachers and parents. Key research questions include: How effectively do teachers integrate technology into their lessons? What challenges do they face, and how do parents perceive these changes, especially regarding the use of the e-Albania and the online platform (SMIP)? The theoretical framework is grounded in educational technology and digital pedagogy, emphasizing the need for familiarity with digital tools in modern education. The methodology involved random surveys of teachers and parents in schools from Fieri and Shkodra, aimed at assessing the frequency of technology use, the challenges encountered, and the dynamics of teacher-parent relationships. Statistical analyses and graphical representations were used to present the findings. Results indicate that while many teachers recognize the importance of technology, there is significant variability in its adoption. A substantial number of educators struggle with the online platform SMIP, which impacts its effectiveness if we haven't digital technologies. Parents expressed that they have difficulties in using online platform, particularly when needing to access services through internet centers for simple tasks. In conclusion, the study underscores the necessity of digitizing schools, at least by providing computer labs for skill development and administrative tasks. To enhance the educational experience, it is crucial to address the technological gaps and support both teachers and parents in navigating this digital landscape, in that way the impact in students will be increase. By fostering a cohesive approach to digitalization, we can improve engagement and educational outcomes for students.

Keywords: *technology, education system, digitalization, innovation (SMIP)*

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The impact of gender stereotypes on the development of identity in children and youth

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The topic of this study is to highlight the influence of family, school, and society on the development of gender identity during childhood and adolescence. The research aims to explore how gender norms and stereotypes impact the activities, social interactions, and overall development of children. To conduct this study, a survey developed by SHPS was administered to students from first to ninth grade. The survey focused on the leisure activities chosen by boys and girls during their free time. The results revealed that extracurricular activities and leisure choices are influenced by gender-related factors stemming from family and school environments. These choices are often influenced by societal expectations of gender roles, which can restrict the full development of children and their interests throughout their growth. Gender-related issues significantly impact various stages of children’s development, shaping their journey to maturity. One of the challenges identified is how schools and educators can work towards minimizing deep-seated gender stereotypes, as early childhood presents a crucial opportunity to make a positive impact. The study also delves into how societal expectations steer the leisure choices of girls and boys, often reinforcing traditional gender roles. The paper emphasizes the need for creating gender-neutral spaces where young people can develop free from established stereotypes. By promoting equal access to leisure and social activities, we can foster an environment that supports the holistic development of children, irrespective of gender.

Keywords: *Gender equality, stereotypes, school, family, identity, inclusion*

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Augmentative Alternative Communication in the Interest of Inclusivity

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Augmentative Alternative Communication is an effective intervention modality that offers a range of techniques and strategies, for children with language disorders. Although many infants acquire their language, speech, and communication skills

without any problems, research indicates that a growing percentage of children are exhibiting complicated communication demands. A child's ability to communicate is a key skill that is required for their development. Being an important part of society, schools have a responsibility to address children's needs by fostering an inclusive environment and establishing effective communication channels at all times. The degree of understanding and suitability of these systems at the "Sevasti Qirjazi" school chosen for an Albanian pilot project is noted in this study. The findings showed how the use of alternative augmentative communication systems, such as sign language practice in inclusive school settings, improved the communicative abilities of children with language disorders. Additionally, it enhanced efficient methods for assisting children in need of augmentative alternative communication while providing a friendly approach and a welcoming environment for all practitioners and users within the school community. It takes ongoing skills and training of communication partners, as well as the potential to enrich all areas of daily life with CAA tools, to transform Augmentative Alternative Communication into a language that is utilised in all situations of the child's life. The school as a diverse community should promote the social and academic achievement of children, playing an integral role in their success.

Keywords: *communication, augmentative, alternative, language disorders, communication systems*

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Resolution of conflicts through mediation in school environments

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The purpose of the study: Educating the new generation with the culture of peace, tolerance, understanding, respect for diversity and conflict resolution in school environments through the mediation procedure is one of the goals of the pre-university education curriculum in Albania. This paper aims to: 1) Increase the skills of school leaders to manage conflicts. 2) To develop teachers' skills for establishing understanding in the school environment. 3) To develop the teacher's skills to evaluate, in the school environment and beyond, the behaviors and attitudes that help prevent conflicts, or resolve them through mediation. 4) To help school leaders through their training in the field of mediation to manage conflicts in schools in a constructive way. Research Methods: The paper uses a quantitative approach with a survey of 89 school principals in Gjirokastra District. *Results:* The collected data show that, in general, school principals have an approach of punishment and not management in cases of conflicts that occur in school environments. The uses of punitive methods by implementing the regulations

for punishing children are not effective. *Conclusions:* The handling and resolution of conflicts is an issue as broad as it is complex. The study revealed that the management of conflicts by specialized mediators was a very efficient way to regulate relations between students, but also facilitating the general progress of the school. The study shows the steps to resolve conflicts by making them concrete and with concrete examples. The research indicates the need for targeted interventions that address the specific challenges faced by individuals belonging to different socio-economic groups. This study provides valuable insights for policy making to promote mediation in schools.

Keywords: *conflict, mediation, conflict parties, conflict resolution*

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Challenges in the management of education and educational institutions

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The Management of Educational Institutions today is facing various challenges. The new curriculum framework of pre-university education system, recently is riched with important reforms in education such as: Altext, reorganisation of psycho-social Service and the security package in school, application of the programme of English language and the subject of Information Technology and Communication of first grade, the application guide for 6-9 grades, the rise of multidisciplinary commissions for the evaluation of children with limited abilities, the functioning of professional networks, implementation of the initiative 3 subjects in six hours, planning and implementation of activities for Preventing Violence, Bullying and Extremism in school, the initiative: “Doing homework”, the opening of profiled classes in sports and the presence of sports team on school, the developing and structuring of professional practices in school, the initiative for Community Center School, the Initiative of Art and Crafts, the System of Data Management (SMIP), the Application of a various strategies in support of psycho-social service, a series of projects and programmes with the focus on education. The reason of this article is the highlighting of these challenges, supported of concrete experiences, accumulated during daily working, conversation on focus a group of teacher, pupil’s parents and other partners involved. Also a standardised questionnaire was delivered to the teachers and quantitative data have been generated. The results of such a study will serve as a guide for young aspirants that aim to lead and manage Educational Institutions.

Keywords: *Challenges, school, reform, strategy, projects, programmes*

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The Digital Competence of Teachers in the Use of Technology in the Teaching Process

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Educators are facing new challenges as they work to incorporate technology into their classrooms during this era of digital transformation. This study explores the digital competence levels of teachers and how it affects their teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes. By using a mixed-methods approach, the research gathered data through surveys and interviews with primary and secondary school teachers and students. The findings indicate that while most educators recognize the importance of technology in enhancing teaching and learning experiences, they often encounter significant obstacles. These challenges include insufficient resources, such as limited access to current devices and educational software, as well as a lack of ongoing training programs. Time constraints also impede teachers from seamlessly integrating technology into their lesson plans as they endeavor to blend traditional teaching methods with new digital tools. The study emphasizes the crucial role of teachers' digital competence in effective education in today's world. Without adequate support, including professional development programs and institutional support, many teachers are unable to fully leverage the benefits of technology. To tackle these issues, the paper recommends improved training opportunities focused on developing digital skills, thus bridging the gap between the availability of technology and its practical implementation in classrooms.

Keywords: *Digital competence, educators, technology integration, teaching effectiveness, learning outcomes, professional development*

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The role of the support teacher and the relationship with the subject teacher

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In field of special education, the dynamic interaction between support teachers plays a pivotal role in shaping the educational experience of children with special needs. This scientific research investigates the multifaceted dimensions of this collaboration shedding

light on its essential role in inclusive education. The study examines the collaborative efforts, strategies and challenges faced by support teachers and class teachers in addressing the diverse needs of students with special needs. It delves into the ways in which the support teachers augment the teaching process, tailoring instruction to accommodate individual learning styles and abilities while promoting an inclusive classroom environment. Furthermore, the research explores the factors that underpin the success of this partnership, including communication, mutual understanding, and shared pedagogical goals. It highlights the significance of continuous professional development and the importance of a cohesive, unified approach to fostering the holistic development of students with special needs. The implications of this research are far-reaching. Enhancing the relationship between support teachers offers the potential to create a more inclusive, equitable and enriching educational environment for children with special needs. It facilitates the realization of the principles of special education and promotes the comprehensive growth of all students. This scientific paper underscores the necessity of nurturing and strengthening the support teacher- class teacher alliance as a cornerstone of inclusive education, ultimately leading to improved learning outcomes and the social integration of children with special needs. In conclusion the collaborative and harmonious relationship between support teachers and class teachers in special education is fundamental to creating an inclusive and supportive learning environment for children with special needs. Ensuring their holistic development and social integration.

Keywords: *Support, education, teacher, special needs children, relationship*

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Wellbeing of Teachers in Challenging Times

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The well-being of teachers has a significant influence on student achievement, retention, quality of instruction, and general school operations. However, because of mounting work demands and pressures from schools lacking adequate support systems, teacher wellness is marginalized in today's educational environment. This qualitative study investigates factors that impact the well-being of mid-career secondary teachers at Hong Kong international schools, where the demands of the job are particularly high due to unique circumstances. The results highlight the importance of several factors in promoting healthy teacher well-being. The presence of autonomy and supportive relationships with leaders, students, and coworkers are essential for fostering teacher wellbeing. Personalized professional development opportunities combined with a collaborative culture based on trust enable teachers to feel fulfilled in their work. These findings highlight the critical role that trust-based relationships and leadership that prioritize wellbeing have in building a

strong sense of belonging within the school community. On the other hand, unjustifiable workloads, a lack of autonomy and flexibility, bureaucratic procedures, testing and curricular requirements, and a gap between policy and practice seriously impair wellbeing. The necessity for comprehensive, systemic adjustments influenced by teachers' experiences is underscored by the new challenges presented by COVID-19 and political shifts. Methods to promote supportive school environments and give teacher welfare priority are the main focus of the proposals. Developing relationships with stakeholders, scheduling time for teamwork and specialized professional development, improving school leadership and culture, incorporating teachers in decision-making, facilitating better access to outside resources, and controlling stakeholder expectations are a few of these. For improvements to be sustained, systemic problems with staff turnover, autonomy, and closing the gap between policy and reality must be addressed. In order to improve wellbeing, this research emphasizes how crucial it is for administrators, practitioners, and politicians to concentrate on long-term approaches that take into account both organizational and individual aspects. By doing this, supportive school cultures can be developed despite the educational system's constant demands.

Keywords: *Well-being, teacher, student, quality, flexibility, environments, methods*

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Management in education and the role of the school principal

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Management in education, overview, definition, three main tasks of the manager, main characteristics. Roles and skills of the manager: interpersonal (central figure, leader, liaison), informative and decision-making roles. Managerial skills: technical, human and conceptual skills. Contemporary perspective on managerial skills: task-related activities, people-related activities, and change-related activities. The principal and change, successful principals, the fundamental leadership role of the principal, their role in developing the school's capacities. The 21st-century school principal, the changed role, the persistence for quality. The school as a place of hope and dreams for students, the future of the school principal as a profession. The total lack of leadership from the principal within a school is a clear sign of a weak and disconnected teacher community. On the contrary, strong leadership plays a key role in creating and maintaining these school-wide teacher communities. Principals with low scores for their leadership (according to teachers), are generally considered managers

who provide little support or direction for teaching and learning in schools. Principals who score high are actively involved in the kinds of activities that nurture and maintain a strong community of teachers.

Keywords: *Principal, roles and skills of the manager, change, quality, contemporary perspective, school capacity*

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Designing motivational learning environments

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This project aims to create a functional and effective environment for the subject of physics in schools through the proper management of equipment and the provision of appropriate infrastructure. Nowadays, where technology has begun to play an important role in education, it is essential that educational institutions adapt their teaching methods and tools to meet the needs of students. The objective of this project is to transform the teaching environment by integrating technology and laboratory tools into the learning process, with the aim of developing systematic and coherent skills in students. The main goals include identifying the needs for classroom transformation, training teachers for the effective use of technology, and providing opportunities for collaborative teaching that encourages student engagement. From the analyses conducted so far, a lack of infrastructure and didactic tools has been identified, requiring immediate intervention to address these needs. The project will contribute to a higher quality education by providing an equipped laboratory as a space for experiments and the development of practical skills that are essential for understanding the abstract concepts of physics. Ultimately, the implementation of this project aims to create a collaborative climate among various actors in the school, increasing the engagement of both students and teachers and ensuring a quality educational service that meets the necessary standards for a successful and sustainable education.

Keywords: *functional environment, technology, experiments, practical skills*

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The well-being of the student, a challenge in everyday reality

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In the 21st century, as technology is advancing at a rapid pace, the whole world’s focus is precisely on that—on the latest developments in science and technology, on rapid advancements, where a part of this progress is also the one that is recently gaining all the

attention: artificial technology (AI). This technology is thought to ‘replace’ the human being in many aspects. Starting from this entire ‘technological chaos,’ what is most important is being forgotten—the very thing we have gained through this chaos. We are talking about the ‘human chaos’ that this has caused and continues to cause. The focus is on the student’s ability to acquire knowledge in the field of technology, how capable they are of keeping up with its evolution, and how quickly they absorb information. This has made us forget what is most important—the individual as a human being, their daily life, feelings, desires, dreams, communication, fears, difficulties in socializing, experiences, integration in the school environment, relationships with peers and teachers. The school is the second most important environment for students after their family. It is there that they form their social circle and spend most of their day; they play, have fun, grow, and shape themselves as individuals. The focus of this study is to get to know the students closely, to understand their perceptions regarding school, their relationships with friends, feelings, experiences, desires, preferences, and talents. In a way, the school itself must take on some ‘responsibilities’ in understanding and discovering their world. Because by closely uncovering their feelings, perceptions, desires, fears, and difficulties in socializing with their peer group, we can do the best for our students. We understand where our focus should be for their proper growth and development, both in the human aspect, and by investing in the human aspect, we are investing in a healthier future.

Keywords: *wellbeing, safety, investment, chaos, technology, innovation, feelings*

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The impact of social and emotional skills on the academic success of students

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Education is a mission and a challenge, and as such, it requires full commitment from all actors of education. However, without social and emotional learning, this education would be incomplete. The daily work in schools has shown that not all teachers are updated with knowledge about social and emotional learning abilities and skills. This is precisely the aim of this article: to understand social and emotional learning, its impact on the student, and on the overall formation of a new generation in all stages of education. A special place in this paper is occupied by the fundamental competencies of social and emotional learning. On the other hand, it is the teacher who, with his role, channels this type of learning, along with teaching methods and strategies to give meaning to the student’s academic journey and to create a worthy citizen in society, some successful practices of social learning will be presented throughout this work. From the review of the literature on scientific research in the schools where they have been applied, very valuable conclusions have emerged about the positive impact of knowing and practicing social and emotional learning, along with other competencies, with the finalization of improving the well-being of the student and his academic growth. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to be included in training

programs for updating them in relation to this skill as well as the implementation of concrete projects in their schools.

Keywords: *ability, student, social, emotional, competence, learning, teaching, well-being*

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Blended learning in the pre-university education system: The case of Albania

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Blended learning for pre-university students is a new challenge of the digital learning age. After the period of the covid-19 pandemic, studies testify to the great role of the use of technology in the function of teaching and learning. On the other hand, traditional teaching in classrooms, in classic physical environments, is the most common form of the learning process, which returned to normality after the pandemic. The experience gained seems like it did not turn into a legitimate instrument to use the technology continuously. In this paper, we aim to analyze the conditions and circumstances in which blended learning can be developed in terms of teaching and learning. The case of Albania is a model to better understand the shortcomings and advantages of blended learning. Using the questionnaires for students and teachers of the pre-university education system, we will analyze the conditions, circumstances and opportunities for the development of blended learning. Direct interviews with teachers, students and parents are very descriptive to understand the impact of blended learning. Participant observation is the method that will be used to explain the concrete reality of teaching and learning.

Keywords: *Blended learning, pre-university education, technology in teaching, traditional learning, Albania*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 25/CSL-AADF

Professional development of school principals and new curricular challenges

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The study explored challenges and elements to be improved in professional development activities aimed at better understanding by school principals of curricular concepts, such as curriculum framework, core curriculum, core competencies, learning outcomes, etc. Participants in the study were 80 principals from a diverse range of public schools in the city of Tirana. Data were collected through a desk study of official curriculum documents

and a survey to explore the principals' perceptions of their professional development needs, the effectiveness of the activities developed and the difficulties they encounter. The findings revealed several problems in current professional development practices. Principals reported a lack of alignment between professional development opportunities and their specific needs, resistance to change, insufficient time for reflection, and insufficient support for implementing curricular changes. Many principals expressed the need for more in-depth training, in areas such as the analysis of new curricular meanings and the design of teaching strategies in accordance with new curricular concepts. Based on these findings, the study identified several areas for improvement in professional development activities for school principals. Recommendations include: (a) tailoring professional development to the specific needs of individual principals and (b) more in-depth training in core curricular concepts and their elaboration for instruction. By addressing these challenges and recommendations, we believe that activities can be more effective, in function of a high-quality learning process.

Keywords: *Professional development, curriculum framework, core curriculum, key competencies, subject content, learning outcome*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 152/CSL-AADF

The impact of technology and the use of free time on the academic performance of students

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This paper examines the use and use of children's free time and the impact of technology on their academic performance. Technology, as an important factor in education, offers many opportunities for learning, information, communication, development, but also presents challenges in time management and students' focus. The use of technological tools such as computers, tablets, mobile phones and various applications or programs can facilitate the learning process, but often students enjoy more the entertainment that these technologies provide than the academic benefits. This diverts their attention from the main goal and makes them feel "older" by getting involved in situations inappropriate for their age, which bring consequences that they are unable to manage. The method used in the study is the quantitative method to analyze the relationship between leisure activities, such as video games and social networks, and the academic performance of students in 9-year schools. Data were collected through surveys and interviews with

students and teachers, and were analyzed to identify trends and their experiences. The results show that the excessive use of technology for entertainment activities has a negative impact on the academic performance of students, while the integration of technology in teaching and studying helps to improve results. In conclusion, this paper highlights the importance of managing technology and free time to maximize benefits in education, proposing recommendations for parents, teachers and students for a more balanced and effective use of technology in everyday life.

Keywords: *free time, technology, students, academic performance, teachers*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 158/CSL-AADF

How a teacher leader mentor their employees? Relevance of a leadership development program

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In what ways do teacher leaders support their colleagues, and why are structured leadership development programs important? Leading from the middle is not for the faint of heart! These teacher leaders must foster and maintain a positive working relationship from a different perspective with colleagues in the classroom while simultaneously advocating for them with senior leaders. If that's not enough, they must also find the voice to collaborate with a senior leadership team so that their perspective is heard. Often, teacher leaders have the potential for these actions, but no training in how to develop their own leadership skills and style. It is imperative that they experience a formal leadership development program so that they can learn and grow as leaders in their context, and in their own right. This paper will explore the role of teacher leaders in mentoring their colleagues and highlight the significance of structured leadership development programs in enhancing these relationships. Through qualitative analysis, we examine how teacher leaders employ various strategies to support their peers, foster professional growth, and cultivate a collaborative school culture. Using both international researches, and their own experiences, the facilitators will guide you through a series of activities that will help you discover and discuss the key elements of effective leadership development program so that you can begin to design learning opportunities for middle leaders in your institution.

Keywords: *teacher leader, middle leaders, leadership, mentoring, development program.*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 41/CSL-AADF

Teaching strategies for the professional development of history teachers

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Aim: This paper aims to assist history teachers in pre-university education by focusing on several teaching strategies that teachers should employ. The objective of the study is to increase students' interest in history through these strategies, thereby making the subject more engaging and relevant. **Method:** The methodology of this study involves a comprehensive analysis of both foreign and local publications concerning teaching strategies, with a specific focus on literature related to history education. In addition to the literature review, the study incorporates an examination of conclusions drawn from training sessions conducted with history teachers, allowing for insights into their practices and challenges. To guide the investigation, several research questions were established, including: How can technology be integrated into history education to enhance teaching effectiveness and student engagement? What are the perceptions of history teachers regarding the effectiveness of various teaching strategies they currently employ? In what ways do professional development and training sessions impact teachers' adoption of contemporary teaching strategies in history? **Results:** The implementation of appropriate strategies requires creativity, dedication, and careful attention from teachers to ensure effective and inspiring lessons. To engage students and connect historical events to their daily lives, teachers should implement various strategies that, when combined, foster an environment conducive to critical and creative thinking. **Conclusions:** By utilizing these strategies, teachers can help students recognize the importance of history and establish a stronger connection to the subject. Teachers should be committed to participating in training focused on effective teaching methods and the integration of technology in the educational process.

Keywords: *history teacher, teaching strategies, students, professional development, technology*

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School principal candidates' perceptions of educational leadership preparation training

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Educational leadership includes two integrated roles, one being the managerial role and the other the educational role. Educational standards and performance-based

assessment are based on educational leadership practices focused on teaching and learning by sharing power, acting democratically, and encouraging collaboration and participation; while at the same time, providing clear leadership and guaranteeing the efficiency of school management processes. This study aims to explore the perceptions of school principal candidates' knowledge of educational leadership practices and relate these to their professional development toward principalship. The mixed research design attempted to identify the perceptions of 78 school principal candidates during their professional development training. Data were collected by means of semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire. Based on the findings, implications for practice and recommendations for future research are included.

Keywords: *leadership, school principal, training, professional development*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 161/CSL-AADF

Creation if the multifunctional classroom

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The purpose of this project is to create a multifunctional classroom in primary education, to ensure appropriate, contemporary and innovative conditions for students to benefit from certain levels of digital competence to adapt to the demands of the 21st century knowledge society. Specific objectives: a) Creation of an innovative, modern and inclusive learning environment in Primary Education, b) Increasing the quality of teaching and the level of learning, c) Development and improvement of digital competence. Improvement of planning should be analyzed in several aspects, which can also be considered as advantages of using digital tools during the teaching/educational process in different subjects, such as: a) Visualization of teaching materials; b) Concretization of the lesson; c) Support for students with learning difficulties and lack of concentration and motivation, also for children with different abilities; d) Improvement of communication; e) More efficient preparation of teachers; f) Encouraging and motivating students. After the creation of the multifunctional classroom for Primary Education students, the teaching and learning process would be improved in several aspects as: infrastructural, technological and pedagogical. All this is based on quantitative data methods using questionnaires through the Google form platform with teachers, students and focus groups with parents. From the answers received through these methods, it turned out how important it was to create a multifunctional class. The use of videos allows teachers to illustrate and demonstrate complex ideas with the help of visual, audio and educational learning elements.

Keywords: *Multifunction, inclusion, digital competence, creativity*

19TH INTERNATIONAL INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE

“WELLBEING IN CHALLENGING TIMES”

THEMATIC SESSION 01:
CULTURE, ARTS, PUBLIC SPHERE
AND COMMUNICATION

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 01/01

The consequences of bad and poor governance

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We all have significant roles to play building a society of equal opportunities and development. To fight against war, conflicts, crime, racism, inequality, injustice, bad governance, marginalization, poverty and hunger. It is our obligation and responsibilities to protect, preserve, manage our environment and resources (ecosystem, climate change, biodiversity etc.), with policies to ensure a better and sustainable living for all. Today, we live in the age of digitalization, innovation and information technology where democracy needs to be transparent. The choice for dictatorship has failed to provide security and sustainability. Many live in abject poverty, while our political elites enrich themselves with wealth and positions. Human Rights has become an abuse on citizens, creating division among tribes, forcing citizens to live as alliance and refugees in their own land, causes revenge and war. Many developing countries are blessed with rich and diversify cultural heritage, languages and natural resources, but bad management has giving room to high unemployment rate pushing African countries to see Europe as heaven. Cameroon as an example, where war is ongoing between the francophones and anglophones because of bad governance, inequality in the division of resources and development. Many have fled their homes and villages migrating to destinations they are not familiar with.

Keywords: *Change, equality, sustainability, justice*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 24/01

The effect of media on public opinion formation in Albania

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The media influences the formation of public opinion. Media effects theorists examine in a continuum how media contents and the audience's exposure to them shape the beliefs, behaviors or perceptions of individuals. In Albania, researches on the influence of the media in the formation of public opinion are few and it is necessary to have a greater focus on these topics, especially in the conditions where technology has increased the audience's access to information even more. The research on the effects of the media on audiences takes on a great importance also because this is how we know how audiences think, act and behave and how they form their opinion on matters of public interest. This paper specifically aims to examine how the media has influenced the formation of public opinion in Albania by examining several cases. What is public opinion? How do the media influence public opinion in Albania? What elements do the media use? How does its impact play out on television and digital space? These will be the research questions that will be answered during this study. The hypothesis of the study is focused on finding that the media decides on the issues that the public should not only be informed but also focus and think more. The decisions of the media to deal with this or that issue, with priority or not, have an impact on further developments in television and digital sphere. Matters perceived as matters of public opinion are influenced by the way how the media handles and publishes these issues. The methods used will be the monitoring of media contents and their analysis.

Keywords: *media, public opinion, media influence in Albania, media effects, opinion formation*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 32/01

Stereotypes in Media Commercials and Their Impact on the Students' Personal Well-being

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This paper explores the influence of media stereotypes on Albanian students' well-being, focusing on recurring portrayals of gender, race, body image, and mental health

in popular media. Media plays a pivotal role in shaping societal perceptions, often reinforcing cultural stereotypes that negatively impact individual self-esteem, identity formation, and psychological health. This study deals particularly with stereotypes in television commercials. Through content analysis of television commercials, and by employing a qualitative and descriptive methodology, the study consists of two main data-gathering methods: students' task consisting of content analysis of stereotypical images in television advertisements and group discussions with students in English course Master studies. These methods assess the impact of these stereotypes on individuals' mental and emotional health. The findings reveal that repeated exposure to stereotypes in commercials is linked to lower self-esteem and identity-related stress. The findings underscore the media's significant role in perpetuating harmful stereotypes and influencing personal well-being. These results highlight the pressing need for television commercials to adopt more responsible and diverse representations to enhance individual and collective well-being.

Keywords: *media commercials, cultural stereotypes, awareness, consequences, well-being*

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The impact of Drama therapy on cognitive and emotional development in early childhood education

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This study investigates the impact of dramatherapy on cognitive and emotional development in early childhood education through a systematic and integrative approach. Our findings indicate that dramatherapy not only fosters creativity and self-confidence but also enhances peer relationships and emotional resilience. By utilizing role-play, storytelling, and symbolic play, dramatherapy engages children in processes that support emotional regulation, social interaction, and cognitive flexibility. The research highlights how these creative methods can significantly improve self-expression and empathy among young learners, equipping them with vital skills for personal and social development. Furthermore, it discusses the importance of incorporating structured, child-centered methods that align with educational and psychological frameworks, maximizing the developmental benefits of dramatherapy. This study advocates for the inclusion of dramatherapy in early childhood curricula to promote holistic growth and effectively address the diverse developmental needs of young learners. In conclusion, the study emphasizes the transformative potential of dramatherapy in early childhood education, demonstrating its value in nurturing essential life skills that lay the foundation for lifelong learning and emotional well-being.

Keywords: *drama therapy, early education, method*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 74/01

The Digital Public Sphere: A Sociological Analysis of Algorithmic Consumptions Impact on Political Opinions of Indian Students

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In the era of digital media, algorithm-driven news curation has become a powerful force shaping public discourse, political opinions, and ultimately, the well-being of individuals and societies. This study adopts a sociological perspective to examine how algorithmic content curation on digital platforms influences the formation and distribution of political knowledge and attitudes among Indian University students, with implications for their social and intellectual well-being. Employing a mixed-methods approach, including surveys (n = 200) and content analysis across social media platforms, we investigate the emergence of digital tribes, the potential reinforcement of echo chambers, and the implications for social capital and information networks. The research is underpinned by a Digital Sociological framework and supported by sociological theories such as the Social Construction of Technology, Actor Network Theory, and Network Society Theory. This study provides a framework to analyze how algorithmic curation is becoming a new social institution with significant implications for power dynamics and gatekeeping in the digital public sphere. By examining this phenomenon through a digital sociological lens, we aim to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between technology, society, and political discourse in the 21st century, and how these factors impact the well-being of young adults in challenging times. The findings of this study will offer valuable insights for policymakers, tech companies, and civil society organizations working to foster a more inclusive and democratic digital public sphere, ultimately contributing to the intellectual and social well-being of individuals in the digital age.

Keywords: *digital sociology, algorithmic curation, political opinions, social media, public sphere, well-being*

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The service of art and culture in the learning context

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The study will present the IAP leader's role and practices, in the involvement and engagement of teachers in organising artistic- cultural activities and educational games.

The main goal is to identify the most effective strategies and practices to provide adequate support in improving personal and professional teacher's wellbeing. The study will focus on educational context in which the art can be used to improve communication between teachers, students and parents. A detailed data analysis will present the practices and the experience of the Mesopotam educational institution about the knowledge and educational games and artistic – cultural activities. The interviews and group discussion will analyse the challenges of the inclusion of bilingual students. The challenge is how cultural activities could offer as many ways as possible to express ideas and feelings that may not be expressed in words and also how public spaces can strengthen community ties and promote cultural dialogue. The results of this study provide a deeper understanding of the ways in which primary, middle and high education teachers can use educational games, artistic and cultural activities to create a suitable learning environment for all students. The resources used during this study can serve as guidelines for teaching purposes and teacher's training. It will provide an effective, beautiful and attractive approach to education for all students.

Keywords: *Artistic-cultural activity, educational games, bilingual children, work strategies, teaching practices*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 159/01

Physical and Mental Well-being of the Silver Generation in Italy: Challenges and Opportunities

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In the context of a significant demographic reversal, Italy faces a growing presence of the silver generation, i.e., the elderly population, which represents an important social and economic resource. This talk will explore the physical and mental well-being of this segment of the population, analyzing the challenges and opportunities that emerge from this evolution. Starting from recent demographic data, the phenomenon of population aging, the increase in life expectancy and the transformations in family structures will be illustrated. The importance of active lifestyles and a balanced diet will be discussed, along with the need to improve accessibility to health services. In addition, emphasis will be placed on the importance of socialization and psychological support in promoting mental well-being, highlighting cultural and recreational initiatives. In addition, emphasis will be placed on the importance of socialization and psychological support in promoting mental well-being, highlighting cultural and recreational initiatives. This intervention aims to stimulate a collective reflection on how we can all contribute to a more inclusive and sustainable future for the silver generation in Italy.

Keywords: *Silver generation, culture, economy, lifestyle*

THEMATIC SESSION 02:
POPULATION, MIGRATION AND DIASPORA
&
SPECIAL SESSION OF ALBANIAN ACADEMIC
DIASPORA ITALY (AADI)

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 02/02

**Migration trends in chechnya and Kosovo:
a comparative analysis**

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The modern world is characterized by high migration activity of the population, the movement of labor migrants within the country and between countries. Which contributes to economic and cultural exchange. However, migration movements often occur due to economic and social inequality, environmental threats and natural disasters, the emergence of conflicts and wars. This actualizes the need to study migration processes, trends, and legal grounds for migration policy. The report attempts to consider the main causes of migration in Chechnya and Kosovo during the conflict and post-conflict period. **Objective:** to identify the factors of migration trends in Chechnya and Kosovo. Materials and method: The study uses socio-cultural and conflictological approaches, the method of sociological and statistical analysis, the principle of historicism, comparison. **Result:** Sociological observation shows that in multi-ethnic regions, when social and political tensions and conflicts arise, people experience different migration sentiments. The study examined migration intentions through the key concepts of “Security” and “Well-being”. Some want changes and hope for an improvement in their lives, while others fear destabilization and threats and adhere to the strategy of moving to other safe regions of the country. During military actions, mass migration occurs due to threats to life in other regions and foreign

countries. With the beginning of peaceful construction, many refugees return, but soon a new wave of migration of “economic” refugees occurs due to the destroyed economy and high unemployment. The report characterizes the dynamics of changes in migration factors in Chechnya and Kosovo over the past 25 years and formulates general conclusions.

Keywords: *migration, conflict, war, values, well-being, security*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 22/02

Migration or Expulsion

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We are witnesses of the time that in recent years we have a drastic decrease in the number of the population in society. Seen from a sociological point of view, this painful phenomenon for the future of the state is the result of economic policies, unemployment, the high cost of living and the insecurity of citizens who do not see a future in their homeland.

This alarming trend, which has almost captured all the states of the region, can hardly be stopped, and in the coming years we will also have schools closing and some teachers being out of work. We say that we have a decrease in the number of primary school students, but in reality, the number of primary school students is much higher, but the flight from the homeland and migration has made us regretfully conclude that we empty our schools and fill the schools of European countries with primary school students. America and Australia. It is a sociological phenomenon that must be researched whether it is about migration or migration!

Keywords: *migration, migration, trend, future*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 100/02

Emigration policies in Albania: the case of Gjadër (Lezhë) refugees' camp

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The article aims to explore migration policies in Albania, by focusing on the role of the Albanian government, being a transit country for the emigrants that intend to enter in the territories of EU countries. Emigration refers to the movement of people across

state borders and is related with different motives, but it affects different political, social, economic and cultural areas for the host country. The article discusses the role and the policy of the Albanian government in relation with emigration, especially in the case of emigrants from northern Africa to Italy or other European countries (based on an agreement with the Italian government) by constructing a camp for refugees, as a temporary settlement. The government position is open and welcomes the emigration flow to our country, by offering a transitory place to stay for the emigrants in their route, with this recent initiative to building a camp in the Albanian territory for emigrants that want to reach the Italian neighboring shores. The paper centers on emigration policies and their effects, by analyzing the case of the refugees in the camp in Gjadër, Lezhë, and the implications that derive from these policies in Albania. Also, it focuses on the reactions of the national and local actors and their acceptance or resistance towards this initiative.

Keywords: *emigration policies, forced migration, refugees, bilateral agreement, refugees' camp in Albania*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 128/02

An analysis of the social integration of emigrants: Albanian emigrants in Italy

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In this study, usage of the term 'social integration' is done to analyze the level of the adaptation of Albanian emigrants to the elements of culture such as norms, values, traditions, way of life, way of thinking, and behaviour of the social structure of the host societies. Social integration means the individual connections of emigrants with social groups, their participation, and membership in these groups of hosted societies. The main indicators of inclusion in social life are communication or social interaction, companionship, partnership or partnership, marriages as well as voluntary membership in different groups of society. The study of these elements of social integration of emigrants in the host society adds importance to this study. Analyzing the social integration situation of Albanian emigrants in Italian societies is an important element because, during their daily lives, emigrants adapt to social life and are included in this society. This analysis enables a sociological perspective of the study of social integration, throughout the process of emigration of Albanians in Italian societies, which adds to the importance of this study. The study aims to analyze the sample group of Albanian emigrants and sample-hosted societies such as Italy. The study focuses on the level of integration of Albanian emigrants and emigration-hosted policies. The main hypothesis is based on the level of integration in social everyday life and the application of emigration policies. Social integration fulfils the needs of individuals to be part of the society where they have emigrated, as well as to be included in their social life.

Keywords: *Emigration, social integration, Italy as hosted societies, Albanian emigrants*

3RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF LTC AND POLIS
PUBLICATIONS: “EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION”
&
THEMATIC SESSION 03:
EDUCATION AND SPORT

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 06/03

Professional Well-Being of Visual Art Teacher: A Qualitative Study

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The main purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of visual art teachers regarding their well-being. To achieve a deeper understanding of how teachers perceive and experience professional well-being it is necessary to study the internal and external factors that contribute to the sense of fulfillment in their career. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 5 visual art teachers. The findings of this research provide a good insight into

the meaning of well-being by revealing which are the most important internal and external factors that determine their professional well-being. The study also shows how school leadership, classroom environment, beliefs and parental commitment determine teachers' well-being. The findings can be used to optimize the well-being challenges of visual arts teachers.

Keywords: *professional well-being, key factors, visual art teacher, qualitative study*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 08/03

Modern Sports and Indigenous communities of Jharkhand: Subaltern Paradigm

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Sports are an integral part of the social and cultural fabric of diverging localities, regions and nations. It has a transformative potential which is evident in some of the deprived areas of the world. This paper focuses on sports, especially Hockey and its significance in the lives of tribal sportspersons. The study engages with the complex continuity of sports, social capital and tribal identity. The theory of social capital views capital as resources lying in the social relations. This paper engages with tribal sportspersons to understand how they navigate through the national and global sports world. And how it becomes the part of the continuous journey of the tribal sportspersons. This paper also looks at socialization and how the process of socialization plays a vital role in the lives of sportspersons and their engagement with Hockey or other sports. Further the paper discusses the difference among games, sports and play as well as we engages with understanding Modern sports, through Allen Guttman's work, "From ritual to record".

Keywords: *Sports, Hockey, Indigenous, socialization, Jharkhand*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 19/03

The relationship between the physical fitness and academic performance of students in Douala, Cameroon: A cross-sectional study

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Background: Academic success in Cameroon is more focused on the pedagogical aspects of classical subjects such as mathematics and English. Physical and sports education

is only a recreational activity in the Cameroonian school context. The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between physical fitness (cardiorespiratory fitness and motor skills) and academic performance. *Methods:* In this cross-sectional study, a total of 643 pupils with a mean age of 12.4 ± 1.3 years were included. The cardiorespiratory fitness (VO_{2pic}) was measured using the 20 m shuttle run test. Motor skills (e.g. speed and agility) were assessed with 4x10 m shuttle test. The students' academic performance in trimestral average, science and literacy was evaluated based on school records. *Results:* Boys had significantly higher anthropometrics (height and weight) and performance parameters (VO_{2pic} and duration). As far as teaching disciplines are concerned, significant differences also existed between the genders. There was no significant association in terms of VO_{2pic} and literacy ($r=0.017$; $P=0.6625$), english ($r=0.052$; $P=0.1879$), and mathematics ($r=0.070$; $P=0.0767$) subjects. However, in science ($r=0.080$; $P=0.0418$) and trimestral average ($r=0.087$; $P=0.0273$) subjects, a significant association with VO_{2pic} was found. Besides, significant relationships were observed between the duration of the physical and sport education activity and the academic performance. Higher VO_{2pic} values were found in younger students ($r=0.252$; $P=0.0001$). For all grades, VO_{2pic} decreased with age. *Conclusion:* The minor effects of physical fitness on academic performance among young Cameroonian pupils were linked to specific socio-cultural and socio-economic contexts. This study showed the beneficial effects of extra-curricular activities on academic performance.

Keywords: *Academic performance, Adolescent, Child, Physical fitness, Cameroon*

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Students divided into groups of 5 will create a business idea in order to generate more money from an initial investment of 500 ALL. All they need is an idea, which they will try in reality for two hours and see how much money they will earn with only 500 ALL. They will choose themselves how they will manage the budget created by the sales of the products.

Competence for life, entrepreneurship and the environment is one of the key competences of the competence-based curriculum. Through this competence, students contribute productively by developing individual or group projects to carry out environmental or social activities of importance to the school or the community. Students understand how they can provide their own income to meet their needs and desires. The students, divided into groups, with a budget of 500 lek, prepare different products such as: cakes, cards, bracelets, bags, and works with shells, masks, stones and painted tiles. The students prepared and sold these products in the school yard among the students, teachers and the community in general. This fair was developed as a result of

a very fruitful cooperation between students, teachers and parents. The products of the fair attracted the attention of not only students, but also teachers and the community, who became participants and contributed to the increase in income. With this income, students bought books for the class library, as well as symbolic gifts for families in need, the children's home, the social center for the elderly, etc. Although young, students should be inspired to create a well-being for the family, society, school or community. Expresses one's opinion on a certain topic orally or in writing, as well as in other forms of communication.

Keywords: *Students, business, investment, idea*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 60/03

The impact of remote learning during COVID-19 on students' emotional and social well-being

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This is a modest study regarding the impact of COVID-19 on the teaching and learning process, as well as presenting some concrete suggestions for successfully facing future similar challenges. When I decided to address this topic, I faced several dilemmas regarding the approach of this study, which aspects to investigate concerning the subject of the study, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the distance learning process and its effects on the social and emotional well-being of the students. COVID-19 found the education system unprepared, forcing it to make various decisions concerning the learning process. This pandemic caused unprecedented changes in global education systems, demanding an immediate shift to remote learning. By analyzing data from multiple sources, including international studies and national reports, the study identifies key challenges such as social isolation, increased stress, and disruptions in daily routines. An important moment in this paper is the identification of the role of the family in the learning process. Following this, the needs that arise for education systems regarding further development, investment, and integration are listed. The findings indicate that the impact on students' mental health and social development may have long-term consequences. The study concludes with recommendations for policymakers and educators to mitigate these effects and improve the resilience of education systems to future crises. The paper is organized into five main sections, each highlighting a different idea in accordance with the main topic. The sections are preceded by an introduction that provides a brief overview of the content of the following paper.

Keywords: *COVID-19, remote learning, emotional well-being, social improvement, mental health, social isolation*

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Elderly people's psycho-physical changes following a three-month exercise regimen (nature walks combined with the Otago exercise program and music therapy)

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We used EuroQol to assess the psycho-physical changes in senior citizens living in nursing homes following the introduction of a three-month exercise program consisting of three components: 1) Otago exercises; 2) music therapy; and 3) nature walks. The EuroQol Group is an association, and the EuroQol Research Foundation is a foundation that makes up EuroQol. A non-profit organization called the EuroQol Group funds, directs, and carries out scientific research and development into tools that characterize and assess health. The EQ-5D is a preference-based health status measure that is extensively used globally in clinical trials, demographic studies, and real-world clinical settings. It was developed by the EuroQol Group. The participants in the study, in addition to the physical tests in the laboratory carried out on the Leonardo Mechanography or Ground Reaction Force Platform (GRFP), also completed the standardized international questionnaire EQ-5D-3L, which consists of 5 questions with 3 answers on a scale from 0 (very good) to 2 (very bad) related to: - ability to move and walk independently; - ability to take care of oneself; - capacity to carry out routine everyday tasks; - pain or discomfort; - anxiety and sadness. The EuroQol Group created the standardized Q-5D assessment of health status to offer a straightforward, general measure of health for clinical and financial appraisal. A broad range of disease regions can be described and valued using the EQ-5D series of instruments. In general population health research, they are also widely utilized. The instrument is available in three versions: EQ-5D-5L, EQ-5D-3L, and EQ-5D-Y. The preliminary data show significant psycho-physical improvements in the elderly of the experimental group (24 people) who follow the 12-week (3-month) exercise program, even though we are still in the statistical data processing stage. In contrast, the control group (18 people) experienced regression in most cases, and in some cases, the same condition has been maintained or there have been slight improvements. The study confirms that physical activity, walks in the outdoors, and an active lifestyle are all highly significant factors in determining an older person's quality of life beyond the age of 65.

Keywords: *Questionnaire EQ-5D-3L, psycho-physical improvements, elderly, quality of life, physical activity*

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**Moral education in young children,
a condition for the emotional wellbeing
and the cultural survival of society**

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Hypothesis: If moral and healthy education is realized in the early phases of personality development in children, we will achieve social, emotional and cultural wellbeing in them and the whole society as well. To prove this we refer to scientific evidence, we follow different procedures like: cases of study in different time periods, in different social cultural categories. Making concrete observations, data collection and their analysis in some cases in Preschool Educational Institutions and in different families. Social experiments realized in social environments with peers in nursery school, family etc. Interviews with parents or children's relatives. This fact is proven with the importance and space this education has in Preschool Education's curriculum. Negligence of this education has led to a lot of problems in the individual, family and society's wellbeing in today's world of big social, economic and technological challenges. New strategies for growing the quality of education in family, institution and society are needed. We also need the promotion of positive and inspirational models and the enrichment of educational tools and strategies with access to education. Hypothesis: If moral and healthy education is realized in the early phases of personality development in children, we will achieve social, emotional and cultural wellbeing in them and the whole society as well. To prove this we refer to scientific evidence, we follow different procedures like: cases of study in different time periods, in different social cultural categories. Making concrete observations, data collection and their analysis in some cases in Preschool Educational Institutions and in different families. Social experiments realized in social environments with peers in nursery school, family etc. Interviews with parents or children's relatives. This fact is proven with the importance and space this education has in Preschool Education's curriculum. Negligence of this education has led to a lot of problems in the individual, family and society's wellbeing in today's world of big social, economic and technological challenges.

Keywords: *Moral reasoning & behavior, justice, liability, empathy*

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The effect of physical activity on lower limb strength and balance in individuals aged 55-65

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The goal of this study is the development of physical-motor abilities in structured physical recreational exercise. Its primary objective is to increase lower limb strength and balance in people with a beginning physical-motor level, encompassing all genders of the 55–65 age range, which is seen as the final ten years before retirement and a time when physical and mental health issues are most likely to start developing at this age. There will be a total of 70 subjects, 35 in the experimental (interventional) group and 35 in the control group. The study is the result of an experimental activity that coordinates leisure activities in the outdoors as an operational framework with useful values for the development of physical-motor and coordination skills. The 12-week exercise intervention program will include scheduled walking (step count, pace, and kind of relief), with the goal of increasing from 5000 to 10,000 steps by the conclusion of the 12th week. There will be three walking sessions per week, for a total of thirty-six sessions, along with unique recreational activities (primarily for strengthening the muscles of the lower limbs and balance). The lower limb strength and balance of the control group and the experimental group will be assessed in preliminary laboratory testing that will serve as the basis for the investigation. The two instruments from the SUT biomechanics lab—the Leonardo Mechanography and Dynamometer Easytech—will be utilised for the aforementioned measurements. The following tests are scheduled for Leonardo Mechanography: a) Tangent position with eyes open and arms at sides (TanEO); b) Tangent position with eyes closed; and c) a 10-second Flamingo pose. The following tests will be run using the Easytech Dynamometer: a) Knee (quadriceps muscle), isometric mode (statistically blocked system). In conclusion, this study will contribute to the current understanding of the advantages of a unique training program for enhancing lower limb strength and balance characteristics in healthy, working, but generally inactive 55-65-year-olds.

Keywords: *55-65 year old age group, lower limb strength, outdoor walks, balance, quality of life*

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Intellectual Well-Being in a Digital Age: Challenges and Opportunities

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Rapid and frequent global changes have affected secondary education among other areas. The challenges faced by high school students are diverse and can be accompanied by various consequences. Contemporary scientific studies and statistical data indicate that fewer and fewer students are attending high school, and the number of students pursuing higher education is declining. Additionally, the average scores on elective subjects in the State Matura exam are also decreasing. The purpose of this research paper is to analyze how the use of technology has impacted the teaching and learning processes for students attending high school. In light of the challenges that education is currently facing, the primary question posed in this article is: What are the challenges and opportunities for intellectual well-being in a digital age? Some of the research questions that support the main question of this study include: (1) What has been the level of knowledge acquired by students in the 9-year school compared to the level of knowledge acquired in high school? (2) What is the level of student performance on the State Matura exams over the years? This article initially presents a comparative analysis of the results of graduates on the State Matura exams. It further compares the results achieved by students in the 9-year school with those achieved in high school, examining the factors that have influenced the education process. This analysis will help in proposing best practices for teaching and learning for an increasingly effective education system for today's youth.

Keywords: *education, intellectual well-being, scientific progress, human progress, student pass rates*

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The importance of sleep for preschool children and their well-being

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One of the most influential factors in raising healthy children is sleep. A child's well-being is closely tied to the quality and duration of their sleep, which not only

supports the physical growth of preschool children but also enhances their emotional stability, concentration, and creativity in daily activities. Good sleep positively impacts children's academic performance and improves their emotional state. The role of parents in understanding the importance of sleep is crucial, as they are responsible for establishing a proper sleep routine and maintaining good sleep hygiene. The authors of this study aim to deepen the understanding of parental perceptions regarding the quality of sleep and its importance for the overall development of preschool children. To achieve this, a semi-structured interview was designed for parents of preschool children (N=9) attending public kindergarten. The study data were processed using Excel 2010, which aided in thematic analysis. The results indicate that parents face difficulties in setting routines and schedules to ensure sufficient sleep, have limited knowledge about sleep hygiene, and struggle to prevent their children from screen exposure before bed. The researchers have put forward several practical recommendations to help parents better understand the importance of sleep and to build healthy routines for the optimal development of their children.

Keywords: *parents' engagement in education, well-being, sleep quality, parental education*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 82/03

The role of social studies in education

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This thesis explores the crucial role of social studies in education, focusing on how these subjects influence students' understanding of society and behavior. The integration of social studies topics such as geography, economics, sociology, and psychology into the school curriculum is examined to understand their impact on the development and perspectives of students. The objective of this research is to evaluate the importance of social studies within the educational framework, highlighting its role in shaping students' views and behaviors. The study addresses key questions regarding the effectiveness of current educational practices in social studies and the outcomes they produce. Through the use of a mixed-methods approach, combining surveys and interviews, the research assesses how well these subjects are integrated into the curriculum and their effectiveness in achieving educational goals. The methodology includes a detailed analysis of data collected from educational environments, focusing on students' engagement with social studies content and its impact on their understanding of social issues. Interpretive analysis of survey results and qualitative data from interviews provides insights into the pedagogical practices that are most effective in teaching social studies. Findings suggest that social studies education plays a vital role in developing critical thinking skills and fostering informed citizenship. However, the study also identifies areas for improvement in integrating these subjects within the curriculum. Recommendations are provided to enhance educational practices to better incorporate social studies topics, thereby improving students' readiness to engage with social issues.

Keywords: *Social studies, education, curriculum, integration*

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Enhancing school-family engagement through effective communication, implications for student well-being

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The aim of this paper is present the critical role of effective communication in enhancing school-family engagement and its implications for student well-being. It examines how clear, open, and constructive communication between parents and educators influences students' academic achievement, well-being, and overall school experience. The study is grounded in the theoretical frameworks of Epstein's model of school-family-community partnerships and the work of Hill and Tyson on parental involvement, which provide the basis for interpreting the impact of communication on student outcomes. The goal of this paper is to highlight the significance of effective communication in strengthening school-family collaboration and to demonstrate how this collaboration positively influences student well-being and academic performance. Effective communication is essential for strengthening school-family relationships, which consequently leads to improved student outcomes. Establishing effective communication channels cultivates greater student success, while collaborations between families and schools exert a positive influence on both academic and behavioral performance. Furthermore, enhanced parental involvement, facilitated by effective communication, is correlated with elevated student achievement. Based on the scientific analysis presented in this article, recommendations for implementation have been provided to establish the essential conditions for a child's well-being and to support their overall welfare. The objective is to create an optimal environment conducive to their development. This study aims to provide actionable recommendations for developing and implementing communication strategies based on these theoretical foundations. By doing so, it seeks to promote a collaborative and inclusive school environment that enhances student well-being and supports academic success.

Keywords: *engagement, effective communication, student well-being, emotions, academic success*

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Successful School Leadership Fosters Strong School-Family-Community Partnership

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Successful school leaders have a clear vision of an open and inclusive school culture, demonstrate a great passion and shared leadership, deeply believe in the Growth Mindset (Dweck, C., 2017) and set the ground for an inclusive and enabling environment that encourages and supports an active involvement and cooperation of teachers, students, parents and the whole community to help each and every child thrive, regardless of their background. Research and practice convincingly show that a meaningful parent and community involvement in the school life is ensured when schools possess comprehensive School, Family, and Community Partnership Programs, which are jointly designed through an active participation and cooperation of all stakeholders, include elements of the “six types of parents and community involvement” (Epstein, J., 2009), value everybody’s strengths and contributions, and are based on mutual trust and respect. Successful school leaders also cherish the indispensable role of inner school structures in a democratic school governance that supports improvement and democratization of school life and invest in the enhancement of their role through consultation and various capacity building opportunities. The methodology of this paper combines a deep analysis of theoretical paradigms with empirical data and positive practices. This paper will also provide recommendations for improvement and contribution to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4.

Keywords: *School Leadership, School-Family-Community Partnership, Inclusive School Culture, Inclusive Policies and Practices, Inclusive Education*

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Lifelong learning: opportunities and challenges case study: Albania

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The main objective of this paper is the studying the ‘lifelong learning’ of adults in Albania: opportunities and challenges in their participation in formal, non-formal and

informal education. In the ‘background’ of the study is the employment and skills strategy 2023-2030, as well as the instat studies on adult education. The methodology used is mainly quantitative, based on instat data, as this work is based on the principle of ‘evidence-based policy’. According to the adult education survey 2017 results, 9.2% of the population aged 25-64 participated in formal and non-formal education; 67.8% of this age group participated in informal learning; 39.9% of this age group knows a foreign language, 40% of them know English language. Meanwhile, the results of population aged 55-64 show that 3.5% of this age group participated in formal and non-formal education; 62% of this age group participated in informal learning; 22% of this age group knows the English language. In this context, it is recommended the undertaking the efficient policies in order to create opportunities and facilitating conditions for the participation of adults in the lifelong learning process, mainly in the professional dimension of this process, to provide the ensuring compatibility between the required skills and offered skills in the labor market.

Keywords: *formal education, non-formal education, informal education*

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Using Authentic Materials in Translation classes

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Teaching translation is not a simple thing. In Master classes students are exposed to authentic language use, as authentic materials are a very good source of words. The paper is focused on these issues: teaching translation through the use of authentic materials: audiovisual (documentaries, films, podcasts, advertisements etc., and printing materials in translation tasks in Master of Science in translation classes (Bilingual -Foreign language classes). The paper discusses language barriers, subtitling problems etc., translating from source text (ST) to target text (TT), from English to Albanian and reverse translation. The use of various audiovisual materials depends on the topic, student’s cognitive knowledge and language proficiency. Authentic language like British or American help translation students learn and use new words from a variety of fields. Independent, pair or group work are very helpful to perform translation tasks. Students learn to cooperate, share ideas and knowledge. The paper starts by explaining the importance of authentic language in translation process and it concludes with practical examples of tasks and some types of materials used in Master of Science in Professional Translation classes.

Keywords: *translation materials, tasks, text type, authentic language*

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The role of teaching methods in Sports Sciences

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Sports Sciences constitute a specific educational field. Teaching in these sciences requires special teaching methods in order to enable the mastery of concepts and skills. Various research findings have revealed that different teaching methods or strategies can influence student learning through the construction of high-quality learning environments. But lecturers and trainers in choosing a teaching method should consider the nature of the subject and its content, objectives, individual differences of students in terms of learning and thinking style as well as their age, gender and social background. The main purpose of this literature review is to examine the importance of teaching methods used by pedagogues in sports sciences. For this paper, articles were reviewed which were found by searching electronic databases such as Web of Science, SportDiscus, Eric, PsycInfo and Elsevier. The studies examined teaching methods and their importance in the physical education program. The results of this review mainly provide information on the role of teaching methods in the process of planning, programming and evaluating physical education classes. The scientific contribution of the results finds practical application in the optimization of the teaching process of physical education and the training of students.

Keywords: *Teaching, method, student, physical education*

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Exploring children's wellbeing and its correlating variables in school environments

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Children wellbeing is an important part of their development, health, safety, education and socialization. Childhood experiences play an important role in overall wellbeing. Schools play an important role in improving emotional well-being for 21st-century children, since teachers help raise their self-esteem and motivation by being role models, mentors, and educators. Promoting wellbeing involves providing supporting environments, families and communities. Wellbeing encompasses mental, behavioral, social functioning. Children wellbeing is related to their satisfaction with life and school experience. The main aim of this paper is to explore the relationship of the children wellbeing with the correlating variables in school settings. To address this relationship as research method was used literature review which is very important to create opportunities for additional research in this field in

school contexts in Albania. Results from research literature revealed important data about the relationship among children wellbeing and variables such: school satisfaction, school climate, school happiness, school connectedness and peer support. When satisfaction with teachers and peers is high, children consider school as one world.

Keywords: *Subjective wellbeing, school climate, school connectedness, peer support*

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Bullying as a pathology of e-society: A sociological approach

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Bullying is a complex term and issue that involves aggressive behavior, systematic abuse of power (Smith & Sharp, 1994), a phenomenon related to cases where an individual is repeatedly exposed to negative actions by another individual, creating an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim (Olweus, 2007). Bullying as a fact may be as old as humanity itself, while as a concept, it has a history of five centuries, becoming a critical issue in the information society (following agricultural and industrial societies). Bullying is mostly prevalent among the juvenile population and causes individual, familial, and even broader traumas (ethnic, racial, religious). Scientific understanding and treatment can help prevent the spread of this destructive phenomenon, which is especially common in schools that serve as hubs for education, personal development, and preparing society's future. This research used primary and secondary sources, quantitative data, and methods such as historical, comparative, case studies, content analysis, among others. Findings show that bullying, in our context (North Macedonia), is present at all levels of schooling, especially in primary and secondary education (44% in 2019), and that public institutions, media, and civil actions (NGOs) are needed to combat it. The role of psychologists, sociologists, and theologians in this regard is crucial.

Keywords: *bullying, harassment, schools, sociology of bullying, North Macedonia*

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The well-being of students in challenging times is an important psychosocial factor

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The well-being of students in challenging times is a key issue that requires special attention in the context of sudden changes that occur in the school environment, such as pandemics, social crises or traumatic events. These challenges can profoundly affect students' emotional and mental health, causing stress, anxiety and depression. This study examines

the factors that contribute to student well-being, identifying the elements necessary for effective support during difficult times. One of the main factors is social support, which includes relationships with family, teachers and peers. Strong support networks help students feel safe and valued, thereby strengthening their ability to cope with stress. Likewise, access to psychological resources and support services, such as school counseling, is essential to address students' emotional needs. Another important aspect is the promotion of extra-curricular activities and the development of stress management skills, which contribute to a sense of fulfillment and increased self-confidence. This fosters a positive environment, which is essential for psychological well-being. Schools should play an active role in creating a supportive and encouraging atmosphere for students by integrating wellness practices into their curricula. This will help increase students' emotional stability and improve academic results, contributing to a healthier and more sustainable society. Ultimately, investing in student well-being is a collective task that requires the engagement of all relevant factors.

Keywords: *Welfare, students, mental and emotional health*

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Cooperation with parents in educational establishments

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Children's education is a complex process that requires a dedicated and comprehensive approach from teachers, parents, and the community. This article examines the importance of early education and the role of teachers in collaborating with parents for the development of children as capable and dignified citizens. Drawing on data from a survey conducted in preschool institutions from 2020 to 2023, the study analyzes parental involvement in educational decision-making and its connection to children's success. The methodology included a sample of 323 parents who participated in focus groups and reviewed relevant legislation, and it was conducted over a relatively long period from 2020 to 2023. The results indicate a strong correlation between parental involvement and children's academic achievements. Engaged parents help create a positive learning environment and have higher aspirations for their children's education. 74% of parents reported that their opinions were considered in organizing school activities. Recommendations include training for parents on the importance of involvement, institutional support for school-family partnerships, and the development of a university course for this purpose. Additionally, working with parents should be a criterion for evaluating teachers' performance. These measures will help create favorable conditions for children's education, ensuring them a quality education and opportunities to reach their full potential.

Keywords: *Parental involvement, school-family collaboration, child development, social skills*

THEMATIC SESSION 04: POLITICS, DEMOCRACY, INTEGRATION AND LAW

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The challenges of the Euro-Atlantic integration of Albania and their impact on national security

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Albania's pursuit of Euro-Atlantic integration presents a complex array of challenges that profoundly affect its national security landscape. This abstract examines the multifaceted obstacles hindering Albania's alignment with NATO and the European Union, encompassing political instability, economic fragility, and regional geopolitical tensions. Despite significant strides since its NATO accession in 2009 and designation as an EU candidate in 2014, Albania continues to contend with entrenched corruption, governance deficiencies, and a weakened judicial system, which collectively erode public trust and institutional integrity. Additionally, the emergence of non-state actors and external influences, particularly from neighboring regional powers, further complicates Albania's security framework. This paper investigates how these challenges not only obstruct Albania's integration efforts but also threaten its strategic stability and resilience. Through a qualitative analysis of current policies and international relations, the study elucidates the intricate relationship between domestic reforms and external expectations, highlighting the necessity for a holistic approach to security that encompasses socio-economic development and political accountability. Ultimately, this research seeks to enhance the discourse on Euro-Atlantic integration by clarifying the essential connection between Albania's national security and its capacity to navigate the intricate dynamics of international relations. The findings aim to provide valuable insights for policymakers and stakeholders committed to fostering stability and development in the region.

Keywords: *national security, integration, challenges, politics, international relations*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 52/04

Civic participation in European countries

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The process of global transformation has various consequences. One of the fundamental theses of globalists assumes that the possibilities of citizens' participation are increasing (S. Huntington 2004). Opponents emphasize, in turn, that the processes of globalization lead to completely opposite effects. (Sennett 1992).

The aim of the paper is to try to answer three main problematic questions:

What is the general level of civic participation in Europe at the end of the second decade of the 21st century?

What patterns of civic participation dominate in Europe?

Which of the following models (socio-economic status model, social capital model or attachment model) is best suited to explaining the variation in participation in Europe?

Civic participation as a dependent variable is understood as an activity that is implemented through citizens' actions in the public, political and associational spheres (pattie, seyde, whiteley, 2003). Participation in each activity was coded using the 0.1 system. The empirical basis for the presentation will be the results of the European social survey of 2018 conducted on representative samples in 34 European countries. As a result of the analyses; it was found that the general level of political participation in Europe is not high. The dominant type of civic participation is voting in parliamentary elections. The highest level of civic participation was identified in the Scandinavian countries and the lowest in the post-communist countries and Portugal. The socio-economic status model and the social capital model are equally suited to explaining variability in participation.

Keywords: *civil society, participation, European countries*

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The well-being of the Albanian people in the prism of international policies

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The Albanian nation, present almost all over the globe, but with a larger population in the Western Balkans, has been under the influence of wars between the East and the West

quite a few times. The political orientation of the Albanian nation towards the west, this approach was also analyzed by the philosopher Mr. Ukshin Hoti, made the Albanians of the Western Balkans an intermediate center of conflict between the East and the West, or transformed it into an important geopolitical factor. Thus, firstly, the research consists in finding external influences on the Albanian nation in commitment to re-orientation against European policies; secondly, the research consists in a historical approach of the Albanian nation oriented towards pro-Western policies. Will the well-being of the Albanian nation depend on the conflict between the East and the West or on the unelected status of Albanians in many republics, mainly in the Western Balkans? The research has an analytical approach mainly of the theories of Mr. Ukshin Hoti on the trend of Russian domination through Serbia and the political situation of the Albanian people against this trend. The results of the research tend to be whether the natural goals of the Albanian people are realized with the Euro-Western option, whether they depend on internal resources or external circumstances, or on the objective and analytical evaluation of these two components.

Keywords: *Albanian people, East, West, International politics*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 94/04

Ethical qualities of leadership in education and their importance in the management of the institution

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Actors of the educational system are increasingly becoming aware of the importance of ethical issues in the management of higher education institutions. In this direction, the emphasis is placed on the role of leadership, on its model, on the organizational culture that it creates in the educational institution. The mission of universities, among others, is based on honesty, freedom of spirit, promotion of human values, culture and dialogue and universal justice. In fulfilling the mission, the behavior of university leaders is of decisive importance. Principles such as justice and integrity, respect, care and service to others are identified in the behavior of leaders with high ethic qualities. In fulfilling the mission, contradictions and tensions always arise in front of the leader and the institution. It is the responsibility of the manager, to try to resolve the contradictions and find the best solutions, to preserve with priority not only the individual ethical values, but also the ethical values of the entire institution. A leader with high moral and ethical qualities can be evaluated by several main criteria, which consist of the way the leader uses his powers, mutuality and equality in dealing with problems, taking responsibility for the organization's decisions and actions, transparency and reflecting on criticism, developing staff skills and confidence. Studies show that universities, which have achievements and successes in all their institutional and academic performance, have been led by leaders with high moral values and civil culture. The spirit of leadership with high moral and ethical qualities positively affects the progress of the institution and the leadership model reflects in positive ethical attitudes of the staff.

Keywords: *university, leaders, ethical quality*

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**Young people participation challenges
in democratic life of Albania and the impact
of EU youth strategy in the integration process**

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Participation in elections, as the most important form of democratic representation, is currently a major problem with its declining tendency throughout the entire globe. This tendency of no interest in politic process or election abstinence includes also the young voter. In this paper, the authors analyze the present participation of young Albanians in democratic processes in two main lines: the level of democratic representation and their perception of representation. In both cases, the authors sought to note the level of influence of the strategies designed and implemented by the European Commission on increasing the power and engagement of young people in democratic processes. The study examines the factors behind shaping their participating level, their political choices, and the influence of other internal or external (EU) actors on participation. The data on which the research is based are primary, analysis of statistical data from two annexations developed at the national level (2022 and 2023), analysis of BEEC strategies and policies, CEC results as well as other supplementary data in the field.

Keywords: *Young electorate, democratic participation, EU strategy, Albania*

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**Principles, regulatory framework and potential reforms
of consumer protection in the European Union**

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Consumer protection in the European Union (EU) is built on principles that uphold consumer rights, safety, fairness, and transparency throughout member states. These guiding principles enable the EU to maintain high standards of consumer trust and

welfare, fostering a balanced and competitive internal market across borders. The regulatory framework enforces rigorous product safety standards, guarantees the right to transparent and accurate information, protects against unfair commercial practices, and provides strong data privacy protections, notably under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The EU also offers a standardized right of withdrawal for online and remote purchases, allowing consumers to return products within 14 days. Accessible dispute resolution options, including the European Consumer Center (ECC-Net) and the Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) platform, empower consumers and promote fair interactions within the single market. Other enforcement mechanisms are the Market Surveillance Authorities, which oversee compliance with safety and market rules, with the power to recall or remove unsafe products, and the European Commission and the National Consumer Protection Authorities (CPC Network) that collaborate to enforce consumer laws, particularly for cross-border cases, ensuring that protections are consistent throughout the EU. The European Union continuously assesses its consumer protection framework to adapt to new challenges, particularly those arising from digital transformation, sustainability goals, and complex cross-border transactions. The aim of this paper is to analyze the key principles of EU consumer protection, give a comprehensive overview of the regulatory framework of consumer protection in the European Union and propose potential areas for reform to strengthen EU consumer protection.

Keywords: *Product safety, accurate information, unfair commercial practices, data privacy protections*

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Morality as a leader in the communication of political elites

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Morality has always been a critical element in political leadership, influencing international relations and policy decision-making. As political leaders face significant ethical and moral challenges in modern times, the use of morality in their communication with the public and with other political actors has become a central topic of intellectual and political debate. This study analyzes the role of morality in the communication of political elites, examining how moral and ethical principles impact how leaders communicate and interact with the public and each other. The methodology used for this study is quantitative, involving a group of 31 participants. The main part of the analysis involves examining various ethical theories such as utilitarianism, deontology and virtue ethics, to understand how these theories have been used and applied in the context of political communication. Key findings indicate that political leaders who adhere to moral and ethical principles in their communication are more likely to gain public trust and maintain a positive image. However, the study also reveals that there is often a gap between moral declarations and the actual actions of leaders, which can undermine their credibility. This analysis provides

a deep perspective on the importance of morality in political leadership and democratic governance, emphasizing the need for accountability and transparency in political actions to uphold integrity and credibility in the eyes of citizens. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of political ethics and offers recommendations to enhance integrity in political leaders to address the ethical challenges of today's times.

Keywords: *Political elite, morality, communication, political communication, politics, ethics*

THEMATIC SESSION 05:
RELIGION, COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR
& SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 16/05

**Physical Activities: A means of enhancing health
and well being of the elderly in the Nigerian Populace**

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Physical inactivity and sedentariness are becoming rampant among the elderly within the Nigerian population. The reasons are traceable to changes in lifestyle as a result of diet, social activity and orientation. Most of the elderly believe that they need more rest out their age and should not subject their body to stress. However, experience has revealed that a lot of them experience health challenges that could have been averted if they were physically active. This study identified the causes of inactivity, addressed the importance and benefits of physical activity on health and well-being of the elderly in the Nigerian populace. The study also advocated for a need to engage and physical activity and the type of activities that are beneficial to the health of the elderly people. This study concluded by suggesting ways of overcoming identified barriers to physical activity participation. It was recommended that stakeholders such as medical, paramedical, sports and exercise scientists and other practitioners should develop programmes to address the problem of physical inactivity and facilitate behavioral change among the elderly.

Keywords: *Physical Activity, Improving Health and Well-Being, Nigerian Elderly Population*

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Pathalgadi Movement of Jharkhand: Asymbol of awareness in contemporary times

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In this proposed paper, I will be looking at Pathalgadi movement as well as Netrahat field firing range in Jharkahnd which has high tribal population. In contemporary times, the Pathalgadi movement in Jharkhand, reflects renewed struggle of the Adivasis to assert their authority over their landscape. The tribal history of Jharkhand is marked with land alienation from their ancestral land as well as mass displacement in the name of development. Both of these issues can be seens in the Pathalgadi Movement as well Netrahat Field firing range. After the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) was enacted in 1996, this ancient practice of erecting stone slabs was adopted by its proponents in some areas of Jharkhand, and many villages inscribed the provisions of the Act in stone as a means to raise awareness of rights. In the current political climate, the tradition has again been appropriated to symbolize Adivasi rights with over hundred villages in the district of Khunti and Simdega. The official narrative of what has now become known as the Pathalgadi movement is that it is a radical movement that aims for autonomy in governance and self-rule, whereas Netrahat field firing is yet another epitome of struggle against mass displacement in the name of development.

Keywords: *Tribes, Jharkhand, Pathalgadi Movement, Autonomy*

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Financial well being of retirees' community in Nigeria

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Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to investigate the financial well-being of often-neglected group in the society. The authors examined the role of risk management and social capital in the financial well-being of the retirees in Nigeria.

Design/methodology/approach – A quantitative method of research is used with a six-point Likert scale questionnaire. A survey was conducted to 376 retirees from public organizations to determine the perception of their financial well-being in post-retirement era. The sample population is selected using the simple random sampling technique. An exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling are used to analyze the data. Findings – The results indicate that both risk management and social capital are significant predictors of retirees' financial well-being in the Nigeria context. All respondents have a good education background. Research limitations/implications – This study focused on retirees who have worked in public organizations in Nigeria. Thus, it is likely that the results may not be generalized to other settings. The results show that to promote financial well-being among retirees, the focus should be put mainly on individual risk management and maintaining good social capital. Originality/value – The present study is first of its kind that focuses on contributory role of risk management and social capital in influencing the financial well-being of retirees in Nigeria. Findings make a novel contribution to retirees' financial well-being literature by clarifying the significant role played by risk management and social capital in promoting the financial well-being of retirees in a developing country, specifically in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Nigeria, risk management, social capital, financial well-being Paper type Research paper*

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Religion and society on Avicenna's philosophy

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Abu-Ali al-Husayn ibn-Abdallah Ibn-Sina a.k.a. Avicenna (ca. 970–1037) was the preeminent philosopher and physician of the Islamic world. It dominated intellectual life in the Islamic world for centuries to come, and the sundry reactions to it, ranging from acceptance to revision to refutation and to substitution with paraphilosophical constructs, determined developments in philosophy, science, religion, theology, and mysticism. Avicenna wrote in different genres, but his major innovation was the development of the *summa philosophiae*, a comprehensive work that included all parts of philosophy as classified in the late antique Alexandrian and early Islamic tradition. Avicenna philosophy influenced both, East and the West for nearly a thousand years. In the East it radically and directly influenced Islamic thought, philosophy and science, while in the West it influenced medicine and science and indirectly the philosophy of the Renaissance. Due to his influence, it is of great interest and importance to know his philosophical views, especially on religion and society. Avicenna believes in religion, prophethood, resurrection after death, but in certain matters he makes rationalistic interpretations, of which he received great criticism from al-Ghazali. But he does not question the authenticity and role of religion in society. This is because

religion is seen as the source of morality for society. Although he did not write specific works to deal with religion, the role of religion in society and on matters of political philosophy, as his predecessor Al-Farabi did, he treats these as part of metaphysics and their relationship to metaphysics. This will be the focus of our research, which will highlight Avicenna's philosophical views on religion and society. Highlighting his philosophical thoughts on religion and society will help us to better understand the background and influences of the philosophers of the Renaissance period and later, which also preceded sociology.

Keywords: *Avicenna, religion, philosophy, society, morality*

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Sociological approach from the 30th chapter (juz) in the Holy Qur`an

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This paper is research of sociological approaches that emerge from the Qur`anic verses. The research is focused on the 30th chapter or as it is called in religious terminology the juz. Here it is intended to learn how the main source of the Islamic religion organizes social relations. Explains what is the methodology that the holy book uses for the smooth running of social relationships. It is an attempt to observe the manner of the Holy Qur`an as it addresses the individual by placing him in the center of attention. The main question in this paper is how the word of the Creator serves us to rehabilitate selfishness, a phenomenon that permanently endangers the cell of society, the family, and beyond, the whole society. In order to realize the meaning that emerges from the Qur`anic verses, the interpretations of researchers in this field are referred to. Also for the reason that the `meal`, that is, the translation remains truncated compared to the original, but also for the fact of the more precise meaning by the scholars as heirs of the Prophet Muhammad a.s. the verses quoted in this article are based on their analysis. I mainly focused on the analyzes made by Bediuzzaman Said Nuri, Prof. Dr. Suat Yıldırım, Prof. Dr. Davut Aydın etc. Through analyzes and approaches of the above scholars, a brief overview of the rights and obligations of social life is given. I hope that the article provides scholars or attentive readers of interpretation of Qur`anic verses and beyond, a clear developmental and convincingly argued approachment.

Keywords: *Qur`an, interpretation, selfishness, rehabilitation, approach*

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Averroes' Influence on the Initiation of Secularism Debates in Medieval Europe

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This paper studies the role of Averroes (Ibn Rushd) in starting the debates about secularism and in the development of the social thought of medieval Europe. The Andalusian philosopher, physician and judge Ibn Rushd (1126–1198), who is one of the greatest figures of medieval philosophy, with his philosophical interpretations challenged religious orthodoxy and contributed to the gradual emergence of secular thought. The research focuses on the main questions: In what ways did Averroes' works, especially his commentaries on Aristotle and the *Decisive Treatise*, introduce secular ideas to a medieval European audience? How did his philosophy shape the intellectual environment of the European Renaissance through early discussions of the separation of faith from reason? The methodology of this paper involves a historical analysis that includes primary sources such as Averroes' works and their Latin translations, alongside Renaissance texts influenced by his ideas. Secondary sources provide insights into the transmission of Averroist thought through translation movements in medieval Spain and its socio-cultural impact on European intellectual history. Charting these intellectual exchanges, the study identifies how Averroes' rationalist approach—particularly his theory of “double truth,” which separated religious and philosophical reasoning—influenced early secularism debates. Averroes significantly influenced Renaissance humanists and philosophers by promoting a rationalist perspective that challenged established scholastic traditions. His ideas helped pave the way for a secular approach to social thought, emphasizing the role of reason in analyzing human behavior and social institutions. This influence is evident in the works of figures such as Thomas Aquinas, Marsilius of Padua, and later, in the development of social contract theories. The initial debates sparked by Averroes' works also contributed to the tensions between religious and secular authorities, ultimately influencing political and social structures in Europe.

Keywords: *Averroes (Ibn Rushd), Laicism, Double Truth Theory, Medieval Europe*

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Orientalism and the Balkanism: The Balkans as Otherness Religious of Europe, and Albanian Self-orientalism

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The division of the world into East and West has been a reality since ancient times. However, with the emergence of Orientalism as a scientific discipline and political

discourse, this distinction has become even sharper and has inevitably produced political consequences. This is because Orientalism institutionalized and normalized the division of the world into East and West. Therefore, the myth of superiority of the West over the East resulted in the stigmatization of the latter as primitive, barbaric, fanatical, etc. Meanwhile, Balkanism, either as a variation of Orientalism or as independent from it, is a notion that imposes pejorative meaning in the Balkans and the Balkan people. In this context, the Balkans from the West is imagined as a world opposite to that of the West. Consequently, the Balkan people at the beginning of the process of modernization and internalization of Western values began the process of de-Orientalization and de-Balkanization. From this point of view, the first attempts of Albanians to “escape from the East” began at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, when the process of Albanian modernization and national formation began. Thus, the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century is also the birth date of Albanian Orientalism. The revivalists influenced by the orientalist discourse emphasized the European origin and identity of Albanians in order to orient the value of the Albanian nation towards Europe. As a result, this study analyses Albanian self-orientalism as an attempt to “otherize” or “stigmatize” a part of the Albanian nation as eastern by another part which imagines itself as “European” and the bearer of the Europeanization process of Albanians. In this context, Albanians of Albania consider themselves more “European” than Albanians of Kosovo, while Albanians of Macedonia are “easterners” both in the eyes of Albanians of Albania and Albanians of Kosovo.

Keywords: *Orientalism, Balkanism, self-orientalism, religion, Albanian self-orientalism*

THEMATIC SESSION 06:
MARRIAGE, FAMILY, WELFARE,
SOCIAL POLICY & COMMUNITY

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**Addressing the treatment gap in Mental Health care:
A quantitative analysis**

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Different studies and reports emphasize the increased need for mental health treatment in Albania. In recent years, there are an increased number of people that seek and receive mental health services due to higher awareness of the importance in addressing mental health issues. Despite that, many people with mental health needs do not do not receive treatment for different reasons. This research analyses the gap between the need for psychological treatment of Albanian population and the actual number of people that receive treatment. Through a quantitative approach this study aims at identifying the gap between these needs and services as well as possible barriers toward seeking and receiving mental health services. By analyzing data from different sources, including self-report instruments and healthcare records of mental health professionals this study examines the extent to which mental health disorders are undertreated or untreated compared to their prevalence and the factors influencing the gap between such variables. The findings uncover differences influenced by various factors such as geographic location and demographic variables. Our findings stress the impact of socio-economic variables on mental health accessibility. Also this research explores how the treatment gap affects health outcomes, highlighting the need for targeted interventions in different areas of Albania. Through quantitative analyses

this article highlights issue of the treatment gap in Albania, providing also data driven insights that can inform policy and practice advocating for more effective and accessible mental health services.

Keywords: *mental health, psychological distress, treatment gap, treatment policies*

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Successful parenting, the greatest challenge of our time

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Being a parent today is a difficult and quite complex challenge. Every parent experience a lot of love and joy that comes from children and the relationship with them daily, but also full of challenges, difficulties and stress. Parents often find that they cannot respond effectively to their children's negative behaviors. Undoubtedly, the birth and rising of a child dictates a different dynamic in the family system. Parenting leaves an indelible mark on children. An exemplary and dedicated parent is not only luck and a role model for the child, but also motivation and inspiration to build a successful tomorrow, his future family! Being a parent is undoubtedly one of the greatest experiences and responsibilities in life. Parenting, the most difficult profession, which we never have the chance to be taught by any lecturer, not even any good professional! It is learned throughout life, on the way to parenthood, by looking at models, choosing among them, but in the end, of course, practicing yourself! But today, parenting is a real challenge! Not only does it have its own relationship difficulties, but also because today's reality is so challenging! It is a rich reality full of problems, which during our exhausting efforts to solve them, make difficult that very child-parent relationship, that is, make parenting difficult.

Keywords: *Parenting, challenge, relationship, emancipation, psychology, childhood*

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Happiness and well-being in ancient Stoicethics

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In regard to the concept of human happiness and well-being, the paper analyzes some significant ethical moments of the Stoics as well as those of Epictetus, the most well-known

representative of this philosophical school. Even though this school's concepts - which also come to us in the form of postulates and advice - might come across as idealistic or naive, they are still relevant in our time. Some key concepts are explored and illustrated by instances of Stoic ethics that focus on man's ultimate purpose: his happiness and well-being. Methodologically, various problems related to the question of happiness, the dilemmas and the aporetic state that they seem to generate are revealed, and then the corresponding solutions of the Stoics are analyzed. In this regard, the question of happiness and well-being is related to such problems as the role of material goods, the presence of others, the events and factors that condition the realization of happiness, the conditions of bodily states and human will. Consequently, Stoic ethics remain even more relevant in today's times and appears as a possible way to choose a happy and spiritually successful life, as the above-mentioned elements display a stronger and more dominant presence in our time.

Keywords: *happiness, well-being, peace of mind, choice, material things, will*

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Individual and collective well-being in times of challenges

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Purpose of Work: In times of economic, social, and environmental crises, the concept of wellbeing has become increasingly critical. This research aims to investigate how individuals experience well-being during challenging periods and identify the factors that influence it. The research questions that are posed for treatment are: 1. How is well-being perceived in times of crisis? 2. What key factors influence it, and how do these vary across different demographics? 3. What role can policy interventions play in mitigating the negative impacts on well-being? The paper is based on theories of positive psychology and social resilience, emphasizing the importance of economic and social factors in the development of individual and collective wellbeing. **Research Methods:** The paper employs a quantitative approach with a survey of 120 participants from various socio-economic backgrounds. **Results:** The collected data show that economic stability, strong social support networks, and access to healthcare services are key factors contributing to individual and collective well-being. Differences in perceptions and experiences of well-being are noted between age groups, income levels, and educational levels. The study

found that resilience-building policies, such as social safety nets and access to mental health services, are essential in maintaining well-being during crises. Conclusions: The research indicates the need for targeted interventions that address the specific challenges faced by individuals belonging to different socioeconomic groups. Policymakers should focus on strengthening social support systems, ensuring economic stability, and increasing access to essential services to foster well-being. By implementing these measures, governments can create more resilient communities capable of maintaining well-being even in the face of difficulties. This study provides valuable insights for policy-making that promotes wellbeing in times of challenges.

Keywords: *well-being, challenges, promoting policies, economic stability, essential services*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 66/06

Teen parent communication; parenting challenge

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Introduction. Adolescence is a period of challenge for the teenager, but equally so for their love. Communication, one of the sharpest problems, which not a few parents have a problem solving, being involved enough in the parenting of teenage children. In many cases, parent-teenage communication is closed - arguments, fights, criticism - which is often difficult to avoid. On the other hand, it is known that the teenager needs guidelines and healthy boundaries. Communication is the key to an integrated combination. In fact, it is a skill worth learning that makes an irreplaceable contribution to the good of all people. *Methodology.* For this study, was conducted a qualitative study, where there are focus groups and in-depth interviews. The champion was 36 parents of teenagers from the city of Tirana. They were chosen with different educational, social, economic, etc. backgrounds. The gender of women was 20 and 16 men. Three focus groups were organized, related to 10, 8, 8 influences. From with each participant are in-depth interviews. The instruments are all, fitting some models obtained in the literature. *Conclusions.* It is clear that effective communication is of great importance in the parenting of teenage children. For them, the teenager needs to know that the parents are interested, but vigilant, that they care and are on his side, even if you are not always right with them. It is the ability to have the skills and emotional resilience to see ahead, even in the face of indifference and appreciation. *Recommendations.* Communication makes parenting teenage children much easier. As your teen grows up, the way you communicate with him will need to reflect the new boundaries in your love created by his growing private life.

Keywords: *adolescent, parenting, communication, challenge*

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Albanian family, in times of depopulation and decrease

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This paper aims at researching some of the challenges of the Albanian family, especially during the last decade when the depopulation of the society is extremely massive and intense. Family is a cardinal institution which effects and is affected by other entities of a given society. The focus of the research will be on the challenges of the Albanian families in times of turbulences and coercion. There are hundreds and thousands of families in rural and urban communities that are thoroughly impacted by the depopulation in their social, economic and existential realm. The study will be built on a theoretical and empirical approach. The methodology used for this paper will be the ethnographic research, thus the data collection will be conducted through informal interviews and holistic outlook of the respondents. The sampling in this study will be the municipality of Prenjas and the municipality of Librazhd, two communities with relevantly 40,000 inhabitants and 33,000 inhabitants. All the results and obstacles of the study will be included for discussion, in order to shed lights on the challenges of the Albanian families in such turbulent times.

Keywords: *Family, depopulation, communities, correlation, emigration*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 80/06

Adolescent, Cyberbullying and the law: A review of psychological and legal challenges

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Cyberbullying is one of the biggest challenges for digital society, with impacts on adolescent mental health. The increase in the number of social networks, instant messaging applications and online gaming platforms has made teenagers more exposed

than ever to potential bullying, intimidation and exclusion. The effects of cyberbullying vary depending on the individual, but its consequences include low self-esteem, anxiety, feelings of sadness, being fearful, depression, anger, decreased academic achievement, an increased tendency to bully others, violence at school and even suicide. Although parents, schools and online social networking sites are encouraged to provide a safe online environment, little is known about the legal avenues that can be used to prevent or act as a deterrent to cyberbullying. This article aimed to conduct a systematic review of empirical evidence addressing how cyberbullying experiences affect adolescents' perceptions of self-image and well-being, as well as attempts to explore the current laws and challenges that exist for establishing cyberbullying legislation. The method of this systematic review was developed in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Criteria for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). According to many studies, bullying and cyberbullying can have devastating consequences on a teen's mental and physical health; hence the punishment should equal the impact. Technology has offered some solutions to reporting and reducing cyberbullying, although it might not be judged as fully efficient at the moment, issues of jurisdiction and other factors psycho-social, prove to be challenging. Schools and parents should be the first to tackle Adolescents should be educated about the sustainable and public nature of online content. They need to understand that once something is posted, it can never be completely erased from the internet.

Keywords: *self-image, well-being, adolescent, cyberbullying, law*

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Welfare in times of crisis

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This study is an analysis of the issue of emotional education, viewed through the lens of the utility of work on emotional competencies, particularly within the educational environment. The literature review focused on practical tools serves to provide a broader and deeper understanding of the issues surrounding the use of practical tools during crisis situations as a means to prevent or minimize mental health concerns. The methodology includes a qualitative and quantitative approach, utilizing interviews with students, teachers, and school psychologists to gather data on the impact of crises on students' emotional well-being and the effectiveness of supportive strategies. The theoretical framework of the study is based on theories of emotional intelligence and mental health, including intervention models aimed at enhancing students' capacity to cope with stress and develop social skills. The existence of prior works on this topic by researchers in the fields of education, sociology, and management, including monographs, articles, and reports, many of which are presented in the References chapter, is noted. These works on this topic or on specific parts or aspects of it hold value and significance as reference resources. In these works, it is observed how other

researchers have made “emotional education” their subject of study, and how they have procedurally approached the methodologies for processing the concepts that construct it. The study delves into the discussion of the questions: How do crises affect the emotional well-being of students, and what educational interventions can support their mental health and resilience? Findings indicate that students who benefit from interventions focused on developing emotional competencies exhibit higher levels of well-being and resilience during crises.

Keywords: *emotional education, practical tools, emotional competencies, crisis, social skills*

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Engaging Communities in Social Cohesion: Learning from the URBACT programme

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In the last 20 years, research has concentrated on the role that city partnership plays in the implementation of urban development policies, from those related to the environment, sustainable transport, employment policies, research and innovation, up to social inclusion, education and lifelong learning. In this context, Urbact promotes a series of actions, aimed at developing vertical and horizontal integration policies. On the one hand, the vertical approach implies the collaboration between local authorities and national and international representatives, on the other hand, on the horizontal level, the analysed dimensions aim at the economic, social and environmental spheres, which are the basis of strategic partnership networks developed at local level, interconnecting. In this sense, we rely on thematic content analysis to identify how social cohesion is present in the thematic objectives of the Urbact programme, the place it occupies within the city networks, the correlation between the social component - the type of network and the regional distribution. Starting from the information and data published by Urbact, we formulated a series of research questions showing the applicability and impact of the European Union Urbact program in the sustainable development of cities and the increase of local connectivity through strategic partnerships. The last part of this study presents: 1) The attractiveness of programs focused on social cohesion for cities in European countries and 2) the place that Romania had within Urbact, the main calls which attracted the attention of local actors and sustainable urban development projects implemented in our country, either as a leader or as a partner.

Keywords: *Social, inclusion, planning, urbact, local development*

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Solution of marriage and its consequences under mediation's optic

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Purpose of Work: The resolution of family disputes as one of the essential elements of the field of family law is considered a key point of it due to the consequences of their resolution in practical cases. The Family Code has specifically regulated the field of marriage dissolution as well as its consequences, where the principle of the autonomy of the spouses and their will in determining the modalities for the dissolution of marriage and its consequences, lie at the foundation of the legal basis and constitute the spirit that guides the entire process of marriage dissolution. Their regulation is specifically reflected in Chapter II of the Family Code, "Cases of dissolution of marriage", Article 125 et seq. The Code of Civil Procedure of the Republic of Albania expressly provides that "it is the duty of the Court to make efforts to reconcile the parties in dispute and/or to notify and instruct the parties about the possibility of resolving the dispute through mediation". So, the entire research work aims to, through legal analysis and practical cases, orient and argue that mediation is a "quasi-ideal" alternative in resolving such delicate consequences as those of family disputes. **Research Methods:** The methodology used in this paper is based on primary research whose basis is the research, comparative and analytical method with the aim of applying mediation in the resolution of family disputes as an ideal solution and as close as possible to the will of the parties. The legal analysis of this paper is mainly based on the qualitative method, since for the argumentation of the application of mediation in matters of family disputes, concrete cases subject to judgment were taken into consideration, as well as direct interviews with mediators who have assisted in the process of resolving family disputes through mediation. **Results:** The research work aims to frame a general overview of the current legislation on family matters, the challenges and problems faced by the implementation of legal provisions in concrete cases. Evidence of the consequences arising from the resolution of family disputes as well as the orientation towards mediation as an alternative that is both legal and efficient in time as well as closer to the will of the involved parties. **Conclusions:** At the end of this research work, an in-depth analysis of the essential elements of family matters is aimed, as well as in combination with the concept, spirit and provisions of Law No. 26/2018 "On mediation in the resolution of disputes" (Updated) to provide the most practical guidelines where mediation is implemented as much as possible for the resolution of concrete issues.

Keywords: *family dispute, mediation, the will of the parties, marriage, the consequences of marriage dissolution*

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Early Childhood and Well-being in Challenging Times

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Early childhood, from birth to age six, is a critical period for children's development, encompassing physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and moral growth. Proper support during this time is essential for their overall well-being. Children require a safe and stimulating environment that fosters learning, social interactions, and emotional stability. The COVID-19 pandemic introduced numerous challenges, such as technological barriers, reduced social interactions, and increased feelings of anxiety and isolation, which impacted their development. Online learning limited children's social interactions, hindering the development of essential communication and cooperation skills. The lack of physical activity and outdoor play further affected their physical and emotional well-being, contributing to issues like obesity and depression. Social isolation and stress also led to difficulties in emotional regulation and the development of social skills. To address these challenges, it is important to create opportunities for social interaction, both in-person and digitally, and to encourage physical activities and emotional support. Parents and educators must collaborate to provide a structured, supportive environment that helps children navigate difficult times. Building a strong, supportive community around children is the key to their resilience, ensuring they develop the skills necessary to thrive in both the present and future.

Keywords: *Early childhood, well-being, social development, emotional support, online learning, physical activity*

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Family, poverty and social policy interventions

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The concept of poverty is related to the lack of basic means of existence and has a negative impact on the family, contributing to the increase of social problems, stress and stigma in family life. Meanwhile, social policy is public policy that reduces poverty by providing the necessary resources to families living in poverty. This paper aims to research and analyze the relationship between the family, poverty and the impact that social policies

have on reducing poverty. Social policy instruments can reduce poverty and therefore should exert a positive impact on households. The first premise in this argument will be supported by a review of extensive measurements based primarily on the family stress model. Poverty is considered the cause of economic stress, which leads to strained relationships and social changes in the parenting aspect of the family. On the other hand, this damages the psychosocial development of the children and affects the learning outcomes and the consequences that are carried into their future. The second premise will be supported by distinguishing the types of social policy instruments that aim to reduce family poverty. They are part of the genealogy of the history and development of a welfare state, as well as the interaction of economic and demographic trends in the context of politics and cultural change. The methodology of the work is mainly based on descriptive analysis and literature review, including the impact of comparison methods, as well as statistical analysis. The general results emphasize that family poverty is reduced not only by cash benefits offered to families with children, but also by pensions and other cash benefits and social services and that the development of social policies against poverty are programs that reflect the growth of care and family welfare.

Keywords: *Poverty, family, social policy, family policy, welfare state.*

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The impact of family dynamics on wellbeing during crisis

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The family unit represents one of the fundamental components of social organization and constitutes an essential characteristic that aids in delineating both individual and collective well-being. Particularly during periods of crisis, such familial dynamics are of paramount importance, as families are subjected to stressors that have the potential to induce destabilization. This article examines the complex interplay of family dynamics in influencing individual and collective well-being during crises. In times of adversity encompassing economic recessions, natural calamities, and public health emergencies, families often function as foundational support systems. This study conducts a review of the existing literature on this subject and enhances our understanding of how diverse family structures and interpersonal relationships impact individual well-being through qualitative analysis. The prevailing literature was thoroughly reviewed, a scoping review methodology was implemented, and a mixed-methods research design was employed in the investigation. Novel qualitative data from focus group discussions have shed light on the diverse experiences of certain family structures. Patterns of communication, conflict resolution, and support among family members were examined across these unique relational contexts. Basic elements that may foster adaptive resilience and enable some families across these structures to perform necessary tasks effectively and efficiently during a crisis were elucidated. The primary basis for the investigation was

to reinforce the notion that support from family members serves as the key line of defense during a time of crisis and that effective communication and good “dynamic health” within a family may serve as the preconditions for performing well under the duress of a crisis. This analysis broadens the understanding of how families facilitate the development and sustenance of resilience amidst adversity and stress, offering insights that hold significant value for policymakers. Comprehending these intricate dynamics enables the formulation of strategies geared towards familial interventions that enhance relationships and operational efficacy to promote well-being in times of crisis.

Keywords: *Welfare, family dynamics, crises, communication conflict resolution, coping strategies*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 131/06

Parenting stress of mother of children with mental retardation

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This study is with quantitative and qualitative nature and his aim is to measure the impact of education level of mother in parenting stress of mother of child with mental retardation. Secondary objectives of the study his to measuring the impact of educational level of mother in parenting stress level. Thus, the study will measure the extent to which education level of mother affect more the parenting stress level (elementary, medium, high) Another aim of the study is to measure if are correlative relationship between educational level of these mother and three fields of questionnaire (1 – parenting stress, 2 – dysfunction in the relationship parent-child, 3 – stress linked to child behavior difficulties). The study is applied in population of parents of children with disability, in the city of Vlora. The study involved 50 individuals; mother of children diagnosed with mental retardation and these children frequent the special school PLM Vlore. The instrument used for measurements is Abidin 1995 questionnaire, which is a measurement of parenting stress short-form, with 36 questions of Likert square, three fields, and 5 scales for measure level of parenting stress. The processing of data generated by the completion of questionnaires was conducted with the statistical package for social sciences IBM (SPSS 20). The minimum scores received by testers to stress is 47 and the maximum 147 points. Of the 50 test 72% experience very high stress level (clinical). From the data emerged that among the general level of parenting stress and mother educational level there is a significant correlation in levels, positive and valuable from the standpoint of statistical correlation ($r = 0.341$, $p < 0.001$) Explanations for the relation between stress and low educational levels are throw out made by Pearson correlation. At low stress level the connection is better with higher educational level ($r = 0.175$). Correlation of stress fields is done by regression and the strong links for stress field is for middle level education $b_0 = 30$). For the second field the relation is for secondary level of education and have $b = 8.30$. If low educational level increase, the level of difficulties children sub-area.

Keywords: *Parenting, stress, mental retardation, level education*

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**Integration experiences of people with disabilities
into the workforce
(Case of Shkodër Municipality)**

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In recent years, recruiting disabled people has been given priority in our country, Albania, thanks to significant improvements in labor legislation. Individuals with different abilities should receive special consideration when it comes to professional qualification and labor integration, according to the law 15/2019 "For promoting employment." Public local institutions in Shkoder Municipality have collaborated with several non-governmental organization in recent years to create a wide variety of chances for disabled individuals to internships, obtain vocational training, and engage in the labor market. The study aims to investigate, from a qualitative perspective, the efficacy of disabled people's work experiences and obstacles that affect their chances of integrating into the workforce, based on these various practices and with the aim of better understanding the achievements and challenges faced by this target group. There are 15 participants in this study, 6 parents or legal representatives of disabled persons and 9 individuals with disabilities. Referring to the research findings, several significant obstacles that this population faces in obtaining and keeping a job, have been found through data analysis of interview data. Barriers pertaining to prejudice in the job, a lack of social and professional support, and contract disruptions are particularly emphasized. The contribution of the study has a substantial influence on local employment practices since they provide specific suggestions for enhancing current services to improve accessibility and advantages for disables people. By addressing existing gaps in support, this study seeks to create a more equitable work environment for this target group.

Keywords: *Disabled people, employment, achievements, challenges*

THEMATIC SESSION 07:
CHILDHOOD, YOUTH, LEISURE,
AGING AND GENDER

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 04/07

**Comparing the role of self-compassion
& compassion toward others in bullying behaviors
of 11-16-year-old adolescents**

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Contemporary literature shows that a high level of self-compassion and compassion toward others predict low bullying rates. However, these dimensions do not always show a positive correlation with each other. Meanwhile, in Albania, neither these dimensions perse nor their relationship with bullying has been explored. This research aims to explore how the roles of self-compassion, compassion toward others, and compassion for other living beings compare to the display of bullying behaviors of 11-16-year-old adolescents. The studies by Dragoti & Ismaili (2017) and UNESCO (2019) found that 11, 13, and 16-year-old adolescents displayed the highest rates of bullying. Therefore, the sample of the current research, composed of 250 respondents, was randomly selected from the population of 11-16-year-olds. The study has a non-experimental, descriptive-correlational design. The Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire for Adolescents was used to measure bullying. This measure has two subscales: aggression and victimization. The Compassion Scale for Children (Nas & Sak, 2020) was used to measure compassion dimensions. It has three subscales: compassion toward oneself, compassion toward others, and compassion for other living beings. Additionally, the effect of age and sex was measured as well. The analysis plan includes findings on demographic data, reliability of the scales, normality of the data, correlations, partial correlations, multiple regression, and independent t-tests

or the nonparametric alternative. Data is currently being analyzed and will shortly be available. The study has implications for both bullying prevention and interventions. It also provides information on a useful dimension like (self) compassion.

Keywords: *self-compassion, compassion toward others, aggression, victimization, adolescence*

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Exchange Programs' Experiences: Students' Perceptions

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This study aims to focus on the perceptions of Faculty of Social Sciences' students (University of Tirana, Albania) regarding their experiences in academic exchange programs (academic and social development). Academic exchanges are increasingly recognized as vital for enhancing students' employability and intercultural competencies... students who participate in these programs often achieve better academic performance and gain valuable skills that are attractive to future employers (Clemente et al., 2020; Sadiki, 2022). Utilizing a structured questionnaire, the research collected data from a purposeful sample of students who have participated in such programs. Obtaining information was achieved through faculty services, limited to the last 5 years, but not in specific programs or study cycles. The social aspects of academic exchanges cannot be overlooked. Language barriers and cultural differences often pose significant challenges for students, which can affect their overall experience and engagement during the exchange (Susandi, 2023; Kang & Metcalfe, 2019). Overcoming these barriers can lead to increased self-confidence and a stronger sense of belonging among participants, as they navigate new environments and interact with diverse peers (Suryanto et al., 2022). Supportive academic environments, characterized by effective communication and engagement strategies, significantly enhance students' experiences and perceptions of academic exchanges (Beasy, Morrison, Coleman & Mainsbridge, 2022). The collaborative efforts of faculty and administration can create a more inclusive atmosphere that encourages student participation and retention in such programs (Jurado et al., 2019). The perceptions of students regarding academic exchanges are shaped by a complex relation of academic performance, social integration, and institutional support.

Keywords: *students, perceptions, exchange programs, experiences*

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A study of the emotional experiences of preschool children

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The concept of emotional intelligence is relatively new. It was first mentioned around 1990 by researchers Peter Slovey and John Mayer. With the changes that have occurred in modern society, where technology has created a serious dependence among representatives of all age groups, especially children and adolescents, the issue of the development of emotional intelligence becomes even more significant. In childhood, the emotional sphere plays a dominant role in the mental structure of children. They perceive and interpret the world around them through their senses and feelings. Namely, this is the most sensitive age for the development of emotions. The present study aims to investigate preschool children's ability to navigate others' emotional experiences, name them, and express their attitudes towards the depicted. 60 children from three kindergartens in the territory of the city of Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria were studied. For the research, we obtained permission from the parents and official representatives of the childcare facilities. The research methodology consists of three pictures depicting different situations related to different emotional situations. The situations are arranged depending on the degree of emotional charge and are close to the child's experience. The research was conducted individually, and each child's answers were reflected in a protocol. The results of the study clearly show that a significant number of children are adequately oriented in recognizing and naming different emotional states in others, as well as in expressing their attitude towards these states.

Keywords: *Emotional intelligence, child, age, emotions*

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Young Rural Women and Digitalization: Double Disadvantage, Double Challenge

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This paper investigates the double disadvantage faced by young rural women in Bulgaria as they navigate the digitalizing world, focusing on how gender and geographic marginalization intersect to create unique challenges. The main research questions of this

study are: What role do digital skills play in the lives of young rural women in Bulgaria? How does limited access to digital tools and infrastructure shape their participation in the digital economy and education? How does gender and rural status affect their experiences with online risks, including cyberbullying? The study draws on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of social capital, examining how limited access to digital resources constrains young rural women's ability to accumulate essential forms of capital. Patricia Hill Collins' intersectionality framework is applied to analyze the compounded effects of gender and rural status, while Manuel Castells' network society theory emphasizes how digital exclusion deepens social inequalities. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research combines an online survey and qualitative interviews with young rural women in Bulgaria. The survey assesses digital skills, access to technology, and online risks, while zero-inflated negative binomial regression models analyze the factors affecting trust in internet content and the impact of past cyberbullying experiences. The findings reveal significant barriers to digital inclusion, including limited access to infrastructure, low trust in online content, and the detrimental effects of cyberbullying. Despite some digital skills, rural isolation and societal norms limit their participation in the digital economy. The conclusion emphasizes the need for targeted interventions that address the structural inequalities faced by young rural women in Bulgaria. Digitalization must not only improve access to technology but also provide supportive educational resources, community-based initiatives, and policies that acknowledge the compounded challenges of gender and rural marginalization.

Keywords: *youth marginalization, rural women, gender inequality; digitalization, social capital; digital divide*

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The parent's presence in the daily life of the child, a necessity for his intellectual growth

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The reality of today has caused the entire course of life to take a different direction or dimension. The daily burden in our lives often makes us lose focus on our children, leaving them out of parental control, partly due to the burden, partly due to work, fatigue, exhaustion, and in some cases unintentional neglect. Day by day children are turning into mechanical beings that spend very little time in nature and interacting with each other. In our daily lives, we encounter many antisocial children, who in minor incidents often displays sings of excessive aggression. The focus of the study is the importance of the presence of the parent, whether it is a mother or father, in child's daily life. When we talk about presence it should encompass all dimensions of a parent's existence, being by the child's side at every step to help them grow. It is important for parents to understand that a child's personality depends on what they learn and receive from them. Involving parents in all aspects of a child's life is very important. Children can fully realize their

potential in school or in life only when their physical or emotional needs are met. Parent-teacher cooperation is a necessary condition during the process of raising and educating children. The presence and participation of parents in educational activities should be encouraged and promoted because it improves students' performance in school. Parental involvement is the key to helping children succeed in school. Parents should be seen as parents, as observers, as advisors. Children do better when parents pay attention to what they are doing in school.

Keywords: *Child, intellectual growth, presence, results, inclusion, education*

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Engaging youth in Sustainable Urban Communities: A study on promoting the Urbact European program

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Numerous studies and initiatives for intervention have focused on the significant issues that European states and cities face. Currently, approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of Europe's population lives in urban areas and this number will rise until 2050. The inequality, the lack of affordable housing (Hilber and Schöni 2022), the insecurity of the urban environment (Muggah 2014), unemployment (Gallie and Paugam 2000) and congestion are among the major socio-political and environmental problems (Beilin, Wilkinson 2015). At the same time, this gathering of people, infrastructure and businesses offers important opportunities to transform cities into engines of change and innovation (Ribeiro and Gonçalves 2019). Thus, cities can be the source and solution for the current challenges. This is the reason why initiatives that promote the development of resilient cities and inclusion are the core of EU policy. The aim of this article is to provide an approach on the issue of youth participation at the Urbact programme impact on urban development as it is established in the reports of Urbact. The reports's empirical data, which was examined over a ten-year period, is represented in the article on this social topic. The analysis was based on sociological methods (content analysis), this issue being dealt with in terms of a frequency approach. The analysis will take into account some themes related to the issue of community development, active inclusion and policies on youth: children's education on urban sustainability, youth skills, youth information center and platform during the Covid-19 crisis; the cooperation efforts of the community actors (NGOs, public authorities and economic agents).

Keywords: *Youth, education, inclusion, urbact, network of cities, policy*

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Teacher empowerment in inclusive education and the impact on student well-being: strategies, challenges and opportunities

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Inclusive education is the whole process that teachers ensure for the inclusion of all students of the class or school, in the educational and learning activity without any distinction, respecting the diversity of all students. This article aims to explore the creation of a learning environment for all students regardless of their abilities, disabilities, gender, socio-economic status, psychological or health needs where every student feels equal and unfolds his abilities and full potential. The main goal is to build a methodology that aims to remove obstacles to a quality education for all students and to change and adapt school practices in order to meet the different needs of all students and respect their rights. This study provides important information about identifying students' needs and barriers to learning through teacher training and capacity building on effective communication techniques and the implementation of inclusive strategies and practices to create a supportive and accessible learning environment for all students. The findings show that teachers' positive attitudes towards inclusion can be beneficial for students' well-being, especially during the transition from one school cycle to another. The study highlights the importance of the teacher's role towards this approach as one of the principles of the curriculum and his ability to create positive attitudes and implement inclusive methods as part of a wider strategy to promote an inclusive society. The need to implement inclusiveness in school is a challenge faced by teachers during the lesson. Teachers understand inclusiveness but often have difficulties to implement it. Inclusion aims at the continuous change of the educational system, of the school, but also of the teacher himself to make it more flexible, more suitable to respond to the needs and diversity of students. This study estimated that creating a comprehensive teacher profile through continuous professional development and adapting teaching depending on the needs of students is the key to success in fulfilling one of the basic rights that all children have the right to quality education.

Keywords: *inclusive education, learning barriers, learning needs, support strategies, inclusive teachers, well-being*

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The well-being of students in rural areas, in times of challenges

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For a long time now, the well-being of students in rural areas has turned into a priority area in educational policies and practices. Governments around the world are making efforts to measure and monitor student well-being, and the number of areas proposed for

student well-being has also increased. The main aim of this study was to analyze the factors that affect the well-being of students in rural areas in challenging times. To fulfill this aim, a mixed methodology was employed, and by instruments of a checklist and interviews we gather the main data about the current situation. The rural schools of the villages Kamenica, Bulgarec, Dishnica, Dvoran, Vinçan and Zvezdë were included in the study. 30 parents of students in these rural schools also participated in the study. From the study conducted, we came to the conclusion that the infrastructure of rural schools is generally good and the teacher/student ratio is relatively close, but there is a lack of qualified teachers of some subjects, full psycho-social services, transportation of students, and appropriate technological equipments for the development of students' technological skills. We also concluded that parents in rural areas do not participate in joint activities with their children, and due to financial constraints, children do not have the opportunity to participate in after-school activities. Through this study, we recommend that measures be taken by the appropriate institutions to ensure the well-being of students in these challenging times. Key words: well-being, students, rural schools, challenges, parents.

Keywords: *well-being, students, rural schools, challenges, parents*

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The well-being of school-aged children

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This research examines the emotional well-being of school-age students in Albania, analyzing key factors that influence their mental health, such as academic pressure, family dynamics, school support systems and the influence of social media. . The excessive academic pressure associated with national examination systems contributes significantly to stress and anxiety among students. Family dynamics, especially those affected by economic challenges and migration, further complicate emotional health, often resulting in feelings of isolation and emotional instability. Educational institutions do not always have enough materials to properly address the psychological needs of students. Moreover, as the role of social media has increased and the use of social networking has become more important, cyber bullying and peer comparison harm students' self-esteem and health. Some of the suggestions made are to change traditional approaches to educational assessment, expanding family-focused programs, increasing the availability of school psychologists, and promoting digital literacy to mitigate the negative effects of social media. This study underscores the need for collaborative efforts between governments, educational institutions, families, and mental health professionals to create a support system that prioritizes students' emotional well-being. The combination of educational measures and emotional support in schools is necessary to create a healthier and safer environment for the next generation of Albania, promoting a culture of care and protection of children's rights.

Keywords: *Children, well-being, causes, consequences, children's rights*

THEMATIC SESSION 08:

WORK, PROFESSIONS AND ORGANIZATION

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 26/08

Understanding well-being through social exchange theory: analyzing reciprocity, fairness, and social capital during crises

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Social Exchange Theory (SET) is a sociological theory that characterizes human relationships and interactions as transactions to maximize gains while minimizing losses. According to SET, people engage in social exchanges by considering the balance between rewards and costs, their behavior being shaped by anticipations of reciprocation and mutual gain, all based on economic principles. This theory enables us to grasp the sustainability of social connections by emphasizing that relationships prosper when the rewards perceived are greater than the investments and costs incurred. In a sociological context, SET extends beyond personal interactions to clarify behaviors within groups, institutions, and communities. It underscores the importance of power, dependency, and social capital in determining the balance of exchanges among individuals. Unequal exchanges, where one party benefits more than the other, can create power imbalances and change the dynamics of the relationship, possibly leading to feelings of exploitation or withdrawal. SET has been used to study different sociological issues such as family dynamics, workplace relationships, social networks, and community involvement. By incorporating ideas of trust, commitment, and equity, it illuminates the complexities of social interactions across different contexts. As a flexible theoretical framework, SET continues to be important in examining the micro-level interactions that influence larger social structures and institutions. By concentrating

on analyzing the costs and benefits of human actions, SET offers a pragmatic method for studying the incentives and consequences of social interactions in contemporary society. During periods of financial troubles or community emergencies, it is crucial to recognize the insights Social Exchange Theory (SET) can provide on well-being. An important focus is on how individuals' well-being is influenced by their perceptions of reciprocity and fairness in social interactions. When individuals perceive their social interactions as equitable and just, their emotional and psychological well-being usually remains steady, even in the face of economic or social pressures. The study found that power dynamics and reliance on family or work connections impact overall health during prolonged stress. Uneven transactions may result in feelings of exploitation or burnout, causing a notable effect on an individual's mental well-being and feeling of security. How people assess the benefits and drawbacks of upkeeping social relationships in times of crisis is vital to their overall ability to bounce back. Assessing the pros and cons of relationships can impact how individuals handle difficult circumstances, ultimately impacting their overall happiness. Social capital and trust play a crucial role in maintaining relationships and enhancing well-being in times of turmoil. Having strong social connections and feelings of confidence can offer important assistance and strengthen resilience, enabling people to better cope with personal and societal emergencies. Finally, the perceived equity in social interactions among impacted communities can influence individuals' feelings of inclusion and mental well-being. When community support is perceived as fair and even-handed, it enhances emotional wellness and inclusion, leading to a more unified response to widespread disruptions. These linked inquiries demonstrate how Social Exchange Theory provides an important understanding of the dynamics of happiness during challenging moments, emphasizing the importance of give-and-take, equity, and social connections in preserving psychological and emotional well-being.

Keywords: *Social Exchange Theory (SET), social capital, well-being, cost-benefit analysis*

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Role of the Head of the School in Human Resources, Resources and Finance Management

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Nowadays, the school, with its dynamics, definitely requires effective management mode. This efficiency gives the school development opportunities based on a clear vision of it. An important role plays the management of the school management. It is known that

education management covers a wide category of elements closely related to each other that play an important role in the well-being of the whole process. The main management skills for us leaders are evident in supporting our staff development, which definitely includes: building constructive and collaborative relationships, permanent communication to improve human resource management, i.e., communicating effectively with our teaching staff, In addition to the management of human resources, another very important item is the management of resources and finances. This is where the clear starting point comes into play, planning, which is based on the school's mission, vision and purpose. Based on the mission, vision and purpose, a 5-year school plan is drawn up, from which the annual plans are derived, with the priorities that also dictate the needs for the final budget. This entire path described until the final budget needs a clear forecast of needs by take into account the resources we refer to as: the state budget, local government, businesses, NGOs, etc. Our leadership ability, in addition to using these resources, must also be presented convincingly to businesses, the community and non-profit organization. If we have clear projects that manage to attract their attention, then the benefit from this resource will be possible and efficient for the school.

Keywords: *resource, project, management, school, development*

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The impact of the implementation of ethical standards by leaders on school success

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Researchers have adopted a multiple ethical paradigm approach in an effort to better understand the fundamentals on which everyday ethical dilemmas are solved by educational leaders. The purpose of this study is to examine ethical considerations in the ethical judgments of directors. To examine the ethical considerations involved in school leadership decision-making, an ethical perspective instrument has been created, especially in the scope of the topic, and relies on multiple ethical paradigms. This instrument has been pre-tested to explore validity and reliability among school principals and teachers of educational institutions. The research sample is based on the real questionnaire developed with participants in the main training programs at the School of Directors and not only. (The instrument refers to the questionnaire used by current leaders and teachers mainly certified for leadership, as they understand the importance of the change brought by the implementation of ethical standards by leaders who are able to understand the obligation to comply with these standards). After completing the questionnaire/instrument it was found the negative correlations (correlations) between

choices that reflect values and justice and those that reflect utilitarianism and care. In addition, negative correlations were found between choices that reflect community values and those that reflect care, criticism and occupation. Criticism turned out to be the most accepted value by the institution's management to solve ethical dilemmas, followed by care and profession. The common notion in literature is that different ethics complement each other. However, there is little empirical work on ethics the judgments of educational practitioners. The importance of this exploratory research is twofubling: firstly, it examines the extent to which multiple ethical considerations may be taken into account simultaneously; secondly, it identifies the dominant values that come into play more often. Definitely, school leadership should be oriented by Ethics and built on moral standards. The ethical dimension of the school serves as a key for successful management and for the way teachers do their work being motivated by the leader.

Keywords: *Direction of educational institutions, ethics, leaders, values, decision making, instrument*

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Challenges of women leaders in local businesses in Lezhë, Albania

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This study examines the challenges faced by women leaders in local businesses in Lezhë, Albania, focusing on socio-cultural factors influencing their leadership and the strategies they employ to overcome these obstacles. Through semi-structured interviews with 11 women who have led businesses for at least five years, the research explores key challenges such as gender stereotypes, balancing professional and family responsibilities, and the lack of institutional support. The study aims to highlight both the struggles and successes of these women in navigating a traditionally male-dominated business environment. The findings show that these women, aged between 33 and 66, come from diverse educational backgrounds, ranging from secondary education to doctoral degrees and lead businesses across various sectors. Despite facing significant barriers like gender bias and the need for work-life balance, the women demonstrate resilience and adaptability. Many are motivated by the desire for financial independence, personal fulfillment, and the need to contribute to their families and communities. By analyzing these challenges and coping mechanisms, the study provides valuable insights into how women in Lezhë are redefining leadership roles and contributing to local economic development. Their experiences offer a model for overcoming structural barriers and inspiring future generations of female leaders.

The research also underscores the need for greater support systems to enhance gender equality and empower women in leadership.

Keywords: *Women leadership, local businesses, gender challenges, socio-cultural barriers*

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Urbanization phenomenon and its socio-economic aspects in Albanian environment

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Urbanization is an ever-growing phenomenon that most developing countries face. The process of urbanization in different countries reflects both positive and negative effects regardless of the impact level. Socio-economic aspects take priority if we see the phenomenon in the short and long term. The paper draws on a current analysis of the necessary variables concentrating on the most affected pillars. In the case of Albania, examining the regions that show the highest degree of urbanization such as Tirana and Durres, it is noted that the social elements of the phenomenon are determinative in the short term, highlighting many problems in society. Furthermore, in terms of economic aspects, it creates positive decision-making influences for these regions. Analyzing data from the descriptive research reveals that the economic development of those regions compared to the average index of the country creates a steady-state condition, implying the emergency for the implementation of new policies that can give new impulses. Factors such as the fragmentation of economic sectors, changes in the educational preferences of young people, or technological developments remain determining variables in the level of urbanization.

Keywords: *Urbanization, social problems, economic growth*

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Happiness at work place

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Based on previous studies, happiness at work has a significant relationship with performance. Happiness at work also contributes to the improvement of social relationships, physical, mental, and emotional health. This study aims for educational employees to reflect and deepen emotional awareness, which enhances and develops us professionally. The research method used in this study is a district analysis. This study includes 143 educational employees in public and non-public primary schools. The sample was chosen based on

convenience. The instrument used, the “Happiness at Work” questionnaire, was sent via email, and the data was analyzed using SPSS. About 62% of respondents perceive their work as meaningful and fulfilling, 30.3% feel optimistic about their future at work, and 40% have the perception that leaders do not show care towards employees. Most of the time, teachers feel that their values align with their workplace, and that their contributions have a direct impact on people; however, they are not optimistic about their job. It has been observed that there is a lack of emotional or challenging goals for the future. Happiness at work depends on three key factors: Finding meaning in what we do, which relates to our values and the rewards of our work. The hope we have for the future. Does our job fulfill our professional aspirations and goals? The last but not the least, is having warm and positive relationships with colleagues and management. An understanding and cooperative climate helps us bring out our best, our talents, and our joys. This study aims to open a new window of research in Albania.

Keywords: *Happiness, work place, performance, future*

THEMATIC SESSION 09:
COMPARATIVE, HISTORICAL, REGIONAL,
GLOBAL & FUTURE STUDIES

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 11/09

**Do conventional and Islamic microfinance models
differ in influencing women's
decision- making agency?**

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The purpose of this article is to examine the effects of conventional and Islamic microfinance on the decision-making power of women in southern Bangladesh. The study uses a case study method to investigate the Grameen Bank and the Rural Development Scheme (RDS) of Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited (IBBL). Data was collected from 40 borrowers through interviews, focus group discussions, participant observations, and documentary evidence. The data was analyzed using a 7-step framework method, with thematic analysis conducted using CAQDAS NVivo 10 software. The results suggest that both conventional microfinances have a greater impact on the ability to make significant purchase decisions and to participate in major decisions.

Keywords: *Conventional microfinance, Islamic microfinance, decision-making agency, case study, Bangladesh*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 33/09

Authoritarianism and democracy - Fujimori Case!

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Alberto Fujimori in the early 1990s, from a university professor created the party, used the crises of society to become president and managed to win by relying on ordinary Peruvians. He represented the old and influential politicians but was deaf to the concerns of the common people. With a populist discourse, it became an alternative to change Peru from the current situation and lead it to a better destiny. Confrontation with the old political elite, traditional power concerns and being an outsider to Peruvian politics did not help him consolidate power. Fujimori lacked the experience of legislative policies and the patience to wait, preferred to govern alone instead of negotiating co-governance, and bypassed Congress, governed by executive decrees and with little commitment to democratic institutions. He used social programs and presented himself as a traditional democratic leader. His ability, personality and character served to advance his political goals by undermining democracy and embracing neo-authoritarian approaches to leadership. Fujimori for two years turned from the hope of the Peruvians into pronounced authoritarianism and tyrannical features. He recalls that demagogues elected by vote can win public positions without having a plan for autocracy, but the destruction of democracy can also be done without a plan. The concentration of power, the populist approach and the weakness of political parties suggest that the tension between democratic and autocratic elements could never be properly reconciled.

Keywords: *Fujimori, Peruvian society, political alternative, institutions, authoritarianism, democracy*

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Developments of Paradigmatic Models in Today's Sociology

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Contemporary developments in Sociology also focus on systematic studies of the basic structure of sociological theory. The first type of these studies consists of four divisions, which include the formal or informal study of sociological theory to ensure a deeper understanding of it. In fact, Sociology nowadays has acquired even more the status of a paradigmatic science, focusing on social facts, social determination and social behavior. The social facts paradigm encompasses a large number of theoretical perspectives. Functionalism and conflict theories are the ones that appear most often, but systems

theory also has a presence within this paradigm. The paradigm of social determination is represented by theories that rely on social determination-determinism. The paradigm of social behavior is represented by theoretical approaches within social behaviorism, such as behavioral sociology and exchange theory. Thus appears a new space filled with new theories, complicated, chaotic, and freed from the effort to reach the absolute truth. This results in not only having a theoretical perspective, but having approaches that offer new theoretical perspectives. These new approaches appear as diverse as they are necessary, and can be complemented by other, valid and useful treatments in accordance with changing social needs and circumstances, and the science of sociology must interpret them with its own scientific methods.

Keywords: *the structure of sociological theory, sociological paradigms, social facts, social determination, social behavior, theoretical perspectives*

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Overview of human rights in Albania in the last two decades

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Human rights in Albania have had a long and not easy journey. Even in the last two decades, it has been noticed that respect for human rights has remained a difficult challenge for Albania. Albania is one of the candidate countries that aspire to be part of the EU family. Pending the opening of negotiations, Albania is subject to the control from the European Commission for the fulfillment of the Copenhagen criteria, especially for human rights. The Commission does not consider certain rights, but analyzes the situation of human rights based on the judicial practice of the ECtHR. The country has made moderate progress in some areas of human rights, but experts in Albania see the situation facing vulnerable groups as even worse. The attention in this paper will be focused on the problems that infringe and affect these rights the most in Albania. Current human rights issues in Albania include a number of serious and disturbing issues for Albanian society such as domestic violence, isolated cases of torture and police brutality, the general condition of prisons, freedom of expression, human trafficking and sex, LGBT rights, etc. The purpose of this paper is to make a presentation of the situation of human rights in Albania by looking at them from several perspectives and in function of different categories of society, referring to the reports of international and national institutions that deal with the monitoring of respect and guaranteeing these rights. Also, in this paper it is intended to highlight the measures taken to improve the state of rights in the last two decades in Albania. This paper is based on monographs, articles by Albanian and foreign researchers, official notebooks and periodicals. Descriptive and analytical methods were used to highlight the issues and problems related to human rights in the period we studied.

Keywords: *Human rights, categories of society, challenge, problem, freedom of expression, violence, monitoring*

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The Evolution of Geopolitics: From Classical to Critical Approaches

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This paper examines the development of geopolitical thought from classical geopolitics to neo-classical and critical geopolitics. Starting with the works of Rudolf Kjellén and Halford Mackinder, classical geopolitics emphasized geography as a fundamental determinant of state power. In the mid-20th century, neo-classical geopolitics shifted its focus to national security and strategic interests. Critical geopolitics, emerging in the 1980s, brought a new dimension by analyzing how political elites construct geographical narratives. This paper explores the theoretical underpinnings of these schools and their relevance to understanding modern geopolitical conflicts, particularly in the context of cultural heritage. The intersection of geopolitics and cultural heritage highlights the evolving nature of power dynamics in a globalized world, where cultural identity and heritage play increasingly significant roles in international relations.

Keywords: *Geopolitics, cultural heritage, classical geopolitics, critical geopolitics, identity politics*

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Kant's Philosophy and the 'Philosophical Machine' of 21st Century Capitalism (on the 300th Anniversary of the birth of Immanuel Kant)

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In this paper, the features of capitalism of the 4th Industrial Revolution are analyzed, examined in relation to the philosophical principles of Immanuel Kant. So, can there be a «Kantian Capitalism»? Kant (1724-1804) lived when the term «capitalism» had not yet been used and more than ½ century before Marx published the first volume of his work «Capital» (1865). The paper is based on comparative analysis, for example, Kant against A. Smith, K. Marx and contemporary philosophers. Marx has a starting point of moral character, then moves to an economic analysis and ends with the synthesis of his thought - in fact with a philosophical-sociological (but radically apocalyptic) prediction of capitalism. According to him, in capitalism «either you oppress the other, or the other oppresses you, or you work for the other, or the other works for you, or

you are a slave or you are a slave owner». Borrowing Kantian principles, there would be a capitalism in which «neither you oppress the other, nor the other oppress you; neither do you work for the other, nor does the other work for you; you are neither a slave nor a slave owner». What are we then? «Interested Stakeholders». In this analysis, the emergence of Kantianism in the so-called theory of interested parties is singled out. But does Kant's philosophy help us in understanding 21st century capitalism? The answer is «Yes». And this is illustrated by the concept of the «philosophical machine» with the condition that algorithms to make important decisions (as is happening) must understand ethics. From this analysis, some conclusions emerge, especially for societies with a new democratic and capitalist tradition.

Keywords: *Immanuel Kant, stakeholders, philosophy of the future, philosophical machine*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 85/09

A Comparative Study of Nick Bostrom and Luciano Floridi's Philosophies on Harmonizing Ethics and Risk Management in Artificial Intelligence

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The field of artificial intelligence is advancing quickly, making it crucial to comprehend the hazards and ethical considerations that come with cutting edge technology. The junction of Nick Bostrom and Luciano Floridi's philosophies regarding the existential and ethical implications of artificial intelligence development is examined in this work. In his analysis of the possible dangers of sophisticated AI systems, Bostrom stresses the necessity of international cooperation and security precautions. Conversely, Floridi tackles how digital technologies affect privacy, autonomy, and human values. In order to provide a thorough analysis of the effects of AI, this research seeks to combine Florida's ethical approach with Bostrom's AI risk-oriented approach. In order to ensure that technologies are used responsibly, this study aims to highlight how important it is to harmonize ethical standards with risk management techniques. By using an interdisciplinary comparative analysis, the study advances knowledge about the opportunities and problems associated with artificial intelligence.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, philosophy, ethical principles, Nick Bostrom, Luciano Floridi*

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Collective memory and contrasts conveyed through a film-museum, the case of ‘MúSiNé’

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Found in front of a past, not too far away, in front of a collective wound that crippled the country for almost half a century, “Klubi i Dramës”, (the ‘Drama Club’) -FHF, within the framework of the “Days of Memory” in February of this year, brought to the public the drama “MúSiNé”- “Like all of us!”. The intellectual figures who lived in the dark years of communism (1945-1990), who paid for freedom of speech by imprisoning the soul, by removing the right to breathe, came to the National Museum of Recordings “House of leaves”, portrayed through dramatic figures and elements of modern theater. Inspired by the life and work of the resistance fighters of the dictatorship, such as Musine Kokalari, Alma Liço, Vilson Blloshmi, Genc Leka, Atë Zef Pllumi, Uran Kostreci, Sabiha Kasimati, Mark Ndoja, Lekë Tasi, the students of the “Drama Club” - FHF performed parts from the creativity of these figures, in the rooms of the Museum of Recordings, causing to the public pain and emotion, fear and hope - catharsis. As well as free speech, which may cause “cacophony”, applause is not allowed in these rooms either. In the strong light of the spotlights, the scenic elements of the Modern Theater illuminated the objects of the past, displayed on the walls of the present. The elements of Desktop Theater through video projectors intended as a flash memory, sequences from the lives of these intellectuals. In this way, “MúSiNé - Like all of us!” was shaped through the transition from literary and non-literary text, to dramatic texture and scale, improvised in a museum-stage or stage-museum, to be transformed into a film!

Keywords: *Memory days, MúSiNé, museum, desktop theatre, communism*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 86/09

The Crucial Role of Sociology in Understanding and Addressing Social Problems

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Sociology plays a crucial role in understanding and addressing the complex layers of social problems within modern societies. This paper explores the essential contribution of sociology to these issues, emphasizing the need to situate social problems within broader contexts—such as social, economic, political, and historical dimensions—to uncover their intricate connections with societal dynamics. It also highlights sociology's focus on social structures, institutions, and power relations, which deeply influence individual behaviors and collective outcomes. By fostering public awareness and encouraging dialogue, sociology drives collective action aimed at confronting entrenched social inequalities and injustices, shaping public policies in the process. In conclusion, this paper underscores sociology's vital function in analyzing and addressing social issues. Through a comprehensive understanding of the complexities inherent in societal challenges, sociology facilitates informed interventions and promotes transformative change toward more just, equitable, and sustainable societies.

Keywords: *Sociology, social problems, societal challenges, sustainable societies*

THEMATIC SESSION 10:
SECURITY, PUBLIC HEALTH,
DEVIANCE & SOCIAL CONTROL

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 18/10

**Environmental justice and human
well-being bundles in protected areas: an assessment
in Campo Ma'an landscape, Cameroon**

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Justice and human well-being are increasingly used as key considerations when assessing the socio-economic impacts and trade-offs associated with forest conservation on local and indigenous populations. This paper incorporates environmental justice framework and human well-being bundles to get a more comprehensive understanding of the social-economic impacts of forest conservation. Through household surveys, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews in three villages adjacent to the Campo Ma'an National Park (CMNP) in Cameroon, we examine how the creation of the national park amidst expanding large-scale commodity plantations affects perceptions of well-being bundles and justice among local and indigenous communities. Specifically, we look at how the establishment of CMNP influences forest-dependent people's freedom to access forest resources, food sufficiency, health, security, social relationships, life satisfaction, and perception of fairness in benefit distribution, participation and recognition. The results reveal a concerning state of relatively low well-being evaluation and diminished perception of justice among local populations which, we argue, lead to a deterioration

of overall capabilities among local and indigenous communities. The lack of sense of justice was associated with the loss of freedom in accessing common resources, hindered cultural-spiritual practices, lack of compensation, and unresolved human-wildlife conflicts. Comparative analysis reveals variations in well-being bundles among the three communities, influenced by various factors such as the different histories of displacement and law enforcement, ethnicity, level of dependence towards forest resources, external NGO support, and the expansion of extractive industries in the area. Reflecting on these findings, this study offers insights into how justice and human well-being can be more integrated into the process of co-constructing and re-imagining future interventions aimed at improving the quality of life of local communities and promoting sustainability goals in Cameroon and beyond.

Keywords: *Communities, socio-economics, human, sustainability*

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The Role of Nudges in Vaccine Acquisition

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Nudges, as coined by professors Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein, are subtle policy shifts that encourage individuals to make beneficial decisions while maintaining their freedom of choice, such as arranging healthy foods at eye level in cafeterias or defaulting employees into retirement savings plans. Importantly, these nudges can significantly impact health-related behaviors. This study explores the role of nudges in the context of vaccine acquisition, and specifically whether the seasonal nature of flu vaccinations might serve as a nudge, reminding people to obtain non-seasonal shots such as the COVID-19 vaccine. While both vaccines are recommended, only the flu shot follows a predictable rhythm. This study's first-hand analysis of data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and World Health Organization reveals a notable correlation ($r = 0.71$) between individuals who received flu shots and their likelihood of obtaining COVID-19 vaccinations within similar time frames, suggesting that the seasonal flu vaccine can effectively remind individuals to seek COVID-19 vaccination. This study demonstrates how well-designed nudges can enable more effective and targeted public health campaigns. Further research is warranted in public health as well as other sectors, such as finance, education, and environmental policy. By understanding the power of nudges, policymakers can design interventions that influence individual choices and drive systemic change, creating a society more attuned to making choices that benefit both individuals and the community.

Keywords: *Nudges, vaccination, public health, behavioral economics, flu shots, COVID-19 vaccine*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 69/10

Looking on and left behind: the meanings of loneliness for people with chronic health conditions

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Loneliness is emerging as a significant public health issue, with links to multiple health issues, including mental health. People with chronic health issues are at heightened risk of loneliness. To understand how loneliness is constituted and experienced by those most affected, we conducted semi-structured interviews with 40 people with chronic illness who were experiencing loneliness. We explored what loneliness means to them and how it impacts in their daily lives. Drawing on ideas around liquidity and performativity, we identify the relational, temporal and social layers of loneliness. Our analysis reveals the interconnectedness of chronic illness and loneliness in participants' daily lives, as well as how chronic illness shifts temporal orientation, and transforms interpersonal relationships and relationship with self, contributing to the experiences of loneliness. Though participants described the many social conditions that restricted their opportunities for social participation, giving them a sense of being left behind and spectating the social life of others, a rhetoric of loneliness as a problem and responsibility of the individual was still prominent. A narrative of the need to perform social connection emerged, in the absence of meaningful social bonds with others. We argue that normative ideals of wellness and positivity circulating in chronic illness communities and society more broadly are implicated in the experience of loneliness for those for whom these ideals exclude.

Keywords: *Loneliness, chronic conditions, performativity, social relationships, qualitative*

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The nexus of honor killings and passion crimes in the Albanian Society

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The number of women, who are being murdered in Albania, is appalling. The research shows that every year women get tortured and murdered by their partner, husband, intimate sexual partner or ex-husband. This paper aims at elaborating and understanding the code of honor in the Albanian family and male jealousy syndrome. The perpetrators usually claim that the murder is an honor killing and the police proclaim it's because of jealousy. We will try to shed some light on the nature and the typology of these murders. We hypothesize that: "when ethnic-based family oriented

societies face new rules and regulations, a deregulation of the social system and a disruption of family ties is displayed, hence a domain of anomie is created, a threat of collective conscience of the society, a state of being lost between past and future which influences people to be more prone to committing murder and crimes towards society, towards their families and towards themselves, committing suicide. The second hypothesis is that: the honor killings are nothing but a rudiment of the old patriarchal societies and an expression of the collision between the new imposed norms and old, well-established traditions.

Keywords: *Honor, sexual male jealousy, homicide, crimes of passion, murder, filicide*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 132/10

Interactions between female sex workers and police in Poland: Experiences, Challenges, and Ways to improve safety

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Much as the very provision of sexual services itself is not criminalized or penalized in Poland, existing legal regulations (which criminalize third parties involved in organizing, coordinating, or facilitating the provision of sexual services for profit) bring sex workers under the scope of police activities. This legal framework shapes the dynamics of interactions between sex workers and police officers. This presentation aims to examine the experiences of sex workers in Poland in their interactions with the police. The analysis covers both situations where sex workers initiate contact (such as seeking help) and those where the interaction is unwanted (such as police inspections of premises offering indoor sex services). I discuss these issues based on qualitative interviews with sex workers engaged in different types of sex services in Poland (mainly escort services, but also striptease, webcam performance, pornographic films, and erotic massages). The women's age ranged from 18 to almost 60, with seniority in sex work spanning from a few weeks to a dozen years. In the speech, I point out that even partial criminalization of sex work (through the criminalization of third parties) positions sex work as suspicious, potentially criminal activity. In effect, the asymmetry of power in police officer-sex worker relations is further aggravated. Under such circumstances, police officers may be susceptible to abuse of power, and sex workers may avoid interactions with police officers (as prevention). The findings from my research may offer insights to improve the nature of these interactions. Consequently, this could potentially enhance the safety of sex workers and build greater trust in the police.

Keywords: *Sex work, police, stigma, interactions, violence*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 153/10

The effects of anxiety and locus of control on university students during the post-Covid period

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Coping with the post-Covid-19 situation has been accompanied by the effects of various factors, including psychological factors with their different effects. Anxiety, stress, post-traumatic stress symptoms, phobias and depression are some of the influencing psychological factors that usually come into play even in such a threatening health situation. This study, conducted in 2021-2022, explores the impact of anxiety tendencies and locus of control on university students' coping strategies. A sample of 336 students from Faculty of Economics at the University of Shkodra was assessed using standardized psychological tools. Preliminary analysis focuses on the role of locus of control beliefs in managing Covid-19-related stressors, providing insights into students' psychological responses during this period.

Keywords: Anxiety, locus of control, student, Covid-19

THEMATIC SESSION 11:
ETHNIC RELATIONS, NATIONALISM,
HUMAN RIGHTS

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 50/11

Problem of leadership in Nigeria
the main cause of hardship among citizens:
an appraisal

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Nigeria among a host of other developing countries tops the list of countries whose citizens live below poverty level. A situation where graduates and the educated members of the society cannot provide or fend for themselves and families. This is actually painful, disheartening and in fact regrettable. Little wonder why many uneducated illiterates now prefer to remain the way they are due to poor living standard of the educated members of the society. The problem is simply traceable to poor or bad leadership. Corruption has done several damages to virtually every segment of the economy. The people are almost of the same level with the perceived lower animals. They no longer provide or afford themselves two square balanced meals. The elected rulers and representatives at various levels are self-centered and so egoistic in their approach. This has posed a threat

to the survival of the average Nigerians. The above stated fact forms the gamut of this study. Various data collection techniques were adopted such as interviews, journals, textbooks, newspapers etc. Structuralism as a theory was adopted for theoretical framework for this study, thereafter, conclusion was drawn.

Keywords: *Problem, leadership, hardship, citizens*

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Perspectives and the Role of International Law in Albania's Educational System on AAC

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This paper explores the critical role of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) in ensuring inclusive education for children with communication impairments, with a particular focus on Albania's legal obligations. Guided by the principles set forth in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and decisions of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), the paper argues that the provision of AAC in schools is a fundamental right for children with disabilities. The CRC, particularly Article 23, stresses the importance of special care and support for children with disabilities, ensuring their active participation in society, while ECtHR rulings affirm the necessity of removing barriers to education, including communication obstacles. In Albania, the integration of AAC remains in its infancy and the country faces significant challenges in aligning its practices with these international standards. By examining legal frameworks and policies in other European nations, where consolidated practices and appropriate legal measures have advanced AAC in educational systems, the paper offers practical recommendations for Albania. It calls for the implementation of legal measures and funding mechanisms that would promote AAC accessibility in schools, supported by well-trained professionals and technological resources. This discussion aims to contribute to Albania's efforts to create an inclusive educational environment that respects the communication rights of all children, in line with international and European human rights standards.

Keywords: *augmentative and alternative communication, inclusive education, Albania's education system, CRC, legal framework*

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**Documenting war crimes:
Social and professional challenges
The case of Kosovo**

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Addressing the crimes committed during the war is a complex process and therefore subject to different scientific and institutional disciplines. In this topic, the social and professional challenges in addressing the crimes committed during the war in Kosovo during the 1998-1999 period and the need for an interdisciplinary approach in the realization of this process will be addressed. The purpose of this paper is to describe, analyze and provide recommendations regarding the role of sociologists, psychologists, lawyers, historians, forensic doctors and journalists in building a comprehensive approach to the documentation and research of crimes committed during the war in Kosovo, as a process of important in the implementation of transitional justice and the establishment of lasting peace. This professional coordination not only enables to fundamentally understand the historical, political and ethnic complexity of the conflict, but also to lay solid foundations for peace and justice. Through this aim, it is also intended to critically analyze the historical and political narratives about the war within the Kosovar public space and the memorial culture built within 25 years. The paper will confirm the thesis that - on the one hand, war events, crimes against vulnerable civilians, violent evictions, acts of genocide and collective memory can be documented and researched and, on the other hand, mental health challenges in the collective coping with post- traumatic - can be addressed - only thanks to an interdisciplinary approach. The juxtaposition of personal and collective narratives about the war is also essential to the construction of this approach. For the writing of this paper, local and international scientific publications related to the documentation of the war events and other historical, demographic and psychological sources and reports on the post-conflict collective confrontation with the consequences of the war will be consulted.

Keywords: *Collective memory, documenting, crimes, nationalism, peace, justice*

THEMATIC SESSION 12: ENVIRONMENT, ECONOMY, TOURISM & DEVELOPMENT

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 03/12

Method in Economics

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It has been observed that different methods supported by various schools and opinions are applied in economics. The focal point of the theories put forward in these methods centers around whether economics can be evaluated independent of human factor and social facts and whether it can be studied by abstracting it from economic sociology. From this point of view, the discussions aroused in the discipline of social sciences. This discussion can be studied in two aspects: 1. General Method, 2. Particular Method. It can be drawn the following conclusion from this discussion: It is possible to talk about the presence of particular method in all branches of science as well as economics. However, "it is wrong to study particular method without studying general methods." On the other hand, these differences in methods in economics result in different applications in the field of economy policies. While the economists who argue that laissez-faire is valid in the natural order supported free market economy, the economists who reject laws of economics with general characteristics but who argue that economic order exhibit differences in time and place, support the state intervention. Despite the common view put forward by economists arguing that economics is a branch of science, they have different opinions on what kind of a science it is.

Keywords: *methods, economics, sociology, science*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 90/12

Tourism and welfare: evaluating social impacts and policy implications

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This systematic review focuses on the complex relationship between tourism and social welfare, highlighting how tourism activities impact host communities socially, economically, and culturally. The review synthesizes evidence from qualitative and quantitative studies to evaluate both the positive and negative social impacts of tourism and the policy implications arising from these effects. The research questions are: what are the key social implications of tourism on host communities? How does tourism contribute to or exacerbate social inequalities within communities? What policy frameworks exist to enhance the benefits of tourism while minimizing its negative social impacts? how can community engagement be integrated into tourism planning and policy-making to promote social welfare? What are the long-term implications of tourism on social cohesion and cultural identity within host communities? findings indicate that while tourism can contribute to economic development and community empowerment, it can also intensify social inequalities, disrupt cultural identities, and lead to environmental degradation. The review emphasizes the necessity for holistic policy frameworks that not only promote sustainable tourism practices but also ensure equitable distribution of benefits among community members. Through an examination of existing literature, this review addresses critical research questions aimed at guiding future studies and informing policymakers. Ultimately, this work seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how tourism can be influenced as a tool for social welfare enhancement while mitigating its potential harms.

Keywords: *social welfare, host communities, social impacts, economic development, social inequalities*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 91/12

The Impact of Events on Tourism Promotion of Destinations

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Events play a significant role in promoting tourism, transforming into powerful tools for attracting visitors and building a unique image for tourist destinations. In an era when tourists are increasingly seeking authentic and unique experiences, the organization of

various events, such as music, art, sports, and culinary festivals, has helped create a diverse and attractive tourism offering. This paper aims to determine the impact of these events on raising awareness in the markets about the destinations where they are held and on the tourism development of these destinations. Through the analysis of successful events, the paper highlights that these activities not only provide rich experiences for visitors but also help promote local culture, history, and traditions. Furthermore, events contribute to creating a strong image for tourist destinations, differentiating them in the global competitive market. The role of events in extending the tourist season is also significant, encouraging visits outside traditional periods and boosting the economic activity of host communities. The methodology used for this paper is based on literature research, focusing on events that impact tourism in various countries and how destinations leverage them to improve their image and revenues from tourism. Through effective management and proper promotion, events can become key points of a destination's identity, attracting both domestic and international tourists. The results suggest that to achieve a sustainable impact, a strategic approach is necessary, one that centers on the visitor experience and promotes cultural diversity. In this way, events can contribute to the long-term development of tourism and the well-being of local communities.

Keywords: *Tourism, destination, events, promotion, image*

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Characteristics of the Waters Collected in the Reservoir of the Tirana Zoo

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The primary objective of this study was to analyze the water collected in the basin within the Tirana Zoo, originating from zoo activities, the surrounding residential area, rainfall, and other sources. The study was conducted during 2024, with water samples taken dynamically throughout the year to determine the key indicators of waters such as COD (Chemical Oxygen Demand), BOD5 (Biochemical Oxygen Demand after 5 days), Ph, Total Phosphorus (Pt), Suspended Solids and Settleable Solids. The sample analysis was carried out in a laboratory following the methodologies outlined by EPA 2011. The study results were consistent with other research on urban wastewater. The findings indicated the following values: COD = 540 mg/l, BOD5 = 280 mg/l, phosphorus = 9.7 mg/l, suspended solids = 198 mg/l, and settleable solids = 7.9 mg/l. The high phosphorus content requires continuous monitoring due to its significant role, as it could lead to water bodies becoming hyper-atrophic, causing severe damage to aquatic life. Based on these results, and considering the BOD5/COD ratio < 0.3 , it is concluded that these waters are not suitable for treatment using simple biological methods. This characteristic is typical of urban wastewater and requires advanced physico-chemical treatment to meet the standards for discharge into surface waters.

Keywords: *Wastewater, pollutants, pollution parameters, zoo*

THEMATIC SESSION 13:
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY,
DIGITALIZATION & INNOVATION

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 12/13

**The role of innovative leadership
in high-tech education**

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Innovative leadership in the education of students with high technology (High Tech) presents a new and transformative approach to the way educational institutions prepare students for the challenges of the XXI century. This type of leadership involves creating an environment conducive to innovation, where teachers and students are equipped with the most advanced technological tools and resources. The paper aims to reflect on the professional development practices of teachers in schools, through the use of smart devices, artificial intelligence, and digital platforms. The findings showed that teachers were skeptical about creating innovative transformational leadership in the school; in some places it was even judged to be useless in bringing about the desired change in teachers' classroom practice and in student learning. The research objectives carried out the literature selection carefully to gain an in-depth insight. Data analysis in this study includes synthesis and interpretation of relevant literature. The researchers identified key themes, key concepts, and important findings from the literature. The analysis process involved compiling data, grouping information and interpreting the meaning of the literature accessed. This approach allowed researchers to holistically understand how innovative leadership affects the transformation of educational

management. The suggestions tended to clarify the role of innovative leadership, making it more interactive, personalized and suitable for the individual needs of each student; we suggested continuous commitment to professional development and continuous improvement of teachers and education leaders, in the direction of creating innovative leadership; the adaptation of new pedagogical and management methodologies in accordance with technological developments and the demands of the labor market.

Keywords: *leadership, education, perspective, curriculum, innovation*

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**Skills acquisition and entrepreneurship:
a possible solution
to the problem of poverty in Nigeria**

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Studies from different scholars and backgrounds points to the fact that eighty percent of Nigerians are living in abject poverty. The economic situation in the country at the moment has become so unfriendly and unbearable to average citizens and especially the less privileged that are not skilled. Little or no tangible efforts are being made to empower the people to cater for themselves and their families since taking care of far relatives has simply become a taboo. The reason level of hardship remains is that people above eighty percent have resorted to poverty because they cannot help themselves due solely to non – possession of skills that could have put food on their tables. The above stated fact forms the purpose of this study. The internet, textbooks, newspapers and journals furnished us with the data for this study. The functionalist theory was adopted for the study; thereafter conclusion and recommendations were made.

Keywords: *skills, acquisition, entrepreneurship, problem, poverty, Nigeria*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 54/13

**Digitization:
an accelerator of technological progress
and a provocateur of social inequalities**

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The digital economy is dynamically impacting and changing all sectors: labor market, healthcare, finance, and information and communication technologies. In this context, people, the education system and the labor market need to adapt quickly to changing conditions to avoid major social and economic disruptions and to ensure the integration and improvement of digital literacy in a rapidly changing labor market. This is why the process of tackling digital inequalities is multifaceted and requires the design and implementation of policies and strategies at local, national and European levels. Spanning different aspects of society and the economy, efforts are aimed at harnessing the potential of digital technologies to drive innovation, economic growth, and social development. This is why, in the context of accelerated digitalization, it is crucial to rethink several issues related to digital inclusion; “social sustainability and societal cohesion”, job opportunities, and accessibility to modern technologies. The digital divide, leading to social inequalities, digital exclusion and inequalities in employment and mobility, is proving to be a significant problem for digital adaptation and digital transition. Digital inequalities and labour market divisions, although a socially significant issue, still remain on the periphery of public attention. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to examine the impact of digitalization on the new “skills” in the labour market and in the education system, to analyze the challenges faced by all actors in this process, in order to thus outline priorities to alleviate the inevitable changes of the digital transformation process.

Keywords: *digitalisation, social inequalities, technology, strategies*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 62/13

The objective of this research is to examine identified contract deficiencies in the planning process

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The research is focused on several important aspects for a successful planning process, namely whether the plan of the Building Entities is based on the right information, whether the physical conditions are properly examined and whether the main steps in the planning process are done properly. As a result, the Construction Entities' projects ran into cost overruns and took longer to complete than expected or needed. For the realization of this research, specifically, we have examined the documents related to the contracts of the Construction Subjects; we have interviewed notaries, as drafters of these contracts, in order to judge the contracts for the Construction Subjects. We have reviewed all the documents related to the process until the award of the contract.

Keywords: *contract planning, cooperation of the parties, professional capacity, planning process*

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Teaching, education and artificial intelligence (IA) in education

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Today, artificial intelligence has a decisive role in many areas of society, including education. This thesis examines Artificial Intelligence, in its history, in current education systems and finally in social investigations of the most important parts of modern society. The purpose of the thesis is to advance sociologically, the historical path of artificial intelligence on its role in education, on the use of its modern applications and new technologies in education. How much does artificial intelligence help students in the learning process today? The dilemma of the time is how the future of education will be, where will education go and in what direction we should orient the youth so that they can respond to the demands of the time and the labor market. Education is a phenomenon that has been constantly talked about and efforts have been made to find a way to achieve it, which would have prepared the youth to realize different professional and life profiles in the future. How much and how education accomplishes this task

is always debatable and we always try to reach the level of education that will respond to European requirements, of modern times and at the same time adapt to the time in which the students live and the time in which they will they need to work and develop society. In conclusion, the thesis summarizes the good and bad in modern sections in relation to society and man, the replacement that is being done to man with robotic artificial intelligence as well as the fusion of artificial intelligence with the human race.

Keywords: *Teaching, education, artificial intelligence (IA), human race*

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**Virtual simulations
in social work education:
enhancing learning through technology**

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The integration of virtual simulations into social work education has emerged as a transformative approach to enhance student learning outcomes and practical skills. This systematic review examines the effectiveness of virtual simulations in enhancing social work education, focusing on their role in improving student learning outcomes, practical skills, and critical thinking. As educational institutions increasingly adopt technology, virtual simulations have gained attention for providing immersive, real-life scenarios where students can apply theoretical knowledge in a safe, controlled environment. This review synthesizes findings from multiple studies, exploring how virtual simulations contribute to the development of core competencies, such as client interaction, decision-making, and cultural sensitivity. The review also highlights the potential for virtual simulations to bridge the gap between theory and practice, offering a dynamic space for students to practice, receive feedback, and refine their skills without compromising client safety. Furthermore, the studies included in this review address how virtual simulations enhance student preparedness for professional practice and improve reflective learning processes. The findings suggest that virtual simulations, as a complement to traditional social work education methods, provide significant pedagogical value and are an effective tool for fostering student engagement and competence in increasingly complex social work environments. This review provides educators and curriculum developers with insights into the integration of virtual simulations, emphasizing the need for future research to explore long-term impacts on professional practice and to further refine simulation-based learning models in social work education.

Keywords: *virtual simulations, social work education, simulation-based learning, experiential learning, competency development*

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The Impact of Technology on Albanian Upper Secondary Education

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In recent years, technology as in every other country has greatly transformed the educational system in Albania. The usage and combination of digital tools, virtual tutoring, advanced visualizations methods like 3D modelling, or e-learning resources has dramatically impacted the learning experience, making it more accessible for everyone, more flexible, more interesting and personalized according to different students' capabilities and skills. Furthermore, technology has eased the process of teaching in remote areas, reducing the educational gap between rural and urban regions and has helped to create a tangible approach of complex concepts. However, there are still many challenges which need to be faced like inadequate teacher training, the need for sustainable infrastructure, costs and various technical problems. This paper explores the transformative effects of technology on Albanian upper secondary education, with all its benefits and improvements that it has brought to the system, and also the challenges and difficulties that need to be addressed to maximize its potential. Even though technology has dramatically helped to enhance educational quality and has created better opportunities for the students, still many improvements in policies, investments, infrastructure, curriculum and training are necessary to ensure access for everyone and successful implementation across the country.

Keywords: *upper education, technology, education system, improvements*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 126/13

The role of technology in developing basic skills for 5th grade students

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This study examines the role of technology in developing basic skills for 5th-grade students in three primary schools in the city of Gjilan. In the era of digitalization, it is essential to understand how technology aids in improving critical and digital skills that

are vital for success in the 21st century. The main research questions include: What are the effects of technology use on students' skills, and what challenges are encountered during this process? The theoretical framework is based on digital teaching theories and skills development, emphasizing the importance of student engagement through technology. The methodology involves a qualitative approach, with in-depth interviews and classroom observations, including a total of 100 participants, consisting of 80 students and 20 teachers. The results indicate that the use of technology enhances academic performance, increases engagement, and fosters the development of skills such as critical thinking and problem-solving. However, the main challenges include a lack of adequate resources and the need for teacher training, which often limits the effectiveness of technology in education. This study suggests that investments in technological infrastructure and teacher training are necessary to maximize the benefits of technology in the learning process. The findings have significant implications for policymakers and educational leaders who wish to advance educational systems through technology.

Keywords: *Technology, digital skills, primary education, student engagement, digital teaching*

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Teachers' perceptions of the role of ICT integration in teaching and learning during the learning process

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Information and communication technology helps teachers in global demands to replace traditional teaching methods with new and up-to-date methods. In our country, ICT is considered one of the main elements in the transformation of the country towards future development. In KKK, education in Kosovo offers students conditions for maximum development of their potential and the use of technology effectively during their learning. In this context, this document points out the importance of teaching and learning based on one of the goals of education, the development of entrepreneurship, and the use of technology for sustainable development. This research aims to identify and describe the attitudes of primary level 1-V teachers regarding the interdisciplinary integration of technology during their work in the learning process. The research method used for this research is quantitative. Questionnaires for lower-cycle primary education teachers of both sexes are used as research instruments. The sample for teachers during the survey was random and included all regions of Kosovo from public primary schools, that is rural and urban ones. The survey is for 300 teachers.

The data of this quantitative research is analyzed using SPSS software. The results of this research show that the integration of ICT with other subjects is an added value for teachers during teaching and offers a new approach in this process, where the student develops his competencies; The well-equipped preparation of teachers with ICT tools and equipment is one of the key factors for the success of technology-based teaching and learning, and that professional development training programs for teachers play a key role in improving qualitative learning of students. Recommendation: To address teachers' perceptions of ICT integration, it is essential to implement a targeted professional development program tailored to their specific needs and comfort levels with technology, using ICT appropriately.

Keywords: *ICT integration with other subjects, teaching and learning, technology effectiveness, education*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 154/13

E-banking - factors affecting its success in Kosovo

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The E-banking service is one of the most important current developments in the functioning of the banking system in Kosovo. Being a relatively new service and as a service that is offered to a customer with experience, knowledge and performance characteristic of the populations of developing countries, success in the implementation of this service in Kosovo can only be achieved if the responsible institutions design policies and implement programs that promote and realize a functional cooperation between banks and their potential customers. Success in the e-banking service is in any case the result of the action and cooperation of encouraging, supporting and inhibiting factors. The identification of these factors and the assessment of the extent and manner of their action in the conditions and economic, social, cultural, behavioral and psychological approach of the population and businesses in Kosovo are necessary as a process that must precede and accompany the implementation of to this service.

Keywords: *E-banking, factors, Kosovo*

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A Repeated Cross-Sectional Study of Children's Subjective Well-Being Before and During COVID-19

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The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly disrupted children's lives, affecting their sense of safety, support, and participation in everyday activities. This study employs a repeated cross-sectional design to analyze data from two cohorts of 10-year-old children in Tirana, collected through the Children's World Survey in 2018 and 2021. By comparing the subjective well-being of children before and during the pandemic, we explore changes in their perceptions of key aspects of their home and school environments. Preliminary findings reveal that during the pandemic, children felt less safe, experienced reduced support, and had fewer opportunities to participate in family and school life. However, their perceptions of being cared for, particularly at home, remained largely stable. The repeated cross-sectional approach enables us to capture the broader impact of the pandemic on children's well-being by analyzing two distinct but comparable cohorts of 10-year-olds. These results shed light on the critical role that supportive relationships and active participation play in maintaining children's well-being during times of crisis. They also underscore the importance of ensuring robust social support systems and policies that can protect and enhance children's well-being during periods of adversity, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key Words: *Children's subjective well-being, COVID-19 pandemic, Repeated cross-sectional study, Adversity and resilience.*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 162/04

The free man in a functioning democratic society

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Freedom is of course the basic value, which all political actors proclaim and defend a lot. "The natural freedom of man consists in the fact that he is free from every major power on earth, which he is not subject to the will or legislative power of a man, but that he upholds only the law of nature as the fundamental law of right. The freedom of man in society lies in the fact that he should not be under any other legislative power than that which has been applied with understanding for the general good, not to be under the rule of a will or the limitation of a law, but only that which has been established by the legislature on the basis of faith in it". In society - this is the essence of his argument - the freedom of the person's disposition turns into ownership of the person himself; the freedom of thought and feeling must be guaranteed by society through participation in decision-making and political power, and the freedom to own secured things it needs a free market, accessible to everyone. So natural freedoms cannot

simply remain preserved in society, on the contrary, they must be ensured through social rules. “Freedom, equality and solidarity”. From a philosophical perspective, we can talk about an equal society when these three basic values are realized. While today’s everyday language speaks of freedom, justice and solidarity, notions that have already taken their place in language use. And yet it is worth taking a look at the philosophical discussion. Unlike the notion of “freedom”, which can be acquired by any individual, woman or man, in the case of “equality” and “justice” we are dealing with relative notions: they put man and his individual freedom in relation to other members of society. Justice: The theme of justice is the individual’s position in his community, in society, in relation to others, i.e., to those he deals with in daily life. People need to determine their position in relation to others, i.e., to those they have contact with, to learn how they are perceived, how they are valued. When the individual’s sense of self-worth is the same as what others do to him, then he feels treated fairly. Such judgment finds its expression in the distribution, opposition or removal of material and ideological goods.” (Heinrichs 2002: p. 207). The notions of “equality” and “justice” allow us to formulate them in a defining way, as long as the different scientific theories do not contradict each other. It is of course interesting, as argued in theory, that an “unequal distribution” can be judged fair. Representative democracy is based on the principle that only a body of elected representatives can truly evoke the national will. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the theorist of popular sovereignty in the “Social Contract” (1762), becomes the apostle of direct democracy where each of the individuals who make up the people is the owner of a piece of power, which he places under the common will. This will be manifested by universal suffrage, direct democracy and majority rule.

Keywords: *Freedom, equality, justice, democracy*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 164/12

Comparative analysis of the characteristics of underground water resources of northern and central areas of Albania, 2018 – 2022

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The analysis of the characteristics of some underground water resources of the northern and central area of Albania, during 2018 - 2022 includes different aspects of water resources,

their reserves, quality and their management. Albania is a rich country in underground water reserves due to its geographical position and geomorphological structure. However, in some areas there have been changes in the amount of groundwater as a result of pollution and excessive use. Intensive use of water for agricultural and industrial purposes has affected the reduction of groundwater levels. Lack of a good management system and control of pollution imposed many aquifers at risk, affecting the quality of water for consumption. Given the importance of the use of groundwater in everyday life, our study aimed to analyze the performance of groundwater resource pollution by analyzing the performance of the quality of these waters based on the degree of pollution and analyzing the factors that have affected their quality. The data are taken from the environmental reports of the Ministry of Environment and other studies conducted during these years. The indicators analyzed during these years are pH, water hardness, and general mineralization, NH₄⁺, NO₃⁻, NO₂⁻ and PO₄³⁻. Groundwater resulted in good physico-chemical properties, are waters with poor alkalinity and nitrogen content within limits allowed. Albania has taken several steps to improve water resources management such as the development of water management strategies and efforts to integrate European Standards. Climate change has affected underground water resources. Rainfall cuts and changes in rainfall patterns have affected aquifer levels and caused resource reduction in some areas. Although improvements have been made in the management and protection of underground water resources in recent years, continuous monitoring of pollution problems, sustainable management and climate impacts are indispensable.

Keywords: *Groundwater, groundwater quality, management of water reserves, climate impact*

N° 2024 Pristine Int. Conf. 165/08

The role of overeducation on personal well-being in European societies

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Overeducation, or the status of having more education than one's occupation typically requires, has increased in recent decades in light of educational expansion in Europe, especially the expansion of opportunities for tertiary education across Europe. While a highly educated society brings many public benefits, it can also have heterogeneous personal effects when available jobs don't match with educational credentials. It is possible for educational credentials to generally match occupational requirements (defined by the "modal" educational level for an occupation), or to be in excess of them (overeducation), or to be deficient in them (undereducation). In this presentation, my research question is how overeducation impacts subjective well-being (happiness) in European societies using European social survey data. The theoretical framework on overeducation suggests that when people invest in their education but attain jobs below their skill level (a professor working at McDonalds, in an extreme example), it leads to resentment and expressions of low life satisfaction (low well-being). Methodologically, this can be determined by

pooling together ESS surveys (to increase sample size), coding respondents for their degree of overeducation, and then conducting a OLS regression on the subjective well-being variable, controlling for a standard set of predictors of well-being (age, gender, health and relationship status). Interaction effects between overeducation and gender are also conducted. The results confirm the initial hypothesis, showing that overeducation is in fact a major (negative) predictor of well-being, and requires further research for exploration. The presentation also shows a unique way to measure overeducation (and undereducation) and how the variable can be applied to other life outcomes.

Keywords: *Overeducation, credential inflation, occupations, well-being*

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Leadership challenges in rural schools

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Leadership is the form and methodology of the functioning of schools that aim at their change and democratic transformation. Decentralization, stakeholder involvement, and engagement of all staff, employees, students, and the community is a priority for school operations today. This paper brings the experience of the operation of a rural school in the form of a case study. The work is based on qualitative methods based on the review of the literature of the field, the consultation of the official documentation on the management of the school as well as the interviews of teachers, students, leaders and parents. The paper also brings a picture of the level of implementation of leadership in defining the school's vision and mission, decision-making as well as in the useful activities of the school. Analytically, through meta-analysis, the paper highlights a number of factors and barriers encountered by school management on the bases and principles of school leadership. The most challenging problem in rural schools is dealing with the traditional mentality. Authoritarian directors also seem to be desired by interest group opinion. Teachers, students and parents often create conflicts and get involved in unpleasant situations precisely because of the different perceptions they have about the effective school model, taking responsibilities and solving problems that concern the school. The study also proves that the determination of the vision and the structuring of the medium-term and annual school plans do not come as a result of discussions and constructivist studies, they are taken a priori. This approach creates disconnection and inconsistency in running the school according to an effective strategy. The paper gives some recommendations for leaders, teachers and school students.

Keywords: *Leadership, rural school, director, teacher, vision, community*

FULL PAPERS

METHOD IN ECONOMICS

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ABSTRACT

It has been observed that different methods supported by various schools and opinions are applied in economics. The focal point of the theories put forward in these methods centers around whether economics can be evaluated independent of human factor and social facts and whether it can be studied by abstracting it from economic sociology. From this point of view, the discussions aroused in the discipline of social sciences. This discussion can be studied in two aspects: 1. General Method, 2. Particular Method. It can be drawn the following conclusion from this discussion: It is possible to talk about the presence of particular method in all branches of science as well as economics. However, “it is wrong to study particular method without studying general methods.” On the other hand, these differences in methods in economics result in different applications in the field of economy policies. While the economists who argue that laissez-faire is valid in the natural order supported free market economy, the economists who reject laws of economics with general characteristics but who argue that economic order exhibit differences in time and place, support the state intervention. Despite the common view put forward by economists arguing that economics is a branch of science, they have different opinions on what kind of a science it is.

Keywords: *methods, economics, sociology, science.*

Introduction

Marshall, who argues that economics can employ all methods, maintains that economics should study Man with reference to his experiences in the real world and with his behaviour. Marshall contends that economics is concerned with the motive material interest, which is the most important motive that affects business life. According to him, the fact that the aim of Man who is occupied with material interest is expressed through money makes economics a branch of science that can find more absolute solutions than social sciences do.

Contrary to this method which Marshall tries to install in economics, economics followed two different paths. Some economists' attempt to develop models that are more abstract, that is, models which are more isolated from human economics by deviating from real economic behaviour. On the other hand, some other economists put forward certain ideas which stipulate that the principle of individual behaviour should change its form and should become a law that it can explain all social behaviour.

Based on this argumentation, there are various views on method in economics just like in social sciences. These differences can be studied in two groups, namely positive economics and normative economics. The differences between these two groups rather originate from whether to isolate theories of economics from subjects such as social, psychological subjects and value judgements.

Literature Review

Positive economics

Positive economics study facts by introducing certain criteria. They distinguish between economics and other social sciences by ignoring non-economic factors. In other words, positive economists believe that there are no differences between economics and positive sciences in terms of method. In economics, they consider Man as homo economicus and behaviour of Man as economic human behaviour, which means that they exclude political, historical, social, and cultural variables from economics. In short, they introduce mono economics, which exhibits universal characteristics. This aims at facilitating the meaning.

Based on these, the acceptance or refusal of hypotheses and theories in economics only depend on economic variables. When the proposition of rational homo economicus fails, non-economic factors are blamed for such failure. According to them, economic human behaviour can be predicted and is rational. That means man is rational. Homo economicus does not spend money in vain and reserves his savings. He makes investments immediately with the capital he has accumulated. Since positive economists believe that value judgements can be tested, they aim at putting forward the method applied by making positive propositions. They aim to make economics absolute by expressing it in numbers and they support deduction.

On the other hand, to work with a limited number of assumptions to test the results of decisions taken, to concrete to propose models, to introduce certainty in calculation and to measure like a physicist have become an indispensable style of working for economists in order to meet expectations: In Kolm's words "economics, despite everything, has made a great progress thanks to mathematics." According to them, economics obtained the status of being scientific by abstracting and isolating some of the variables it takes as basis from

analysis. The fact that assumptions, in a sense, are so poor, made economics obtain more concrete results as compared to other social sciences.

The thesis that argues that assumptions do not reflect the truth even they exclude some of truth from the model, and the perfection or rather elegance of inner harmony in the model came to the foreground rather than the quality of assumptions, is true. However, historians are expected to reveal the truth, but they are not expected to form a final development recipe for a certain society. That is, economics is expected to be prescriptive as well as descriptive economic methods to guide and propose policies. Assumptions are expected to reduce the problem only to the mathematical level. Here only inner consistency is satisfactory. This is obtained through the sophisticated mathematical techniques employed.

With contributions of Walras in particular, economics has been affected by natural sciences and has made a significant progress by resorting to mathematics. Even the expectations about intervention or guidance are met through mathematical models proposed, and obtained the certainty in tests through the fact that quantitative results are testable. It is reduced to the question how can the intentions of individuals isolated from society about production and consumption be co-ordinated through the price system autonomously.

But, in this case, by distancing itself from social sciences, economics has gained more similarities with natural sciences. Even the absence of a historical perspective in education led to the solidification of sovereignty of neo-classical theory. After Walras and the general balance theory, economics will result in the inclusion of facts that are covered within only one model, and the definite exclusion of unprovable facts from analysis. Whereas, rationality, without a historical perspective is a meaningless concept. As Arrow states, it is possible to base the whole analysis on irrationality as well as rationality.

As Friedman points out in his article "Methodology of Positive Economics", which was published in 1953, the concept of economic rationality led to significant results. Friedman is not concerned with how people behave. That is, he does not start with the fact that people behave rationally with their own knowledge. On the contrary, he argues that even though people are not rational, their behaviour seems to be rational or the conditions of a functioning market economy will enforce them to behave so, and that people should keep pace with the market mechanism in economic activities.

Obviously, Friedman, who is regarded as one of the positivist economists, excludes the ethical, philosophical, humane side of human behaviour from economics. But, all the same, as Friedman formulates the rules in great detail and develop the facts, he states that the judgements share cannot be ignored in applying the market rules. Because, he contends that formulating phenomena in the smallest characteristic detail is difficult and only through experience one can decide whether details will be incorporated into the model or not.

On the other hand, positive economists criticise Marxists for being obsessed with ideological value and institutionalist economists for being normative since they attach importance to value judgements. They argue that economics as a science do not have value judgements. In short, positivist economics can be observed and tested.

Normative Economics

Normative economics, which emerged as reaction to the methods of the nineteenth century classical doctrine, has established norms and standards. That is they lay down rules. They study what should be done. They aim at finding the best method to be applied.

Among such economists are the historical school in Germany (W. Rosher, Sombart, Weber, A. Spiethoff), some institutionalist economists in the USA, and some neo-classical economists (Menger, Misses).

While positive economists have value judgements whether correct or incorrect, objective or descriptive, normative economists have value judgements such as good-bad, subjective or prescriptive. But, despite all, some scientists such as Paterno and Walras do not distinguish between positive and normative economics. They rather distinguish between pure and applied economics. According to Pareto, pure economics covers only positive economics. He also argued that pure economics cannot solve problems in practice on its own.

Methods

Normative economics can be grouped in three different approaches:

The Historical School

According to the economists in this school, history and sociology are incorporated into economics since economic thought exhibit differences in terms of time and place. Spiethoff state that “the economic structures of society have a different theory even though they have many historical types and therefore each of them has common concepts with the theories of pure economics.” Similarly, Sombart refuses that universal laws of economics can be obtained. By arguing that puritan mentality and behaviour types emerged before economic systems and they affected economic factors, Weber states that the beginning of the capitalist process originate from the creative role of protestanism. On the other hand, Schumpeter points out that economics cannot be isolated from historical continuity and economic facts which emerge in historical dimension cannot be understood outside the historical experience.

In brief, the historical school maintains that economic and non-economic factors that determine human behaviour should be studied with reference to the historical process and the historical facts.

Institutionalist Economists

These economists aim at explaining human behaviour in economic subjects with regard to the effects of environment and social structure tendencies. They do not agree that homo-economicus mentality and economic calculations guide individual and incorporate activities. They do not support establishing systematic theories. They suggest that “traditions, behaviour and economic institutions should be analysed.” They aim at revealing the social forces underlying the economic phenomena.

According to the institutionalist school, theories do not have universal validity. For instance, the flexibility coefficient can vary from period to period as well as from country to country and from culture to culture. Institutional economics studies facts not only from economic point of view but in a sociological and antropological whole. Institutional economists base their analysis on pattern modelling. They define phenomena or behaviour according to their position in relation to the pattern. Then they argue that this pattern model characterises a whole economy. They also refuse the abstraction of a part in a system. They define system with a relative concretion. As a matter of fact,

although Veblen covers empirical observations, he contends that tendency of abstraction in economics should be observed within the changes experienced in objective reality and thus he excludes monism.

Because he does not believe that social sciences are independent of value judgements. Based on these, the institutionalist school agrees that phenomena can be observed continuously without abstraction by taking man as basis and that they can change with theory.

Besides, Veblen rejects the assumption of personal interests as individual behaviour motives and believes that the fact that the theory of economics regards man as creatures who is established a pleasure-labour relation, is unrealistic. But, neo-classical economists whom are studied under normative economists apply a different method.

Neo-classical Economists

These economists consider B. Mandeville and Hume as their predecessors. In neo-classical theory, the view that hypotheses are important is dominant rather than the correctness of assumptions. Misses, the founder of the Austrian School, which is regarded as neo-classical economics, explained rational human behaviour in his work entitled "Human Action: A Treatise on Economics". In this theory, assumptions depended on purposeful behaviour of individuals. This statement introduces the explanation of all behaviour as well as being valid for economic behaviour. This explanation sets an artificial and synthetic a priori rule, which is proved without any observations. Misses adopts the most radical views with reference to unmeasurability of economic phenomena in this school. According to Misses, it is difficult to measure economics since it is a branch of science with a dynamic structure. Because human activities do not show similarities. Economics does not emerge from products and services but from the behaviour of people. Just like basing activities on financial calculations, it is difficult to prove social phenomena with empirical methods due to these two characteristics. In other words, validity or falseness of theories cannot be ascertained only through experience.

According to Menger, another member of this school, economics is concerned with complex phenomena that originate from multiple reasons. He supports the homo-economicus approach, casting doubts about benefit maximization, unchanging pleasures, decreasing marginal benefit, and the fact that products are homogeneous and dividable. F. Van Hayek, who follows the Austrian school tradition, defends the methodical dualism.

Neo-classical economics attaches great importance to mathematical method in order to fulfill this function. It isolated itself from other branches of science and interested in nothing but rational choices. Because it is not possible to achieve abstraction required without resorting to mathematics intensely. But neo-classical economics became more introverted with this method and isolated itself from reality. As a matter of fact, if suggestions are not necessarily historical, there is only one criterion left, which is the mathematical harmony of the model. By arguing that "mathematics more than required is nothing but speculation", Keynes states that economists may have ignored the complex structure of the real world with many variables that affect each other by becoming introvert in the world of mathematical symbols.

Consequently, it cannot be argued that the neo-classical theory comprehends social reality in its entirety. We can discuss how much homo-economicus reflects human beings. In fact, assumptions are distant from reality; either they envisage a complete competition or they are based on the presence of representative agents. Whereas some economists and neo-classical economists in general either forget about or ignore the fact that if models are

tested, they fulfill one of the conditions of being scientific. Hypotheses that are employed in models may be simplified, but they should not contradict historical and social reality.

Results and Recommendations

After all the statements made above, the following criticism may be expressed for these methods applied:

- Positive economists make propositions based on various assumptions. These assumptions are put forward as propositions like “Let’s assume that products are homogeneous”, or “Let’s assume that consumers are familiar with all prices.” That is to say, positive economists adopt the method of making some abstract and normative propositions. But how can these propositions which may be valid in an abstract world be reduced to people who behave rationally in a concrete world they live in, and to social phenomena that affect them.
- The following criticisms are expressed for neo-classical economists: companies, consumers or products are not homogeneous as they argue. Products have varying qualities. However, the taste of consumers for such products are different as well as the information consumers have on new products.

In 1968, Allais argued that “Economics can analyse only one aspect of a highly complex reality.” It is not possible to achieve it without a deep historical and sociological background knowledge. The philosopher Mongin maintains that the basic postulate of the dominant economic thought considers the market as a perfect form of organization in society, arguing that “when the dominant theory had difficulties in analysing and understanding the modern society in all its aspects, it confines itself to an imaginary world created in certain assumptions and abstractions, thus this introduced a relief but isolated it from reality. In fact, human behaviour and the laws governing the economic tendencies of the society in particular cannot be determined by ignoring the historical, sociological political and cultural aspects.”

It is possible to increase the number of such assumptions. As a matter of fact, Keynes also includes the methods of economics within the historical development of the capitalist system. According to him, “economics is not a natural science but a branch of ethics.” With the contribution of Keynes, the “laissez faire” theory was dropped and economic ethics came to the foreground. The fact that Keynes was concerned with intuition, motives, expectations, uncertainties, inner observations, the style of persuasion makes economics similar to sociology in terms of methods. From this point of view, Keynes criticizes abstraction of economics from the social, psychological and political factors. But he gets closer to positivism, which is suitable for empirical research with his views on multipliers, demand for money, the function of consumption, the law of decreasing income, the fact that marginal consumption tendencies are smaller than 1.

Despite the progress made in economics, it does not enjoy a common basis on which the majority of economists agree. However, many subjects such as the position and role of mathematics in the education of economics, its relations with other social sciences and political choices are discussed. Is economics a branch of humanities like history or sociology? Or is it a science like physics which have universal laws as proposed by Walras?

It cannot be argued that economics consists of only interest conflicts, mathematical

equations and rationalism. Hirschmann revealed that the determinant qualities of non-rational elements such as passions and conflicts on human behaviour, even he suggested that norms and ethical values should be adopted in order to substitute personal interests in situations when the market is not satisfactory. Therefore, it is not possible to ignore passion, pleasure and conflicts which are at the root of human behaviour.

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A COMPREHENSIVE ANALYSIS OF STRESS FACTORS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN ALBANIA

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: University students in Albania suffer with a number of stress factors that affect their academic performance, mental health, and general well-being. This comprehensive analysis explores the primary sources of stress among university students, including academic workload, financial difficulties, social pressures, and career uncertainty. The study aims to provide a better understanding of these stress factors and offers recommendations for reducing their negative impact, with a focus on improving student support systems and mental health services within Albanian universities. **The purpose of the paper:** The purpose of this paper is to research, analysis of concrete problems and provide recommendations in cases where students encounter stress level problems in their daily lives. **Methodology:** This study employs a quantitative research approach using a standardized stress questionnaire. Data were collected through an online survey distributed to a randomly selected sample of university students across Albania, including a significant number of participants to ensure a broad representation.

Conclusions: The analysis reveals significant stressors affecting students, such as high academic demands, financial constraints, social expectations, and career-related concerns. Based on these findings, the study recommends enhancing student support systems, developing stress management programs, and improving mental health services within universities to better address these challenges and support student well-being.

Key words: *Stress level, university students, psycho-social factors, student health, etc.*

In the last decade, there has been growing attention to investigating the risk factors for stress and the consequences for well-being among the university student population (Stallman & Hurst, 2016: 130). Stress and the mental health of university students are key public health topics, as healthy students will become the healthiest workers of the future. Attending university has the potential to be a positive and rewarding experience

in students' lives. However, there is empirical evidence that being a student can also be a stressful experience (Chambel & Curral, 2005: 135). Academic stressors have been identified as high workload, attending classes, meeting deadlines, balancing university and private life, and financial issues. These stressors are associated with a greater risk of distress and reduced academic achievement (Misra & McKean, 2000: 41).

According to Hilger et al., the overwhelming majority of these measures lack a theoretical model of stress. This could represent a significant limitation, as measures based on a commonly tested stress model could better help researchers capture the connections between stress and health among university students in order to develop theory-based interventions (Dyrbye, Thomas & Shanafelt, 2006: 354).

The imbalance between effort and reward is among the most commonly tested and validated stress models. According to this model, when high efforts are matched with low rewards, the resulting imbalance can generate negative emotions and sustained stress experiences (Siegrist, 1996: 27).

Thus, according to this theoretical approach, student stress is defined as the result of an imbalance between efforts, such as high study workload, and rewards, such as recognition from supervisors

Factors Leading to Increased Stress Among Students

Environmental factors such as specialization, living situation, social support, and campus resources are also important explanatory variables for stress among university students. For example, a study by McLean et al. (McLean, Gaul and Penco, 2022: 1–21) found that students who reported lower levels of social support had higher levels of stress. Additionally, students who have supportive peers and family members are more likely to have positive attitudes towards university and lower levels of stress (Collings, Swanson, and Watkins, 2014: 927).

Mental health issues are the leading cause of disability and loss of health globally (Wittchen et al., 2011: 655–79). In particular, mental health problems and the lack of well-being among young people have become a public health concern in many countries (Slavin & Chibnall, 2016: 1194–6). In the last decade, many studies have shown how the incidence of mental health problems among university students is directly related to the increase in academic stress (Pluut, Curşeu and Ilies, 2015: 262). High levels of stress and burnout have been described among higher education students worldwide (Verger et al., 2009: 643–50).

Recently, Deasy et al. highlighted that the student population is at a higher risk of psychological distress compared to the general population. Academic stress is a significant variable that has garnered researchers' attention in the past 20 years (Deasy et al., 2014). Academic stress is conceptualized as a specific relationship between the student and the academic environment, which the student evaluates as exceeding their resources and threatening their well-being. Key sources of academic stress include attending classes, study overload, meeting deadlines, assessments, financial demands, social pressures, and the lack of balance between university and private life (Pitt et al., 2018).

Study Methodology

This study was conducted using a quantitative research method. The questionnaire is structured based on both previous international and national studies on this issue. Data was collected from the female population in the Republic of Albania, using a random questionnaire (from 507 individuals). The data collection took place over a one-year period, from June 2023 to June 2024.

Main Hypothesis:

Being tired, the accumulation of daily problems, the presence of feeling under deadline pressure, experiencing conflict situations, and feeling worried affect mental exhaustion, the sense of responsibility, being worried, the accumulation of problems, and the presence of feeling under deadline pressure.

Sub-hypotheses:

- Being tired affects the feeling of mental exhaustion.
- The accumulation of daily problems affects the sense of responsibility.
- The presence of feeling under deadline pressure affects feeling worried.
- Experiencing conflict situations affects the accumulation of problems.
- Being worried affects the presence of feeling under deadline pressure.

Data Analysis

In the study, 88.8% of the participants were female, while 11.2% were male. And 83.8 % of them are pursuing bachelor's degrees, 15.6% are pursuing master's degrees, and 0.6% are pursuing doctoral studies.

From the collected data, 58.4% of the respondents specified that they live with their family, while 41.6% indicated that they do not live with their family.

About 63 % of the participants in the study specified that they sleep less than seven hours per night, while 37 % indicated that they sleep more than seven hours per night.

About 61 % of the participants in the study specified that they do not engage in physical activities in their daily routine, while 38.9% indicated that they do engage in physical activities as part of their daily life.

The collected data revealed that 54.2% of the respondents specified that they had rested occasionally during the past four weeks, 15% stated that they had almost never rested during the past four weeks, 26.2% indicated that they had often rested during the past four weeks, and 4.5% responded that they had always rested during the past four weeks.

The data collected from the study showed that 43% of respondents specified that they had been irritated or nervous during the past four weeks, 36.5% indicated that they had often been irritated or nervous, 14% reported that they had always been irritated or nervous during the past four weeks, and 6.5% stated that they had almost never been irritated or nervous during that period.

The responses gathered from the study indicated that 44% of respondents specified that they had sometimes felt lonely or isolated during the past four weeks, 24.9% reported that they had almost never felt lonely or isolated, 19.9% indicated that they had often felt lonely or isolated, and 11.2% stated that they had always felt lonely or isolated during that period.

Based on the responses collected from the study, it was found that 47.5% of the respondents indicated that they have sometimes found themselves in conflict situations over the past four weeks. Meanwhile, 31.8% of the respondents specified that they have almost never encountered conflict situations during the same period. Additionally, 17.2% reported that they have often found themselves in conflict situations, and 3.6% indicated that they have always experienced conflict situations in the last four weeks.

The data collected from the study revealed that 39.4% of respondents specified that they had often felt tired during the past four weeks, 35.5% indicated that they had sometimes felt tired, 20.9% reported that they had always felt tired during that period, and 4.1% stated that they had almost never felt tired in the past four weeks.

In response to the question about whether they felt their problems were accumulating over the past four weeks, 45.6% of respondents indicated that they had sometimes felt this way, 28.6% specified that they had often felt their problems were accumulating, 14.4% reported that they had always felt this way during the past four weeks, and 11.4% stated that they had almost never felt their problems were accumulating in that time period.

The data from the study indicated that 51.3% of respondents specified that they had experienced concerns during the past four weeks, 25.8% indicated that they had often experienced concerns, 12.4% reported that they had almost never experienced concerns during that time, and 10.5% stated that they had always experienced concerns in the past four weeks.

The data collected from the study revealed that 40.8% of respondents specified that they had felt mentally exhausted during the past four weeks, 29.8% indicated that they had often felt mentally exhausted, 17.8% reported that they had always felt mentally exhausted during that time, and 11.6% stated that they had almost never felt mentally exhausted in the past four weeks.

The data from the study indicated that during the past four weeks, 46.4% of respondents specified that they had sometimes felt burdened with responsibility, 29.6% indicated that they had often felt burdened with responsibility, 14.6% reported that they had always felt burdened with responsibility during that time, and 9.5% stated that they had almost never felt burdened with responsibility in the past four weeks.

The data collected from the study revealed that during the past four weeks, 42.6% of respondents indicated that they had sometimes felt under deadline pressure, 26.2% specified that they had almost never felt under deadline pressure, 18.7% reported that they had often felt under deadline pressure during that time, and 12.4% stated that they had always felt under deadline pressure in the past four weeks.

Discussion and Conclusions

Below are some of the most important findings from the analysis of the collected data.

- The results of the study highlighted that a significant percentage, specifically 62.9%, of respondents indicated that they sleep less than seven hours per day.
- Another issue raised by the study concluded that around 61.1% of respondents specified that they do not engage in physical activities in their daily routine.
- Furthermore, 50.5% of respondents reported that they have often or always felt irritated or nervous during the past four weeks.
- The study found that 43% of participants indicated that they often or always felt that their problems were accumulating during the past four weeks.

- An additional important finding of the study is that 36.3% of respondents specified that they often or always experienced worries during the past four weeks.
- The results indicated that exactly 31.1% of respondents reported that they often or always felt under deadline pressure during the past four weeks.

Conclusions

- Ongoing Communication with Students: Continuous communication with students regarding the issues they encounter during their university studies is essential for understanding their needs and providing timely support.
- Training and Workshops: Implementing various training sessions and workshops focused on stress-related issues for students is crucial. For example, organizing training on time management and developing effective study plans can help reduce stress related to deadlines and academic workloads.
- Identifying Distressing Situations: It is important to identify distressing situations faced by students and ensure support from educational institutions through qualified specialists, particularly by referring students to psychology clinics at universities.
- Development of Psychological Support Programs: Universities should offer free counseling and psychological support services for students. Regular meetings with psychologists can help students cope with stress and navigate personal or academic challenges.
- Promotion of Physical Activity and Mental Health: Universities can promote physical activities and mental well-being through organized sports programs and relaxation activities. Physical activity is known for its positive effects on reducing stress and improving mood.
- Creating a Supportive Social Environment: Organizing student clubs, social activities, and networking opportunities helps students build new connections and feel more included. This can aid in reducing social isolation, which is often a source of stress.
- Flexibility in Academic Programs and Schedules: Considering the various challenges students face, such as part-time work or family commitments, universities should offer flexibility in lecture schedules and assignment deadlines to prevent unnecessary stress.
- Providing Financial Support: Financial stress is a significant contributor to student stress. Universities and the government can provide more scholarships, student loans, or employment programs to alleviate this burden.

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TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF HISTORY TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to assist history teachers in pre-university education by focusing on several teaching strategies that teachers should employ. The objective of the study is to increase students' interest in history through these strategies, thereby making the subject more engaging and relevant. The methodology of this study involves a comprehensive analysis of both foreign and local publications concerning teaching strategies, with a specific focus on literature related to history education. In addition to the literature review, the study incorporates an examination of conclusions drawn from training sessions conducted with history teachers, allowing for insights into their practices and challenges. To guide the investigation, several research questions were established, including: How can technology be integrated into history education to enhance teaching effectiveness and student engagement? What are the perceptions of history teachers regarding the effectiveness of various teaching strategies they currently employ? In what ways do professional development and training sessions impact teachers' adoption of contemporary teaching strategies in history? Results: The implementation of appropriate strategies requires creativity, dedication, and careful attention from teachers to ensure effective and inspiring lessons. To engage students and connect historical events to their daily lives, teachers should implement various strategies that, when combined, foster an environment conducive to critical and creative thinking. Conclusions: By utilizing these strategies, teachers can help students recognize the importance of history and establish a stronger connection to the subject. Teachers should be committed to participating in training focused on effective teaching methods and the integration of technology in the educational process.

Keywords: *History teacher, teaching strategies, students, professional development, technology.*

History education plays a crucial role in shaping students' understanding of the past and its significance in contemporary society. However, history teachers face significant challenges in their teaching practices. One of the primary challenges is increasing student interest in the subject, as history may seem boring or irrelevant to some. To address this issue, teachers must find effective ways to make history more engaging and applicable to students' lives.

The subject of history encompasses a wide range of events and influential figures, and teachers bear the responsibility of selecting what to emphasize and how to organize this information (Smith, 2012). This requires careful consideration to eliminate excessive and unnecessary information that could overwhelm students. Furthermore, teachers must navigate the challenge of identifying reliable and age-appropriate resources amid the vast amount of information available online (Van Sledright 2002).

Additionally, the integration of technology in history education presents both opportunities and challenges. The use of multimedia and online platforms can enhance the learning experience (Grant & Grandwell, 2010); however, this also necessitates that teachers possess the knowledge and skills to incorporate these tools into their teaching practices.

Objectives

This study aims to explore effective strategies for improving history education, focusing on increasing student engagement and enhancing learning outcomes. The specific objectives of this research include:

- Identifying teaching strategies that successfully increase students' interest in history.
- Analyzing the role of technology in facilitating more engaging history lessons.
- Evaluating teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of various teaching methods they currently employ.
- Examining how professional development and training impact the adoption of contemporary teaching strategies in history.

This introduction lays the foundation for exploring these strategies, guiding the investigation toward methodologies that can better engage students in the study of history. The following sections will examine the specific methodologies used in this study, as well as the research questions that drive the investigation.

Methodology

The methodology of this study consists of several key components:

Literature Review: An analysis of existing publications regarding teaching strategies, with a particular emphasis on literature related to history education.

Analysis of Training Sessions: A review of findings derived from training sessions conducted with history teachers to gather information about their experiences and challenges.

Research Questions: The following research questions have been formulated to guide the investigation:

- How do specific teaching methods impact student engagement and their perception of the importance of historical events in daily life?

- How can technology be integrated into history education to enhance teaching effectiveness and student engagement?

Analytical Methods: Various analytical methods were employed to interpret the data collected from both the literature review and the training sessions, aiming to draw accurate and effective conclusions regarding contemporary teaching strategies.

This structured approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of teaching strategies in history education, with the goal of improving student engagement and learning outcomes.

Results

The study has revealed that there are numerous teaching strategies that teachers can employ in history education. In this research, we focused on three specific strategies: adapting content, engaging students in the learning process, and integrating technology. While these strategies are not the only or the most important ones, they are essential for effective teaching.

Further analysis indicates that a well-trained teacher can utilize various strategies in history lessons. Training helps teachers understand the diverse needs of students, including those with disabilities, and to create suitable learning environments (Gerwin & Visone, 2006). Adapting to students' needs is a vital process in education, enabling every student to reach their maximum potential. Ongoing professional development keeps teachers updated on the latest trends in education, positively influencing student academic outcomes and contributing to the overall success of the school.

Importance of Content Adaptation

The findings of this study emphasize the critical importance of content adaptation in history teaching. Given that history encompasses complex and extensive information, teachers must implement effective strategies to simplify content and enhance student comprehension (Levstik & Barton, 2021). Key steps identified as necessary for achieving this goal include:

- **Using Concrete Examples:** Concepts should be illustrated with well-known examples or those related to students' personal experiences to facilitate deeper understanding.
- **Employing Simple Language:** It is recommended to use clear and straightforward language, avoiding complex terminology that may hinder comprehension.
- **Incorporating Visual Aids:** Utilizing graphs, maps, images, and videos helps make information more accessible and engaging, thereby aiding retention.
- **Encouraging Interaction:** Promoting group discussions, educational games, and hands-on activities engages students in the learning process, fostering a collaborative environment.
- **Organizing Information:** Structuring material logically using headings and subheadings can significantly improve understanding and navigation through content.
- **Repetition and Reinforcement:** Important concepts should be reviewed, and diverse methods should be employed to reinforce learned material, aiding long-term retention.
- **Segmenting Information:** Presenting new topics in smaller, manageable segments helps prevent cognitive overload and allows for more effective knowledge assimilation.

- Adapting to Learning Styles: Identifying and tailoring teaching methods to accommodate students' varied learning styles can enhance engagement and understanding.

Student Engagement in Learning

The research question regarding how specific teaching methods affect student engagement and their perception of the significance of historical events in daily life finds an answer in the following strategy. Engaging students in the learning process is a crucial component of educational practice (Wineburg, 2001). The past can often seem distant and intangible; therefore, teachers must create strategies to spark student interest by linking historical events to their everyday lives (McCullough, 2008). Suggested methods for achieving this engagement include:

- Personal Experiences: Encouraging students to share their thoughts on historical events and how they relate to their everyday experiences.
- Familiar Topics: Connecting historical events to themes that are relevant and contemporary for students, such as pop culture, movies, or music.
- Practical Activities: Organizing projects and activities that simulate historical events, such as dramas, role-playing, or excursions to historical sites.
- Utilizing Technology: Leveraging digital tools and applications to create interactive content, such as documentaries or educational games.
- Discussions and Debates: Stimulating discussions about the consequences of historical events and their impact on daily life, including social and political themes.
- Family Histories: Encouraging students to explore their family histories and connect them with the historical events being studied.
- Visits and Experts: Arranging visits to museums or historical sites, or inviting experts to speak on related historical topics.

By employing these methods, teachers can help students recognize the importance of history and feel a stronger connection to it.

The Role of Technology

Data suggests that while technology provides new opportunities for teaching, teachers must be prepared to use digital tools effectively and ensure that all students have access. Technology can make learning more interactive and engaging, fostering student interest in history (Schwartz, 2009). It facilitates group work and collaboration among students, regardless of distance, creating opportunities for discussions and joint projects (Gerwin, 2006).

Effective ways history teachers can utilize digital tools include:

- Integrating Digital Resources: Using videos, documentaries, and online archival materials to illustrate historical themes, helping students better understand context and events.
- Collaborative Learning Platforms: Employing platforms like Google Classroom or Edmodo to share materials, organize discussions, and keep students engaged, thereby fostering a collaborative space.

- Interactive Projects and Activities: Encouraging students to create digital projects, such as multimedia presentations or websites that explore historical themes, helping them develop new skills and apply knowledge creatively.
- Research Tools: Promoting the use of reliable online resources for research, teaching students how to distinguish accurate information from misinformation.
- Access and Inclusion: Ensuring all students have access to technology, which may include providing support with devices and offering alternative resources for those with special needs.
- Personalized Learning Environments: Using tools like online quizzes and surveys to gather information about students' interests and tailor teaching to their needs.
- Discussion and Reflection: Creating opportunities for online discussions about historical topics, encouraging students to express their thoughts and reflect on what they have learned.

By following these steps, history teachers can ensure a more engaging and effective teaching approach that fully utilizes the potential of technology. Creating reliable and suitable materials for students is indeed a challenge for history teachers.

The conclusions drawn indicate that history teachers face challenges that require creativity and flexibility to develop effective and engaging teaching methods.

Discussion

Analyzing the findings of this study highlights the critical importance of content adaptation in history education. Given the complexity and vast amount of historical information, it is essential for teachers to employ effective strategies to simplify content and enhance student comprehension (Hattie, 2021). The study underscores that history must be made relatable and accessible, as the past often appears distant and intangible to students.

It is important to note that research on teaching methods that influence student engagement shows that active involvement is crucial (. Students need to connect historical events to their own lives in order to foster a deeper interest in the subject. Strategies that encourage personal connections and the relevance of content can significantly increase student engagement and understanding.

Furthermore, the integration of technology in history education plays a vital role in this process. Digital tools can facilitate interactive and engaging learning experiences, making history more appealing to modern learners. The use of multimedia resources, online platforms, and collaborative projects not only enriches the educational experience but also enhances research skills and promotes inclusivity.

From these findings, we can conclude that it is necessary for teachers to creatively and flexibly embrace various teaching methods and Technologies (Krasniqi, 2020) . By doing so, they can create a more effective learning environment that prepares students to understand and interpret history meaningfully. This holistic approach will deepen students' knowledge of historical content while equipping them with the critical skills needed to engage with the world around them.

Conclusions

This study highlights the essential role of adapting effective and contemporary teaching strategies for history education. The findings suggest that strategies for simplifying complex historical concepts, the role of technology, and the identification of reliable and appropriate resources are crucial for enhancing student understanding and engagement. By employing diverse teaching methods, educators can create a more relatable and accessible history curriculum.

Given these aspects, we can conclude that the key points addressed in the study are highly relevant for teachers. Thus, it is evident that the suggested strategies, when combined, are effective for educators and can help students recognize the importance of history and foster a stronger connection to the subject.

Ultimately, the findings of this study indicate that adopting a flexible and creative approach to teaching history can lead to a more informed and engaged student body, preparing them to understand and navigate historical narratives in a meaningful way.

For this reason, it is crucial to recognize the necessity of professional development for history teachers. They should leverage all available opportunities to overcome challenges and issues related to the teaching and learning process.

Future Recommendations

- **Qualitative Research:** Conduct interviews and focus groups with teachers and students to gain deeper insights into their experiences with history education and the use of technology.
- **Case Studies:** Develop in-depth case studies that examine the implementation of various teaching methods in specific classrooms to assess their impact on engagement and comprehension.
- **Assessment of Technology Effectiveness:** Undertake research that analyzes how digital tools affect student engagement and performance in history education, including measuring learning outcomes.

These recommendations will contribute to deepening research and providing a more comprehensive understanding of the most effective ways to teach and learn history.

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THE WELL-BEING OF STUDENTS IN RURAL AREAS, IN TIMES OF CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

For a long time now, the well-being of students in rural areas has turned into a priority area in educational policies and practices. The main aim of this study was to analyze the factors that affect the well-being of students in rural areas in challenging times. A mixed methodology was employed, and by instruments of a checklist and interviews we gather the main data about the current situation. The rural schools of the villages Kamenica, Bulgarec, Dishnica, Dvoran, Vinçan and Zvezdë were included in the study. 30 parents of students in these rural schools also participated in the study. We came to the conclusion that the infrastructure of rural schools is generally good and the teacher/student ratio is relatively close, but there is a lack of qualified teachers of some subjects, full psycho-social services, transportation of students, and appropriate technological equipments for the development of students' technological skills.

Key words: *well-being, students, rural schools, challenges, parents.*

Nowadays, the youth demographic in rural areas continues to experience a global decline, despite significant efforts by national and international organizations to reduce this negative trend. Such efforts aim at creating the necessary conditions for quality teaching and learning, as well as opportunities that can facilitate young people's development of knowledge, skills and competencies. Well-being refers to a state in which students have the opportunity to develop their potential, learn and play creatively (Berger et al., 2022). In the context of this paper, students' well-being means that they feel safe, valued and respected while being active and meaningfully engaged in academic and social activities. Key inputs to the education system, such as curricula, teachers and educational infrastructure, help in improving the quality of education (Berger et al., 2022).

Recent studies have shown that student performance has improved in schools with better infrastructural environments. The potential benefits of improving spaces where education is provided can be huge, including energy savings, safer and healthier

environments for children, and better learning outcomes (Corcoran et al., 2018). Today's world is technologically driven and every nation has to compete with each other in terms of economic and technological developments in the global information-based economy. To match international standards of education and work (PPMI, 2017) and to prepare a nation's youth to compete in a global economy, not only teachers, but also parents must invest in and encourage not only the pursuit of academic excellence, but also the development of a healthy personality of their children.

Therefore, we can say that there are many factors that affect the well-being of students. Considering the context of rural areas, the impact of these factors is even higher. Meanwhile, since humanity is facing occasional challenges (global economic crisis, Covid-19 pandemic, ongoing natural disasters, etc.), a greater effort must be made by the main actors involved to ensure the well-being of students.

Research problem

During recent years, humanity has faced various challenges, starting from the global economic crisis of 2008, and recently the Covid-19 pandemic. These challenges have made it difficult to achieve the well-being of children and young people in particular. The impact of the challenges is more significant in rural areas, especially in the deep mountainous areas, where the distance makes access and assistance even more difficult. During the review of the literature for the preparation of this study, we noticed that Albanian studies on the well-being of students in rural areas are just a few in numbers. On the other hand, there are voluminous foreign studies on the same topic. Thus, this study is an unmet need. The main purpose of this study is to analyze the factors that affect the well-being of students in rural areas during challenging times.

Research questions

- Which are the factors that affect the well-being of students in rural areas during challenging times?
- Is quality education offered in the rural areas of the city of Korça?
- What is the role of parents in ensuring the well-being of children in rural areas and how committed are they in playing this role?

Literature review

Students' well-being

According to researchers, there are a number of adversities and stressful life experiences faced by children and young people in rural and remote areas which affect their well-being. Here we can mention:

- Natural disasters;
- Financial challenges;
- Isolation from peers;
- Bullying and difficulties in avoiding the bullying behavior;
- Family difficulties such as domestic violence and divorce;
- Constant stress and anxiety caused by uncertainty and the possibility of further disasters that are specific to rural and remote areas (Mascherini, 2019).

Quality education in rural areas

Quality rural education is important for individual growth and social cohesion, as well as regional economic productivity and innovation (Pramukti et al., 2020). Ensuring access to quality education in rural areas is essential to meet the needs of rural youth and also to attract young families to settle in these regions. The provision of education and other services in rural areas presents a number of common features, namely long distances and lack of critical mass, which negatively affect their price or quality (OECD, 2010). Low population density means that rural areas find it more difficult to benefit from economies of scale and network effects and long distances increase travel, communication and training costs (Asthana et al., 2003). As a result, many rural households face unavailable, costly or inappropriate services, especially in those sectors where government spending is marginal (OECD, 2010).

Ensuring that all schools, regardless of their geographic location, achieve high standards can not only support equity, but also improve the performance of the entire education system. As data from the OECD's Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) for 2015 show, school systems that have been successful in closing the rural-urban gap show higher academic performance and equity (OECD, 2016b). Similarly, previous studies suggest that countries that have closed the rural-urban gap in infrastructure have been more successful in economic development (OECD, 2016a).

While Internet connections and Internet use increase worldwide, in rural areas, this is hampered by the rate of availability and adoption of digital devices. In addition, in a study from Sept (2020) 33% of 13- to 14-year-olds in rural areas do not have a high level of skills in digital competences and 20% of 16- to 24-year-olds in the EU do not basic digital skills.

Rural schools

Rural schools are often perceived in a negative light. Their geographic isolation, the small size and socio-economic composition are believed to increase their chances of having inadequate infrastructure, lack of quality teachers and limited educational offerings, among other challenges (Salmela-Aro & Upadyaya, 2020). However, as stated by Skinner et al. (2009) these problems are far from universal and some of the characteristics of rural education, such as their low student-teacher ratio, the abundance of social capital and the emergence of new technologies, can provide real opportunities for rural schools.

Rural schools may face special challenges to create inclusive learning environments for students with special needs. While rural schools tend to have fewer space constraints than urban and suburban schools, they often face challenges when trying to find and retain the necessary specialized staff or receive support from outside service providers due to their location. A small number of teachers may have to work with a wide range of skills and disabilities beyond their area of expertise (Sipple & Brent, 2015). Rural schools may face particular barriers in providing opportunities for wider student development and supporting well-being. For example, the design and implementation of school-based mental health prevention and intervention strategies may be affected by limited access to school-based and community-based resources (O'Malley et al., 2018).

Rural schools cannot benefit from scale economies and community resources in the same way as urban schools, often limiting their opportunities for after-school activities. Some children may be able to attend some of these activities, such as science clubs, cultural

and sports events, in neighboring urban centers, but at a significant logistical, time and financial cost to parents and children (Salmela-Aro & Upadaya, 2020).

Adequate physical infrastructure is one of the necessary “tools” for providing education. Mascherini (2019) points out that a school building that lacks the most basic infrastructure can negatively shape the quality of education. Naldi et al. (2015) assert that there are many difficulties encountered in rural schools, which include reduced numbers of teachers, underqualified teachers and poor teacher performance. This results in poor learning standards, poor performance and poor student discipline.

Family environment

In a study by Robinson & Harris (2014) the survey explored a number of aspects of the family, including shared activities (such as reading, singing, telling stories and sharing meals) as well as risk factors (such as smoking in the family, parental stress and the health status of the child’s parents). The study concluded that these indicators provide insight into several factors that can affect a child’s health and well-being.

The bioecological model by Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) provides a framework for conceptualizing family involvement in children’s well-being. This model explains the existence of proximal microsystem contexts in which children reside and actively participate on a daily basis (e.g. school and family). Interactions between these proximal contexts contribute to children’s cognitive and social-emotional development. This model identifies the family system as the most influential and closest context for the child’s development and recognizes the importance of creating meaningful connections between school and family. In addition, parents’ socioeconomic status exerts a profound influence on students’ well-being outcomes such as physical, psychological and socio-emotional well-being (OECD, 2020).

Methodology

The methodology employed for the preparation of this study is a mixed methodology. There were two instruments employed for the realization of this study:

- A checklist completed by the schools of the rural areas included in the study.
- An interview with parents in rural areas.

The interview conducted was a semi-structured one, in order to allow parents to express their ideas and opinions without being limited by the questions presented.

6 rural schools were included in the study, concretely the schools of the villages: Zvezdë, Kamenicë, Vinçan, Dvoran (Mollaj), Dishnicë and Bulgarec. The sample was purposely selected, as the scope of the study required an analysis of schools in rural areas.

30 parents of students in the rural schools also participated in the study.

The data were collected during a two weeks period (September 9th, 2024-September 23rd, 2024), due to the impossibility of meeting the children’s parents before the beginning of the school year. The interviews were conducted in school premises, recorded and then transcribed. The data were analyzed and presented by means of graphs and tables.

Data interpretation

First of all, we obtained data on the general physical infrastructure of the schools. We put 5 scales to define the infrastructure: Very good, Good, Optimal, Needs improvement, Inadequate. 2 of the schools have very good infrastructure (Kamenica, Vinçani), 2 of the schools have good infrastructure (Dvorani, Bulgareci) and the other 2 schools have optimal infrastructure (Dishnica, Zvezda).

Secondly, we obtained data on the number of teachers and students in each of the schools. The data are presented in Table 1 below. The school of Kamenicë includes the school and kindergarden of Floq. The school of Zvezdë includes the schools and kindergardens of Burimas, Gurbardhë, and Zvezdë.

Table 1: *Number of students and teachers in rural schools*

School	Number of students	Numbers of school teachers+kindergarden teachers
Kamenicë	114	18
Vinçan	110	15
Dvoran	210	21
Bulgarec	191	19
Dishnicë	100	14
Zvezdë	138	24

The student/teacher ratio is narrower in the villages of Kamenica and Zvezdë, where there is an average of 1 teacher for every 6 students. Even in the villages of Vinçan and Dishnica, the ratio is narrow, where there is an average of 1 teacher for every 7 students. In the villages of Dvoran and Bulgarec, the report shows 1 teacher for every 10 students.

We also obtained data on the number of students with possible disabilities and the number of teachers for students with special needs for each of the rural schools. The highest number of students with possible disabilities is in Vinçani school (6 students). Only in the school of Kamenica there are no students with disabilities. In terms of teacher for children with special needs/pupil with disabilities ratio, the ratio is generally 1 teacher for 2 students. Meanwhile, in one of the schools (Dishnica school), there has not yet been appointed a teacher for students with special needs for the 2 students with disabilities, even though two weeks have already passed since the beginning of the school year.

We also obtained data on the subject teachers in each of the rural schools. In most rural schools there are teachers for each subject, but there are still exceptions. In Kamenica school, there is no teacher for the Italian language, but it is taught as a subject by English language teachers. In the Vinçan school, the subject of Music and Theater are taught by teachers outside their field of study. In the Dishnica school, ICT, Visual Art and Music Education teachers are missing.

Regarding technology at schools, we found that in 2 of the 6 rural schools surveyed,

there are no ICT laboratories. In the Dishnica school, the technological equipment is old, while in the Zvezdë school, the computers are not functional. Meanwhile, all schools have Internet connections.

Regarding the social services at the rural schools, we received data on the presence of psychologists and social workers in the schools studied. There are no psychologists in any of the rural schools studied. Meanwhile, the social worker is only absent at the Dishnica school. Also, according to the data received from the respective schools, in Kamenica and Zvezdë schools, the social worker works at subordinates' schools only once a week.

According to the data obtained from rural schools, transportation of students from home to school and vice versa is not provided in any of them.

For the realization of the study, semi-structured interviews were also conducted with parents of students from rural areas.

We first obtained data on the place of residence of the parents who participated in the study. The data is presented in Table 5 below.

Place of residence	Number of parents
Kamenicë (Floq)	4 (1 Floq, 3 Kamenicë)
Vinçan	6
Dvoran	5
Bulgarec	8
Dishnicë	3
Zvezdë (Burimas, Gurbardhë)	4 (1 Burimas, 2 Zvezdë, 1 Gurbardhë)

Data on the social status of the parents participating in the study were also obtained. Most of the parents participating in the study (23) are married. Meanwhile, there were: divorced (4), widowed (1) and single parents (2).

Regarding the number of children, most of the participating parents have 2 children each (21). The others have 1 child (5), 3 children (5) and 1 parent has 4 children.

We also obtained data on the employment status of the parents participating in the study. Most of the participating parents (18) are self-employed, mainly working in agriculture, beekeeping, etc. Some parents are unemployed (7), while others are employed full time (5).

The rest of the interview with parents of students in rural areas focused on the role of parents in the well-being of students in challenging times. First, parents were asked about the time they spend with their children and whether they engage in joint activities with their children. Many of the parents answered that they think that they do not devote enough time to their children, mainly during the peak periods of agricultural work. Unemployed parents said that they devote all their available time to their children. Despite this, there were few parents who admitted that they get involved in joint activities with their children.

Asked if their children are involved in after-school activities, most parents said that due to financial constraints, their children are unable to be involved in after-school activities. Meanwhile, some parents said that their children attend courses (for foreign languages,

technology, mathematics, sports) in the city of Korça. It is the parents the ones who transport their children to the urban center and accompany them home after the courses.

Asked if they know about cases of bullying of children in schools, few parents confirmed this phenomenon. In cases where the bullying happened in the community, the parents stated that they met and clarified with the parents of the child who bullied their child. They said that they know all the parents of the other children since the villages are relatively small and they have the opportunity to prevent these incidents.

We received data from parents on the distance from home to the school their children attend. According to the data, the furthest distance is almost 10km from a subordinate village to the village of the center school. According to the parents, transportation is not provided in any of the schools. It is the parents who have make it possible for children to be transported by public transport vehicles (vans, mini-buses). They pay a relatively low fee, but for unemployed parents this fee is considered a constant hardship.

Parents participating in the study were also asked about their children's reactions to difficult life experiences. Parents expressed that children experience such instances badly, even worse than themselves. Thus, they expressed that they try to keep them close at such moments and engage them in activities that will help them be kept occupied. On the other hand, they expressed that there are no mental health workers in their village who could help them and their children cope with difficult experiences.

Finally, parents were asked about their children's reactions when they have faced financial or social problems. Many of the parents expressed that they have not experienced such problems, and in cases where they faced minor difficulties, they did not tell the children or avoided their questions. Divorced parents said that it was difficult for their children to cope with the divorce process. In such cases, they stated that they have sent their children to relatives to avoid possible trauma to the children. Again, the parents stated that they had no help from the state social services or mental health care agencies to help them overcome these problems and difficulties.

Discussion

In order to determine whether quality education is provided in the rural areas studied, we determined some defining criteria, such as: physical infrastructure in schools, the presence of teachers for each subject, the student-teacher ratio, the presence of psychosocial services in schools, transportation, etc. According to Mascherini (2019), a school building that lacks the most basic infrastructure can negatively shape the quality of education. Meanwhile, the study conducted showed that the physical infrastructure of the schools included in the study is generally good, a factor that then positively affects the quality of education in these schools.

In the study of Naldi et al. (2015), the researchers found that there are many difficulties encountered in rural schools, which include lower numbers of teachers, underqualified teachers and poor teacher performance. These result in poor learning standards, poor performance and poor student discipline. This study concluded that for general subjects, all teachers are specialized in the subject they teach. Meanwhile, in the villages of Kamenicë, Vinçan and Dishnicë there is a shortage of teachers for subjects such as Visual Art, Music Education and ICT. These subjects are taught by teachers who do not have the appropriate qualifications. This can result in poorer academic performance of students, thus negatively affecting their well-being.

According to Skinner et al. (2009) one of the characteristics of rural education is their low student-teacher ratio, which according to researchers can open real opportunities for rural schools. In the case of the schools studied, the lowest teacher/student ratio appears in the villages of Kamenica and Zvezdë, where there is 1 teacher for every 6 students. We can say that this low ratio has had a positive impact on the performance of students and thus relatively on their well-being. This ratio helps teachers dedicate more time to individual students.

O'Malley et al. (2018) found that the design and implementation of school-based mental health prevention and intervention strategies may be affected by limited access to school-based and community-based resources. From our study, we reached the same conclusion as O'Malley et al. (2018), as it turned out that there are no psychologists in any of the schools studied. In schools where there are social workers, due to their workload, social workers work in these schools once a week. This has a negative impact on the provision of appropriate psycho-social services, subsequently negatively affecting the well-being of students in these areas. This result was also confirmed by the parents participating in the study, who expressed that their children encounter difficulties in coping with difficult life experiences, or in coping with financial and social problems, since there is no psycho-social service in schools. As for students with disabilities or special needs, we found that in most schools there is 1 teacher for students with special needs for every 2 children with special needs. Meanwhile, these teachers and the social worker are missing in the village of Dishnica.

According to Skinner et al. (2009) new technologies open up real opportunities for rural schools. This study concluded that internet connection is present in all schools. On the other hand, ICT laboratories are missing in two of the rural schools, specifically in the villages of Kamenica and Bulgarec. Meanwhile, in two other villages, even though there are ICT laboratories, the technological equipment is either old or not functional. Thus, this causes students not to benefit from new technologies, making them have little technological skills.

The study conducted concluded that parents of students in rural areas do not devote the right amount of time to their children, mainly during the peak period of agricultural work, a fact that negatively affects their well-being. Moreover, parents are not involved in joint activities with children, losing the opportunity to create close ties with the child. Regarding children's involvement in after-school activities, the study concluded that due to the lack of transportation and financial resources, many children are not involved in such activities. Moreover, no transportation service is provided for students from school to home and vice versa and this affects added costs for the family. The fact that cases of bullying in schools and the community are few and parents take timely measures to prevent such incidents is a positive aspect.

Conclusions

In this study, we analyzed various factors that affect the well-being of students, taking into account that we live in times of constant challenges. To ensure the well-being of students, it is important that they have a quality education. Some conditions must be met for education in rural areas to be of high quality, for example: schools must have the appropriate physical infrastructure; students should be offered new technologies at

school; schools must be equipped with qualified teachers for the subjects they teach; schools must offer psycho-social services; schools must provide inclusive conditions for students with disabilities or special needs; as well as transportation should be provided for students.

From the conducted study we came to the conclusion that the physical infrastructure of rural schools is relatively good. On the other hand, students are not offered the opportunity to develop technological skills, due to the lack of technological equipment or their malfunction. Schools are not equipped with qualified staff. Although there are qualified teachers for general subjects, there is a lack of teachers for subjects such as Visual Art, Music Education and ICT. Rural schools also show deficiencies in the provision of psycho-social services. We also came to the conclusion that there are no psychologists in any of the schools and social workers are absent in some schools. In schools where there are social workers, they do not show up every day. In addition, student transportation is not provided, resulting in high costs for families.

There were two factors that positively affect the well-being of students in these schools. First, there are teachers for children with special needs, thus helping to create an inclusive education where every child is given the right educational support. Additionally, the low teacher/student ratio allows teachers to spend more time with individual students, thus ensuring their well-being. Another positive result is the fact that there are no frequent cases of bullying in schools or communities in rural areas.

We also concluded that parents in rural areas do not give their children the proper attention and are not involved in joint activities with them. Moreover, there are few parents who create the opportunity for their children to attend activities after school, mainly due to economic impossibility or engagements in agricultural work. However, parents do their best to ensure that their children do not worry about family economic or social problems. Also, they help them overcome difficult life experiences.

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MEDIA TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING REQUIRES THE CONTINUOUS TRAINING OF TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

In today's education environment, media technology has shown extraordinary potential to improve student engagement and achievement. Tools such as video, animation, and interactive presentations make teaching more engaging and increase student involvement and motivation. These technologies contribute to a deeper understanding of abstract and complex concepts while encouraging student teamwork and collaboration. However, to maximize the benefits of technology, teachers need ongoing training to help them stay abreast of the latest developments and use these tools effectively in the classroom. A survey of teachers will identify their opportunities and needs to use media technology more effectively in the school. Observations will be made in classrooms where media technology is used and the reactions of students and teachers will be recorded. The study is supported by several theories such as Richard Mayer's multimedia learning theory, active learning theory, Lev Vygotsky's constructivist learning theory, David Kolb's experiential learning theory, Albert Bandura's social learning theory, John Sweller's cognitive load theory, and Deci & Ryan's self-determination theory of motivation. The use of technology in the classroom requires a well-defined strategy to achieve maximum benefit. Training teachers in the proper use of these technologies plays a critical role in the success of technology-based instruction.

Keywords: *Media technology, teaching, multimedia learning, active learning, training*

The Use of Technology in Teaching Became Necessary and Beneficial, especially during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Technology has revolutionized distance learning, enabling students to attend classes from anywhere, and facilitating education even under challenging physical or geographical conditions. We now have a world of students, teachers, and parents globally connected by the internet, allowing them to communicate across geographical and cultural barriers (Cummins & Sayers, 1995). Media technology aims to ease and support the learning process. EdTech, as it is called, is characterized by the interaction of three fields: content, technology, and pedagogy. “Good teaching with technology, therefore, cannot be achieved by simply adding a new piece of technology to existing structures. Good teaching, with technology, requires a shift in existing pedagogical and content domains,” said Koehler & Mishra (2009a). It is now evident that the use of media technology increases student engagement. Technologies such as video, animation, and interactive presentations make teaching more engaging and interesting for students, thereby increasing their level of engagement and involvement in the learning process (Bates, 2015). Media technology is valuable in teaching because it enhances understanding of complex concepts. The use of visual tools and interactive simulations helps students better grasp abstract and complex concepts, especially in subjects like natural sciences, mathematics, and technology (Koehler & Mishra, 2009b). Consequently, integrating media technology into teaching improves student outcomes. Media technologies, when used appropriately (Selwyn, 2014), provide opportunities for personalized learning and access to a wide range of educational resources, helping students achieve higher academic results. However, even the best-prepared teachers can fail if they are not adequately trained in technology use. Bauer & Kenton (2005) studied 30 “tech-savvy” teachers who used computer technology but still faced challenges because their students lacked sufficient computer time and the teachers needed extra planning time for technology-based learning. Other concerns included outdated hardware, a lack of suitable software, technical difficulties, and varying student skill levels.

Hypothesis

To fully benefit from the use of technology in teaching, teachers who use media technology should undergo continuous training to maximize its effectiveness. Effective use of media technology requires specific skills and knowledge. Continuous training helps teachers stay updated with the latest technologies and integrate them effectively into teaching. To achieve this, technology experts need to support teachers and school leaders by providing them with the necessary knowledge for using technology in teaching. Integrating media technology into teaching improves communication and connection between teachers and students. The use of communication platforms and social media tools allows for faster and more efficient communication between teachers and students, creating a more connected and supportive learning environment. Research Questions: How does the use of media technology affect students’ knowledge acquisition? What are the benefits and challenges that teachers encounter in integrating media into the teaching process?

Literature Review

There are several theories that support the use of media technology to enhance student engagement and improve learning outcomes, formulated through key pedagogical and psychological approaches.

Multimedia Learning Theory: Developed by Richard Mayer, this theory posits that people learn better when content is presented through multiple channels (e.g., text and visual images). According to this theory, using various media, such as videos and animations, enhances information retention because people have different capacities for processing visual and verbal information.

Active Learning Theory: This theory suggests that students learn more effectively when they are directly involved in the learning process and are active participants. Media technology, especially through interactive tools (like educational apps, simulations, and interactive presentations), encourages student engagement and helps them be more immersed in the material.

Constructivist Learning Theory: Developed by Lev Vygotsky, constructivism posits that learning occurs when individuals build understanding based on experiences and interactions with their environment. In the context of technology use, this theory emphasizes the importance of student interaction with teaching materials through various media. Technology increases opportunities for group work, encouraging social learning through idea sharing and discussion, aligning with Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development."

Experiential Learning Theory: With David Kolb as a leading proponent, this theory suggests that individuals learn through experience and reflection. Media technology offers opportunities for learning through simulations, visual demonstrations, and interactive activities.

Social Learning Theory: Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory argues that people learn by observing others and imitating their behaviors. Media technology, particularly through videos and animations, aids in demonstrating behavioral models and learning techniques that can improve concept acquisition.

Cognitive Load Theory: John Sweller's theory explains that learning is more effective when students' cognitive load is optimized. Using media technology can facilitate information processing by distributing the load across different visual and verbal channels, avoiding overloading any single channel.

Self-Determination Theory: Described by Deci & Ryan this theory posits that individuals have three fundamental needs for optimal motivation: autonomy, competence, and interpersonal connection. Continuous teacher training to effectively use these tools plays a crucial role in realizing the full potential of technology in the educational process (Kong, Lai & Sun, 2016).

Methodology

A combined qualitative and quantitative approach has been selected for this study. A survey was conducted with teachers from primary and secondary schools, and opinions and experiences were gathered from both teachers and students on the use of media in the classroom. Classroom observations were also carried out to directly observe how media technology influences the learning process. Additionally, various educational materials and media technology strategies used in teaching were analyzed.

To analyze the data, thematic analysis was applied to identify key themes from interviews and observations. Statistical tools were also used to analyze survey results or other collected data. These results were then compared with findings from the literature review to confirm or contradict existing findings.

Teachers’ Perspectives on the Use of Media Technology in Teaching

To validate the hypothesis and address the research questions, a survey was conducted with 100 teachers. The age distribution was as follows: 35.6% were aged 31-40, 33.9% were aged 41-50, and 28.8% were between 51-60 years old. In terms of teaching experience, 42.4% had 11-20 years of experience, 35.6% had over 20 years, 15.3% had 6-10 years, and a negligible percentage had less than 5 years. Regarding gender, 61.5% of the respondents were female, with the remainder being male. Furthermore, 64.6% were taught in urban schools, while 35.4% were from rural schools

The next question addressed how teachers evaluate the quality of teaching technology used in their schools. The percentage responses indicate how they assess technology in terms of performance, usability, and effectiveness: 15.3% rated the quality as “Excellent”: Only a minority considers the technology to be of high quality, suggesting that for a small portion of users, the available technology meets or exceeds their expectations and needs. 47.5% rated the quality as “Good”: The majority were satisfied, viewing the technology as adequate. This suggests that while technology meets essential teaching and learning needs, there is room for improvement. 23.7% rated the quality as “Acceptable”: About a quarter perceive the technology as average, implying significant limitations or issues that hinder its effective use. 13.6% rated the quality as “Poor”: This indicates that a considerable number are dissatisfied with the technology’s quality, suggesting that it is insufficient or does not function well. Overall, the responses show that most users view the technology’s quality as good or acceptable (71.2%), though a notable portion (27.3%) considers it to be far from ideal, rating it as poor or merely acceptable. These results may signal a need for improvements in some schools to enhance the quality and effectiveness of educational technology.

Table 1: Evaluation of teachers for the quality of the technology, and the frequency of using media technology during teaching (in percentage)

Evaluation of teachers for the quality of the technology		Frequency of using media technology during teaching	
Excellent	15.3	15.3	Daily
Good	47.5	13.6	Several times a week
Fair	23.7	15.3	Weekly
Poor	13.5	13.6	Monthly
=	=	33.9	Rarely
=	=	8.5	Never
Total	100.0	100.0	Total

How often do teachers use media technology in their teaching? The answers are included in table 1. About 34 % are responded “rarely”. A significant portion of respondents use media technology infrequently in their teaching. A smaller group uses media technology every day, indicating regular integration of technology into their

lessons. Some respondents use media technology every week, perhaps for planned lessons or activities, while 13.6% uses media technology multiple times during the week, indicating more frequent engagement than the weekly group. But a significant number of respondents do not use media technology at all in their teaching.

Why using media technology in teaching?

The survey results highlight that media technology is primarily used by teachers to engage students in interactive activities and to present new content. In contrast, goals like assessing students’ understanding and facilitating group collaboration are less frequently supported by technology, suggesting these areas may be underutilized in the current educational tech landscape. Despite this, technology plays a significant role in providing students with access to additional resources and content. Key findings are included in table 2. These findings suggest that while technology is well-integrated into teaching for engagement and content delivery, there is room for expanding its use in group collaboration and assessment, potentially enhancing the overall effectiveness of media technology in education.

Table 2: *The goals of using media technology in teaching, and challenges faced by teachers when using technology*

The goals of using media technology in teaching		Challenges faced by teachers when using technology	
Presenting new content	50.8	42.4	Lack of sufficient training
Engaging students in interactive activities	54.2	59.3	Technical issues
Assessing student understanding	18.6	30.5	Limited access to devices
Providing additional resources and materials	45.8	22.0	Insufficient time to integrate technology
Facilitating group work and collaboration	32.2	18.6	Lack of support from administration
Presenting new content	50.8	27.1	Student distractions

What are the challenges faced by teachers when using technology?

Albanian teachers face a range of challenges in integrating media technology into teaching. Technical issues are the most common obstacle, followed by insufficient training and limited access to devices. Other challenges include time constraints for integrating technology and limited administrative support. Additionally, managing student distractions is a concern when using technology in the classroom. The figures are included in table 2.

Technical issues: 59.3% of teachers report technical difficulties, making it the primary challenge. This may include technological interruptions, equipment mismatches, or other technical difficulties that disrupt the learning flow. Insufficient training: 42.4% feel they lack adequate training, suggesting that many teachers haven’t received sufficient

instruction to use technology effectively, which could limit their ability to integrate it smoothly into teaching. Limited access to devices: 30.5% struggle with limited device access, indicating that in many cases, teachers or students lack the necessary equipment for effective technology use, restricting media-supported learning opportunities. Student distraction: 27.3% of teachers cite student distraction as a challenge, suggesting that while technology can enrich lessons, it can also lead to increased student distraction, making it challenging to maintain focus on lesson content. Time constraints: 22% report insufficient time for technology integration, indicating that adapting and building technology-rich lessons requires additional time, which not all teachers can allocate. Lack of administrative support: 18.6% feel they lack institutional backing, showing that some teachers feel constrained by limited support or guidance on using technology in teaching. Overall, while many teachers recognize the benefits of media technology, these challenges underscore the need for better support systems, training, and resources to enhance its effective use in the classroom.

Teachers face technical issues when using media technology in their classrooms. The survey shows that a significant majority of teachers (84.7%) regularly encounter technical problems (always, often, or sometimes). Only a very small percentage reports experiencing no such issues at all. This indicates that technical problems are a common challenge in teaching when technology is used, which can negatively affect the effectiveness of lessons and create delays or disruptions. 16.9% report that they always encounter technical problems, suggesting that a considerable number of teachers face ongoing difficulties with technology in teaching. 30.5% often experience technical issues, indicating that a large percentage of teachers regularly face technological challenges, hindering their teaching. 37.3% sometimes feel technical problems, meaning that for most teachers, these issues are prevalent but not always present. 8% rarely encounter technical problems, indicating that only a very small group of teachers faces these issues very infrequently. 8.3% never experience technical problems, suggesting that it is extremely rare for a teacher to have an experience without any technological obstacles.

According to the survey, although the majority of teachers have received formal training, there is still a significant percentage of teachers who have not had access to it. This may affect how they use technology in teaching and could be a factor influencing the success and sustainability of media technology use in the classroom. 87.5% of teachers report having received formal training, indicating that the overwhelming majority have had the opportunity to undergo some form of official training for using technology in teaching. This suggests that educational institutions, in most cases, provide support for the development of teachers' technological skills. 22.5% have not received formal training, indicating that a considerable percentage of teachers still have not benefited from any structured training in this area, which could pose a barrier to the effective use of technology in the classroom.

Let's examine how teachers assess their confidence in integrating media technology into their teaching: 15.3% feel very confident, indicating that a small group of teachers is completely assured of their abilities to use technology effectively. 39% are confident, which is the largest group, showing that the majority of teachers have a high level of confidence in their abilities to use technology, although not completely. 32.2% feel neutral, suggesting that a significant portion of teachers are uncertain or do not have strong feelings—either positive or negative—about their technological skills. This implies they may need support or training to build more confidence.

Only 5% feel somewhat confident, indicating that a very small percentage of teachers have little confidence in their technological abilities. Meanwhile, 8.5% do not feel confident at all, representing a considerable group of teachers who face significant difficulties using technology and feel insecure about their ability to integrate it into their teaching.

Overall, the interpretation shows that the majority of teachers (54.3%) are confident in their ability to integrate technology into their teaching, with a substantial portion feeling very or somewhat confident. However, a large segment (32.2%) feels neutral, suggesting they may require additional support to build their confidence. The group that feels insecure or very insecure (9%) is small but needs further training and support to enhance their self-confidence in using technology.

Findings

Based on the survey results, several key points emerge as significant conclusions regarding the use of media technology in teaching by teachers.

- **Widespread Use of Technology:** The use of technology in teaching is prevalent, although teachers face considerable technical challenges. Most teachers use technology to engage students in interactive activities and to present new content, highlighting that media technology is an important tool in their teaching experience.
- **Technical Issues as a Major Barrier:** Technical problems remain a significant obstacle, with 59.3% reporting ongoing issues. This indicates that despite training and efforts to integrate technology, teachers are often hindered by technical issues that negatively impact the teaching process.
- **Presence of Training, but Not Always Adequate:** While the majority of teachers (87.5%) have received formal training, only 16.9% rate it as “Excellent,” suggesting there is room for improvement in the quality and depth of the training provided.
- **Moderate Confidence in Technology Use:** Most teachers have a moderate level of confidence in using technology. 54.3% feel confident in their ability to integrate technology, but 32.2% remain neutral, and 9% feel insecure. This indicates the need for ongoing support to enhance teachers’ confidence and technological skills.
- **Need for Additional Resources and Support:** Teachers express a strong need for workshops and seminars (64.4%) and online courses (52.5%), as well as technical support (52.5%). These demands indicate a need for a comprehensive approach that includes various training formats to support the ongoing development of technological skills.
- **Student Distraction and Insufficient Time:** Student distraction and insufficient time are also significant challenges, but they are ranked below technical issues and lack adequate training.

Ultimately, while teachers widely use technology in teaching, technical challenges and the lack of ongoing support—including improved training and problem resolution—remain major barriers to achieving full and effective integration of media technology in their education. Addressing these aspects would significantly enhance the learning experience for both students and teachers.

Discussion on the Challenges of Integrating Media Technology in Teaching

According to a survey conducted by UNDP with 800 teachers, 65% of them reported not integrating technology into the teaching and learning process. The UNDP report emphasizes the need for teacher training to develop digital skills and better understand how to utilize technology for educational purposes (Klan 2024).

Another issue highlighted by the survey conducted for this study is inequality, as raised by teachers in their responses to open-ended questions. Not all students have equal access to technological devices or reliable internet. This can exacerbate social and economic disparities, leaving some students behind compared to their peers who have better access to technology. Such inequalities are noted among students in urban centers versus those in small towns, rural areas, or remote mountain regions, as well as among marginalized groups. Warschauer (2004), along with Selwyn (2010b) and Li & Ranieri (2013), refer to this as the “digital divide.” The use of technology varies based on students’ gender, as well as their ethnic and social differences (Heemskerk, Volman, Admiraal & ten Dam 2011a). The degree of digital choice and/or digital exclusion is also influenced by government educational policies, as noted by Eynon & Helsper (2011).

Integrating technology requires teachers to be capable of using digital tools effectively, which may necessitate ongoing training and additional preparation time. Some teachers may feel overwhelmed or unprepared to successfully integrate technology in the classroom. Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2010) suggest that “teacher change is a multi-faceted endeavor impacted by teacher knowledge, teacher beliefs, as well as the culture within which teachers work.” Meanwhile, Cuban (2001) asserts that reforms to introduce technology into schools have failed because teachers are unprepared and tend to use technology mechanically and unimaginatively.

In K-12 education, several barriers hinder the use of technology, including teacher preparation, the ability to adapt curricula, social culture, and the lack of infrastructure in schools (Hew & Brush 2007). The integration of technology with traditional teaching methods often results in students using technology more at home than in the classroom, due to various challenges faced in integrating methods (Inan & Lowther 2010). The question arises: why does technology encounter difficulties in its use in schools? This perspective points to new research directions and has significant policy and practical implications for implementing innovations in schools (Zhao & Frank 2003).

Furthermore, a study by Ertmer, Ottenbreit-Leftwich, Sadik, Sendurur & Sendurur (2012) indicated that teachers’ pedagogical beliefs and their ability to use technology influenced its utilization in schools. However, teachers who prioritized students’ needs managed to overcome challenges more effectively than others.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the EdTech market experienced a dramatic increase in revenue. In India, EdTech is a thriving economic sector, generating substantial employment and contributing 8% to the national GDP. It is projected to grow to over \$10 billion by 2025 (Investindia.gov 2024). On the surface, this growth in digital education appears promising for democratizing access to quality learning experiences, transcending geographic, socio-cultural, and individual skill barriers. However, the deeply rooted reality of this promise presents a profound dichotomy. Despite the EdTech revolution gaining momentum worldwide, it, unfortunately, reflects a familiar picture where the most marginalized segments of society are systematically excluded from its benefits, fostering the ground for deepening the digital divide between the wealthy and the less fortunate.

Conclusion

The use of media technology in the teaching process appears to be an irreversible trend. However, teachers face numerous challenges. Albanian teachers expressed concerns ranging from a lack of necessary infrastructure to difficulties in utilizing technology due to inadequate ongoing training. Meanwhile, studies in various countries identify these and other issues leading to the failure of this process, such as the absence of natural integration of technology into teaching curricula, a lack of time for planning technology integration into lesson hours, as well as technical difficulties and bureaucratic hurdles from school administrators. To ensure effective technology use, although teachers can be trained, they tend to feel more confident using traditional methods for explaining lessons and assessing student preparation than using new digital tools, which evolve and change day by day.

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THE IMPACT OF MORAL LEADERSHIP ON BUILDING TEACHER TRUST, ENCOURAGING CONSTRUCTIVE CONFLICT, AND ENHANCING COMMITMENT

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ABSTRACT

Moral leadership plays a crucial role in providing a strong example for others. This study investigates the relationship between moral leadership and trust, constructive conflict, and commitment among teaching staff. The research is based on a quantitative analysis involving 393 teachers from AMU schools in the city of Durrës. The instrument used is a standardized questionnaire comprising two scales: the Moral Leadership Scale, adapted from the *“Paternalistic Leadership Scales”* by Cheng et al. (2004), and scales measuring the absence of trust, fear of conflict, and lack of commitment from “The Five Dysfunctions of Team Assessment” (Lencioni, 2007). The findings highlight a positive relationship between moral leadership and the absence of trust ($r = 0.552$), fear of conflict ($r = 0.545$), and lack of commitment ($r = 0.531$). Moral leadership is rated at moderate levels, with corresponding moderate levels of trust, productive conflicts, and commitment among teaching staff evident. It is recommended that school leaders promote a moral leadership model, that encourages open communication, and a willingness to learn from mistakes.

Keywords: Moral leadership, trust, conflict, commitment, team learning.

The ethical dimension of leadership is vital in shaping educational environments that foster integrity, accountability, and moral reasoning. This framework synthesizes diverse perspectives from the literature on ethical leadership, emphasizing key principles, challenges, and implications for educational practice and outcomes. Greenfield and Ribbins (2005) describe moral leadership as essential for navigating

conflicts and stresses, emphasizing the role of trust and transparency in enhancing engagement, because *“trust is the underlying issue in not only getting people on your side, but having them stay there”* (Bennis, 2009: 152). March and Weil (2005) support this by pointing out that mutual trust and shared goals foster commitment, while Bolman and Deal (2008) note that moral leadership helps buffer against conflicts stemming from role ambiguity and differing values.

Building upon existing literature, this study seeks to investigate the relationship between moral leadership, trust, conflict management, and organizational commitment among teachers. Specifically, this study hypothesizes that moral leadership will positively affect teachers’ commitment, trust in leadership, and constructive conflict management strategies. Through empirical inquiry, this study aims to provide valuable insights into the mechanisms through which moral leadership contributes to organizational effectiveness and employee well-being within educational contexts.

Literature review

Effective educational leadership is grounded in a commitment to moral principles that transcend subjective or culturally specific values. Campbell & Sergiovanni (1995) and Davidson & Hughes (2020) focus on the necessity of moral character and objective truths, while Levine and Boaks (2013) highlight the relationship between ethics and effective leadership, emphasizing the potential pitfalls of self-interest. Meanwhile, Louis et al. (2016) contribute a crucial perspective on the importance of care in leadership practices. Together, these authors advocate for a comprehensive understanding of ethical leadership, one that integrates morality, character, and care to create effective educational environments.

Robinson (1960) echoes this sentiment, highlighting the role of moral integrity in leadership and its necessity for establishing authority based on competence rather than arbitrary power. The emotional bonds formed through caring leadership are essential for building trust and collaboration, creating an environment conducive to student success.

Moral courage emerges as a critical component linking authentic leadership to ethical and pro-social behaviors among followers. Hannah et al. (2011) establish that leaders who embody moral perspectives foster an environment where followers are more likely to engage in ethical behaviors. This notion is reinforced by Steinbauer et al. (2013), who advocate for integrating psychological insights into organizational ethics, emphasizing the importance of accountability and active participation in ethical decision-making. The capacity for leaders to inspire moral courage in their followers is paramount for nurturing a culture of integrity. The effectiveness of leadership is influenced by contextual factors and cultural dynamics, necessitating a nuanced understanding of leadership practices. Kavanagh (1984) underscores the need for leaders to adapt their styles to meet diverse expectations, advocating for collaborative approaches that empower team members. Wong (1998) connects Western educational leadership discourse with the Chinese tradition of moral leadership, particularly through Confucian thought. By examining moral leadership across cultures, we can gain insights into how ethical principles are understood and enacted in various educational settings, enriching the global discourse on leadership.

"Leadership brings a multitude of ethical dilemmas"

Davidson & Hughes (2020), that require thoughtful navigation. McCarthy & Sarthory (1978) assert that ethical reasoning should guide leaders in making decisions that advocate for meaningful changes within educational systems. Oser (1994) emphasizes the necessity of moral considerations in teaching, noting that negative outcomes often arise from thoughtlessness rather than malice. This aligns with Robinson's (1960) assertion that authority and moral integrity are intertwined, with effective leaders needing a solid philosophical grounding to navigate ethical challenges competently. Understanding the potential pitfalls of leadership styles is essential for fostering ethical environments. Sendjaya et al. (2014) highlight how Machiavellianism can undermine authentic leadership, leading to unethical behaviors, particularly under pressure. They emphasize the need to foster low Machiavellian traits among leaders to ensure they consistently act in morally responsible ways. Similarly, Skubinn & Herzog (2014) argue that authentic ethical leadership arises from internalized values rather than merely conforming to expected norms, reinforcing the need for self-awareness and moral integrity in leaders. The synthesis of these perspectives underscores the necessity for comprehensive leadership development programs that prioritize ethical and moral considerations. Gu et al. (2013) emphasize the role of ethical leadership in enhancing creativity within organizations, suggesting practical implications for fostering ethical cultures. Additionally, Fehr et al. (2014) propose that leaders' ethical behaviors influence follower actions, advocating for a broader understanding of ethical leadership that encompasses various moral foundations. Such initiatives should aim to create leaders who prioritize the well-being of their communities and uphold moral accountability, fostering an environment where ethical behavior is normative.

Intricate interplay between moral foundations, caring leadership, contextual factors, ethical dilemmas, and leadership development in the realm of education. By integrating these dimensions, educational leaders can enhance their effectiveness and contribute to creating a culture of integrity and respect within their schools. The insights drawn from the literature provide a robust foundation for further exploration of ethical leadership practices and their impact on educational outcomes. Ultimately, ethical leadership not only benefits individual schools but also has the potential to transform educational systems and contribute to social change.

Methodology

This study employed quantitative methods to examine the relationship between the independent variable, moral leadership, and the dependent variables: absence of trust, fear of conflict, and lack of commitment. Correlational and regression analyses were conducted to test this relationship.

Participants

The study population comprised teachers from 9-year schools in the city of Durrës (N=393). The participants included teachers from 9-year schools in the Durrës district (N = 393), comprising 71.5% women and 28.5% men. Regarding age distribution, 43.8% were in the age group up to 39 years old, 28.5% in the 40-49 age group, 20.5% in the 50-59 age group, and 7.2% in the over 60 age group. Additionally, 58.7% of respondents were from central and suburban schools, while 41.3% were from rural schools.

Measuring instrument

The research instrument consisted of a standardized questionnaire incorporating two scales: the moral leadership scale, adapted from Cheng et al.’s (2004) “paternalistic leadership scales,” and the degrees of absence of trust, fear of conflict, and lack of commitment from Lencioni’s (2007) “the five dysfunctions of team assessment.” The internal consistency of the scales was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha, with values of .857 for moral leadership, .846 for absence of trust, .829 for fear of conflict, and .797 for lack of commitment, indicating a high level of reliability. Prior to distribution, the questionnaire underwent a pilot test to ensure clarity and effectiveness.

Findings and discussion

Moral leadership and Trust

Regression analysis: The bivariate correlation analysis reveals a statistically significant ($p = 0.000$) and strong positive linear relationship ($r = 0.552$) between moral leadership and trust. Approximately 30.4% of the variance in absence of trust can be attributed to the influence of moral leadership ($R = 0.304$), with an insignificant difference between the R Square and Adjusted R Square values. The Standard Error of Estimate is 4.40124. The F statistic obtained (161.072) is also statistically significant ($p = 0.000$), indicating the significance of moral leadership in predicting the trust variable in the regression model, with 1 degree of freedom in the regression analysis.

Table 1: *Model Summary: Moral leadership and Trust*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					df2	Sig. F Change			
1	.552a	.304	.303	4.40124	.304	161.072	1	368	.000
a. Predictors: (Constant), Moraleadership									
ANOVAa									
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F				Sig.
1	Regression	3120.103	1	3120.103	161.072				.000b
	Residual	7128.494	368	19.371					
	Total	10248.597	369						
a. Dependent Variable: Trust									
b. Predictors: (Constant), Moraleadership									

Coefficients ^a								
Model	B	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		Std. Error	Beta				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	13.174	1.051		12.530	.000	11.106	15.241
	Moraleadership	.770	.061	.552	12.691	.000	.651	.890

a. Dependent Variable: Trust

The regression analysis reveals a significant positive correlation between moral leadership and teachers’ trust ($R = 0.552$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that moral leaders who demonstrate ethical behavior and integrity foster greater trust among teachers. Approximately 30.4% of the variance in trust can be attributed to moral leadership ($R^2 = 0.304$), highlighting its substantial impact.

This finding aligns with the views of Campbell and Sergiovanni (1995), Bennis (2009), which assert that moral leaders embody virtues that inspire trust, and reflects Gini’s (1997) perspective that effective leadership is rooted in moral integrity. The concept of caring leadership, as discussed by Louis et al. (2016), supports this idea, suggesting that leaders who genuinely care for their teachers enhance relational trust. Yam & Dang (2014) emphasize the role of followers’ perceptions of their leaders’ ethics in building trust, reinforcing the notion that teachers’ trust is influenced by their leaders’ moral character. Furthermore, Hannah et al. (2011) argue that authenticity and transparency in leadership foster trust, indicating that moral leaders who communicate openly are more trusted. McCarthy & Sarthory (1978) highlight the importance of ethical reasoning in leadership, suggesting that leaders who navigate ethical dilemmas with integrity build trust. Lastly, Robinson (1960) underscores the significance of moral integrity in effective educational leadership, with the findings indicating that teachers are more likely to trust leaders who embody moral authority, providing direction and meaning within the school environment.

As Lencioni (2002) posits, trust is crucial for effective teamwork, enabling open dialogue and constructive conflict. In environments characterized by high moral leadership, individuals feel safe to express their thoughts and concerns, knowing that their leaders are committed to ethical practices. Moral leadership is indeed a significant predictor of teachers’ trust. This aligns with Campbell & Sergiovanni’s (1995) assertion that good leaders must be moral leaders to effectively build trust within their communities. The findings echo the claims of Gini (1997) and Hannah et al. (2011), who highlight that leaders who exhibit moral integrity and ethical behavior foster trust and positive relationships with their followers. This could enhance teachers’ trust, ultimately contributing to a more positive school climate and improved outcomes for students. The findings highlight the essential role that moral leadership plays in fostering an environment of trust. As Lencioni (2002) and Bennis (2009) posit, trust is crucial for effective teamwork, enabling open dialogue and constructive conflict. In environments characterized by high moral leadership, individuals feel safe

to express their thoughts and concerns, knowing that their leaders are committed to ethical practices.

Moral and Fear of Conflict

The regression analysis reveals a moderate positive linear relationship between morale leadership and conflict, with a correlation coefficient ($r = 0.545$) and a statistically significant ($p = 0.000$). Approximately 29.8% of the variance in conflict can be explained by morale leadership ($R^2 = 0.298$), with negligible differences between R^2 and Adjusted R^2 values. The Standard Error of Estimate is 4.72975. The F statistic of 165.588 is significant ($p = 0.000$), highlighting the importance of morale leadership in predicting conflict in the regression model, which has 1 degree of freedom for the regression analysis.

Table 2: Regression analysis: moral leadership and conflict

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.545 ^a	.298	.296	4.72975	.298	165.588	1	391	.000
a. Predictors: (Constant), Moraleadership									
ANOVA ^a									
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.			
1	Regression	3704.291	1	3704.291	165.588	.000b			
	Residual	8746.890	391	22.371					
	Total	12451.181	392						
a. Dependent Variable: Conflict									
b. Predictors: (Constant), Moraleadership									
Coefficients ^a									
Model	B	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		Std. Error	Beta					Upper Bound	
1	(Constant)	13.684	1.104		12.398	.000	11.514	15.854	
	Moraleadership	.818	.064	.545	12.868	.000	.693	.943	
a. Dependent Variable: Conflict									

The moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.545$) implies that moral leadership does not necessarily eliminate conflict; instead, it appears to coexist with it. This finding challenges the conventional notion that ethical leadership leads to a harmonious workplace. Instead, it suggests that moral leaders may face more conflict as they navigate the complexities of ethical decision-making and differing stakeholder interests. Leaders who prioritize moral principles often engage in difficult conversations and make tough decisions that may provoke conflict. For example, Greenfield et al. (2005) highlight the inherent nature of conflict in educational settings, where leaders must balance diverse stakeholder interests while adhering to ethical standards. Thus, moral leadership might catalyze conflicts as leaders advocate for transparency, accountability, and ethical practices.

Moral leadership often involves challenging the status quo, which can create tension within an organization. As McCarthy & Sarthory (1978) suggest, ethical reasoning in leadership requires confronting moral dilemmas head-on, leading to potential conflicts as leaders advocate for change. This perspective aligns with the regression analysis, which shows that 29.8% of the variance in conflict can be explained by moral leadership, highlighting its predictive value in understanding conflict dynamics.

Although moral leadership may increase conflict, it also equips leaders with the tools to manage and resolve conflicts constructively. As leaders uphold ethical standards, they are better positioned to engage in meaningful dialogues that address the root causes of conflict. This aligns with Hannah et al. (2011) assertion that moral courage in leadership fosters an environment where ethical behavior is valued and conflict can be resolved through open communication.

Leaders who exhibit moral leadership often inspire their followers to engage in ethical practices, which can lead to increased collaboration and shared values. However, this alignment of values may also surface underlying tensions as different perspectives and interests are voiced. The F statistic of 165.588, with a significance level of $p = 0.000$, underscores the crucial role that moral leadership plays in predicting these conflicts. It illustrates that moral leadership fosters an environment where conflicting views can be expressed and addressed constructively. The relationship between moral leadership and conflict can be further understood through the lens of trust. While moral leadership may provoke conflict, it can also enhance trust among stakeholders when conflicts are managed transparently and ethically. As leaders demonstrate their commitment to ethical principles, they may gain the trust of their followers, who are then more likely to engage in open discussions about conflicts and collaborate on solutions.

Moral leadership and Commitment

The regression analysis reveals a moderate positive linear relationship between morale leadership and commitment, with a correlation coefficient ($r = 0.531$) and a statistically significant ($p = 0.000$). Approximately 28.2% of the variance in commitment can be explained by morale leadership ($R^2 = 0.282$), and the Adjusted R^2 value is 0.280, indicating a slight adjustment for the number of predictors. The Standard Error of Estimate is 4.08524. The F statistic of 153.691 is significant ($p = 0.000$), emphasizing the importance of morale leadership in predicting commitment in the regression model, which has 1 degree of freedom for the regression analysis. In the coefficients table, the unstandardized coefficient for morale leadership is 0.681, suggesting that for each one-unit increase in morale leadership, commitment is expected to increase by 0.681 units. The

standardized coefficient (Beta = 0.531) indicates a moderate effect size, further reinforcing the predictive power of morale leadership on commitment. The 95% confidence interval for the morale leadership coefficient is (0.573, 0.788), indicating high confidence that the true effect lies within this range.

Table 3: Regression analysis: moral leadership and commitment

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.531 ^a	.282	.280	4.08524	.282	153.691	1	391	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Moraleadership

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	2564.976	1	2564.976	153.691	.000 ^b
Residual	6525.487	391	16.689		
Total	9090.463	392			

a. Dependent Variable: Commitment
b. Predictors: (Constant), Moraleadership

Coefficients^a

Model	B	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		Std. Error	Beta				Upper Bound	Lower Bound
1	(Constant)	11.226	.953		11.775	.000	9.352	13.101
	Moraleadership	.681	.055	.531	12.397	.000	.573	.788

a. Dependent Variable: Commitment

The correlation coefficient ($r = 0.531$) suggests a moderate positive linear relationship, meaning that as perceptions of moral leadership increase, so does teachers commitment. This correlation aligns with the theoretical underpinnings established in the literature, where moral leadership is posited to influence follower behavior through both self-focused and other-focused pathways.

The p-value of 0.000 indicates that the relationship between moral leadership and commitment is statistically significant, which reinforces the argument made by Gu et al. (2013) regarding the role of ethical leadership in fostering a positive organizational culture. The statistically significant F statistic ($F = 153.691$) further supports this conclusion, demonstrating that moral leadership is a significant predictor of employee commitment. The R^2 value of 0.282 indicates that approximately 28.2% of the variance in commitment can be explained by moral leadership. This suggests that while moral leadership is a crucial factor, other variables may also contribute to team dynamics and teachers commitment (Kavanagh, 1984; Rhode, 2006; Gu et al., 2013). The adjusted R^2 value of 0.280 accounts for the number of predictors in the model, suggesting that even after adjusting for complexity, moral leadership remains a robust predictor of commitment. This supports the conclusion by Steinbauer et al. (2014) that organizations should integrate moral considerations into leadership training and selection to enhance ethical behavior and commitment among employees.

Implications and conclusions

In summary, the regression analysis findings emphasize that moral leadership is essential for fostering trust within organizations. The significant positive correlation indicates that leaders who prioritize ethical decision-making and moral principles are more effective at creating a trusting environment among team members. Since trust is vital for teamwork and organizational success, organizations should focus on developing moral leadership capabilities. Integrating ethical considerations into leadership practices not only enhances trust but also promotes a positive organizational culture, ultimately improving performance and collaboration. As Lencioni (2002) notes, trust enables open dialogue and constructive conflict, allowing individuals to feel secure in expressing their thoughts and concerns when led by ethical leaders. Therefore, organizations that prioritize moral leadership are likely to enjoy higher levels of trust among their members.

A moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.545$, $p = 0.000$) suggests that while moral leadership does not eliminate conflict, it facilitates its constructive management. Ethical leaders often confront complex issues that may provoke disagreements. However, moral leaders equipped with strong ethical frameworks can engage in open dialogues that address conflicts constructively, thus reinforcing trust among stakeholders.

The results underscore the importance of cultivating moral leadership within organizations. Principals should focus on behaviors that foster an ethical climate, such as demonstrating compassion and promoting loyalty, as identified in Fehr et al. (2014). Given the significant positive correlation between moral leadership and employee commitment, leaders can enhance commitment by actively embodying ethical behaviors and values. With approximately 28.2% of the variance in commitment explained by moral leadership, the findings underscore the critical role of ethical leadership in fostering a committed workforce. As leaders embody moral principles and foster an ethical culture, they can enhance employee commitment, ultimately contributing to organizational success and stability. Understanding this relationship can provide valuable insights for leaders seeking to cultivate a dedicated and engaged team, particularly in educational contexts where commitment is essential for achieving shared goals.

The regression analysis presents compelling evidence of the relationship between

moral leadership and teacher commitment, resonating with the literature's emphasis on the significance of ethical leadership. The findings suggest that organizations should prioritize moral leadership development as a strategic approach to enhance commitment, thereby improving overall organizational effectiveness. As the landscape of leadership continues to evolve, integrating ethical considerations into leadership practices will be crucial for fostering a committed and engaged workforce.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research on moral leadership should focus on longitudinal studies to track how the relationships between moral leadership, trust, conflict, and commitment evolve over time, as well as the impact of contextual factors such as school type and socioeconomic status. Additionally, qualitative methods and cross-disciplinary approaches can enhance understanding by capturing in-depth experiences, exploring emotional intelligence, evaluating moral leadership development programs, and examining the effects of leadership styles and perceptions on organizational outcomes during crises.

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PRINCIPLES, REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND POTENTIAL REFORMS OF CONSUMER PROTECTION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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ABSTRACT

Consumer protection in the European Union (EU) is built on principles that uphold consumer rights, safety, fairness, and transparency throughout member states. These guiding principles enable the EU to maintain high standards of consumer trust and welfare, fostering a balanced and competitive internal market across borders. The regulatory framework enforces rigorous product safety standards, guarantees the right to transparent and accurate information, protects against unfair commercial practices, and provides strong data privacy protections, notably under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The EU also offers a standardized right of withdrawal for online and remote purchases, allowing consumers to return products within 14 days. Accessible dispute resolution options, including the European Consumer Center (ECC-Net) and the Online Dispute Resolution (ODR) platform, empower consumers and promote fair interactions within the single market. Other enforcement mechanisms are the Market Surveillance Authorities, which oversee compliance with safety and market rules, with the power to recall or remove unsafe products, and the European Commission and the National Consumer Protection Authorities (CPC Network) that collaborate to enforce consumer laws, particularly for cross-border cases, ensuring that protections are consistent throughout the EU. The European Union continuously assesses its consumer protection framework to adapt to new challenges, particularly those arising from digital transformation, sustainability goals, and complex cross-border transactions. The aim of this paper is to analyze the key principles of EU consumer protection, give a comprehensive overview of the regulatory framework of consumer protection in the European Union and propose potential areas for reform to strengthen EU consumer protection.

Keywords: *Product safety, accurate information, unfair commercial practices, data privacy protections.*

Consumer protection in the European Union (EU) is a fundamental aspect of the internal market, ensuring that consumers' rights are respected and that markets operate in a transparent, fair and accountable manner. This paper examines the fundamental principles that guide consumer protection within the EU, the regulatory framework designed to implement this protection and possible reforms to meet the evolving challenges caused by digital transformation, sustainability goals and the complexities of cross-border trade. Through continuous adaptation of policies and regulations, the EU seeks to build a strong, resilient and consumer-focused framework that aligns with the demands of a digital economy, supports sustainable practices and strengthens cooperation between member states in an increasingly interconnected global marketplace.

Principles of Consumer Protection in the European Union

The EU's approach to consumer protection is guided by several fundamental principles, each of which addresses an essential aspect of ensuring fair treatment and empowering consumers in an increasingly complex market.

The first principle is transparency. This principle is essential to ensure that consumers are fully informed about the products and services they purchase, especially in the digital marketplace where the line between advertising and content can be blurred. These principal mandates clear presentation of pricing, product features, terms and conditions, and data privacy information. Transparency is essential for consumers, as it enables individuals to make informed decisions, manage their personal data and understand the full implications of transactions.

Another principle is Fairness. The EU promotes fairness in trading practices to prevent businesses from engaging in deceptive, manipulative or exploitative practices. This includes addressing tactics such as "dark patterns" - design elements that intentionally mislead consumers into choices they might not otherwise make. Fairness is especially critical in digital transactions where algorithm-driven practices, such as individualized advertising or personalized pricing, can create inequity. Fair treatment also ensures that all consumers, regardless of technological ability, are protected from unfair practices.

By the principle of accountability, we will understand the holding of responsibility by companies for the goods and services they offer and that they adhere to the legal and ethical standards set by the EU. This principle is vital in a single market where companies can operate across multiple jurisdictions. By holding companies accountable, the EU ensures that consumer rights are uniformly respected across member states.

The sustainability principle reflects the EU's wider commitment to sustainable development. Consumer protection is achieved by aiming to promote durable, repairable and environmentally friendly products. This principle is in line with the EU Green Deal and the Circular Economy Action Plan, which aim to reduce waste, encourage recycling and minimize environmental impacts. By focusing on sustainable practices, the EU promotes responsible consumer choices that support environmental goals.

The last principle is the principle of cross-border cooperation. Given the interconnected nature of EU member states' economic policies, cross-border cooperation is essential to effectively implement consumer protection. The principle of cross-border cooperation enables member states to work together to implement EU legislation, particularly when dealing with issues in e-commerce, where transactions often take place across borders. Cooperation also allows for the rapid resolution of cross-border disputes and promotes a unified approach to consumer rights.

Regulatory Framework for Consumer Protection in the EU

The EU has created a comprehensive regulatory framework to address various consumer protection challenges. This framework consists of basic directives and regulations covering a wide range of issues, as well as specialized bodies that oversee implementation and support for consumers.

Basic directives and regulations

Consumer Rights Directive (2011) sets forth rules that ensure transparency in consumer contracts, especially in the context of online transactions. This directive is essential for e-commerce, as it sets clear guidelines on pre-contractual information, such as the right to cancel and return purchased goods.

Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (2005) prohibits misleading, aggressive and unfair trade practices, providing essential safeguards against misleading advertising and sales tactics. By preventing businesses from engaging in these practices, the directive promotes fair competition and protects consumers from exploitation.

General Data Protection Regulation (2018) sets strict privacy and data protection guidelines, ensuring that consumers have control over their personal data. The regulation addresses the collection, storage and use of data, making it particularly relevant in the digital marketplace where data has also become a key commodity in commercial exchanges. This regulation has become a global standard for data protection and highlights the EU's commitment to protecting privacy rights.

The E-Commerce Directive (2000) provides a legal framework for online services, establishing obligations for transparency, accountability and consumer protection. This directive is essential in an era where e-commerce is expanding rapidly, ensuring that online platforms and service providers operate in a transparent and accountable manner.

Specialized bodies for consumer protection

The consumer protection bodies are the European Consumer Centers Network (ECC-Net) and the Consumer Protection Cooperation Network (CPC). The European Consumer Centers Network (ECC-Net) is a network of consumer organizations that provides information and assistance to consumers on their rights within the EU. The network plays an essential role in cross-border dispute resolution, providing guidance and support to consumers dealing with issues arising from cross-border transactions.

Consumer Protection Cooperation Network (CPC) facilitates cooperation between national consumer protection authorities, enabling them to address cross-border issues and take collective action against unfair practices. This network is essential for enforcing consumer rights across the single market and ensuring that businesses comply with EU regulations, regardless of their location within the EU.

Possible reforms in consumer protection in the EU

As the EU's consumer protection legal framework continues to face new challenges from digital transformation, sustainability imperatives and complex cross-border trade, there is a growing need for reform. The following sections outline the main areas where the EU can strengthen its consumer protection laws and regulations.

Enhanced digital protection

A possible reform in consumer protection is the improvement of digital protection. Such an improvement could be achieved through greater transparency of automated decisions. As artificial intelligence (AI) increasingly impacts consumer experiences, there is a need for greater transparency in AI-driven decision-making processes. AI is widely used in personalized advertising, product recommendations, and pricing algorithms, which can significantly influence consumer choices. Reforms could require companies to disclose when AI is used and how it affects consumer interactions, while also providing mechanisms for consumers to challenge automated decisions they believe are unfair.

Improving digital protection can also be achieved by combating dark patterns. Dark patterns are manipulative design features in digital interfaces that force consumers to make unintended choices. To address this, the EU could introduce regulations specifically targeting dark patterns, requiring digital interfaces to be designed with transparency and ethics in mind, thereby empowering consumers to make choices without manipulation.

More unified application of EU law

Another possible reform in consumer protection could be a more unified application of EU law. Strengthening the coordination of enforcement efforts at EU level could improve the effectiveness of cross-border consumer protection. By strengthening the mandate of the Consumer Protection Cooperation Network, the EU can create a more effective approach to tackling unfair practices across member states, ensuring that consumers enjoy consistent protection across the single market. Also harmonized penalties and the creation of standardized fines across the EU would prevent the relocation of companies to jurisdictions with less stringent penalties. Harmonized penalties would act as a strong deterrent to companies that consider non-compliance, contributing to a fairer market in all EU countries.

A unified legal framework of civil liability for cross-border sales would protect consumers from legal ambiguities that arise when buying goods from sellers in other EU countries. This would provide greater clarity and certainty for consumers engaging in cross-border trade.

Sustainable Consumption Policies

The European Union can also reform sustainable consumption policies, such as right to repair, or verification of green claims. The EU could introduce a directive forcing manufacturers to design products that are easier to repair, thus extending the life of goods and reducing waste. By promoting a “right to repair”, consumers would have greater access to repair services, especially for electronic devices.

Also, to combat greenwashing, i.e., claims that a company is implementing green, environmentally friendly manufacturing practices, the EU could apply verification standards to these environmental claims, such as “eco-friendly” or “carbon neutral”. This would allow consumers to make sustainable choices based on reliable information, thereby supporting environmental goals and encouraging ethical marketing practices.

Enhanced consumer rights for digital content and services

The EU can reform consumer protection by enhancing consumer rights for digital content and services. This can be achieved by extending the Digital Content Directive. As digital technology evolves, the EU may expand the Digital Content Directive to cover

newer types of digital goods, such as AI tools and so-called Internet of Things (IoT) devices, i.e. the interconnection between the Internet and installed computing devices in objects of daily use, enabling them to send and receive data. This would ensure that consumers are protected when using these emerging technologies, which often raise concerns about data security, privacy and functionality.

In today's data-centric economy, reforms can strengthen consumer rights around data collection, giving consumers more control over their personal data. This would include clearer rights to review, manage and delete data collected by companies, thus increasing consumer trust and autonomy in digital transactions.

Improving redress and dispute resolution mechanisms

Reforming consumer protection can be achieved through improved redress and dispute resolution mechanisms. A unified EU-wide system for cross-border redress could simplify the process for consumers seeking redress for infringements in other member states. Such a system would simplify access to redress and make it easier for consumers to resolve disputes, regardless of the jurisdiction in which they arise.

Improved alternative dispute resolution and online dispute resolution options can make it easier for consumers to resolve issues without lengthy legal proceedings. This would be particularly useful for disputes arising from digital and cross-border transactions, where traditional dispute resolution processes can be cumbersome.

Protection of vulnerable groups and digital education

EU reforms in consumer protection should focus on drafting specific provisions to protect vulnerable consumer groups, such as the elderly or individuals with limited digital literacy, could prevent exploitation and ensure that consumer protection is comprehensive. Tailored protections would address the unique challenges these groups face in navigating complex markets.

Also, EU-wide digital literacy campaigns can improve consumers' ability to understand their rights, make well-informed decisions and avoid falling victim to unfair practices. Digitally inexperienced consumers, who may be unfamiliar with the dynamics of the online market, would particularly benefit from such initiatives.

Conclusion

The European Union's consumer protection legal framework is at a pivotal moment, as it seeks to align its longstanding principles with the new challenges posed by digitalization, sustainability and cross-border trade. Potential reforms in digital transparency, sustainable consumption and enhanced redress mechanisms are critical to meeting the needs of modern consumers in a rapidly changing market landscape. By addressing these areas, the EU can improve consumer confidence, support sustainable practices and strengthen its unique market with a consumer protection system that is both resilient and responsive to the evolving market.

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THE IMPACT OF EVENTS ON TOURISM PROMOTION OF DESTINATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is a big driver of growth in Albania and events are a key part of making the country a tourist destination. This study looks at the impact of different events – cultural festivals, music concerts, sports competitions and exhibitions – on tourism promotion in Albania. Specifically, it looks at how these events attract both domestic and international tourists, shape the destination's image and engage local communities. Using a qualitative approach data was collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with 20 stakeholders – event organizers, local officials and business owners. Thematic analysis identified five main themes: community involvement, economic impacts, cultural promotion, sustainability challenges and niche tourism opportunities. The findings show that community involvement in events brings authenticity, for the tourists and for the locals. The economic benefits were visible, well-organized events increased spending in local businesses and supported small artisans. Cultural events promoted Albania's heritage and differentiated it from other destinations. Niche events for off peak tourism like nature festivals and wellness retreats emerged as a tool to distribute tourism throughout the year and make Albania a year-round destination. And events were found to increase cultural pride among residents and create an authentic atmosphere for the tourists. Solving these through better event management, smart investments and joint marketing can make Albania more attractive internationally. This study shows that events are a key tool for tourism development and recommends more support from government and private sector for sustainable growth.

Keywords: *Tourism promotion, Events, Cultural branding, Community involvement, Economic impact*

Tourism is a key sector in Albania's economy, contributes to the country's GDP and employment. Events like cultural festivals, concerts, sports competitions and exhibitions are important in tourism promotion by attracting domestic and international tourists. These events are economic boosters and increase the visibility and image of the destination, offer unique experiences to visitors and create memories

Understanding the impact of events on tourism promotion in Albania is key to maximize these opportunities for sustainable tourism development. Destination promotion through events is a growing trend in tourism (Getz, 2008). Events allow to showcase the cultural, historical and natural assets of a place and make it more attractive to tourists (Richards & Palmer, 2010). For Albania, events like Tirana International Film Festival, Gjirokastër Folk Festival and Korçë Beer Fest have been helping to position the country as an emerging tourist destination in the Balkans. These events give us a platform to showcase Albania's cultural heritage, local traditions and community life and to reinforce its brand as a diverse and open destination (UNWTO, 2022).

Aim of the study

This study aims to investigate events in tourism in Albania. How do different types of events bring tourists, shape the destination and involve local people.

The study objectives:

- To identify the role of cultural, sports and entertainment events in attracting tourists to Albania;
- To understand the contribution of events to the branding of Albania as a tourist destination;
- To evaluate the economic and social impacts of tourism events on local communities;

Research questions:

- How cultural, sports and entertainment events attract tourists to Albania?
- What events bring for the image and brand of Albania as a tourist destination?
- What are the economic and social impacts of events on local communities in Albania?
- What are the challenges and opportunities in events for tourism promotion in Albania?

Literature review

Tourism is one of the main sectors in Albania's economy and events are seen as a powerful tool for destination marketing. Events like music festivals, cultural heritage fairs and sports competitions have shown a big impact in attracting tourists, image of the destination and local economy. This section aims to examine the impact of events on tourism promotion in Albania by reviewing existing research and data on event tourism management, economic contributions and challenges of the industry.

Events make a destination more attractive by creating unique experiences for tourists. According to Getz (2012) events are strategic tools that can increase visitor numbers and create memorable experiences that differentiate a destination. Albania is using its rich cultural heritage to organize events like Gjirokaster Folk Festival which promotes local

traditions and cultural identity (UNESCO, 2022). These events help with destination branding and visibility in the global tourism market.

Cultural festivals are a key tool for tourism promotion in Albania as they allow both domestic and international tourists to engage with local culture. Richards and Palmer (2010) say that festivals and events help to improve the image of a destination by connecting visitors with authentic experiences. Tirana International Film Festival is an example of how cultural events are used to promote Albania's contemporary culture and international tourists (TIFF, 2023).

The economic impact of events on tourism promotion is proven. Dwyer et al. (2000) say that events can bring significant benefits to the host community including income, employment and infrastructure development. In Albania Kala Festival has been reported to have a positive impact on the local economy by attracting international visitors who spend on accommodation, food and other services (Kala Festival, 2023).

Events also help with destination marketing by creating tourist attraction. Mossberg (2007) says that events have the power to create emotional connections between visitors and the destination and make them more likely to return. Emotional attachment is crucial for Albania as repeat visitors contribute to the sustainability of the tourism industry. Events like South Outdoor Festival promote the natural beauty and outdoor activities in Albania and further create emotional connection of tourists with the destination.

Despite the benefits, Albania has several challenges in using events for tourism promotion. According to Gibson et al. (2012) inadequate infrastructure, lack of proper event management and insufficient government support are common challenges for developing countries in event-based tourism promotion. In general events have proven to be a good tool for promoting Albania as a tourist destination by improving the image, boosting the local economy and creating tourist attachment. But solving the existing challenges like infrastructure and event management will be key to make events work for tourism in Albania.

Methodology

A qualitative methodology is used for this study, purposeful sampling, data collection through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions and thematic analysis to understand the impact of events on tourism promotion in Albania.

Sampling involved selecting key stakeholders from different segments of the tourism industry in Albania including event organizers, local government officials and business owners. Purposeful sampling was used to ensure that participants had relevant experience and knowledge to provide in-depth information about the relationship between events and tourism promotion. The sample size was around 20 participants which provided a good mix of perspectives on the impact of tourism events.

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Interviews were used to gather in-depth information about the role of events in promoting tourism in Albania. The questions were about participants' experiences, challenges and the effectiveness of different events in attracting tourists to the destination. Focus group discussions provided a space for participants to share their views and discuss the wider implications of tourism events. These discussions were used to validate and add to the data collected from the interviews.

The data from the interviews and focus group discussions was analyzed using thematic analysis. This allowed the researchers to identify patterns and themes in the responses which showed how events contribute to tourism promotion in Albania. The analysis focused on main themes such as increased destination visibility, cultural promotion and economic benefits. These themes provided an overall understanding of the impact of events on tourism in Albania and answered the research questions of the study.

Results

The analysis of the interviews and focus group discussions showed several key points about the impact of events on tourism promotion in Albania. Participants mentioned several factors that contribute to successful tourism promotion through events including cultural identity, local community engagement and media coverage. The findings are presented in six main themes: community involvement, economic impacts and cultural promotion, Event Sustainability and Long-Term Planning, Off-Peak Tourism Through Niche Events and Strengthening of Local Identity and Cultural Pride.

Community Involvement

The findings showed that community involvement was key to the success of events as a tool for tourism promotion. Several participants mentioned the positive vibe created by community engagement, which not only improves the experience for visitors but also gives sense of pride to the locals. One participant said: *“Events that involve the local community attract tourists because they feel authenticity. The community adds to the atmosphere and visitors appreciate that”*. Some interviewees mentioned that events that encouraged participation from local artisans, musicians and food vendors were more effective in creating an appealing experience for tourists.

Moreover, community involvement was seen as a key factor for the sustainability of events. One respondent said: *“When the local community is involved, they feel ownership over the event and this ensures that it will continue in the future”*. But also, it was mentioned that sometimes there was not enough support from local authorities to properly engage the community which could limit the overall impact of these events on tourism.

Economic Impacts

The economic impact of events on tourism was another issue that emerged. Participants mentioned that well organized events bring more spending to visitors, benefiting not only the event organizers but also local businesses like hotels, restaurants and transportation services. One focus group participant said *“During big events we see an increase in bookings at our guesthouse and even local restaurants are fully booked”*. It's a great boost for the economy. Many respondents mentioned that the spillover effect of events goes beyond the event itself, tourists often choose to extend their stay or come back to the area after attending an event.

Although the economic benefits, participants also mentioned the challenges that limit the economic potential of these events. The lack of infrastructure in some parts of Albania was mentioned as a barrier. Better transportation infrastructure would increase the economic impact of these events. Moreover, respondents mentioned the need for better coordination between event organizers and tourism agencies to maximize the economic potential of these events.

Cultural Promotion

The third major theme that came out from the data was the role of events in promoting Albania's culture. Many participants believed that cultural events such as folk festivals and traditional music performances were key to showcase Albania's rich history and cultural identity to international visitors. One participant said: *"Events like the National Folk Festival allow us to share our traditions with the world. It's a way to tell our story and invite others to experience our culture"*. Such events were described as very effective in differentiating Albania from other destinations and creating an image that appeals to tourists looking for authentic cultural experiences.

But some participants mentioned the challenges in promoting cultural events. Limited marketing budget and no professional promotion strategy were seen as obstacles to attract a bigger international audience. *"We need more targeted marketing to reach international tourists. Events are good but people need to know about them to attend"* one respondent said. Participants also mentioned that social media and digital platforms should be used to reach younger audience who are more influenced by online content.

Challenges with Event Sustainability and Long-Term Planning

A common theme among participants was the difficulty to sustain successful events due to financial constraints and lack of support from local authorities. Many respondents mentioned that successful events lack the funding and strategic planning for continuity. One respondent said: *"We host great events but without long term support it's difficult to sustain them or improve them over time"*. This feedback shows the need for better financial planning and public private partnership to have events organized consistently, year after year.

Off-Peak Tourism Through Niche Events

The data also showed an increasing interest in niche events that promote off-peak tourism. Events like nature festivals, wellness retreats and hiking competitions are bringing tourists during the low season, extending the tourism calendar. A tourism official said: *"By organizing events outside of high season we can bring tourists throughout the year which benefits the local economy and reduces crowding"*. This is in line with sustainable tourism by distributing tourist traffic more evenly throughout the year.

Respondents mentioned that such events promote unique experiences in Albania's natural landscapes and encourage eco-tourism, adventure tourism and wellness tourism – segments with huge growth potential. The interest in niche events is an opportunity for Albania to add more to its tourism offer and become a year-round destination.

Strengthening of Local Identity and Cultural Pride

The qualitative data showed the role of events in reinforcing the local identity and cultural pride among residents. Community members involved in events felt prouder of their culture. One respondent said: *"When tourists come to our town and appreciate our culture it reminds us of the value of our traditions"*. This feedback shows that events not only promote tourism but also strengthen cultural pride among residents and create a more welcoming community atmosphere for visitors.

The cultural pride also led to higher community engagement, locals are more motivated to be involved in the event planning and execution. Respondents said that strengthening local involvement and cultural pride will lead to a more authentic tourism experience which will attract international tourists looking for cultural immersion.

Discussion

The findings of this research show that events play a big role in promoting tourism destinations like Albania as per the literature. The results showed that participants considered cultural events, music festivals and local fairs as important drivers of domestic and international tourism. This is in line with Richards and Palmer (2010) stated that events can increase the profile of a destination by creating unique experiences that attract different visitor segments. In Albania participants said that the events focused on culture and heritage were very successful in attracting tourists from neighboring countries. This is in line with Getz (2008) who said that events that resonate with the local culture and heritage are very appealing to international tourists looking for authentic experiences.

The discussions with participants also showed a strong correlation between media coverage of events and the increase of tourists, as per Mair and Whitford (2013) who said that effective promotion of events through media channels increases destination visibility and attractiveness. One respondent said: *"Events like Tirana Music Festival were widely covered on social media and television and that's when we saw an influx of tourists from Italy and Greece"*. This shows the importance of media as a tool to reach international audience and promote Albania as a vibrant and culturally rich destination. According to Florek and Insch (2011) media coverage can have a big impact on the perception of a destination and turn it into a must visit place which is in line with the opinions of the participants.

Besides the study also highlighted the challenges of event-based tourism promotion such as limited infrastructure and lack of consistent funding. These challenges are in line with Gómez et al. (2018) who said that infrastructure is a key factor in hosting events that can attract big number of tourists. This shows the need for infrastructure improvement to fully tap the tourism potential of events. Moreover, the need for consistent investment and collaboration between stakeholders such as government and private sector was emphasized by the respondents as per Andersson and Getz (2009) for effective public private partnerships in event tourism. Overall, the findings show that while events have a positive impact on tourism promotion in Albania, overcoming the infrastructural and funding challenges is key to maximize the benefits. Gómez et al. (2018) said that infrastructure and consistent funding are the key success factors in sustaining events that attract tourists. As per Andersson and Getz (2009) effective public private partnerships is key in establishing a stable financial foundation for tourism events and to invest in resources, marketing and continuous improvement.

The growing interest in off peak tourism through niche events like nature festivals, wellness retreats and adventure tourism is in line with sustainable tourism practices to reduce seasonality and promote year round visitation. This will diversify Albania's tourism products and support local economies throughout the year and reduce the economic fluctuations of seasonal tourism (Butler, 2001). As per Getz and Page (2016) niche events that promote eco-tourism and wellness tourism appeals to environmentally conscious and experience driven tourists who are looking for alternative to traditional tourism experiences.

Niche events will help Albania to position itself as a year-round destination which is key for sustainable tourism growth (UNWTO, 2022). By leveraging Albania's natural assets these events will create unique tourism products for adventure seekers and nature lovers. Similar initiatives have worked well in destinations where eco-tourism and off-peak

event tourism is a big contributor to economic stability and sustainability (Gössling et al., 2009). Promoting niche tourism events will reduce the pressure on popular tourist sites during peak season and will build economic resilience for the host community year-round.

The findings show that events are key in building local identity and cultural pride among Albanian communities as in other destinations with strong cultural tourism. As per Mossberg (2007) events can create emotional connection between the destination and its residents and they in turn will create an authentic and welcoming atmosphere for tourists. This is happening in Albania where cultural events not only attract international visitors but also boost local pride of cultural heritage.

Community involvement through tourism events creates a collaborative environment that enhances the authenticity of the tourist experience. As per Dwyer et al. (2000) when local communities are involved in tourism activities it creates a positive feedback loop: tourists experience genuine local culture which boosts community pride and in turn residents will support tourism initiatives

Conclusions

The findings from this study on the impact of events on tourism promotion in Albania showed some interesting results. Events are key in attracting tourists, enhancing destination image and contributing to local economic growth. As per the qualitative interviews participants said that large scale cultural and music festivals in particular helped to project a positive image of Albania as a vibrant and culturally rich destination. Participants mentioned that events when well organized and marketed can increase the visibility of the country internationally and boost tourism.

The literature supports the findings of this study that events can be a effective tool for tourism promotion as they enhance destination competitiveness and create memorable experiences for visitors. Previous research has shown that events are a strategic tool for reviving tourism (Getz & Page, 2016) and the findings of this study agrees with that. Participants said that events can be a differentiator for Albania to stand out from other regional destinations.

The study highlights the need for continuous support and funding to sustain tourism events in Albania. Better public private partnerships, strategic planning and infrastructure development is key to maximize the positive impact of Albania's cultural events on tourism.

Off peak tourism through niche events like nature festivals and wellness retreats shows Albania as a year-round destination. Niche events will diversify Albania's tourism products and will contribute to economic stability by distributing tourist activity across different seasons and support sustainable tourism development.

Events in Albania will help to reinforce local identity and boost cultural pride among residents which will enhance the authenticity of the tourist experience. By involving local communities in event planning and execution Albania can offer genuine cultural experiences to international tourists looking for unique and immersive experiences and will strengthen its brand as a culturally rich destination.

In summary, promoting Albania through events has a lot of potential to increase tourism, boost local economy and improve the country's image as a diverse and attractive destination. To maximize the benefits more collaboration between government, tourism

agencies and local stakeholders is needed to ensure continuous planning, investment and marketing of these events. The findings of this study shows that events are not only tourism magnets but also opportunities for Albania to brand itself on the international tourism map

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THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON ALBANIAN UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, technology as in every other country has greatly transformed the educational system in Albania. The usage and combination of digital tools, virtual tutoring, advanced visualizations methods like 3D modelling, or e-learning resources has dramatically impacted the learning experience, making it more accessible for everyone, more flexible, more interesting and more personalized according to different students' capabilities and skills. Furthermore, technology has eased the process of teaching in remote areas, reducing the educational gap between rural and urban regions and has helped to create a tangible approach of complex concepts. However, there are still many challenges which need to be faced like inadequate teacher training, the need for sustainable infrastructure, costs and various technical problems. This paper explores the transformative effects of technology on Albanian upper secondary education, with all its benefits and improvements that it has brought to the system, and the challenges and difficulties that need to be addressed to maximize its potential. Even though technology has dramatically helped to enhance educational quality and has created better opportunities for the students, still many improvements in policies, investments, infrastructure, curriculum and training are necessary to ensure access for everyone and successful implementation across the country.

Keywords: *Teaching, digital tools, upper secondary education, technology, infrastructure*

The Albanian education system has undergone significant changes, especially since the fall of communism in the early 1990s. Before, the education system was highly centralized, with strict government rule over curriculum and teaching methods, and everything was controlled so that it was aligned with the system. Even though the whole system was filled with political content, it was effective to reduce the illiteracy in the country. After the fall of the communist regime, Albania faced the challenge of

reforming this system to align more closely with European standards, aiming to promote critical thinking and adapt to a free-market economy. This transition process was very difficult due to dramatic changes which happened in the country, and the education system for many years was not in the focus of the governments. But, recently during the last 15 years various reforms have been made, mainly to improve curricula, enhance teachers' pedagogical and professional skills and to invest in technology and innovation. Currently, at the upper secondary level, education in Albania is divided into general education (which prepare students for university), vocational training, and specialized schools (which are aimed to prepare students for the market needs). Due to its terrain with remote villages, poor infrastructure and many rural areas, limited human resources etc., there are still many challenges to face, in order to provide a qualitative educational system. One significant step toward modernization was the adoption of the "Digital Agenda of Albania," a government initiative aimed at expanding internet access, developing IT infrastructure, and promoting digital education, which has improved internet connectivity across schools, and enabled more students and teachers to use digital resources in their learning. To improve the remaining disparities and to further modernize the system, recently different digital tools like virtual tutoring, advanced visualizations methods, e-learning and artificial intelligence are starting to be implemented in the Albanian schools and universities. These technologies can ease the learning and teaching methods, make it more accessible for everyone, more flexible and allow for a deeper understanding of difficult concepts, by creating a hands-on approach for them. The scope of this study is to check the efficiency of using these technologies in Albanian upper secondary education system and their impact on it. Even though the usage of these newer technologies in Albanian education system is still in the beginning phase, they can make a huge difference, transforming dramatically the way students learn, and teachers instruct, making the access to information and knowledge available to everyone, and providing at the same time an interactive way of learning through simulations and resources to enhance understanding and learning. Nevertheless, the use of technology needs to be provided carefully, as it can create new challenges like lack of adequate knowledge from the teachers, high costs for the infrastructure, privacy and data security concerns, ethical issues, lack of reliability and of course the need for improvements in policies and laws.

Literature Review

In order to provide innovative and improved learning experiences in various circumstances, academics have researched a variety of different technologies in education and their impact on it. Although recently there are many studies on this topic worldwide, there is still much more to do, to realize the full potential of applying technology in education. Below is a list of some of these studies and their overall approach, both worldwide and in Albania:

- "*The Theory and Practice of Online Learning*" by T. Anderson (2008), provides a comprehensive guide about the theories, strategies and technologies behind effective online education.
- "*The Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences*" by R. K. Sawyer (2014), provides an exploration of the interdisciplinary field of learning sciences combined (computer science, education, technology psychology, etc.) to understand how people learn.

- “*Artificial Intelligence in Education*” by C.P. Rose, and R. Martinez-Maldonado, and H.U. Hoppe et al. (2018), provides an overview of AI-driven tools that adjust content for each student’s style and needs and foster collaborative learning environments for students in education.
- “*The Role of 3D Modeling in STEM Education: A Review of the Literature*” by H. B. Lee, C. M. Lee, and E. W. Kim (2024), provides a comprehensive overview of the use of 3D models in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects, analyzing the impact of implementing these models in STEM.
- “*The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Learning, Teaching, and Education: Policies for the Future*” by I. Tuomi (2019) published by the European Commission provides an in-depth analysis of how AI is changing educational system through personalized content tailored to learning environments.
- “*Teaching and Learning for the Twenty-First Century: Educational Goals, Policies, and Curricula from Six Nations*” by F. M. Reimers and C. K. Chung (2016) examines how six different countries: Chile, China, India, Mexico, Singapore, and the United States, approach educational reform to prepare students for the demands of the 21st century. The book analyzes each country’s educational policies, goals, and curricula, providing insights into how these nations address global competencies, critical thinking, problem-solving, and civic responsibility.
- “*3D modeling for e-learning: a case study in cultural heritage.*” by N. Di Blas and P. Paolini (2015), provides an overview of the use of 3D modeling to create dynamic e-learning content in cultural heritage.
- “*Robot-Proof: Higher Education in the Age of Artificial Intelligence*” by J.E. Aoun (2017) provides information on how higher education can be reshaped to prepare students for the future.
- “*Effects of a 3D modeling learning environment on conceptual understanding and problem-solving skills in engineering drawing.*” by M. E. Parra-González, A. Valero-Valenzuela, and G. Gómez-García (Parra et al, 2019) explores the impact of using 3D modeling learning on conceptual understanding and problem-solving skills in engineering drawing.
- “*Learning Analytics in Education: Principles and Methods*” by Ch. Lang, G. Siemens, and D. Gašević (2017) provides an in-depth exploration of learning analytics like data mining, machine learning and predictive modeling to track and analyze students’ learning behaviors and academic progress.
- The study “*ICT’s Impact on Teaching Information Technologies in Albanian Secondary Schools Through an Empirical Study*” by E. Xhumari, S. Maxhelaku, A. Como, and O. Kromici (2024) investigates the influence of Information and Communication Technologies on the teaching and learning of information technology in Albanian secondary schools.
- The *UNICEF Report on Education in Albania* (2020) provides a comprehensive overview of the state of education in Albania, focusing on the challenges and progress within the country’s educational system

Methodology

This study involves the usage of descriptive and qualitative methodologies to understand the impact of technology in upper education system in Albania. There are many recent trends which involve the usage of different digital tools and technological platforms like hybrid learning models (which combine online components with face-to-face instructions) or the usage of learning management system (LMS) like Moodle, Google Classroom or Blackboard, which can be great tools to organize and deliver content for students, the usage of open educational resources from different platforms like Coursera, Khan Academy, MIT Open Course Ware, which provide plenty of e-learning materials and virtual tutoring, the usage of mobile learning through platforms like Duolingo etc., the usage of different adaptive learning technologies which use artificial intelligence to personalize the educational content for individual students and the use of gamification to increase engagement through 3D modelling and visualization. The focus of this study is to understand the how these technologies are used in the upper secondary education in Albania and their impact. The main target groups of this study are students at high schools, so mainly the age group between 15-18 years old, both in general high schools (gymnasium), and vocational upper secondary education. Currently, a focus group of around 40 students has been tested and were asked to evaluate their overall experience with the usage of different technologies in their education system, to understand if the learning process was enhanced and made more efficient or not and the results are shown below.

Results and discussions

The students involved in the study were asked to answer some questions. A list of different technologies and digital tools were also presented, from different companies and used for different purposes (hybrid learning, online e-learning platforms, digital tutorials, management learning systems, mobile platforms, visualization tools and adaptive learning technologies etc.). Their feedback is shown in Table 1 and Table 2. The digital tools and the questions are listed below:

Digital Tools/platforms divided by categories:

- Moodle, Blackboard, Google Classroom
- Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Meet
- Unity-3D Modelling
- Coursera, Khan Academy, Duolingo
- VR/AR/AI, Knewton
- Kahoot!

The questions asked:

- Do you use any of the listed digital tools in your class?
- Do you use any of these tools by yourself?
- Do you think that technology helped you better understand the learning concepts?
- Are you interested in continuing using them?
- Which platform do you use the most?
- Do you prefer using these platforms more than the traditional learning methods?

Table 1: *Students' feedback*

Students	Do you use any of the listed digital tools in your class?	Do you use any of these tools by yourself?	Do you think that technology helped you better understand the learning concepts?	Are you interested in continuing using them?	Which platform do you use the most	Do you prefer using these platforms more than the traditional learning methods?
40	Yes-24 (60%)	Yes- 38 (95%)	Yes-35 (88%)	Yes-40 (100%)	15-Google Classroom (38%), 7-Coursera (18%), 5- Teams (12%), 5-Duolingo (12%)	Yes-35 (88%)
	No-16 (40%)	No-2 (5%)	No-5 (12%)	No-0 (0%)	4- 3D Modelling (10%) 2-Kahoot! (5%) 2 - Zoom (5%)	No-5 (12%)
Students	Do you use any of the listed digital tools in your class?	Do you use any of these tools by yourself?	Do you think that technology helped you better understand the learning concepts?	Are you interested in continuing using them?	Which platform do you use the most	Do you prefer using these platforms more than the traditional learning methods?
Gymnasium - 24	Yes-11 (46%)	Yes-23 (96%)	Yes-21 (88%)	Yes-24 (100%)	7- Coursera (31%), 5- Microsoft Teams (20%), 5 - Duolingo (20%), 3 -Google Classroom (13%), 2-Kahoot! (8%), 2 - Zoom (8%)	Yes-21 (88%)
	No-13 (54%)	No-1 (4%)	No-3 (12%)	No-0 (0%)		No-3 (12%)
Vocational Schools - 16	Yes-13 (81%)	Yes-15 (94%)	Yes-14 (88%)	Yes-16 (100%)	12 -Google Classroom (75%)	Yes-14 (88%)
	No-3 (19%)	No-1 (6%)	No-2 (12%)	No-0 (0%)	4- 3D Modelling (25%)	No-2 (12%)

Based on their answers to these questions, the results are as follows. Around half of the students involved in the survey (60%) use some kind of digital tools in their class, which shows that still the technology is not used as it should to ease the process of education. The main platforms that they use are Google Classroom with 38% and Coursera online e-learning materials with 18%. Nevertheless, around 95% of the students use the technology by themselves to help them in the learning process. Most of them (around 88%) are convinced that the technology and digital tools helped them to better understand the concepts and all of them (100%) are interested in continuing using it in the future. Around 88% of the students prefer using these platforms and digital tools instead of the conventional learning methods. If we categorize the students based on their schools (gymnasium and vocational schools), it can be noticed that for the chosen population there is a significant change for the first question. Around 81% of the students attending a vocational school use at least one of the digital tools in their class, instead of 46% for the general gymnasium high schools, which clearly shows the gap between the two categories of upper secondary education in Albania and the usage of technology from them in class. However, the results are very similar if students are asked if the technology helped them to better understand the learning concepts (88%), because almost all of them use technology by themselves (96% gymnasium's students and 94% vocational schools' students). Also, around 88% of the students in both cases prefer these platforms instead of traditional learning methods.

Conclusions

The scope of this study was to check the usage and impact of technology in Albanian upper secondary education system. Although there have been different projects and reforms in the education sector by improving technology and infrastructure, still the potential is not yet fully realized. The use of different technologies together (like hybrid learning, online e-learning platforms, digital tutorials, management learning systems, mobile platforms, visualization tools and adaptive learning technologies etc.) can greatly enhance the process of learning and teaching by creating and building personalized suitable models, which are accessible, flexible, more engaging and interactive, so that the learning process can be both interesting and effective. As part of this study a target group of 40 high school students were chosen and were asked to answer some questions and provide feedback regarding the digital tools and platforms that they use in their class or by themselves and the impact they have on their learning experience. Based on their results, we can conclude that most of them find the use of technology through different platforms and digital tools very useful to help them enhance their learning outcomes (88%). Even though their access to technology in their classes it still limited (60%), still they were able to use it by themselves (95%), in order to better understand the concepts. It was noticeable in the population chosen a significant difference between the students of gymnasium and vocational schools, where around 81% of students from the latter use digital tools in their class instead of 46% for the general high school students, which means that still a lot needs to be done to include technology in the upper secondary education in Albania, especially in the general high school. Also, it is very important to mention that all the students who took part in the study are very interested in continuing using innovation and technology in the near future and around 88% of them (in both

general and vocational schools) prefer these platforms more than the traditional learning methods through lecturers and textbooks. To summarize, we can say that including technology in the education system offers several advantages like accessibility for everyone, flexibility, very high customization and personalization to satisfy various students' needs, more engagement and motivation from the students, a hands-on learning experience, and an improved comprehension of complex concepts through greater interactivity. In conclusion, the use of technology in the Albanian upper secondary education can be a very efficient tool to enhance and empower the teaching and learning process with many advantages as mentioned and confirmed from the students' feedback, but on the other hand the use of digital tools and platforms should be provided carefully, as it can create also new challenges like lack of adequate knowledge from the teachers, privacy/data security concerns, ethical issues, lack of reliability, more strict policies and regulations etc.

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INTELLECTUAL WELL-BEING IN A DIGITAL AGE: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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ABSTRACT

Rapid and frequent global changes have affected secondary education among other areas. The challenges faced by high school students are diverse and can be accompanied by various consequences. Contemporary scientific studies and statistical data indicate that fewer and fewer students are attending high school, and the number of students pursuing higher education is declining. The average scores on elective subjects in the State Matura exam are also decreasing. The purpose of this research paper is to analyze how the use of technology has impacted the teaching and learning processes for students attending high school. Considering the challenges that education is currently facing, the primary question posed in this article is: What are the challenges and opportunities for intellectual well-being in a digital age? Some of the research questions that support the main question of this study include: (1) What has the level of knowledge acquired by students in the 9-year school compared to the level of knowledge acquired in high school? (2) What is the level of student performance on the State Matura exams over the years? This article initially presents a comparative analysis of the results of graduates on the State Matura exams. It further compares the results achieved by students in the 9-year school with those achieved in high school, examining the factors that have influenced the education process. This analysis will help in proposing best practices for teaching and learning for an increasingly effective education system for today's youth.

Keywords: *education, intellectual well-being, scientific progress, human progress, student pass rates.*

The Importance of Education in Creating Intellectual Well-being

The education system continuously works to strengthen policies that will impact the illumination of the human mind. Educational policies aim to foster inclusive learning environments and utilize various resources to promote better educational

opportunities for all students. Policymakers strive to achieve high-quality education, with schools increasingly focusing on the goal of achieving high average grades and pass rates. Meanwhile, in the face of this challenge, there is a growing need for teachers to be equipped with the appropriate training and pedagogical knowledge to identify and support students on their path to knowledge, especially in the digital age.

A review of the literature reveals that educators and scholars of education raise the question: -Why are schools important and what purpose do they serve? For years, educators and critical sociologists have questioned the role of schools, creating misunderstandings among other scholars. John White, an educational philosopher, counters this criticism by speaking positively about schools and their role in enlightening the human mind. He states: “Schools are institutions with very specific goals, which aim to promote and acquire knowledge” (Cornelius-White, 2007: 113-123). He further presents the view that positive teacher-student relationships contribute to the comprehensive learning of knowledge, supported by student-centered teaching.

In line with this issue, scholar Michael Young holds a similar view, stating: “Schools, like families, have a unique role in developing human capacities and in providing the conditions that allow society to embrace innovation and consequently change” (Young, M., 2012: 10-18). In a digital age, where students might misuse technology, it is precisely the professional work of intellectual teachers that will guide and channel the youthful, unrestrained desire of adolescents toward the proper use of technological tools.

Some studies argue that education can bring about societal change. Encouraging creative skills and critical thinking in students will bring young people closer to innovations in education and many other fields. The development of human capacities with a modern mindset will be the source of future innovations that will continue to shape the future of society, ensuring intellectual well-being.

Additionally, studies show that the education process plays an important role in the economic development of a country. Through the transmission of contemporary knowledge, young people become an innovative force driving economic change and development in the country. Beyond its educational function, the education system also provides certification for students who complete a particular level of education. Certification for specific professions makes young people, who have just entered the job market, increasingly sought after. A review of literature in both Albanian and other languages indicates that some scholars argue that intellectual well-being is important not only for the individual but for society. For all the reasons mentioned above and many others, the education process is seen by scholars as a sure path that leads to intellectual well-being.

Education Priorities in the Digital Age

Education faces a wide range of challenges, which continuously evolve into key priorities. Studies affirm that education is crucial for creating intellectual well-being, but beyond its significance, it also confronts many difficulties. One of the problems of education today is the hidden dropout phenomenon, which researchers associate with deviant behaviors (Rocque et al., 2017: 592-612). Hidden dropout refers to students who do not attend school regularly, have unjustified absences from specific classes, are disengaged during lessons, or lack the necessary educational materials, among other issues. This hidden dropout becomes a major challenge for policymakers, as it negatively impacts the intellectual well-being of young people.

Furthermore, there is a growing concern over the steadily decreasing number of students enrolling in upper secondary education (Brahja, 2022: 128). Data from this study, presented in the table below, shows a decline in the number of students in schools from the 2014-2015 school year to the 2018-2019 school year, with a decrease of 897 students, of whom 357 are girls and 540 are boys.

Table 1: *Number of Enrolled Students Over the Years in Secondary Schools in the Tirana Region*

School Year	Total Students	Girls	Boys
2014-2015	3976	2031	1945
2015-2016	2706	1967	1739
2016-2017	3560	1903	1657
2017-2018	3243	1752	1491
2018-2019	3079	1674	1405

Such a situation immediately underscores the need to develop policies and strategies that will bring young people closer to schools and turn them into attractive and engaging environments for adolescents.

Moreover, the lack of educational resources in schools, such as appropriate learning spaces, specialized classrooms, and technological tools, remains a significant issue, even though we are talking about integrating technology into teaching. Addressing these issues has become a priority in education today.

Factors Influencing the Quality of Teaching

Without underestimating the importance of schools for societal development, it is worth noting that today’s generations live in a complex industrial society where, in addition to traditional resources, technology is also used in the teaching process. One of the recent innovations in education is learning through technology. The need for global integration in a digital world has increased the focus and importance of education, turning technology into a significant factor in the teaching process.

In the 21st century, technology began to be used not only for teaching but also for assessment, placing two eras -traditional and digital- side by side. Teachers found themselves facing the challenge of using technological tools. Schools began to focus on utilizing technology and orienting learning through digital networks. This situation led to a need for training and professional development of teachers in the use of technological tools. The challenge for teachers is not only the use of technology but also the teaching process itself. Today’s youth are more focused on digital texts, online books, and visual interpretations, rather than on the traditional explanations provided by teachers.

But how has the use of technology impacted the teaching process?

In connection with this issue, in analyzing the impact of technology on student learning effectiveness, researcher Chauhan states: “We have a lack of comprehensive adaptation of technology use in pedagogy” (Chauhan, 2017: 14-30). The data from this study argue that technology has a moderate impact on the effectiveness of student learning, always

considering the influence of other factors such as the subject in which technology is used, the field, the duration of use, and the learning environment.

Additionally, the use of technology has led to the development of various applications that help students better understand concepts, phenomena, and theories. Innovative and interactive technological applications have changed learning methods, offering students an active learning environment for various subjects and fields. Teachers are now confronted with a generation whose brains learn and operate across multiple dimensions.

Other scholars argue that the use of technology in teaching is characterized as a problem-solving-oriented approach (Luppardini, 2005: 103-109). By using technical tools, theories, and methods, it becomes easier to design, develop, and assess human resources effectively, making it possible to exploit all aspects of learning. Contemporary studies show that students learn better when actively involved and when they can relate concepts to their real lives. The technological environment facilitates more effective learning (Taşkın & Kandemir, 2010: 1379-1384). Through technology, today’s youth can connect new concepts with practical examples from the real world.

A review of the literature reveals that another factor influencing the quality of teaching is teacher job satisfaction. This factor is fundamentally linked to working conditions and teachers’ salaries. However, it is not limited to these; studies also show that the workload of teachers, collaboration among them, and their perceptions of student discipline in school are additional factors related to teacher job satisfaction (Toropova, Myrberg & Johansson, 2021: 71-97).

Considering the literature reviewed from other languages, data collected from the Albanian context for this article is also presented. To study the level of knowledge acquired by students in primary school compared to that in high school, data were collected from the following schools: “Mustafa Kemal Atatürk”, “Mustafa Greblleshi”, “Sandër Prosi”, and “Avdulla Keta.” Two primary schools and two high schools were selected to carry out a comparative analysis between the data gathered in compulsory education and upper secondary education. It should be noted that the data were collected from the respective educational institutions and are not generalized; they are intended solely for this study. The table below presents the data reflecting the pass rates and average grades per school from the 2019-2020 school year to the 2022-2023 school year.

Table 2: *Pass Rate and Average Grade of Schools*

School	Achievements	Academic year			
		2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
“Mustafa Kemal Atatürk”	Annual Pass Rate	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Annual Average Grade	8.1	8.2	8.1	8.3
“Mustafa Greblleshi”	Annual Pass Rate	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Annual Average Grade	7.9	8.3	7.9	7.8
“Sandër Prosi”	Annual Pass Rate	99%	100%	100%	96%
	Annual Average Grade	7	6.98	7.32	7.35
“Avdulla Keta”	Annual Pass Rate	98%	95%	93%	99%
	Annual Average Grade	7	7.2	7.23	7.4

Data processing results indicate that the pass rate in the 9-year schools included in this study is 100%, while the average grade is 8.0. Meanwhile, the pass rate in both high schools is 97.5%, with an average grade of 6.26. The comparison of the data reveals that the quality of upper secondary education is declining. The average grade has decreased by a difference of 1.74 points compared to 9-year education. Similarly, the pass rate has also decreased by 2.5%. It is emphasized that the data are not generalizable; therefore, this study could serve as an impetus for the development of further research.

Regarding the results of students in the 2019 State Matura exams, the data on pass rates and average grades are presented in the table below:

Table 3: *Pass Rate and Average Grade in the 2019 State Matura Exam*

No.	Exam Subject	Pass Rate	Average Grade
1	Literature	95.40 %	6,39
2	Mathematics	94.43 %	6.35
3	Foreign Language	96.90 %	7.39
4	Elective Subject	96.23 %	7.88

The data processed from the Center for Educational Services collected show that the pass rate for all subjects is 95.99%, and the average grade for all subjects is 6.85. Meanwhile, the data collected in the 2021 State Matura exams are as follows:

Table 4: *Pass Rate and Average Grade in the 2021 State Matura Exam*

No.	Exam Subject	Pass Rate	Average Grade
1	Literature	99.00 %	7.13
2	Mathematics	98.89 %	6.50
3	Foreign Language	99.05 %	7.52
4	Elective Subject	99.05 %	7.66

The data show that the pass rate for all subjects is 98.99% and the average grade is 7.20. As is evident from the data, the quality of education has improved year by year. The pass rate and average grade results from the State Matura exams are increasingly aligning with the results produced by schools.

This data serves as an impetus for the development of further studies, which will highlight the main factors that influence intellectual well-being.

Best Practices in Teaching and Learning

Modern societies are increasingly aware that they are transitioning from industrial societies to those supported by information technology. Educational systems are those that must respond to this change. Studies in the field of education show that changes in the teaching and learning process are rarely implemented as designed. The focus must be

placed precisely on the implementation of teaching practices. It is not enough to simply use contemporary teaching methods to achieve success in education. What is important is that these methods are integrated with the needs and capacities of the students, as well as with the necessary infrastructure to use a particular teaching method in a specific field or subject. Studies show that a teaching method that is not properly implemented is predisposed to negatively affect the learning process.

The study of the implementation program is an important factor that involves the balance between fidelity to the program and its adaptation (Lendrum & Humphrey, 2012: 635-652). It is enough to analyze the use of the SMIP platform (Pre-University Information Management System), which today is radically replacing the traditional method of recording student assessments, generalities, and any other achievements in the learning process. However, this platform faces implementation difficulties because some schools are not equipped with computer labs that teachers can use to enter data. Additionally, the lack of the internet makes it impossible to log into the system. As a result, teachers have found ways to adapt to the implementation of this innovation. They work in the classroom with the internet shared through their mobile phones, in computer labs when there are no students attending lessons, or at home. The above methods are expected to be ineffective because filling out the SMIP platform during class time takes time, affecting the teaching and learning process. Completing the platform in the computer lab deprives other teachers who may need to use the lab with their students for a digital lesson. Meanwhile, completing it at home takes time away from other family commitments. Practices that are expected to be implemented without being based on the study of project ideas lead to dissatisfaction among teachers who are unprepared for what the digital era offers, which is reflected in the learning process.

What is suggested in such a situation is the creation of new job positions to employ individuals who would facilitate the entry of necessary data into the SMIP platform. This would alleviate the burden on teachers and not disrupt the teaching process.

Scientific studies argue that another very important practice in the teaching and learning process is the motivation of students. Motivational practices by teachers toward students have a positive impact on the learning process and student achievements, regardless of their intelligence (Steinmayr & Spinath, 2009: 80-90).

Furthermore, the role of the principal in the learning process should not be underestimated. The principal can have a very significant positive effect on reducing gaps in student achievements. Principals can influence student outcomes through methods such as encouraging the qualification and training of teaching staff, monitoring instructional practices, and maintaining student discipline.

Conclusions

The education process has had its history over the years. The data show that the level of quality and achievement in high schools, in the subjects of the State Matura exams, are at satisfactory levels, with a small increase in the average grade and pass rate. However, the average grade and pass rate in the high schools included in this study shows a decline. Nonetheless, other studies indicate that education suffers from an ongoing identity crisis, keeping it in a prolonged transition period. Without allowing enough time for improvement and development in the implementation of continuous reforms

in the education sector, it has become possible to identify a variety of issues. In the face of the challenges education faces today, mechanisms are certainly activated to help to resolve problematic situations.

Today, we discuss schools as institutions, the education process, the integration of theory with practice, the use of technology in schools, the development of new curricula, the use of the SMIP platform, the digital age, intellectual well-being, and many other challenges that we must assess. However, the concept of “good” is relative and infinite, and therefore, it is necessary for us, as members of society, to provide opportunities for improvement. During changes in the education process, several suggestions are offered to move toward the best possible outcomes.

Outdoor Education – The connection between classroom teaching and outdoor learning, linking new knowledge with environmental education. This will help students develop their knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward the world.

Transforming schools into environments that encourage student creativity, without stifling their innovative ideas and thoughts.

Youth education through the exchange of experiences with their peers in other schools or with parents who have completed their education under different conditions.

Changing educational practices in a way that contributes to positive changes in society.

The integration of two ‘communities’: technology and society, by clearly defining the role of each in the overall education process. Technology and society need to support each other, not replace one another.

Another suggestion regarding the use of technology is that if it is comprehensively integrated into teaching, it can act as a powerful tool for effective learning.

Using technology to promote critical thinking in students and their ability to solve problems.

Integration between the competencies that the school aims to instill and the competencies that students are expected to develop in school.

The lack of field trips and extracurricular activities increasingly diminishes the hidden function of schools, which is the socialization of young people.

If policymakers conduct in-depth and detailed analyses of the problems faced by upper secondary education, both short-term and long-term interventions will provide a path toward their resolution.

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IV. NEXT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
FROM PRISTINE - KOSOVO TO SHKODER - ALBANIA

From Pristine Kosovo 2024 to Shkoder Albania 2025
20th Annual International & Interdisciplinary Conference:

“Development in Turbulent Times”

University Luigj Gurakuqi Shkoder, ALBANIA
November 14-15, 2025



Nga Prishtina 2024 në Shkodër 2025
Konferenca e 20-të vjetore, ndërkombëtare e ndërdisiplinore:

“Zhvillimi në kohë të trazuar”

Universiteti “Luigj Gurakuqi” Shkodër
14-15 nëntor 2025

**International Interdisciplinary Conference
(20th Annual):**

**University Luigj Gurakuqi Shkoder, ALBANIA
14-15 November 2025
[Co-presence & Online]**

Deadline for abstracts: 10 October 2025, 24.00

“Development in Turbulent Times”

20th Annual International & Interdisciplinary Conference of AIS-ALBSA and Institutional Partners

5th Annual Conference of CSL – AADF: “Leadership and Management in Education”

**4th Conference of LTC and Polis Publications: “Early Childhood Education”
&**

6th Int. Conference of Balkan Sociological Forum (BSF): “Development in Turbulent Times – a Balkan Perspective”

The aim of the 20th Annual International Conference is to bring together researchers from all fields of research, as well as students and interested individuals from the Balkans, Europe and other parts of the world, to present studies and exchange ideas on the topic “Development in Turbulent Times”. This is an interdisciplinary conference. It aims to address development in all dimensions, such as social, environmental, cultural, economic, institutional and other aspects. The conference is an opportunity to strengthen cooperation between researchers and regional and international partners. This conference alternates every year between Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia. After the conference of Pristine (2024), Vlora (Albania) 2023, Gjilan (Kosovo, 2022), Korca (Albania, 2021), Prizren (Kosovo, 2020), Durrës (Albania, 2019), Mitrovica (Kosovo, 2018) etc., the next conference will be held in the University Luigj Gurakuqi Shkoder, Albania. Based on the agreements signed with the respective universities, the following annual conferences will be held in:

- University Fehmi Agani of Gjakova, KOSOVO (2026, 21st Annual)
- Albanian Academy of Science, Tirana – Albania (2027, 22nd Annual)
- University Haxhi Zeka Peje, KOSOVO (2028, 23rd Annual)
- University Aleksander Xhuvani Elbasan – Albania (2029, 24th Annual)
- South East European University & Mother Teresa University, North Macedonia (2030, 25th Annual).

Organizing Institutions:

- University Luigj Gurakuqi Shkoder, ALBANIA
- CSL – AADF Center for School Leadership, ALBANIA
- Universal Peace Federation, UPF
- La Sapienza University Roma, ITALY
- LTC Agency & Polis Publications
- University Fehmi Agani of Gjakova, KOSOVO
- South East European University, NORTH MACEDONIA
- University Haxhi Zeka Peje, KOSOVO

- University Aleksander Moisiu Durres, ALBANIA
- AAB College, KOSOVO
- University Fan S. Noli Korce, ALBANIA
- University Ukshin Hoti Prizren, KOSOVO
- National Association of Sociologists - Associazione Nazionale Sociologi (ANS), Italy
- University of Mitrovica Isa Boletini, KOSOVO
- Institute of Science and Technology - INSI, KOSOVO
- Albanian Academic Diaspora ITALY
- Institute of Sociology, Demographic Research and Innovation - ISDI, KOSOVO
- Albanian Institute of Sociology - Albanian Sociological Association (20th Annual International Conference)
- Balkan Sociological Forum (BSF)
- International Sociological Association, ISA

Place & Time:

University Luigj Gurakuqi Shkoder, ALBANIA
14-15 November 2025

Chair of the Conference:

Prof. Dr. Tonin GJURAJ - Rector, University Luigj Gurakuqi Shkoder

Conference Coordinators:

Prof. Dr. Paulina HOTI - Academic Vice Rector, University Luigj Gurakuqi Shkoder
Dr. Jola KEPI – Executive Director, Center for School Leadership, CSL-AADE, ALBANIA

Chair of the Local Organizing Committee:

Admir URUÇI - Administrator, University Luigj Gurakuqi Shkoder

Coordinator of partner institutions:

Prof. Dr. Leke SOKOLI - Albanian Institute of Sociology & UAMD, ALBANIA

Conference Themes:

I. Central Theme: “Development in Turbulent Times”

II. Other themes: by 15 Sections (CSL -BSF)

- CSL. Fifth Annual Conference of School Leadership (CSL - AADF)
- TS01. Culture, Arts, Public Sphere and Communication
- TS02. Population, Migration and Diaspora
- TS03. Education and Sport
- TS04. Politics, Democracy, Integration and Law
- TS05. Religion, Collective Behavior and Social Movements
- TS06. Marriage, Family, Welfare, Social Policy and Community
- TS07. Childhood, Youth, Leisure, Aging and Gender
- TS08. Work, Professions, Organization, Urban and Rural Affairs
- TS09. Comparative, Historical, Regional, Global and Future Studies
- TS10. Security, Medicine, Public Health, Deviance and Social Control
- TS11. Ethnic Relations, Nationalism, Human Rights
- TS12. Environment, Economy, Tourism and Development
- TS13. Science, Technology, Digitalization and Innovation

Special and/or Joint Sessions:

- Peace - the Balkans in a European and Global Context – 3rd Annual Scientific Session of Universal Federation of Peace & Albanian Institute of Sociology (AIS)
- Social Session of National Association of Sociologists, ITALY
- Social Session of the Albanian Academic Diaspora, ITALY
- (Other Special Sessions: to be confirmed, before 31 August 2025)

Awards:

Ambassadors of Peace
Award for Excellence in Research and Practice
Award for Best Partnership

Publications/documents:

1. Proceedings (Conference Book – Coauthors UNISHKODRA & AIS) with ISBN code [which includes the program, organizers, plenary sessions, thematic scientific sessions, special sessions, abstracts, or even full papers, up to the index of participants, etc..]
2. Individual Certificate “for participation and presentation of the paper”
3. Full Papers, in proceedings with code ISBN (optional)
4. Publication, as an article in the international scientific journal “Social Studies” with ISSN Code [ISSN 2309-3455] also noting “Presented in the International Conference...” (Optional); Link: <https://www.sociology.al/en/social-studies-journal>

How to present a paper?

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Elda KUTROLLI - AIS-ALBSA Secretariat
E-mail: unishkodra.conf2025@gmail.com; conference@sociology.al

**We are looking forward to meeting you
in Shkoder - ALBANIA in November 2025!**

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University Luigj Gurakuqi Shkoder, ALBANIA

November 14-15, 2025



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- TS11. Ethnic Relations, Nationalism, Human Rights
- TS12. Environment, Economy, Tourism and Development
- TS13. Science, Technology, Digitalization and Innovation
- TS14. Student's Section

Special & Joint Sessions:

To be decided before 30 July 2025

Chair of the Conference:

Prof. Dr. Tonin GJURAJ - Rector, University Luigj Gurakuqi Shkoder, ALBANIA

Deadlines:

Deadline for abstracts: 30 September 2025, 24.00

Publications/documents:

1. Proceedings with ISBN Code (abstracts)
2. Full Paper in proceedings with ISBN Code (Optional)
3. Full Paper in International Scientific Journal “Social Studies” with ISSN Code (optional)

E-mail: unishkodra.conf25@gmail.com; conference@sociology.al
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We are looking forward to meeting you in SHKODER - ALBANIA in November 2025...!



**5th Annual Conference
of Center for School Leadership
(CSL-AADF)**

“LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN EDUCATION”

**University Luigi Gurakuqi, Shkoder, ALBANIA
14-15 November 2025**

