International Conference on

SOCIAL WORK & SOCIAL RESEARCH

Financial Capability and Asset Building for All

24-25 November, 2023

Baku | AZERBAIJAN

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PREFACE

It is no coincidence that the international scientific conference of Social Work and Social Research is being held at Azerbaijan University right now. Recently, the emergence of various social disasters caused by conflicts and ecological reasons in different parts of the world necessitates the development of new scientific approaches and methods for solving such problems. This, in turn, is possible in the conditions of combining the scientific potential of world scientists working in this field, expanding their cooperation opportunities within various cultures, customs and traditions, as well as legislative frameworks, offering wide platforms for discussions, and involving different layers of society in these discussions. In response to these challenges, Azerbaijan University, seeing social work, social work organization and its research as one of its priority directions, decided to organize the international conference on Social Work and Social Research. We are grateful to Washington University in St. Louis (USA), Sakarya University (Turkey) and the Center for Social Research (Azerbaijan) for their acceptance our invitation and join us as co-organizers. In addition, I would like to thank all the participants on my own behalf and on behalf of the co-organizers for choosing this conference as a platform for the presentation and discussion of their research and the latest scientific results.

We believe that the scientific results, ideas and proposals discussed in the panels of the İnternational conference on Social Work and Social Research will contribute to making our world more beautiful and people's lives safer and happier.

Rector of Azerbaijan University
Dr. Saadat Aliyeva

PLENARY TALKS

FINANCIAL CAPABILITY AND ASSET BUILDING (FCAB) IN SOCIAL POLICY AND SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

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Human challenges are fundamentally social. We are a highly social species and we make progress by working together. Very humans often we take this for granted, but we can do better when we learn from each other. Ideally, we are guided by cooperation, clear goals, solid evidence, smart policy design and effective delivery. In this regard, an international *Conference on Social Work and Social Research* will always be timely and productive.

This conference pays special attention to an emerging area in Social Work research and action: *Financial Capability and Assets for All*. As the world becomes more financialized, all people, even the very poorest, require effective finance and assets to invest in their daily security and future potential. Social workers are "among the people" and well positioned to build this new area of policy and practice.

BUILDING FINANCIAL CAPABILITY AND ASSETS FOR GLOBAL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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During the past several years, the world has borne witness to the ravages of the global COVID-19 pandemic, escalating geopolitical crises and shifts in the trends of economic globalization. These global macro upheavals and transformations profoundly impact the employment, economic and financial security of individuals and households in all countries and societies. This demonstrates that in a complex, changing and turbulent global environment, financial capability and asset-building – encompassing not only financial literacy, knowledge, skills and saving behaviors but also structured financial opportunities provided by inclusive finance – play a crucial role in ensuring family economic security, financial well-being and health.

In the increasingly financialized processes of modern societies, financial capability has become one of the core competencies for comprehensive human development and a foundation for promoting social prosperity. The key role of financial capability runs through the entire process of creating wealth, distributing wealth and accumulating assets. Promoting individuals' financial capability and enhancing their access to inclusive finance serves as an effective strategy for establishing a financial services system centered around individuals and families' financial well-being. However, numerous disadvantaged groups and families lack basic financial capability and financial resilience to withstand financial risks and they do not have access to inclusive financial opportunities to help them achieve asset accumulation and economic prosperity. This further affects their physical and mental health, family relationships, child development, quality of life and happiness. Given its significance, we argue that financial capability and asset building should be considered a central field of global social development.

In a broad sense, social development is defined as planned, systematic and concreted social actions and changes designed to promote the well-being and livelihood of the entire population within the context of a dynamic development process in conjunction with economic growth, technology progress and environmental improvement. As a developmental approach, social development focuses on transforming institutions, structures and policies. Its focal fields often include, for example, education, social security, health and so on. It requires institutionalized

strategies in order to define financial capability and asset building as a central field for global social development, which could encompass the following four aspects:

First, we emphasize that promoting the development of individuals' financial capability and asset building must pay attention to the trend of financialization of **social policies** and the close interaction between social policies and financial services. For financially vulnerable groups, it is crucial to ensuring their financial well-being by avoiding the risks of financial exclusion and inequality exacerbated by the financialization of social policies. We observe that the financialization of social policies is an important institutional force that affects individuals' and households' financial capability and well-being. For example, social policies for retirement and healthcare systems have individual accounts as integral components, and financially vulnerable populations are often excluded from these programs.

Second, social workers and social service professionals already work to address family financial challenges for low-income families with children and help families make ends meet, get emergency cash assistance, access public benefits and so on. Social work offers a **professional infrastructure** that is already in place and suitable interventions, services and practice for building financial capability and assets among vulnerable populations.

Thirdly, a substantial body of scientific research demonstrates that financial education alone is insufficient to fully enhance people's financial capability. Alongside financial education, we require **a delivery system of specialized financial guidance services** tailored to households' financial needs. We define financial guidance as a social service system related to household financial matters, targeting all populations, to enhance financial capability and promote asset building. By providing accessible and appropriate financial guidance to the target audience, we can equip individuals with the necessary financial knowledge and skills to better comprehend and manage personal and family financial matters. Financial guidance can encompass various service contents and forms, such as financial information, financial education and training, financial advising and planning, financial counseling, financial coaching and financial therapy. The public sector, for-profit sector and non-profit sector collaborate to construct a comprehensive delivery system of financial guidance.

Finally, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the financial situation of individuals and families and their financial capability, we need to rely on a completed **knowledge-building and education institutions** for social scientists to conduct scientific and in-depth research. Such research can help us describe the current state of family financial capability, understand its importance to individuals and families and its impact on comprehensive human development. This research also helps us recognize how financial capability is interconnected with factors such as economic conditions, educational opportunities and social well-being. By analyzing the different

dimensions of financial capability and the factors influencing it, we can develop more effective and targeted policies, services and intervention measures to improve people's level of financial capability.

Through these four areas of planned social actions, we advocate building financial capability and assets for global social development. The work in these four aspects reflects that promoting the financial capability of individuals and households is a complex and integrated social effort, requiring the collaboration of various sectors and industries in society. The profession of social work envisions financial capability and asset building for all and focuses on the relationship between financial capability and holistic human development. The promotion of financial capability by social work has created a new field of social work practice: financial social work. We have observed the rapid development of financial social work education and practice in the global context.

Keywords: Financial capability, asset building, financial inclusion, social development, social work.

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CHILD DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS IN OIL-GAS-RICH COUNTRIES: CASE OF AZERBAIJAN AND KAZAKHSTAN

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Countries rich in oil-gas resources should provide an essential source of financing for development. While doing so, investing in innovative social policies should be a priority. Proposed by Sherraden (1991), the concept of inclusive asset building in social policy is one of the innovative and effective ways to achieve this goal. Starting asset-building in childhood, specifically through child saving accounts, improves overall and psychosocial well-being during childhood (Ssewamala *et al*., 2009; Chowa *et al*., 2010) and provides resources to live productive and satisfying lives in adulthood (Peng *et al*., 2007; Friedline *et al.,* 2013). Savings during childhood help children learn about financial services and concepts (Johnson & Sherraden, 2007), which can positively impact their financial actions and behavior in adulthood (Peng *et al*., 2007). A specific saving account for children, child development accounts (CDAs) started late 1980s, helped families build life goals for their children such as postsecondary education, homeownership, business development, and retirement security (Huang *et al*., 2020). Saving accounts for postsecondary education are positively associated with children's educational attainment and human capital development in the long run (Elliott & Beverly 2011; Lerman & McKeman, 2008). Child savings accounts help families pay for postsecondary education, motivate young people to prepare for college and teach them financial management (Hunag *et al.*, 2015; Sherraden, 1991). Since the late 1990s, Singapore, Canada, the U.K., Taiwan, South Korea, Israel, and several states in the U.S. have set up CDAs for children to reduce poverty and close the gap between rich and poor children. Most of these CDAs are universal, although some are targeted based on family income. Key strategies are to start asset building with all children, automatically beginning at birth often called Child Development Accounts (CDAs).

Oil-gas-rich countries have enough resources to open a CDA for each child financed by oil and gas wealth. Two oil-gas-rich post-Soviet countries can be leaders in doing so. Kazakhstan in 2022 announced to launch of a new policy, the National Fund for Children, and fund by oil-gas revenues accumulated in the National Fund of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2023a). The National Fund of the Republic of Kazakhstan is a repository for the nation's natural resource revenue and associated investment returns. Under the new policy announced by the president, 50% of the National Fund's annual income from natural

resources will be allocated to a new National Fund for Children, which will support universal child accounts. Starting in January 2024, the government of Kazakhstan will automatically open an account for every child who is a citizen of Kazakhstan.[1] Opened shortly after the beneficiary's birth, each account will receive an annual deposit from the National Fund for Children until the beneficiary turns 18.[2]

Discussions on a national CDA policy for Azerbaijan began in 2017, generating an international CDA policy conference that drew participants from 12 countries, including Kazakhstan (AzerTaj, 2018; International Federation of Social Workers, 2018; Next Age Institute, 2018; Azerbaijan Social Work Public Union, 2018; Center for Social Development, 2018). If both Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan implemented CDA policies, the initiatives would become examples for other up to 80 resource-rich developing countries. Moreover, the nations would be among the few that effectively use natural resource wealth to support and develop the population. CDA policy is an evidence-based strategy to achieve this goal. The design and implementation of the National Fund for Children policy in Kazakhstan may facilitate the diffusion of CDA and CDA-like policies in other oil-gas-rich post-Soviet countries.

Keywords: Child welfare, natural resources, extractive industries.

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[1] The policy will provide an account and annual contributions for every child aged 5 years or under when the policy launches.

[2] The government plans to deposit USD 150 annually until the age of 18. Deposits will be in U.S. dollars.

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FINANCIAL CAPABILITY AND ASSET BUILDING (FCAB) AND SOCIAL WORK IN THE UNITED STATES: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PROFESSION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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Context. For the social worker in America, developing knowledge and skills to help families build their financial capability and assets has become a critical component of the profession. Although the profession's focus originated with helping those in poverty and those otherwise marginalized, the 21st century has created a "perfect storm" of financial challenges with significant technological advancements in the financial products and services sector compounded by recent socio-economic upheavals, a world health pandemic (COVID-19), and growing inequality in both income and wealth across the population. A 2019 survey by the American Psychological Associated showed that money and employment are the two top stressors in America (American Psychological Association, 2019). A 2018 study showed that 16% of suicides are related to a financial problem (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018). And in 2020, nearly half of households in 2020 reported "serious financial problems" (NPR/RWJF/Harvard, 2020).

Is the social work profession in America prepared to address these issues? After all, it is the social worker that is most likely to be working with the most financially fragile individuals, families, and communities. And social workers are unique in that they utilize a person-in-environment approach which is necessary to address both the presenting issue (such as mental or physical health, homelessness, child abuse, immigration, domestic violence) and the underlying financial vulnerability that often accompany these situations.

Issues of credit and debt are particularly problematic in America. For those unfamiliar with the American system of debt and credit, we have a confusing system of "credit scoring" that rewards having a certain amount and kind of debt but penalizes you if you have no debt or do not pay off your debt consistently. One's credit score can affect one's ability to obtain housing or employment, or the level of interest rate on a loan. Household debt totals $17.06 trillion as of 2023(Q2). That comprises 70% mortgages, 9% of auto loan and student loans each, and 6% credit cards (Federal Reserve Bank of New York, August 2023). And approximately 24% are either unbanked or underbanked (FDIC, 2020; FDIC, 2018) meaning that they aren't using mainstream

financial institutions or are using a combination of mainstream and costly alternative financial services. In an informal survey of nonprofits about which financial capability topics were most critical to address, credit and debt were the most common response.

In a 2016 survey of social work faculty, 92% perceive that FCAB content is useful to their students, but only 54% are actually teaching the content. Of particular significance is the finding that over 60% of the faculty have never taught about financial products and services, including on debt and credit (such as student loans, credit reports and scoring, and bank and non-bank products) (Huang et al., 2021). To be clear, social workers have been addressing the needs of impoverished households since the inception of the profession. The distinction we are making is that new tools and innovations are needed to address the changes in the social, political, and financial climate of the 21st century.

In 2015, the Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare identified this issue as one of 13 national Grand Challenges for Social Work (GCSW). In a speech by then U.S. Council on Social Work Education President, Darla Spence Coffey expressed a similar message noting that FCAB content and practice is "essential knowledge and skills" for today's social workers (Coffey, 2018, p. 2).

And what would FCAB success look like to be financially capable? Individuals must have "the knowledge and skills to manage finances and plan for a financially stable future" (Sherraden *et al.*, 2015, p. 11). They must also have the opportunity to access: "basic financial services and asset-building programs; targeted resources and progressive programs that counteract environmental and/or unjust barriers, particularly those faced by disadvantaged or vulnerable populations;" and financial guidance services (which could be social workers trained in helping clients to navigate financial systems and personal finances). Finally, they must have a "voice in the design of suitable financial products and services, and a way to influence decisions of consumer protection organizations and financial regulators" (Sherraden *et al.*, 2015, pp. 10-11).

How are social workers addressing this grand challenge? The good news is that awareness and innovations in FCAB have been growing over the past 20 to 30 years. Researchers, practitioners, and policymakers have been testing innovations in FCAB and developing evidence that can improve the wellbeing of financially vulnerable households. Today, social workers are leading FCAB innovations and working in partnership across sectors at the micro, mezzo, and macro level of practice (direct work with individuals and families, with communities, and with policymakers) (Huang *et al*., 2022).

One of the first FCAB innovations, tested nationwide, and known as individual development account programs, combines a financial education curriculum with the opportunity to build assets through a matched savings account set up at a federally-insured financial institution. The first test

of this innovation began in 1998 with 13 organizations across the United States called the "American Dream Policy Demonstration" (Schreiner & Sherraden, 2007). The Federal government subsequently established a policy program, known as "Assets for Independence," to fund these types of individualized community programs. Though the federal program is no longer funded, the concept continues in various types of organizations. They have been implemented and tested with a wide variety of populations and in a variety of settings including families living in poverty, rental property residents, immigrants and refugees, survivors of intimate partner violence, people transitioning from prison, youth in foster care, and children in public school (Sanders, 2010; Sanders, 2016; Shobe & Dienemann, 2008; Peters et al., 2016).

The evidence from these and subsequent programs have highlighted the key distinction between financial literacy and what we now term financial capability. The IDA program staff provided financial education but also financial guidance about ways clients could build their assets, and what affordable and safe financial products and services were available to them in the community. Of particular importance was helping clients to understand their credit report, how to improve their credit score, and build credit (Sherraden et al., 2005). Advocacy and findings from these and other programs have informed development of more equitable credit reporting and scoring algorithms, and credit building products. The findings also highlight the importance of financial guidance as a financial capability intervention for the financially vulnerable who are least likely to be able to afford mainstream financial counselling.

Social workers have led or partnered with government, industry, and the non-profit sector to advance other FCAB policies and programs. Most prominently, social workers are leading a now 16-year policy experiment that has informed state and federal level efforts to establish asset-building accounts at birth for all Americans, known as child development accounts (Cisneros et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2021). To date, seven states have implemented statewide CDA policy, and about five million children have CDAs across the United States.

As an example of the industry and federal government partnership, social workers have been testing "Refund-to-Savings." This technology initiative uses features in a well-known online tax-filing platform to encourage low- and moderate-income tax filers to save part of their refunds (Grinstein-Weiss *et al.,* 2015).

Social workers have collaborated with government agencies, such as the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, created under the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010, to ensure fair treatment by financial institutions (Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, n.d.). The agency has developed a train-the-trainer financial capability toolkit as a resource

for professionals working with financially vulnerable clients. It also developed the first normalized measurement scale to assess financial wellbeing (CFPB, 2015).

Social workers have also worked with other national agencies to hurdle the financial access barrier in underserved communities. For example, The National Credit Union Administration and Cities for Financial Empowerment (CFE) Fund focus on providing access to mainstream financial services in particular geographical areas, and CFE has developed national account standards that include product features that support the unbanked.

Social work educators and researchers have been key figures in the development of FCAB innovation and evidence. Another critical component is workforce development. Educators at the Center for Social Development at Washington University in St. Louis developed a 32-module curriculum for social work faculty to use in teaching their students FCAB concepts. It was tested with 16 minority-serving institutions. The curriculum was subsequently developed into a textbook and accompanied by online teaching resource modules. Other schools and faculty are teaching FCAB content, either as part of a course or as a standalone course. The University of Maryland established a continuing education certificate in FCAB topics that recently introduced a section on student loan repayment. A social worker has leveraged her experience with financially vulnerable minority populations to develop an online financial guidance platform, Change Machine, to assist social work practitioners and social service agencies in the field.

Gaps and Priorities for the Future

While there has been much progress, there remains much to be done. Based on the results from the 2016 survey of social work faculty, teaching FCAB content is a key priority. Preparing social work students for practice must include teaching FCAB content if the profession is to remain relevant and true to its person-in-environment perspective. In this regard, plans are being developed to offer faculty fellowships in teaching FCAB content, and research to assess what topics and methods are most effective.

Policy priorities are clearly outlined in the FCAB chapter of the book Grand Challenges for Social Work and Society (Huang *et al*., 2022). They include expanding digital and place-based access for financially vulnerable families to affordable and secure banking services, affordable credit, financial guidance, financial protection, and tax assistance programs. They also emphasize starting early with federally-based universal and automatic lifelong asset-building accounts at birth, and youth-focused FCAB education and employment programs.

Keywords: Financial capability, social work, assets, united states, research, policy.

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FINANCIAL CAPABILITY AND SOCIAL WORK IN CHINA

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Modern societies are undergoing a long process of increasing financialization, in which finance is gradually penetrating many areas of social life and is increasingly becoming an important driving force for social development. Meanwhile, under the trend of social financialization, increasing uncertainty and economic and financial risks also profoundly affect the financial well-being of individual, family, group and community, which in turn creates a series of new challenges for profession social work. In the global, financial social work is a new branch of professional social work and only has more than one decade history, which has gradually emerged and developed in China since 2018.

The rise of financial social work in China has dual backgrounds. On the one hand, in the last 10 years, Chinese has issued a series of policies on financial inclusion and financial capability enhancement, which has provided a favourable impetus for the development of financial social work in China. For example, banks and other financial institutions are required to carry out financial education and improve the citizens' financial literacy, which has facilitated a large number of financial institutions to emphasize and fulfill their social responsibilities. As another example, China Government has also issued the development plans for financial inclusion, which has gotten easier access to financial service for many disadvantaged groups and rural residents, alleviated the borrowing burden for them, and enabled many financial institutions to have a wider service networks. On the other hand, recent 5 years, the Center for Social Development at Washington University in St. Louis has provided many supports for the professional education, practice and research of financial social work in China through cooperation with a number of Chinese universities, such as organizing academic symposiums, carrying out collaborative study, and providing curricula and educational guidance, which has led to the launch of the MSW programs in the direction of financial social work in some Chinese universities and colleges represented by the Central University of Finance and Economics (CUFE), and the curricula for the Bachelor's degree or Master's degree in "Financial Social Work", and the implementation of the nationwide practice program on financial social work.

Over the past five years, financial social work has developed rapidly in China. In November 2018, "Financial Empowerment and Asset Building: International Symposium on Financial Social

Work Practice, Research and Education" was successfully held, co-sponsored by the Central University of Finance and Economics (CUFE), the Center for Social Development at Washington University in St. Louis and the Center for the Study of Social Work in China at Peking University-Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Since then, in 2019, three successive academic forums or salons were held in China, organized by the Central University of Finance and Economics (CUFE) in Beijing, the Shanghai Business School (SBS) in Shanghai, and the Southwest University of Finance and Economics (SWUFE) in Chengdu, Sichuan province. 2020 is one key year for the development of financial social work in China. The China Association for Social Work Education has established the Professional Committee of Financial Social Work, marking the formal establishment of a national alliance for financial social work education, research and practice. On this basis, an increasing number of financial institutions, non-profit organizations and social service agencies are implementing financial social work projects and carrying out specific services.

To summarize, the development of financial social work in China presents four characteristics. First, the development of financial social work is promoted by multiple subjects, which is manifested in the leading role played by the government in promoting the development of financial social work, the synergistic parallelism between social organizations and financial social work and the reciprocal collaboration between financial institutions and financial social work. Secondly, the asynchronous development of the financial social work practice field is mainly manifested in the fact that micro-projects of inclusive financial education are advancing faster, while asset building is in its startup, and there is an urgent need to explore and carry out more precise practices and services. Third, the education, research and practice of financial social work are promoted sequentially, which is mainly manifested in the fact that social work educators in colleges and universities play the lead role in the exploration of financial social work, build a research team to jointly promote the development of financial social work education by carrying out academic communication and promote the implementation of financial social work practice by some action research projects. Fourthly, the different participants have established and shared common value, interest and goal, especially in the network of the Professional Council for Financial Social Work, which incorporates the driving forces of both the financial social work and social finance fields.

There are still many obstacles to the development of financial social work in China, including the channel for top-down development has not yet been fully gotten through, the path of matching the supply and demand of services needs to be further smoothened and unobstructed and the linkage mechanism of multiple subjects has not yet been established. Therefore, to promote the sustainable development of financial social work in China, the following strategies could be considered: firstly, Chinese Government should improve the top-level policy design of financial

social work; secondly, all of financial social work researchers and educators should promote the trinity of education, practice and research in order to build up the professional team, construct the theoretical system; thirdly, financial institutions and relative social organizations should realize the linkage of multiple subjects and give full play to their roles.

Keywords: Financial capability, social work, professional development, China.

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CHILD DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS FOR ALL: GLOBAL VISION AND POTENTIAL

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The world is facing enormous societal challenges-such as economic downturns, global warming, geopolitical differences, population decline. We must tackle these challenges with bold and innovative solutions. An urgent and essential task for us is to develop our children, the most valuable resources on the planet, so that they can grow up and contribute to the world as global citizens.

We envision a world that all children start their lives with an opportunity to build assets and develop their potential through Child Development Accounts (CDAs). As of now, over 15 millions of children worldwide have CDAs. While we celebrate this milestone, we are energized to expand the opportunities to allow more children around the world to build assets through CDAs.

SECTION I

Financial Capability and Asset Building

SOCIAL REUSE OF CONFISCATED ASSETS: THE BEST PRACTICES OF OTHER COUNTRIES

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Background

Like any subject, public administration requires improvement over time, taking into account the new realities and requirements of society. The January events of 2022, which took place in Kazakhstan as a result of citizens' dissatisfaction with the state's socio-economic policy in the country, became the impetus for its speedy revision. "Due to the low human resources, formalism, and corruption, the level of public confidence in the institutions of power remains low" the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan K. Tokayev noted in his speech (Tokaev, 2022). The media also noted that the cause of the mass disorder was ineffective public administration for three decades (Mallinson, 2022). Since then, arrests of high-ranking officials in corruption cases with confiscation of their property have continued.

It is worth noting that people's trust in the government has become especially important, which can be achieved through the correct and effective implementation of the decisions made. In July of this year, the President of the country signed the Law "On the Return of Illegally Acquired Assets to the State". One of the goals of the adopted Law is the restoration of social justice. According to the Law, a special state fund will be created, where it is planned to direct funds received from illegally acquired assets returned to the state. These funds will then be used to finance social and economic projects.

At the same time, changing policies by learning from the experience of other countries is better than inventing it from scratch. At the same time, the researcher needs to carefully study what has already been done, whether they were successful, what were the obstacles in implementation,

whether it is possible to introduce this intervention into the policy of a particular country (Johnson, Tilley *et al.*, 2015).

The purpose of this work is to study the experience of other countries in the field of management of confiscated property in terms of using them to support social projects as part of the return of illegally acquired assets to the state.

Data and Methods: In the course of the work the statistical data from the report of the European Union, the World Bank, as well as research data were used. The author applies a comparative research method.

Conclusions and Implications: A study of the experience of others has revealed that the effective use of funds from confiscated property for social projects can help to reduce some of the social problems among young people. This is especially necessary now, when there is still a high percentage of unemployment and suicides among young people in society.

In accordance with the above-mentioned Law of Kazakhstan, "social projects" are projects in the field of health care, education, support for socially vulnerable segments of the population, persons with disabilities, orphans, children left without parental care, rural youth, the unemployed, communal and socio-cultural infrastructure facilities for the needs of residents of single-industry towns, rural settlements and other projects determined by the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. At the same time, the procedure for selecting and determining the criteria for social projects shall be developed by the central authorized body for state planning. Thus, the results of this study can be useful for those involved in the decision-making process in the field of public property management, as well as for researchers, since this issue is still not sufficiently studied.

Keywords: finance social projects, public administration, socio-economic policy, Kazakhstan.

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THE ROLE OF INFLATION, GROWTH, DIRECT INVESTMENTS AND REAL EXCHANGE VARIABLES IN THE UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM: AN EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON THE TURKISH ECONOMY

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Regardless of the level of development, one of the most priority problems of economies is unemployment, which has both economic and social consequences. A more serious problem is that youth unemployment occupies a significant place in unemployment figures, which is a chronic macroeconomic problem in the Turkish economy. The aim of this study is to analyze the macroeconomic determinants of unemployment in Turkey in the period 2007:01-2023:08. In the study where the ARDL bounds test was preferred, the dependent variable was determined as unemployment figures, while inflation, growth, real exchange rate and foreign direct investors were the independent variables. According to the results, there is a negative relationship between growth and foreign direct investments and unemployment, while there is a positive relationship between other variables and unemployment.

Keywords: Unemployment rate, economic growth, direct foreign investment, inflation rate, exchange rate.

A PILOT RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIAL OF INTERVENTION FOR SOCIAL WORK CLIENTS WITH CHILDREN FACING COMPLEX FINANCIAL PROBLEMS IN FINLAND (FINSOC)

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Background and Objective

Financial problems, indebtedness, low income, and poverty place strain on the everyday life of families with children. There is a growing global recognition that social work should play a key role in improving the financial capability of their clients, and help them achieve financial well-being. Although the importance of financial social work is acknowledged, the interventions for financial support are limited and there is a lack of research on the effectiveness of these practices. We have developed a financial social work intervention, FinSoc, to increase financial literacy and economic self-efficacy and reduce financial anxiety among parents with financial problems in Finland. The aim of this pilot randomized controlled trial is to explore the feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary effectiveness of the intervention. This paper describes the design, implementation of the trial and preliminary results.

Methods

This study is a pilot randomized controlled trial with a mixed methods approach applying both quantitative measures and qualitative interviews. Participating social work clients with children are randomly assigned to either the treatment or the waiting list control group at a ratio of 1:1. The treatment group receives the intervention and the control group receivesservices as usual. The quantitative data from social work clients are collected at three measurement points: first, at the baseline of the intervention; second, within a week after the intervention, and third, at follow-up three months after the intervention. Qualitative interviewsare conducted post-intervention with both clients receiving, and professionals implementing the intervention. The feasibility of the study is assessed through recruitment and retention rates and the interviews with social work professionals providing the intervention. Acceptability is assessed through feedback from participants (social work clients and professionals) on satisfaction with the intervention and usefulness of the specific intervention components. Potential effectiveness is measured by financial literacy, economic self-efficacy and financial anxiety.

Results

We report preliminary results of the design and content of the FinSoc intervention. We managed to recruit 30 families with financial difficulties between December 2022 and May 2023 from eight different municipalities or municipal federations in Finland. The intervention has four components: the personal finances, eco-social perspective to finances, family budget and feelings, and thoughts concerning finances. The intervention is conducted by family´s own social work professional with support of a research social worker. Fidelity of the intervention is supported by organizing training, providing ongoing guidance and manuals for social workers. Our preliminary results indicate, that FinSoc intervention can be conducted with fidelity and it is feasible and acceptable. However, minor corrections should be made to the manual and training.

Conclusion and Implications

Within this study, a new family financial social work intervention has been developed and implemented. This study is a pilot RCT of a novel approachto increase financial literacy and economic self-efficacy and to reduce financial anxiety faced by Finnish families. The study is the first necessary step in understanding the potential utility of an evidence-based intervention for Finnish social work clients with children facing complex financial problems. The initial results of this study demonstrate that this pilot RCT is feasible andthe intervention is acceptable, although some modifications needs to be conducted. Findings of this pilot RCT indicate that larger full-scale RCT is needed to investigate the efficacy of the intervention.

Keywords: randomized controlled trial (RCT), financial social work, families, evidence-based intervention.

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC ASSISTANCE IN COMBATING POVERTY: THE EXAMPLE OF SASFs IN TÜRKİYE

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Problems of the Study

Poverty is a global social issue closely related to an individual's physical, emotional, psychological, and social well-being. In a narrow sense, poverty refers to the inability to meet basic needs such as nutrition, shelter, and security. The diverse dimensions of poverty make it difficult to provide a single definition. Factors such as the duration, extent, impact of poverty, and individual perceptions contribute to the variety of poverty definitions. Consequently, poverty studies have been classified into 9 categories: absolute-relative, objective-subjective, temporary-chronic, rural-urban, income-human, women-children, working poor, cyclical, and social deprivation (Köroğlu, 2022). Absolute poverty refers to the inability to meet basic needs even at the most fundamental level; relative poverty involves having a lower standard of living than the overall welfare level of society; subjective poverty is defined by an individual's perception and feeling of being poor. Human poverty is a multidimensional concept beyond income poverty, encompassing lack of access to education, health, and basic social services. Temporary poverty arises from fluctuating incomes over certain periods, while chronic poverty implies long-term income loss due to individual or structural reasons, unlike temporary poverty. Gender and child poverty relate to poverty stemming from demographic characteristics; rural-urban poverty is caused by regional economic disparities; working poverty refers to inadequate income for oneself and one's family. Seasonal poverty signifies efforts to escape poverty by migrating from rural to urban areas for employment. Social poverty identifies individuals in society who lack access to specific resources (Köroğlu, 2022; Öcal, 2022; Özsoy & Karataş, 2021). Statistics reveal that 1.2 billion people in 111 countries earn less than $1.9 per day (UNDP, 2022). In Türkiye, data regarding poverty indicates that approximately 29.3% of household populations were living below the poverty line in the year 2022 (TÜİK, 2023).

Enhancing societal well-being and ensuring social justice and equal opportunities emphasize the importance of effective, functional, and sustainable poverty policies by governments. Throughout history, assistance, solidarity, charity, neighborliness, and kinship relationships were

the traditional means of addressing poverty, which gradually evolved into more organized structures through charitable organizations and foundations (Canan, Egemen, 2021). In Türkiye, various instruments of public institutions, associations, foundations, and NGOs are employed to combat poverty. Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations (SASF), as one of the institutions striving to prevent poverty, constitute the main focus of this study. This research is significant in examining the services provided by SASF, an important instrument in combating poverty in Türkiye, and discussing the role of the implemented service models in poverty prevention through statistical data.

Aims

Poverty is a multidimensional concept that goes beyond the inability to fulfill basic needs such as nutrition, shelter, and security, extending to the lack of access to health, education, and social services. Poverty is not only a concern for economically underdeveloped countries but also a challenge for developed nations that have yet to find complete solutions. If not addressed, poverty, associated with problems such as lack of education, social exclusion, psychosocial issues, and health problems, can damage the sense of unity and cohesion within society. Effective, functional, and sustainable poverty policies implemented by governments contribute to improving individuals' adverse conditions at the micro level and ensuring fair access to societal resources at the macro level, thereby mitigating income inequality. Among the institutions aimed at promoting the development and support of a culture of unity, solidarity, and assistance in Turkish society, SYDFs play a crucial role. Established through the "Law on Promotion of Social Assistance and Solidarity" in 1986, SASFs currently serve with a total of 1003 branches across various regions in Türkiye (Sosyal Yardımlar Genel Müdürlüğü, 2022). SASFs provide assistance in essential areas such as nutrition, clothing, shelter, fuel, health, and education for citizens facing economic deprivation (Arpacıoğlu & Yıldırım, 2011). This study aims to discuss the role of SASFs in poverty prevention based on statistical data and explore the impact of foundation-provided services on the culture of poverty.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research design using document analysis method. Document analysis involves systematically analyzing the content of written documents such as books, journals, articles, statistics, laws, and regulations (Kiral, 2020). Accordingly, the initial section of the study involves reviewing global and local reports on poverty, statistical data, academic articles, and graduate theses. The second section presents statistical data for the years

2015 to 2021 concerning the number of individuals/households benefiting from SASF services and the total amount of aid provided.

Findings

Inequity in income distribution is considered a factor hindering and complicating countries' efforts to combat poverty. In this context, the GINI coefficient takes center stage. As the GINI coefficient approaches zero, it signifies income equality, while a value closer to one indicates income inequality and deterioration (Özdemir & İslamoğlu, 2017). According to OECD's 2021 GINI coefficient data, Costa Rica (0.487) ranks as the country with the worst income distribution. It is followed by Chile (0.46) and Mexico (0.42). Türkiye, ranking fourth, had a GINI coefficient of 0.408 in 2018 (Euronews, 2022). Examining poverty data for the years 2006 to 2021 in Türkiye, it is evident that poverty has decreased by an average of 10.5% from 2006 to the present. Analysis of SASF data indicates that social assistance has been provided in 26 different categories, with an increasing number of beneficiaries and a growing total amount of aid between 2015 and 2021. Some of the aid is provided as one-time assistance, while others are regular. Moreover, it is observed that in regions with low socioeconomic development, 6 different project supports aim to enhance the economic, psychological, and social well-being of groups such as children, women, elderly, Roma, disabled, and homeless individuals, promoting their societal integration.

Conclusion

Over the past 6 years, there has been an increase in the number of beneficiaries and the total amount of aid across almost all social assistance categories within SASFs. Nevertheless, there is a lack of significant reduction in the number of impoverished individuals and poverty rates. Social assistance addresses the immediate needs of the needy, but it has been criticized for not eradicating poverty, trapping recipients in minimum living conditions, and serving as a temporary solution (Daşlı, 2018). While the mentioned social assistance fills a significant gap in meeting the instant needs of beneficiaries, statistical data suggests that it falls short of eliminating poverty and establishing income justice on its own.

Keywords: Poor, poverty, social assistance and solidarity foundations, social assistance.

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CHILD DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS (CDAs): WILL THEY WORK FOR CHILDREN IN INSTITUTIONS?

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Overview of CDAs[1]

Global CDAs are proposed as a public financing mechanism for building monetary assets for children in non-Western countries, including Azerbaijan (Huseynili, 2023). CDA's started out in the United States about 20 years ago and are sometimes called Individual Development Account (IDAs) (Huang *et al*., 2020). Several U.S. States initiated IDA's, giving parents an option to fund and save for a child's future education by setting up an early savings account (Zou & Tlapek, 2015; Sherraden *et al*., 2005). CDA models, and especially the design variables, vary widely. For example, CDAs in some countries have been initially funded mainly by public resources. Most CDA designs generally limit use of the funds until the child is 18. Permitted purposes for which the child may use the funds upon reaching age 18 vary, but most are for post-secondary education (Nabunya *et al*., 2019). Evidence-based research on CDAs has revealed both the uplifting economic effects on families with children as well as positive psychological impact on children of asset building itself (Sherraden *et al*., 2010). CDA advocates articulate three essential principles for creating global CDA structures:

- Universal (include all children)

- Progressive (subsidize the disadvantaged) and

- Opened upon child's birth and receive investments throughout childhood (at least up to age 18) (Sherraden & Zou, 2022).

CDAs must be designed to be consistent with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC 1990) enumeration of children's rights, including its anti-discrimination provisions (UN CRC Article 2). However, for example, CDAs in Singapore were initially for children solely "born in wedlock" (Huang *et al*., 2020). The exclusion of children born out of wedlock violates the

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[1]The working definition for "institution" in this context is a publicly or privately managed residential facility that does not provide a child with a family environment (van Iljzendoorn, M. 2020). Temporary residential care facilities are not included. Likewise, this presentation does not address the CRC challenges of providing access to CDAs to children who may be in other forms of alternative care, such as foster care, or of including children who may be "in conflict with the law" and housed in juvenile detention facilities or prisons. Likewise, the complex issue of how to include CDAs for "children on the move" as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) or refugees or asylum seekers, regardless of a child's status as an unaccompanied minor, is outside the scope of this presentation.

CRC's prohibition against discrimination (Vaghri *et al.*, 2022). This paper investigates the challenges in creating CDAs that comply with the CRC's non-discrimination mandate with an analysis of the difficulties with ensuring "universal access" to children living in institutions.

CRC Legal Framework for CDAs

The CRC is a multilateral UN treaty, ratified by every nation (State Parties), except the United States (UN CRC, 1990). The CRC mobilized State Parties around a vision of the world where children are viewed as holders of their own human rights (Archard, 2015). The CRC defines four core principles that State Parties must apply to all rights: Non-discrimination (Article 2); the best interests of the child as a primary concern (Article 3); the right to life, survival, and development (Article 6); and the right to freely express views and be heard (Article 12). All State Parties, including Azerbaijan, have a legal obligation to uphold CRC's indivisible rights. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC Committee) enforces the treaty's provisions, and issues detailed reports on country-specific compliance with the treaty. The CRC Committee also regularly issues legal opinions—General Comments (GC's)—on implementation of each CRC article. In this paper, the CRC's non-discrimination provisions (Besson & Kleber, 2019) and the child's right to education (CRC art. 29; UNCRC GC No.1, 2001) are applied to CDAs.

Children in Institutions

Universal Access. Data on the number of children currently residing in institutions worldwide is emerging as part of the deinstitutionalization movement for children in care (Desmond *et al.*, 2020). Conservative global estimates suggest that there are between 5 to 6 million children residing in institutions (Goldman *et al.*, 2020; Van Ilzendoorn *et al.*, 2020). Given these numbers, children living in and exiting institutions at 18 will likely be a substantial minority group to include with global CDAs. Moreover, children in institutions may/may not have parent/s who can invest in and manage a CDA. Identifying alternative financial managers in lieu of unavailable parent/s (due for example to death, abandonment, or removal of child for abuse/neglect) will be problematic, given children in institutions are typically without individual guardians. Children with disabilities will be especially vulnerable to exclusion; reasonable accommodation for their CDA inclusion is legally required (UNCRC GC No.9, 2007). Provisions that permit children with evolving maturity to have information on their accounts and the agency to manage/access accounts will need to be included to comply with CRC Article 12 (Vaghri *et al.*, 2022). Universal access depends on comprehensive birth registration systems. However, the dream of achieving CRC Article 7's requirements for free, immediate, compulsory, and accessible birth registration and companion Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 16.9-Provide legal identity for all

including birth registration-is not yet a reality. Obtaining identity documentation for registering children in institutions for CDAs will be an essential task. Historically meager public budgets for child welfare an (CTWWC 2021) and unresolved child protection gaps for children in institutional care (Goldman *et al*., 2020) means that State Party allocation of public resources to comply with CRC child rights non-discrimination provisions will be especially challenging for inclusion of children in institutions.

Progressive

Adjusting CDA designs to cover children in institutions means that the lack of direct parental financial support-either to initially invest in a CDA or add tranches of funds-must be considered. Children in institutions are not likely to receive ongoing infusions of family funds like children in families may receive. Without a plan to even out the contributions through public investments over time, CDAs will not be progressive. Under CRC, State Parties will be required to subsidize CDAs so that inequalities are minimized. Public subsidies are proposed, but no official costing analysis by country of CDAs has been done. Non-State Party funders, such as multilateral, bilateral, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private sector entities are also proposed as potential donors for subsidizing the balances in individual accounts; however, how these donors would be regulated so that their contributions enable State Parties to comply with the CRC remains an open issue for any emerging CDA legal and regulatory framework.

Opened at Birth/Available at Age 18

CDA programs that require parents to opt in at birth will need to be adjusted for institutionalized children, so they are automatically included. Likewise, flexibility for withdrawals prior to 18, and concomitant child welfare programs, need to be an option because children in institutions have many immediate needs, for nutritious food, health care and primary and secondary education, that frequently are not met. These deprivations have a multitude of negative effects on children (Nelson, 2009). Also, many questions remain about for what purpose the assets may be used when a child exits an institution at 18. The assumption that children who have spent years in an institution will emerge as emotionally and intellectually ready at age 18 for post-secondary education is idealistic, given the overwhelming evidence-based research on the detrimental effects passed onto children who age out of institutions (Goldman, 2020; Ilzendoorn, 2020). A flexible purpose, which does not necessarily include post-secondary education/training, may be needed for children "graduating" from institutions, in such countries as Azerbaijan (UNCRC-Azerbaijan, 2023). CDA assets could address the myriad unmet needs children face as they leave institutional care (Fernandez-Simo *et al*., 2023).

Recommendations

The hope of human rights defenders for children is that institutional care will be eliminated and replaced with family-based care (Goldman *et al*., 2020). Even if deinstitutionalization is successful, the process is gradual. Unfortunately, due to emerging threats to families, such as the loss of parents and caregivers to COVID-19 and HIV-AIDS, the population of children in institutions can expand (Lancet ICRC Group 2020). Further, the inconsistent progress in most countries in creating functional child welfare systems-which support and fund family reunification programs and alternative care options such as foster care and adoption-is obvious given reliable global data showing 5 to 6 million children still in institutions. Thus, CDA structures/funding must specifically address the potential unequal impact on children in institutions. Some recommendations include:

- Create CDAs that comply with the CRC and its optional protocols. Examples: Check each policy variable for discriminatory impact on any subset of children, especially but not limited to, children in institutions (CRC Article 2). Ensure a child's right to participation is guaranteed (CRC Article 12).

- Manage how CDAs are integrated with applicable national/sub-national laws and social protection policies so that they do not siphon away scarce child welfare resources from budgets for deinstitutionalization interventions, such as cash transfer programs to poor families, family reunification efforts, or foster care and adoption program development, or trauma support for victims of violence (Hillis *et al*., 2016; VAC Reports, 2023).

- Address CDA design features that will specifically impact children in institutions, including, but not limited to, lack of parental funding, absence of guardians for individual fund management, lack of birth registration, and need for flexible CDA purpose/s for those exiting institutional care.

- Perform a costing analysis for CDAs by country. Determine how State Parties annual appropriations will provide necessary subsidies over time. If non-State Party funds are to support subsidies, develop CRC-compliant legal framework to cover such donors and investments (Clark *et al*., 2020).

- Assess the overall strategic and legal impact of this systemic policy with comprehensive child impact assessments by country (UNCRC GC No.19, 2016) before implementing it globally and integrate with other financing instruments for education (ECW, 2023).

- Determine need for concurrent programs to support CDA holders in institutions, such as access to financial management training and supplemental academic assistance.

- Improve the skills of social service work force and increase the number of social workers who handle case management, especially the gatekeeping function at institutions.

- Ensure that any new financial mechanisms for adult (over age 18) education or other long-term purpose do not undermine efforts to deinstitutionalize facilities for children in care.

CDAs could be an advantageous savings or investment option to fund a child's post-secondary education/training. However, CRC children's rights law requires that issues with access for all children, including children in institutions, be addressed before CDAs are globally implemented.

Keywords: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), children's rights, deinstitutionalization, alternative care, residential care.

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ENHANCING SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS' ABILITY TO SHARE ASSET-BUILDING PROGRAMS WITH UNDERSERVED CLIENTS

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In theory, California achieved social work's Grand Challenge of bringing Financial Capability and Asset Building (FCAB) to all with the passage of a comprehensive array of financial products for the poor and financially excluded. CalABLE (California Achieving a Better Life Experience) was passed in 2015, providing people with disabilities an account to accumulate savings towards quality of life care, without worry that the accumulation of these savings will threaten their other benefits. CalSavers was passed in 2016 to provide a savings vehicle for workers whose employment does not include a retirement program. Now even self-employed workers can sign up to have tax-protected funds automatically withdrawn from their earnings and invested. Most recently, the passage of CalKIDS (California Kids Investment and Development Savings Program) in 2019 means that all Californians born after July 1, 2022 have a seeded child saving account automatically opened in their name. Additionally children currently meeting one of the following criteria are also eligible for seeded accounts of $500 per category: low-income public school students, foster youth, or youth experiencing homelessness. These saving accounts complement other innovative programs like Lending Circles, which increase participants' credit scores as they make timely deposits to their savings accounts (actually repaying a loan) (Doran & Timoney, 2012). Meanwhile to address the unbanked status of many eligible families, California's BankOn system provides a list of banks and credit unions that enable even undocumented persons to open a low-cost account. The only catch is that people need to register for these saving programs.

For members of low-income, underserved immigrant communities that catch is significant. With public programs having insufficient funding for advertising campaigns, the encouragement to sign up largely falls to social service workers (SSWs). Yet it is doubtful that SSWs are prepared to discuss FCAB programs with their clients. Despite calls for FCAB to be included in social work curricula, it is rare for social work students to receive FCAB training (Kindle, 2013; Ward *et al*., 2023). Research on programs to train social workers to include financial conversations is only emerging, with two articles for in-school training (Doran & Bagdasaryan, 2018; Sherraden *et al*., 2007) and two for in-service training (Frey *et al*., 2015, 2017). Our research adds to the body of work focused on in-service training through a pilot training program designed to enhance SSWs ability to share information about the new saving accounts with their clients.

Methods

We used convenience sampling to select three non-profit agencies serving low income, mostly Latinx populations in a major urban region for a qualitative study of a pilot training program instituted in the summer of 2023. Given limited literature on training programs to encourage financial inclusion through specialized saving accounts and the pilot nature of the training, we used interviews to both track outcomes and to explore feasibility. We used a community based participatory research (CBPR; Rubin & Babbie, 2008) approach to develop the most suitable training for each agency. We began with in-depth pre-interviews with agency directors (N=3) and participating staff (N=11) to gain a sense of existing asset building practices and suggestions to tailor the program given each agency's unique population and practice (CFPB, 2014).

As a result of these interviews, the planned online training was replaced with an online resource guide for use with clients. The planned PowerPoint based in-person training workshop for all three agencies was also replaced. For two of the agencies, the planned training was replaced with group discussions following an exercise to stimulate thinking about their personal financial future and promote future orientation just as they were encouraged to do with clients (CFPB, 2021). This activity was then followed by a brief overview of the key features of the saving account programs (CalKIDS with Scholarshare 529, Cal SAVER, CalABLE and Lending Circles) and a demonstration of the online resource guide. This approach was used for the two agencies whose paid and volunteer workers were less familiar with engaging in financial conversations. These workers were encouraged to contact the facilitator with any questions, and also received weekly phone check-ins to count and discuss any conversations with clients where the financial products were discussed.

The third agency was staffed with financial coaches and already oriented towards FCAB work. Its director opted out of the in-person training in favor of a Zoom training with a Motivational Interviewing expert combined with weekly submissions of outcomes through an Excel spreadsheet created for this purpose. Text messages from project staff were used to remind workers when submissions were missing.

In total we conducted four two-hour synchronous trainings and an average of nearly six 10-15 minute weekly check-ins per worker for six weeks (N=58 check-ins). We concluded with semi-structured in-depth post-interviews with directors and participating staff to review changes and lessons learned (N=13: one worker dropped out after pre-interview for health reasons). A community presentation of our preliminary findings to the three agencies served as a member check (Rubin & Babbie, 2008). Data were collected through analytical notes which were filled out after interviews and check ins, and weekly research meetings were used to discuss emerging

themes. Thus, trustworthiness in our study was enhanced through prolonged engagement, triangulation, peer debriefing, and a member check (Rubin & Babbie, 2008).

Results

Workers and directors reported motivation to share information about the programs whenever engaging with a client who could benefit from the programs. The majority of workers had not heard of these financial products, although one of the agencies had two financial coaches who had a beginning familiarity with CalSAVERS. Across the three agencies, sharing information about these programs increased from 0 to 45 times during the 6 weeks of the study. CalABLE, CalKIDS and Scholarshare 529 were shared 1, 34 and 10 times respectively, while CalSAVER for the two agencies with no familiarity went from being shared 0 times to 11 times (an additional 2 shares of CalSAVER by the agency already familiar with the program). Lending Circles were shared 10 times, with the agency with existing knowledge of the program sharing it 8 of those times.

In spite of this information sharing, only one client in one agency successfully signed up for a program (CalKIDS). Workers reported clients expressing interest, but putting off signing up for the future. They also reported that clients had difficulty thinking about their children's distant future when they were uncertain about meeting current basic needs. Workers and directors also attributed what they perceived as disappointing results to insufficient time to work with clients or integrate the program given unrelated distractions (holidays, training, moving offices).

Workers credited the training with providing the motivation and the weekly check-ins with the accountability that enabled them to remember to share the programs with clients. All directors appreciated the flexibility of the program and two suggested more instruction would have been helpful, but in response to a follow-up question also stated they would not be able to send workers for additional free training without additional funding ("unfortunately, we can't afford free").

Conclusion

In summary, the training accomplished its primary goal of providing workers with the tools needed to share information about the new asset building programs with clients. At first glance, it may be surprising that all this sharing of information did not translate into clients signing up for the programs. However, these results are not surprising in light of FCAB theory (Sherraden, 2013) that posits information alone is insufficient for clients to take action. Rather, more attention is needed to shape the context within which the clients make decisions to take action and enhance their motivation to do so.

Keywords: Child Saving Account, CalKIDS, social work education.

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FINANCIAL CAPABILITY AND ASSET BUILDING (FCAB) PROGRAMS ON ENHANCING ECONOMIC RESILIENCE AND EMPOWERMENT AMONG SYRIAN REFUGEES IN JORDAN

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Financial Capability and Asset Building (FCAB) programs for Syrian refugees in Jordan aim to empower them by enhancing their financial knowledge, skills and resources. These programs combine elements of financial education, savings, investment, and entrepreneurship to promote refugees' economic resilience and well-being. Financial Capability and Asset Building (FCAB) programs have emerged as a vital avenue for enhancing displaced populations' economic resilience and empowerment. This study delves into FCAB programs for Syrian refugees in Jordan. By examining the impact of these programs on the financial well-being and socio-economic integration of refugees, this research addresses critical gaps in understanding the effectiveness and challenges of FCAB interventions.

Drawing on a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative survey data with qualitative insights from refugee participants and program administrators, this study assesses the multifaceted outcomes of FCAB programs. The research investigates how these programs foster financial literacy, facilitate asset accumulation and enable informed economic decision-making among Syrian refugees. Moreover, the study explores the barriers and opportunities faced by refugees in accessing and benefiting from FCAB initiatives within Jordan's distinctive socio-cultural and economic context.

In this research, we want to shed light on to what extent FCAB programs have taken place in the first stage among Syrian refugees in Jordan and then measure its impact on refugees' financial literacy, facilitating asset accumulation, what are the obstacles to implementing such programs and how this financial literacy can enhance, not only Syrians refugee per se, rather their hosting country.

Introduction

The ongoing Syrian conflict erupted in 2011 and has resulted in one of the most devastating humanitarian crises of our time. Millions of Syrians have been forced to flee their homes, seeking refuge in neighboring countries and beyond. Jordan, a country with its economic challenges, has generously welcomed many displaced individuals, particularly Syrian refugees. Amidst this

context, the Financial Capability and Asset Building (FCAB) issue has emerged as a critical endeavor to empower and uplift Syrian refugees in Jordan.

The FCAB framework encompasses a range of strategies to enhance individuals' financial literacy, foster economic resilience and promote asset accumulation. Upon arriving in host countries like Jordan, this approach recognizes that refugees often face considerable economic barriers that hinder their ability to regain self-sufficiency and contribute to their new communities. Financial instability, limited access to economic opportunities and lack of familiarity with the local financial systems pose formidable challenges for these displaced populations.

Jordan's commitment to providing refuge to Syrian displaced persons is commendable, yet these refugees' long-term integration and self-reliance remain complex challenges. FCAB initiatives represent a proactive response to these challenges, offering a pathway for refugees to navigate the intricate landscape of financial institutions, manage their resources effectively, and participate in income-generating activities. By equipping Syrian refugees with the knowledge and skills to make informed financial decisions, FCAB programs enhance individual well-being and contribute to the socio-economic fabric of both the refugee and host communities.

This study delves into the issue of FCAB among Syrian refugees in Jordan, seeking to uncover the impact and effectiveness of these programs in the lives of displaced individuals. By examining the role of financial literacy, asset building and economic empowerment, this research sheds light on the transformative potential of FCAB initiatives. The study also considers the contextual nuances that influence the design, implementation and outcomes of these programs within the distinctive socio-economic landscape of Jordan.

Through a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative data analysis with qualitative insights from refugees, program administrators and key stakeholders, this study aims to contribute to a comprehensive understanding of FCAB's significance. By highlighting successes, challenges and opportunities, the research intends to inform policy formulation, program development and strategic decision-making to address better the financial needs and aspirations of Syrian refugees in Jordan. Ultimately, the study aspires to advance the dialogue surrounding effective interventions that support the immediate well-being of refugees and foster their sustainable integration and prosperity within their host communities.

Several FCAB strategies can be adopted to combine financial education, asset-building initiatives and entrepreneurship support to create a holistic approach to refugees' empowerment.

1. Financial Education Workshops: Offer workshops and training sessions that cover topics such as budgeting, saving, debt management and responsible financial decision-making, tailored to the needs and circumstances of Syrian refugees. In this case, it is about infusing

Financial Capability and Building Asset content to community Organizations (Doran & Bagdasaryan, 2018) dealing with refugees.

2. Microfinance and Small Business Support: Provide access to microloans, grants, or seed funding for starting or expanding small businesses, as well as training in business management and marketing.

3. Digital Financial Services: Facilitate access to digital banking, mobile payments, and online financial tools, enabling refugees to manage their finances conveniently and securely.

4. Entrepreneurship Training: Offering training in entrepreneurship, including business planning, marketing, and financial management, to support refugees in launching and sustaining their own businesses.

5. Community Savings Groups: This type of intervention fosters the formation of savings groups within refugee communities, allowing members to pool resources and support each other's financial goals.

6. Child Development Accounts: Implement CDAs for refugee children, encouraging parents to save for their children's education and future endeavors.

7. Access to Credit: Facilitate access to credit for income-generating activities or investments to help refugees build assets and improve their economic prospects.

8. Asset Protection: Provide education on legal and financial rights, land tenure and property ownership to help refugees protect their assets and investments.

9. Partnerships and Collaboration: Collaborate with local NGOs, government agencies, financial institutions and international organizations to pool resources, expertise and networks for more effective program implementation.

Ultimately, tailored approaches must be based on the refugees' situation and provide customized support based on individual circumstances, skills and aspirations, which can eventually lead to long-term sustainability.

Value Added of Financial Capability and Asset Building (FCAB) programs for Syrian Refugees in Jordan, **for Jordan and for other countries hosting refugees.**

The global refugee crisis has brought attention to the need for comprehensive interventions that empower displaced populations to rebuild their lives and contribute to their host communities. Financial Capability and Asset Building (FCAB) programs have emerged as a transformative approach to address these challenges. This research will explore the pivotal importance of FCAB programs for Syrian refugees in Jordan, highlighting their potential to create positive ripple effects within the refugee population and for Jordan and other countries hosting refugees. Table 1 summarizes such importance.

Table 1. Prospective Benefits for Refugees and Host Countries

-1- **Creating Local Economic Benefits** FCAB programs have the potential to stimulate local economies in host countries. When refugees have the skills to engage in entrepreneurial activities and accumulate assets, they can contribute to job creation, stimulate demand for local goods and services, and even foster cross-cultural business collaborations. In Jordan, as Syrian refugees become active economic agents, the country can experience a boost in economic growth and diversification.	-2- **Fostering Social Integration** Economic empowerment through FCAB programs can contribute to the social integration of Syrian refugees in Jordan. As refugees gain economic independence, their ability to participate in local markets and engage with the broader community increases. This reduces the burden on host countries' resources and cultivates a sense of belonging and cohesion, which is vital for sustainable social harmony.
-3- **Enhancing Refugee Economic Resilience** FCAB programs equip refugees with the financial literacy skills to navigate their new economic environments. By providing education on budgeting, saving, and responsible financial management, these programs empower refugees to make informed decisions about their financial resources. In Jordan, such initiatives can be crucial in supporting refugee households to achieve financial stability, break the cycle of dependency and poverty, and enhance their overall economic resilience.	-4- **Reducing Dependence on Aid** One of the overarching goals of FCAB programs is to reduce refugees' dependence on humanitarian aid and assistance. By promoting economic self-reliance and encouraging refugees to build and manage their assets, these programs lessen the strain on aid organizations and governments, freeing up resources to address other pressing needs.

The success of FCAB programs in Jordan can serve as a model for other countries hosting refugees. As the challenges faced by refugees are often similar across different contexts, the strategies and best practices derived from FCAB programs in Jordan can be adapted and implemented elsewhere. This could lead to more effective integration policies and enhanced well-being for refugees on a global scale.

By fostering economic self-reliance, social integration, local economic growth and reduced dependence on aid, FCAB programs can transform the lives of refugees and positively impact the countries that generously provide them refuge.

Keywords: Financial capability, asset building, Syrian refugees, Jordan.

Research Questions

1. How do Financial Capability and Asset Building (FCAB) programs contribute to Syrian refugees' economic integration and self-reliance in Jordan?

2. What are the main barriers and challenges Syrian refugees face in accessing and participating in FCAB programs in Jordan?

3. To what extent do FCAB programs enhance Syrian refugees' financial literacy and skills, enabling them to make informed economic decisions?

4. What role do FCAB programs play in fostering long-term financial stability and security for Syrian refugee households in Jordan?

5. What are the key factors that influence the effectiveness of FCAB programs in promoting asset accumulation and wealth-building for Syrian refugees in Jordan?

PROFESSIONALS' EXPERIENCES OF FINSOC INTERVENTION PROMOTING FINANCIAL CAPABILITY: A QUALITATIVE STUDY, EMBEDDED IN A RANDOMIZED FEASIBILITY TRIAL

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Background

Financial literacy is considered an elementary component of professional expertise in social work. From a historical perspective, social workers have always been familiar with people's income problems, and they have played important role in building families' income balance and securing social security, but assets and financial capability are less well known to social workers. (Bent-Goodley *et al.,* 2016). The interest in improving financial stability and security among individuals, families and communities has risen in the field of social work (Sherraden & Huang, 2019). There is growing recognition that social work should play a key role in improving the financial capability of its clients and helping them achieve financial well-being. Promotion of financial capability leans on mechanisms of psychosocial support in client work context (Viitasalo et al 2023). Previous literature has proved that social workers' empathy and positive support can diminish psycho-social stressors. (Castro Barker & Keene, 2016). Scanlon & Sanders (2017) has pointed out that social workers should pay attention to the psychological and behavioral characteristics (e.g., trust, motivation, commitment, problem-solving skills, perseverance and self-reflection) in client work concerning financial challenges. An effective way to make a difference in people's lives is to address psychosocial and financial aspects together (Anvari-Clark & Frey, 2019; Callahan *et al*., 2019).

FinSoc (study registry: ISRCTN38586825) is a promising financial social work intervention developed for social work with families. FinSoc was developed to increase financial literacy and economic self-efficacy and to reduce financial anxiety among parents with financial problems in Finland (Kaittila *et al*., 2023). In a randomized feasibility trial exploring the feasibility, acceptability and preliminary effectiveness of FinSoc we investigate the intervention with a mixed methods approach applying both quantitative measures and qualitative interviews.

This paper focuses on the qualitative study, nested within the randomized feasibility trial, and aims to explore the professionals' experiences of FinSoc intervention. We explore the promotion of financial capability from the professionals' point of view and investigate FinSoc's content in relation to the use of psychosocial elements of support. In addition, the study sheds light on the professionals' need to achieve skills, motivation and confidence to apply the psychosocial knowledge in their work on complex financial needs of clients. The paper describes both the FinSoc intervention and the qualitative study on it.

Methods/design

The development of the FinSoc intervention is based on research concerning financial social work. Process of the development was guided by a systematic review of interventions and methods to promote financial capability in social work (Viitasalo *et al*., 2023). The results indicated that there are only a few studies focusing on promotion of financial capability in social work among families with children. Furthermore, the review revealed that implementation of interventions requires attention. Unique situations in the family should be considered closely, and the implementation should rely more consciously on the psychosocial elements of support. In addition, a transformational practice framework (Scanlon & Sanders, 2017) was used as a broader theoretical model for the intervention as a process promoting financial capability and asset building (FCAB). The framework guided to apply the approach of financial capability and solution-focused work practice together with motivational interview as a basics of the FinSoc intervention. Additionally, the process of intervention design involved consultations of collaborators, interviews with stakeholders, workshops with practitioners and clients' perspective to the content of the intervention.

The FinSoc intervention includes five sequential sessions which form a collaborative counseling process that motivates the client to aspire to change in approach to financial issues. Professionals are instructed to utilize motivational interviewing (Miller & Rollnick, 2013) guiding the encounters with the client. Solution-focused perspectives (De Jong & Berg, 2008/2016) are preferable in addressing difficulties and other issues presented by the client. The intervention is delivered by a professional from public social services social worker, social counselor, or financial counsellor). In the FinSoc study a research social worker (who is a certified social worker and a member of the research team) attends some of the intervention sessions.

The intervention contains different background material for participants. First, the clients are provided with a client's workbook which includes a financial glossary, general financial information, and instructions for finding reliable financial information. Furthermore, the workbook includes exercises and an overview of the intervention. Second, it is essential in the

intervention to ensure that the professionals have a sufficient level of financial knowledge. The professionals are provided with a manual which comprehends the process of the sequential sessions and how to deliver the intervention. In addition, the professionals participate in an intervention training and prior to the training they receive an information package. The package contains general financial information, e.g., the basics of collection procedures and an overview of the service system. The FinSoc intervention is delivered to 31 families who have experienced certain financial difficulties in the past six months. The participants are clients of adult social work services or child and family social services. The intervention study is conducted in different parts of Finland. Prior to obtaining the trial results, thematic interviews were held with professionals who participated in the use of FinSoc intervention. The qualitative data is collected from social work professionals who delivered the intervention. The targeted sample size for these interviews is 5 to 10 (interviews are still on-going). In these interviews we enquire social work professionals' experiences of delivering the intervention, the experiences and the usability of the intervention, its strengths and weaknesses, and possible ways to improve the programme. In addition, interviews include questions on their impressions of the usefulness of the training, positive and negative aspects of the training and areas for development. The interview data is analysed by content analysis which aims to answer following research questions: (a) how well professionals managed to deliver the intervention and how psychosocial factors and financial knowledge affect delivery (implementation), (b) how the intervention affected the financial literacy among clients and professionals (mechanisms of impact) and (c) which external factors, incl. psychosocial factors, influenced the delivery (context).

Discussion

Research on financial capability and asset building indicates that social work professionals need to have at least the basic knowledge on financial literacy to be able to support their clients facing complex financial problems. E.g. (Despard & Chowa, 2013) has proposed that social workers need more specific financial knowledge and understanding about different cultural contexts related to personal and household finance. Although social work professionals can address clients' financial problems through a variety of practice strategies, professionals should rely more consciously on the psychosocial elements of support while encountering clients with financial difficulties (Viitasalo *et al*., 2023). It is obvious that little is known about how social work practice strategies respond to clients' financial worries (Birkenmaier *et al*., 2022). The current study focuses on a novel approach to increase financial literacy, financial self-efficacy and to reduce financial anxiety among Finnish families.

Preliminary results from the qualitative study implicate that professionals consider the FinSoc intervention to have positive effects on the financial capability among intervention participants. One of the benefits for clients is the confrontation and reflection of their financial situation as a whole. Clients benefit from encouragement to verbalize their thoughts and from support to deal with the emotional burden from financial difficulties. Implementation of the intervention should depend on the unique situation of the client and on the client´s motivation and aspirations.

Consequently, the professionals emphasize that the relation between the client and the professional leans strongly on the elements of confidence and trust. The professionals expressed themselves to give high value to the intervention as it provides them the opportunity to increase their variety of practice methods and to strengthen their understanding about the clients' complex problems. In the implementation of FinSoc intervention the social interaction and dynamics between social workers and clients impacting the effects of intervention is underlined. Based on the preliminary results, the impressions of professionals highlight the relevance of psychosocial elements of support in financial guidance. As such it is valuable to notice the professionals' rising level of consciousness about financial problems being integrated with psychosocial factors in social interaction and in the client's situation.

The FinSoc study is the first necessary step in understanding the potential utility of an evidence- based intervention for Finnish social work clients with children facing complex financial problems. Findings of this study will indicate whether a larger full-scale RCT is needed to investigate the efficacy of the intervention. If the initial results demonstrate that this trial is feasible and the intervention is acceptable and if it has an impact on financial capability, self-efficacy and anxiety of Finnish parents, it will provide evidence that a full-scale effectiveness trial may be warranted.

Keywords: financial capability, financial social work, intervention, psychosocial support, qualitative study.

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MONEY AND THE POOR

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This study reports findings from community-based research in Nepal on the effect of money on poverty. Until the 1980s, over 85% of Nepal's population relied on asset as their primary source of livelihood-land, house, crops, cattle and jeweleries. The subsistence farmers had no money-income and the wages of farm laborers were exchanged in crops-4 mana of millet (about four pounds) for one day (about 12 hours) of farm-labor. At the time, a day's income (money) of a government employee, such as a schoolteacher or a policeman, could buy 4 mana of millet, same as the farm-laborer. However, as schooling became the norm and the schooled population abandoned subsistence farming (asset-based economy) and switched to income-based (money) economy, money became the primary source of livelihood and the medium of exchange for labor, goods and service. As a result, those who do not have cash income, the subsistence-farmers, became poor overnight. The value of the assets (land, house, crops, cattle) went significantly down. The people who were considered rich and middle-class based on their asset-holding are now considered among the poorest, both in relative and absolute terms. The farm-laborers are no longer willing to exchange their labor for 4 mana of millet. A day's salary of the same government employee today can buy 27 mana of millet at current price, but the farmers earn only 4 mana of millet a day still today, same as the 1980s. The arbitrary creation of fiat currency, money and reliance on money-based economy has created a new class of poor and uncertainty and tremendous hardship on their life, who rely on asset-based economy. The only beneficiaries of such a shift, from asset-based economy to money/income-based economy, have been the financial institutions, the banks. The creation of digital fiat currency is likely to further exacerbate poverty and inequality. Over-reliance on the market, supply-demand, has an unfair disadvantage to the financially illiterate poor. A new set of standards is needed to determine the relationship between money and assets. This presentation will discuss the implications of the findings for policies and programs to reduce poverty and inequality in developing countries.

Keywords: Money, asset, poverty, inequality, Nepal.

POLITICAL DETERMINANTS OF POVERTY

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While much has been written about individual causes and structural causes of poverty, political causes of poverty have largely been overlooked. This paper presents the findings from observations from two countries, Singapore and Nepal, and discusses the extent to which the observed differences in the economic outcomes between the two countries are driven by the differences in political structures. Review of the historical data show that in the 1950s, Nepal was among the best performing countries in Asia, while Singapore was among the poorest. Today, Nepal stands among the poorest of the poor in Asia while Singapore stands among the richest. No two countries could be economically more significantly different. Explaining the observed difference using the conventional "individual and structure" frameworks appear to be not only too narrow a view, but also misleading. While differences in the demographic compositions and geographic locations had an important role to play, it appears that they were not the primary drivers of the differences in economic outcomes between the two countries. The elephant in the room, it appears are the political determinants. This paper explores some of the key political determinants of poverty in Nepal, with more detail analysis of the politics over race, language and religion and compare that with Singapore, which also had similar political concerns over race, language and religion in the 1950s. The paper will conclude with questions on the potential implications for financial capability and asset building for all, in a country like Nepal where there are over 120 different linguistic and ethnic groups, which have historically fraud and racially-charged relation with each other and often do not get along with each other. Drawing lessons from Singapore, the paper will discuss the potential a universal asset building policy can have on, not just lifting the poor out of poverty, but more importantly, bringing uniformity in financial wellbeing across diverse population.

Keywords: Political determinants, poverty, asset, financial capability, Nepal, Singapore.

EVALUATION OF A GUARANTEED INCOME PROGRAM
IN CALIFORNIA, USA

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Background and Significance

California's Guaranteed Income Pilot Program launching in September, 2023 will serve approximately 2,000 low-income pregnant individuals and youth aging out of foster care – two populations experiencing poor outcomes and disparities tied to systemic policies and practices that reinforce inequitable access to quality health care, housing, employment, wages and education. The State of California is overseeing an intervention providing monthly GI supplements of $750-$1,200 for 12-18 months and waiving restrictive safety-net program eligibility rules through state-facilitated benefits waivers.

Government programs designed to address poverty and alleviate financial strain, such as in-kind or cash benefits, tend to be restrictive, time-limited and meager. The State of California is working to eliminate barriers and deliver a benefit that will move the needle on economic hardship, particularly for groups vulnerable to income and health disparities. Myriad unconditional cash payment programs are being delivered worldwide under the theory that financial strain is a primary barrier to health and well-being. Given persistent income disparities by race and geography, unconditional cash payments may support better health and reduce both income and outcome disparities by catalyzing opportunities for individuals to use services and mitigate hardship.

Innovation

This work presents important new opportunities to build knowledge about promoting health and equity with GI. California youth face a benefits cliff upon aging out of foster care on their 21st birthday, at which point many experience homelessness, economic hardship, stagnated employment and educational attainment and poor mental and physical health outcomes (Courtney *et al.,* 2020). Pregnant and parenting individuals face a different set of challenges that are exacerbated by financial insecurity and can affect access to care during pregnancy as well as their overall well-being and that of their children (Gibbs *et al.,* 2022). Offering GI to youth as they exit foster care and to pregnant individuals may support their ability to choose and use physical and behavioral health services, access stable and quality housing and food, reduce stress and anxiety and subsequently mitigate health disparities.

Impact

Evaluations of most existing GI programs are limited to understanding how alleviating financial strain with cash affects individuals during the intervention period without regard to (1) what happens once the benefit ends, and (2) how GI complements or conflicts with other public benefits. This is critical to building knowledge about how GI interacts with other safety-net benefit programs and subsequent understanding of what other structural change may need to accompany GI to maximize equity.

Approach

The Urban Institute and the University of California, Berkeley are beginning an implementation and impact evaluation of the program. The implementation study includes informant interviews with key program staff and focus groups with participants. The impact study employs a randomized controlled trial design (RCT) and includes a longitudinal survey, administrative data from a range of public systems and qualitative data capturing the voices of GI recipients in both the treatment and control groups. The outcomes captured in the survey and administrative data are described in the conceptual model below.

Conceptual Model

We posit that the GI intervention can improve health outcomes and reduce health disparities by interrupting the causal pathway between economic hardship and unfavorable outcomes. Historical/structural factors contribute to economic hardship and can be moderated by individual factors that may be protective or increase risk. Our primary pathway of interest is the effect of economic hardship on health outcomes, mediated through three conditions (stress, material hardship and use of health services). Insufficient income to meet basic needs causes stress, material hardship, and reduced ability to access the care needed to prevent and treat health needs (Frank *et al.,* 2010; Kreuter *et al*., 2016). The connection between economic hardship and material hardship is straightforward: individuals need money to buy food, housing, pay for healthcare, etc. Persistent material hardship can also create psychological and physical stress during pregnancy which has been associated with an increased risk of preterm birth and maternal depression, which can affect mother and infant attachment postpartum (Cordova-Ramos *et al.,* 2022; Perry *et al*., 2011). Economic hardship can also reduce one's ability to prevent and treat health needs. Participating in healthful behaviors, like exercise and a good diet and accessing preventive care takes time as well as cash resources. Time is a scarce resource for individuals with low incomes, who may need to trade off extra work hours for such activities, not to mention the monetary cost (Williams *et al.,* 2016). Finally, we recognize that the key mediators of our primary outcomes– stress, material

hardship and health care utilization–are important outcomes themselves. As noted above, youth leaving foster care often experience material hardships such as homelessness, food insecurity and health problems. Specifically, we hypothesize that California's GI pilot program will alter economic conditions for the priority populations by increasing their income, and the accompanying benefit waivers will allow individuals to receive this increased income without losing key benefits– a crucial policy lever. Together, these interventions have the potential to improve health outcomes by increasing economic security and improving financial access to high quality, culturally appropriate medical care, stable housing and nutritious food.
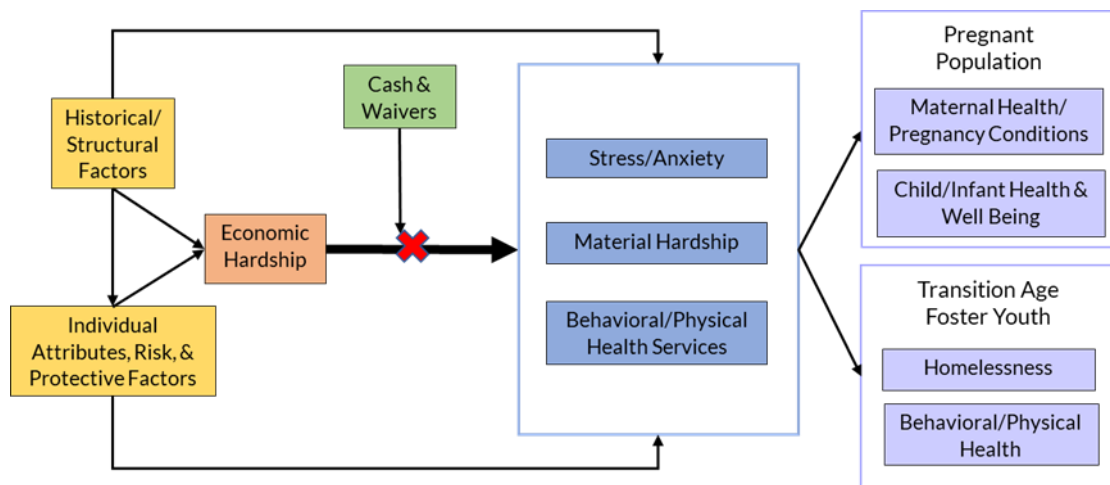
Conclusion and Implications

This presentation will describe the program's theory of change, program and evaluation design and report early implementation observations. GI and other cash programs are proliferating in the US and abroad, many being rigorously evaluated. The present evaluation aims to add to the growing knowledge about the impact of GI on health and well-being outcomes for two specific vulnerable populations.

Keywords: Guaranteed income, income support, child welfare, foster care, health disparities.

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COMPARING TWO WAVES OF DATA FOR TAIWAN'S SAVING ACCOUNTS FOR FUTURE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH: AN ANALYSIS OF PROGRAM IMPACT

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In 2017, the Taiwanese government introduced the "Saving Accounts for FutureEducation and Development of Children and Youth", marking the country's first anti-poverty policy. This initiative established personal savings accounts for children from low-income families and provided monthly deposits until the child's eighteenth birthday. The policy aimed to mitigate wealth inequality, support child development and encourage higher educational aspirations among children born into economically disadvantaged families. By the end of 2022, approximately 60% (N = 26,726) of eligible children (N = 44,627) had opened an account since the program's launch. Whileparticipation is voluntary, social workers are mandated to assist those who have openedaccounts but haven't saved, conducting assistance sessions every six months. For evaluation purposes, the government needs to gather panel data every four years to comprehend parents' savings behaviors and children's developmental trajectories.

Two waves of data were gathered in 2019 and 2023, respectively. During the initial wave, a total of 786 parents or legal guardians of children with active accounts were chosen through random selection. Additionally, 168 parents were selected for childrenwithout accounts. In the second wave, a larger sample comprising 2,033 parents or legalguardians will be selected. Among these, 1,026 parents have opened accounts for their children, while 1,007 parents have not participated in the program. Face-to-face interviews conducted by social workers gathered information on family economic conditions, employment status, parental work situations, emotional well-being, educational aspirations for their children and administrative details.

Data analysis revealed no significant disparities between account holders and non- holders in terms of economic challenges, employment status, parenting stress, parentalexpectations for their children and parent-child relationships in the first wave. This suggests that baseline conditions were consistent regardless of account ownership. Nonetheless, parents who hadn't opened an account reported higher levels of depressive feelings and lower self-concept. Additionally, non-account holders perceived their economic circumstances to be worse compared

to those who had opened an account. Since data collection for the second wave is ongoing, further analysis will be conductedonce the data collection process is completed in November 2023.

Considering that the first wave data were gathered during the program's inaugural year, the full impact of participation hasn't yet manifested. Indeed, this underscores the invaluable insights that the second wave of data can offer. As the process of collectingthe second wave of data is currently in progress, it presents a unique opportunity to delve into whether program participation not only aids in building financial assets but also facilitates positive transformations in parenting attitudes, financial literacy and theoverall well-being of both participating families and their children.

Keywords: Saving accounts, children and youth, low-income families, higher education, development, financial assets, well-being.

IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY-BASED SOCIAL MARKETING FRAMEWORK FOR RESOLUTION OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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Social marketing in the recent decade has become an independent discipline that investigates different spheres of life and its problems regarding the general society or a particular group of people. Considering the wide variety of its types and forms frameworks should be used for better understanding and execution. One of such is a relatively new approach named CBSM framework. The researchers have identified several steps in the process of installation and a well-detailed benchmark. Although, the framework has shown several results, mostly in developed countries, it still has potential for future improvements.

Social marketing in the recent decade has become an independent discipline that investigates different spheres of life and its problems regarding the general society or a particular group of people. In 1951, Wiebe posed the query, "Can brotherhood be sold like soap?" and this is when the concept of social marketing was first observed. The first definition of the term was published in the work of Kotler and Zaltman in 1971 as follows: "Social marketing is the design, implementation and control of programmes calculated to influence the acceptability of social ideas and involving considerations of product planning, pricing, communication, distribution and marketing research" (Kotler & Zaltman, 1971). This definition was based on significant research in the field and sustained interest in the topic. It was determined that social marketing entails a series of initiatives to address a certain social issue or cause for the general public or a predetermined target demographic.

Eagle *et al*. (2016) provided the following definition of social marketing: "Social marketing refers to the application of marketing principles to facilitate behavioural change necessary for the achievement of a public or social good" (Eagle *et al.,* 2016). The importance of behaviour changes in social marketing studies is emphasised by this definition. Significantly, the participants in a particular study's subjects' daily lives show the existence of behaviour study in the social marketing sector. The selected target audience's personal characteristics and decision-making process help the researchers better understand the situation's underlying factors in relation to the identified social problem or cause and limit the potential outcomes of that social problem or cause's continued growth in the selected target audience's case

Another definition of the term "social marketing" in relation to institutions was developed by Baptista, Pinho and Alves and stated as follows: "It can apply not only to the behaviour of individuals but also to that of professionals, organisations and policymakers, meaning the contextual actors that can influence individuals' behaviour change" (Baptista *et al.,* 2021). It's vital to note the government's position in this situation. Since the theory and research, as well as the experience of private institutions, show a positive perspective of social marketing programmes' implementation in the direction of resolving social problems and causes, governments have created several social marketing programmes and initiatives in recent years.

In the wide variety of available possibilities of exploitation of social marketing programmes, it is vital to differentiate between diverse forms of social marketing practices. Among various social marking types are ecological marketing, medical marketing, charity-based marketing, sport marketing and government marketing (Babushkin, 2016). Ecological marketing is a practise where the environment, whether it be the outdoors or an urban setting, is the primary focus. The conservation and preservation of the group of targets' accessible assets is the fundamental concept driving this method of communication. The most common form of marketing that has successfully utilised social marketing initiatives to enhance and sustain the health and wellness of the target population is medical marketing. Charity-based marketing is primarily focused on the promotion and realisation of a certain aim or goal that has already been determined and shared with many prospective influencers and charity contributors in order to reach a common purpose for the contained group of people or public.

When considering sport marketing, it is important to note that this type of communication aims to change how society behaves and does so by advocating for a target audience to adopt certain habits that will eventually lead to a society that is healthier and more conscientious. When thinking about government marketing, it is important to realise that this kind of social marketing has a certain path for implementation because, for the most part, it's regulated and follows a set of accepted procedures for communications and analysis. One example of this kind of work is social reform, which aims to enhance the quality of life for a certain society or group of people by advocating for a specific government initiative or policy.

The successful implementation of all mentioned social marketing approaches requires specific preparation and execution plan. For these reasons several social marketing researchers and practitioners have developed concrete frameworks to analyse, plan, install and reevaluate the respective social marketing programme. One of them is a relatively new framework named CBSM (Community-based social marketing) framework. By creating community programmes that shift away from information-based campaigns and towards campaigns that use knowledge from the

social sciences to elicit behaviour change, the CBSM framework offers a practical five-step method for encouraging pro-environmental behaviour (McKenzie-Mohr & Schultz, 2014). More specifically, CBSM combines "knowledge from psychology with expertise from social marketing" (McKenzie-Mohr, 2000). The first step in CBSM, which guides the phases that come after, has a strict focus on choosing certain habits to modify. The five steps of CBSM are: selecting behaviours, barrier and benefit research, strategy development, piloting and broad-scale implementation and evaluation (Kenzie-Mohr, 2011). To expand the effectiveness of the CBSM framework researchers Lynes, Whitney, Murray came up with an in-depth benchmark consisting of 21 points. Following is the visual representation of the five steps of the CBSM framework alongside the benchmark consisting of 21 points.

Step 1: Selecting Behaviours	1.1 Clearly identifies target audience; 1.2 Selects non-divisible/end-state behaviours; 1.3 Evaluates potential behaviours for impact, probability and penetration; 1.4 Limits number of targeted behaviours to no more than 6.
Step 2: Barrier & Benefit Research	2.1 Conducts research on barriers and benefits for each potential segment in the target group; 2.2 Identifies/distinguishes barriers and benefits that are internal vs. external.
Step 3: Developing Strategies	3.1 Creates strategies that address barriers of the behaviour(s) being promoted and reduce the benefits of behaviour(s) being discouraged; 3.2 Develops commitment tools using best practices; 3.3 Develops prompts using best practices; 3.4 Engages well-known and well-respected people to be part of the campaign; 3.5 Encourages norms that are visible and reinforced through personal contact; 3.6 Develops communication tools using best practices; 3.7 Establishes (dis)incentives using best practices; 3.8 Initiates convenience strategy to address external barriers.
Step 4: Piloting	4.1 Develops a pilot that can be compared with baseline measurements; 4.2 Utilizes a control group; 4.3 Participants are randomly selected and then randomly assigned to strategy or control groups; 4.4 Evaluates strategy effectiveness through unobtrusive measurements of behaviour change rather than through self-report; 4.5 Focuses only on the strategies that can be implemented at a broad-scale.
Step 5: Evaluation & Broad-scale Implementation	5.1 Measures activity prior to implementation and at several points afterward; 5.2 Utilizes evaluation data to retool strategy and/or provide feedback to community.

Figure 1. Lynes et al.'s (2014) 21 Benchmark Criteria for CBSM framework.

Although the CBSM framework was widely used in the western part of the world, mostly in Canada, social marketing researchers and practitioners are still looking for many ways of improving the current state of approach in the resolution of social problems of general society or target audience. Hence, the following points should be noted:

1. The CBSM framework to be used in more initiatives by private institutions and governments for enlargement of the available data;

2. The research involving the CBSM framework lacks extensive quantitate basis for generalisation of results;

3. For a more detailed and smooth execution of the five steps of the CBSM framework social marketing practitioners should concentrate on the available benchmark and elaborate on its improvement instead of co-using with other social marketing frameworks.

Keywords: Sociology, social marketing, social marketing programmes, social marketing framework, CBSM framework, social problem, behavioural change, target audience.

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INVESTING IN HUMAN CAPITAL: THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES

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Investing in human capital through education and social services is a critical component of economic and social growth. Aside from physical infrastructure and technical improvements, civilizations that value education and well-being produce a more trained workforce, increased productivity and improved social cohesiveness. This article investigates the numerous economic benefits that result from such investments, highlighting the delicate relationship between education, social services and general economic growth.

The Role of Education in Economic Growth

Education is widely acknowledged as a crucial factor of economic growth, with substantial studies demonstrating its significant impact. Becker (1964) established human capital theory by emphasizing the economic benefits of education and skill training. Following research by Hanushek and Woessmann (2012) and Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (2018) offered empirical data supporting the favourable relationship between educational attainment and economic production. These findings highlight the importance of education in providing individuals with the information and skills required to participate in complex businesses and contribute to innovation (Heckman & Kautz, 2012).

Enhancing Workforce Productivity

Investing in education and training programs boosts labor productivity dramatically. Individuals that are educated are better prepared to take on higher-skilled professions, resulting in lower unemployment and higher income levels. Furthermore, education promotes ongoing learning and upskilling, allowing workers to stay relevant in quickly changing industries. This increases human capital, which is directly related to economic growth and higher living standards.

Social Services as a Catalyst for Economic Growth

Social services, such as healthcare, housing and social safety nets, are critical in the development of human capital. A secure living environment and access to decent healthcare contribute to a healthier, more productive workforce. Healthy people are less likely to miss work

owing to illness, lowering absenteeism and sustaining economic activity. Furthermore, social safety nets act as a buffer against economic shocks, boosting consumer confidence and spending even during difficult times.

The literature on the relationship between education and labour productivity is extensive. Education, according to Cutler and Lleras-Muney (2006), contributes to better lives by lowering absenteeism and increasing labor force participation. Furthermore, Case and Deaton (2015) investigated the effects of schooling on midlife morbidity and death, uncovering the long-term economic benefits of a healthy population. Currie (2009) stressed the importance of education in the development of important soft skills that improve productivity and adaptability in the work market.

Social services are critical in developing human capital and propelling economic growth. Ravallion and Chen (2007) investigated the relationship between healthcare access and poverty reduction, revealing how better health contributes to a more productive workforce. Rajan and Zingales (2003) addressed the relationship between strong social safety nets and economic stability, emphasizing the importance of social services in preserving consumer confidence during economic downturns. These findings emphasize the critical importance of social services in fostering economic resilience and sustainability.

Breaking the Cycle of Poverty through Education and Social Services

Education and social services investments offer viable avenues for ending the cycle of intergenerational poverty. Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson (2001) undertook a thorough empirical research into the colonial origins of development gaps, highlighting the transformative potential of targeted human capital expenditures. This study's findings are consistent with the work of Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (2018), demonstrating the transformative effect of education and social services in fostering upward socioeconomic mobility and lowering poverty rates.

Conclusion

"Investing in Human Capital: The Economic Benefits of Education and Social Services" emphasizes the indisputable link between human capital development and economic prosperity. Nations that prioritize education and social services establish the framework for a vibrant, adaptable workforce, greater productivity and long-term economic success. This holistic approach not only affects individual lives, but also shapes the trajectory of society toward a more egalitarian and prosperous future.

Keywords: Human capital, education policy, economic prosperity, social welfare.

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THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STANDING OF CENTRAL EUROPEAN HARD COAL SECTOR PRODUCERS IN THE POST-PANDEMIC ERA: SAVED OR BURIED? – EXTERNALITIES, OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS FOR SOCIETY

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Hard coal has been and still is, the driving force behind many national economies and the energy produced from it proved essential in the successful realization of the industrial revolution in Europe and around the world. This resource, however, due to its large contribution to the generation of social externalities, including greenhouse gas emissions and destruction of the environment during extraction, is clearly moving towards decline in the European Union. The processes aimed at phasing out production and consumption of this resource have been noticeably disrupted, however, by the weave of the crises that have emerged in Europe (including the pandemic crisis) (Eurostat, 2021). The Central European sector of hard coal producers is responsible for almost 98% of coal production in the entire European Union (Eurostat, 2023). The strong 2021-2023 fluctuations in the commodity price market, the climate change affecting renewable energy production, as well as the demand-supply disruptions resulting in increased energy demand after the easing of the pandemic restrictions, have stimulated a multidimensional discussion on the actual and future role of hard coal in many industrial sectors of the European Union. Production distribution of this raw material in the European Union is presented in Figure 1.

According to the data, Central European countries are still the main producers of hard coal in the European Community post-2020, with a special role of Poland as the leading hard coal supplier. Geographically, the production of this resource is concentrated almost 100% in Poland. The country has the most extensive mining infrastructure in the European Union and exports coal, while itself remains a significant domestic consumer of it (despite the dynamic development of renewable energy and the successive displacement of fossil fuels). Today, hard coal is still an important element of the energy mix in many European countries (including a 42% share in the electricity generation mix in Poland and about 40% in the Czech Republic) (Globenergia, 2023).
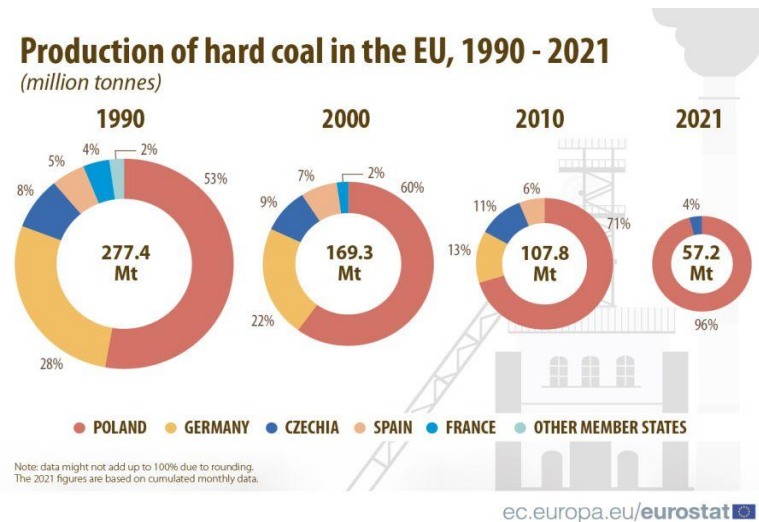
Figure 1. Production of hard coal in the EU between 1990-2021.
Source: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statisticsexplained/index.php?title=Coal_production_and_consumption_statistics
(accessed 22.08.2023).

Such high concentration continues to be a significant challenge to the implementation of the EU's decarbonization policy, which postulates a full phase-out of coal-fired electricity generation (both coal and lignite) before 2030. In addition to the advantages of this ambitious climate policy, the phasing out of hard coal production and related sectors (e.g., coal-fired power plants) brings significant socio-economic challenges, which is even more pronounced in Central European countries, where hard coal production and consumption have long-standing traditions. These countries still have sizable coal reserves (globally, Poland ranks 9th, almost on par with Kazakhstan, in terms of proven reserves of this resource). The advantages of a faster departure from coal include, inter alia, reduction of the social externalities generated by this sector. In contrast, the main challenges of a dynamic energy transition, in socio-economic terms, pertain to:

• The generally difficult financial standing of many coal companies (high debt, low profitability, low productivity), associated with the low number of new infrastructure development investments in the last 20 years- the sector, due to the plans to phase out production, has been underinvested, which puts these entities in an overall bad financial standing. Before the pandemic, most entities in the sector were regularly supported by State subsidies. That complicates effective restructuring and smooth phasing out of the sector.

• High employment in the sector - not only in the mines, but also in sectors linked to coal mining. It is estimated that, as a result of the climate policy, at least 160 000 jobs will be lost (Europarlament, 2020), the vast majority of which will be in the Central European countries. In practice, due to cross-sectoral linkages, the number of jobs at risk is significantly higher and

difficult to estimate. In some regions of Europe, employment in sectors directly and indirectly related to coal reaches even 30% of total employment (Worldbank, 2022).

- The high market concentration and strong linkage of the coal sector with other sectors of the economy, combined with the need to reorganize many workers with very narrow and specialized mining skills, can result in strikes and social unrest. Similar challenges were brought about in Europe by, inter alia, the collapses and restructurings of the shipbuilding and textile industries, which resulted in the need to plan for the reorganization and adaptation of thousands of laid-off workers in these sectors. A valuable lesson in this aspect is the strike of miners in the 1980s in the UK, during the government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, which implemented a radical policy of phasing out mining (Oxford, 2022). Possible threats to regional added value, resulting from decarbonization, are shown in Figure 2.
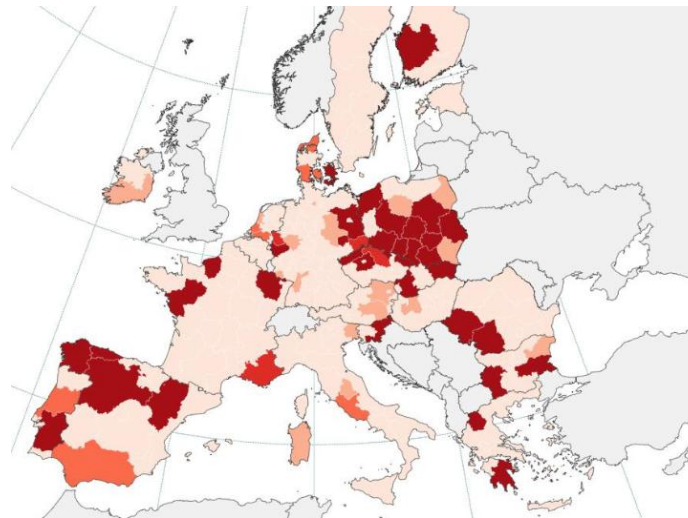
Figure 2. Regional added value at risk due to decarbonization in EU (coal only)
Source: https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-01/jrc127463.pdf (accessed 22.08.2023).

This article outlines the results of the research carried out by the author and attempts to formulate a likely scenario for the future of the sector, in light of the upcoming decarbonization, with recommendations for both coal-producing and coal-consuming European Union countries, including social implications for the regions. The research process was divided into two stages. The first involved the use of quantitative research methods including: statistical analysis as well as such financial engineering methods as ratio analysis and sectoral bankruptcy risk assessment. In the second stage, qualitative research methods were employed: analysis and synthesis methods as well as simplified scenario method and literature review. In the first part of the study, major

producers of hard coal in the European Union were selected for assessment of their financial condition and risk of bankruptcy over recent years. To assess the risk of bankruptcy, so-called discriminatory bankruptcy models were used, which are designed to provide a scoring that determines whether an entity is in the 'healthy' or 'at risk' group (Siciński, 2018). These models employ discriminant analysis, which is a classification method (Zięba *et al*., 2016). Discriminant analysis is a method inferior to machine learning or artificial intelligence (AI) methods in terms of predictive efficiency, nonetheless, it provides satisfactory quality of prediction, with high transparency of the results and clear exposition of the mathematical function, as opposed to black-box classification models (Siciński, 2023). In the next stage, the results obtained were compared with the current global trends in the coal market, including the stock quotations of coal futures, which form a major basis for the valuation of this raw material in Europe (Ice, 2022). The assessment of the sector's overall financial condition, taking the coal price volatility and its possible contribution to the so-called 'windfall gains' effect into, provided a basis for the discussion on future scenarios for the industry. Possible variant-scenarios include: (Antonowicz, 2007) survival and slow phasing out of entities in poor financial condition, in accordance with the existing assumptions of the energy transition; (Sammut-Bonnici & Galea, 2015) effective restructuring of the sector, as a result of improved financial condition and surpluses from the 'windfall gains' effect, as well as inclusion of these entities as complementary partners in the transition process or (Siciński, 2018) radical collapse, as a result of even faster implementation of the EU climate restrictions, under the assumption that only a rapid and full departure from coal can protect against the risk of its price volatility during future crises. Regardless of the scenario variant, each is set bring serious socioeconomic implications. In the second part of the study, the knowledge gained in the first stage was expanded to include conclusions from the PEST analysis of the economic environment. The PEST method is a highly useful tool, offering a wide spectrum of analysis, taking into account the impact of social, political, economic and technological factors on the development of an industry or a single entity (Sammut-Bonnici & Galea, 2015). This allowed formulation of the most likely scenario and identification of the main social challenges (including unemployment, workforce reorganization and new allocation of resources). The study was concluded by verifying the research hypotheses formulated as follows:

Research hypothesis 1: The financial and economic standing of European coal producers has temporarily improved as a result of the high volatility of stock coal quotations in 2022-2023, which may increase their chances of debt relief and restructuring.

Research hypothesis 2: The hard coal sector can become a supporting element in the European energy transition, which can contribute to the easing of the resistance and social unrest associated with mine closures and the need to retool the workforce.

Research hypothesis 3: Taking advantage of the current opportunity offered by the better financial condition of producers in the hard coal sector and engaging them in the transformation process as a supporting entities instead of radical closure may contribute to reducing the social costs of transformation.

Keywords: Hard coal sector, energy transition, sectoral unemployment, social unrest, externalities.

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FINANCIALIZATION IMPACT ON THE PUBLIC LONG-TERM CARE SYSTEM IN JAPAN

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Introduction

An increasing number of public services, including education, social welfare and health services, are now being provided as cash and financial assistance instead of direct service delivery. Universal basic income is an extension of the government's cash assistance function (Baorong *et al*., 2023). This study considers these social policy changes as financialization and examines their impact on Japan's long-term care (LTC) system.

Although the concept of financialization is difficult to understand owing to variations in its definition and discussion among scholars, they share similar concerns, which can be organized as follows: First, the government is learning to collaborate with private entities to attract private funds to cover the increasing costs of public services. For example, Golka (2018) demonstrates the process in which the UK government establishes "cooperative ties" (p.21) with financial companies to introduce a social impact bond system. By the system, private funds are collected as investment in public social services. The distinction between the government and private sector funding has become blurred. This challenges the assumption in the NPM context that the government is responsible for funding and the private sector primarily provides services.

Second, the private sector increases its influence, taking advantage of the privatized systems of public services for "financial engineering" (Hoppania *et al*., 2022). Examples of these behaviors, as outlined by Simon *et al*. (2022), include participating in a privatized system for tax evasion, credit-based expansions of service-providing activities to increase shareholder value, using earned public funds to pay for debt instead of staff wages or service quality improvements, selling a service-providing section to earn a large profit in the financial market and intentional bankruptcy to save profits. Caselli (2020) reports that private service organizations in Italy have formed new networks with foundations and venture capital firms to influence policies in pursuing their own financial aims.

Third, the disparity between those included and excluded from public services is likely exacerbated by the aforementioned changes in social policy. Those without financial literacy or bank accounts are not only excluded from cash/financial assistance, but also from tax benefits that are typically associated with these programs (Huang, 2023; Sherraden *et al*., 2018).

Subjects and method

LTC is Japan's exclusive government insurance program that provides the only available access to long-term care services for older citizens in the country. The government is responsible for setting prices and regulating the amount of services provided to each user. The level of service is determined by the government's assessment of each user's needs. Those aged 40 years and older are compulsorily enrolled in the LTC system and start paying monthly premiums. Those aged 65 years and older are eligible to use services as long as they pay 10 percent of the cost of the services they use in addition to the monthly premiums. Besides the LTC system, private markets for long-term care services have rarely been developed, because of the cultural and historical contexts in Japan. The government were responsible for both funding and providing public services for decades after the Second World War and Japanese citizens still expect the government to remain responsible for managing such public services, including LTC.

This study examines changes in LTC policies based on a secondary analysis of governmental data. The behaviors of service organizations were examined using data collected from panel surveys conducted in 2005–2006, 2011–2012 and 2018, each with an interval of 6.5 years. The research sites were two municipalities located in Tokyo Prefecture selected for their distinct residents' income levels with one municipality having notably higher incomes compared to the other. The study encompassed subjects from both in-home care, where care workers provide personal care and household tasks directly at individual houses and day-care settings, where service users travel designated care centers offering socialization, rehabilitation, meals and bathing services. All subjects were associated with service organizations registered with the local government of the studied municipalities. The service organizations were compared in cohorts based on the data collected during their initial identification. In the 2005–2006 survey, 200 service organizations were identified, of which 142 (71.0 percent) responded, constituting the first cohort. The second cohort consisted of 217 (86.9 percent) service organizations that responded to the 2011–2012 survey and the third consisted of 63 (55.3 percent) service organizations that responded to the 2018 survey.

Outcomes and discussion

The government introduced new programs during the observation period. This included an individual pension account system. Those who chose to enroll in the system make monthly deposits, and the government managed funds in the financial market. Although Japanese citizens aged 20 years and older were compulsorily enrolled in the national pension system, its benefits were predicted to decrease as the percentage of the elderly population increased. Considering that approximately 75 percent of older adults currently rely on the national pension system as their

primary income source, the newly introduced pension account system was crucial for complementing decreasing pension benefits. This enabled LTC service users to continue paying LTC premiums and co-payment fees. In summary, the newly introduced pension account system supports the future sustainability of the LTC system with private funds. Meanwhile, individuals lacking stable incomes who were unable to enroll in the recently introduced pension account system find themselves at an early-life disadvantaged when utilizing LTC services in the future.

Different types of care housing programs have been developed as well based on a joint effort by the government and service organizations. In these programs, the government set reimbursement rates lower than those in existing LTC programs, enabling the government to contain public expenditures. At the same time, certain regulations were relaxed. For example, in the existing in-home help service program, a care worker is not allowed to assist a client bathing and clean the bath tub at the same time because the former service is covered by LTC while the latter is not. In the newly introduced care housing program, on the other hand, service organizations were enabled to offer a packaged service program in which such LTC and additional services were combined, based on fees. In this way, service organizations learned to earn extra business incomes as delivering LTC services.

In the community, LTC service users mostly rely on in-home assistance and day care services. Based on a panel survey, this study reveals that in-home and day care service organizations are accelerating their turnover, resulting in a shorter lifespan. It seems to be related to the increase in the number of chain service organizations, as well as mergers and acquisitions among them. Service organizations also engage in cream skimming, as prioritizing service users with significant needs or those who receive financial assistance for living expenses. The combination of the shorter lifespan and cream skimming consequently enables service organizations to efficiently gather government reimbursements, while increasing instability and impartiality of the LTC system in community.

Conclusion

Financialization is a structural issue, where the roles and interactions of the government, service organizations, service users and community converge, giving rise to a new exclusion mechanism, namely, financial exclusion, as exacerbating a disparity between those who can and cannot afford public services at the same time. To reinforce social responsibility for the well-being of all citizens, this study emphasizes the need to reconsider the governance of privatized areas of public services.

Keywords: Financialization, privatization, long-term care, pension, Japan.

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THE BENEFITS OF FINANCIAL INCLUSION IN PREDICTING QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG LOW-INCOME ADULTS IN MOZAMBIQUE

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Background

Poverty and its complex outcomes persistently exist, causing severe survival crises that could deteriorate quality of life (QoL), especially among African low-income rural households. Previous studies indicated that over 65% of Mozambicans did not have two daily balanced meals, and around 43% of under-five children were affected by chronic malnutrition. Community approach in enhancing mainstreaming financial capability services and heritages in interpersonal skills and support systems could boost health and quality of life. Yet, few studies examine how the quality of life (QoL) relates to participation in informal financial inclusion, household food insecurity and interpersonal skills and behaviors among rural low-income Mozambicans. In this study, QoL refers to the overall evaluation of self-rated satisfaction in one's life. Limited information shows the nexus between financial service, social capital and food insecurity in predicting QoL among African low-income adults.

Method

The study used program evaluation data from Mozambique collected in January 2023. It examined the correlation of QoL with household hunger, friendship networking, neighborhood social capital (NSC), feelings of loneliness and access to financial resources (borrowing money). The study employed stratified cross-sectional data and randomly sampled 732 low-income adults from three sub-villages in Central Mozambique, Beira area. QoL was measured with a single-item life-satisfaction scale ranging from 1 to 5. Household Hunger Score (HHS), a three-item Likert scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.86$), measured food availability in the household with a total score range of 0 to 6. The frequency of borrowing money from savings groups, formal banks, microfinance institutions, families and friends in the last two years was used to assess the benefits of financial inclusion. An ordinal 7-item scale was used to assess respondent experience with NSC, with a score ranging between 1 to 28. Loneliness was measured with a widely used 3-questions: 1) "How often do you feel that you lack companionship?"; 2) "How often do you feel isolated from others?"

etc.; 3) The Lubben Social Network Scale (LSNS) was used to measure friendship, interpersonal networking and support using a 6-item scale with a score ranging from 5 to 30.

Result

Multiple linear regression tests reveal that household food insecurity (β =-.03, p<.005), the feeling of loneliness (β =-.1.10, p<.001) and increased age (β =-.010, p<.001) negatively influenced a self-rated QoL. Whereas opportunity in borrowing money from village saving groups and families for investment and household matters (β =-.05, p<.00), friendship networking (β =-.01, p<.001), NSC (β =-.02, p<.001) and duration in marital partnership (β =-.01, p<.001) positively influences QoL controlling for variables of age, sex and location. The model explains 10% ($R_2 = 0.10$) of QoL variance.

Conclusion

The study provides evidence from Mozambique suggesting that enhancing interpersonal skills, access to financial benefits, and increased household food availability could predict positive change in QoL. The study recommends that scholars, policymakers and development experts consider promoting relational heritages, informal financial inclusion community mechanisms and policies to strengthen resilience and tackle household food insecurity to improve the quality of life in a rural setting. Comprehensive research in urban and semi-urban settings could further rigor the findings.

Keywords: Quality of life, financial inclusion, food insecurity, availability of food, neighbourhood social capital, social network.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND ABSORPTION OF EUROPEAN FUNDS AT LOCAL LEVEL

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One of the EU's biggest problems is ensuring the greatest possible absorption of the funds made available to the member states through the Partnership Framework Agreements that have been negotiated and which establish the development priorities and the amounts allocated for each of them. The harshest criticisms from both researchers and member states are related to the fact that most of the time the degree of absorption is the most important indicator by which they "judge" the spending of European money to a country, although the lower it goes from national to local level it is more difficult to quantify. The gap between the European supply of funds and the needs felt or identified at the local level may be an explanation for the poor uptake. The new European policies are oriented towards a bottom-up type of development (Pike & Tomaney, 2016) by which the reality in the territory (place based policy) is desired to be at the center of all approaches (Barca, 2009). The development strategies elaborated and assumed at the local level are or should be the result of a strategic planning process with the involvement of all interested factors and with the most efficient use of all resources, but especially the European, non-refundable ones. Our research analyzes the relationship between the strategies developed and assumed by local authorities and the degree of absorption of European funds and what is the usefulness perceived by local authorities of development strategies as strategic planning documents.

Keywords: Strategic planning, local strategies, European Funds, absorption, local authorities.

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HOW NOT TO FIGHT POVERTY? INVESTING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD IS THE FOUNDATION OF THE FUTURE

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Background

The fight against poverty around the world is always a topical issue. Kazakhstan provides for various types of assistance to children, low-income and large families, which are aimed at reducing poverty. In 2022, the President of the country in his Address announced the launch of a new program "National Fund for Children", which considers the deduction of 50% of the annual investment income of the National Fund of the country to special savings accounts for children until they reach 18 years old, without the right of early withdrawal. Since January 1, 2020, the system of compulsory social health insurance has been operating, which in its own way is another of the measures of state social support in the form of cash payments within the social security system. Within the framework of compulsory health insurance, all citizens living in Kazakhstan are entitled to a guaranteed volume of free medical care. All children and pregnant women are insured within the framework of compulsory social health insurance.

In this article, the authors consider the ongoing program of investing in the development of young children as an effective service of social support of the state in the fight against poverty. Sustained efforts in comprehensive early childhood care are demonstrated by improvements in various dimensions of poverty. That is, if the state invests earlier in the development of a child, its the stronger potential in the future and the higher the economic effect. A study by Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman found that every dollar invested in early childhood and quality early childhood programs can generate between $4 and $16 in revenue. How does it work? A child under 3 years of age begins to acquire early socialization skills. A child under the age of 3 begins to acquire early socialization skills. One dollar invested in the school development of a child gives 3 dollars of indirect profit for the state. Accordingly, the number of children graduating from school, enrolled in colleges and universities, contributes to economic development and an increase in state income. It also reduces spending on special education/rehabilitation, social security, crime-related costs, incarceration rates, etc.

In 2009, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) issued a joint statement urging low and middle-income countries to conduct home visits to newborns, particularly during the first week of life. The recommended

interventions included: three home visits during the first week of life; identification of problems that put the infant at risk; treatment or referral to a specialist for any high risk problems and providing education to mothers to eliminate or reduce any risks to infant safety. To meet the needs of young children, the Ministry of Health (MoH) of the Republic of Kazakhstan, with the support of UNICEF, within the framework of the Densaulyk State Health Development Program for 2016-2020, identified as a priority goal the introduction of a universally progressive model (UPM) of home visiting in primary health care organizations. Care as an effective system for improving the health, development and well-being of children.

Patronage service is a system of conducting "home visits" of a patronage nurse to young children, including the prenatal period. Meeting the family in their own environment gives the professional a unique opportunity to understand the problems and make the right decision. The main goal of the universally progressive model (UPM) of home visiting is to protect and promote the health and well-being of children at an early age, in close connection with the well-being of parents and the immediate environment. This model exists in most countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

In the second half of 2015, with the support of UNICEF, a pilot project was initiated by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MoHRK) to introduce a universally progressive model (UPM) of home visiting. The piloting of the new model was carried out in the Kyzylorda region in three clinics in 2016-2017. The work on this model also contributed to the development of the institution of supervision in the field of health care in our country. From 2016 to 2018, with the support of UNICEF, national trainers carried out 8 visits of external supportive supervision to consolidate the practical skills of multi-team specialists, analyze emerging problems and solve them.

Methodology

The article provides a brief review of the effectiveness and analysis of the existing problems of the universal-progressive model of home visiting for young children and pregnant women as an effective tool against poverty. In December 2017, a new national standard for organizing the provision of pediatric care in the Republic of Kazakhstan was adopted, which spelled out all the main provisions of the reformed universally progressive model (UPM) of home visiting throughout the country.

Findings

The project showed significant results in the effectiveness of the new model for the provision of patronage services: the death rate of children from manageable causes, household injuries

decreased, the coverage of early observation of pregnant women increased, the number of newborns receiving exclusive breastfeeding, respectively, the cost of purchasing artificial mixtures decreased, the level of knowledge and competence increased significantly patronage nurses, the satisfaction of the population with the work of the patronage service and confidence in health care services and social assistance have increased and the rates of infant and child mortality have decreased.

Discussion and conclusions

The successful implementation of this program in our country also contributed to the promotion of professional social work through the use of case management technology and supervision. In this regard, the analysis of the effectiveness of the universally progressive model (UPM) of home visiting shows that promoting the development of young children is one of the most effective strategies for preventing poverty, realizing children's rights, reducing socio-economic gaps between population groups (rich and poor, urban and rural, major and ethnic minorities), as well as the promotion of equity and inclusion, both in relation to children and to society at large.

Keywords: Poverty, early childhood, universally progressive model, Kazakhstan.

FINANCIAL LITERACY, FINANCIAL COMPETENCE AND ASSET BUILDING CONSULTANCY: THE CASE OF CIHAT E. ÇIÇEK

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The role of social workers in enhancing the financial well-being of individuals and communities within the framework of an empowerment approach, rather than solely providing traditional social assistance in combating poverty is becoming increasingly important. In this context, discussions have emerged within the concept of financial social work about how to support clients in improving their financial literacy levels and enhancing their financial competencies to enable asset building, financial independence and a secure future.

Despite the historical focus of the social work profession on assisting the impoverished, a paradigm shift towards behavior change has become a fundamental focus in contemporary social work. Nevertheless, social work still maintains a focus on finance and this focus is often referred to as financial social work or financial capability and asset development. The reasons behind this include, firstly, a shift toward lower income levels among former middle-class families due to stagnation in global markets. As a result, numerous individuals and families are faced with financial insecurity and turn to social workers for social assistance. Secondly, no other profession has taken up the role of aiding the financially vulnerable population groups. Many other professionals (such as financial planners and advisors) do not have a mission to serve low and middle-income population groups. Thirdly, the Council on Social Work Education's (CSWE) accreditation guidelines for social work programs have mandated a focus on economic and social justice. While programs vary in the extent to which they address economic justice in their curricula, CSWE's requirement establishes a foundation for household financing and a focus on economic justice within the profession. The fourth reason is the growing interest in asset-building policies and practices for the low and middle-income population, shedding light on the need to focus on household financing (Loke *et al*., 2017). Therefore, the emergence of financial social work as a new field within the social work profession has these various reasons as its backdrop and it emphasizes two key areas: financial literacy and financial capacity development.

Financial literacy involves possessing a set of knowledge and skills that allow individuals to make informed and effective decisions about their financial resources. Understanding fundamental financial concepts enables individuals to navigate the current financial system. Individuals who

receive appropriate financial literacy education make better financial decisions and manage income and expenses more effectively compared to those without such education (Klapper *et al*., 2015). Financial capacity, on the other hand, goes beyond financial literacy, addressing not only the knowledge or understanding of financial concepts but also how individuals manage their resources and make financial decisions (FINRA, 2009).

In today's context, social workers assist applicants in areas such as providing low-cost food and housing, banking services, financial coaching and financial education, thereby supporting the financial security of applicants. Social workers, especially when dealing with cases of violence against women, facilitate access to financial education and microcredit as initial steps to empower women facing economic challenges. Furthermore, social workers support those intending to engage in self-employment by providing guidance on labor and trade regulations and income taxation (Sherraden *et al*., 2015).

The role of social work in enhancing financial capacity includes:

Providing knowledge and skills related to budgeting, credit, banking and investment (financial knowledge/literacy).

Assisting individuals in connecting with institutions that provide secure and affordable financial products and services, as well as helping them access opportunities.

Ensuring that individuals make the best financial decisions to meet their personal, familial, and societal needs.

Advocating for policies that encourage access to assets and further financial empowerment (Gates *et al*., 2017).

Financial social work aims to enhance individuals' empowerment through both financial literacy and the development of financial capacity. The concept of financial capacity goes beyond equipping individuals with the necessary financial knowledge and skills to stand on their own; it also implies the restructuring of financial and social policies and institutions according to the needs of the applicants. However, it could be argued that social work education alone may not suffice in gaining financial knowledge and skills. There are limited studies in the literature indicating that students and social workers who receive education related to financial social work believe that they will not only apply the learned knowledge in their personal lives but also provide more valuable assistance to applicants. Therefore, considering the economic problems faced by individuals or other psychosocial problems arising from economic issues, the inclusion of financial knowledge in both social work education curricula and training programs for practicing social workers is recommended.

This paper examines the example of Cihat E. Çiçek, a renowned YouTuber in Turkey. He effectively explains financial matters in an understandable and engaging manner, thereby

increasing the awareness of both young people and adults about financial topics. Followers, across various social media platforms, indicate that they have achieved positive outcomes in areas such as saving, investing and debt management by effectively applying Cihat E. Çiçek's financial advices. The influence of popular figures like Cihat E. Çiçek in financial matters, along with follower comments, also demonstrates how they can play a role in raising the level of financial consciousness within society. This paper, drawing from the example of Cihat E. Çiçek, discusses how social workers can provide effective consultancy in financial literacy, financial competence and asset building topics.

Keywords: Financial Literacy, Financial Competence, Asset Building, Financial Social Work, Cihat E. Çiçek.

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HOW TO IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF FINANCIAL INCLUSION FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION? AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS BASED ON CHINESE DATA

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Financial inclusion has emerged as a new and novel strategy to advance family financial well-being and combat poverty in China. Substantial financial resources have been channeled into revitalizing rural economic and social development. While research on financial usage, financial literacy (two essential dimensions of financial inclusion) and financial well-being has garnered substantial attention within the consumer science and financial industry domains, a significant research gap persists in the fields of social work and poverty alleviation. The study examines the relationship between financial usage, financial literacy (two dimensions of financial inclusion) and financial well-being in China utilizing the data from the 2019 China Household Finance Survey.

The findings reveal a positive correlation between financial usage and enhanced financial well-being. Moreover, the study underscores that financial literacy not only mediates but also moderates the connection between financial usage and financial well-being. These findings underscore the pivotal role of financial literacy in elevating household per capita income and fostering a harmonious balance between income and expenditures. Nonetheless, a discernible disparity exists between the financial literacy and financial usage of low-income individuals in China when compared to their non-low-income counterparts. Acknowledging this reality, interventions designed to enhance the financial literacy of low-income earners take on paramount importance, ultimately augmenting the efficacy of financial inclusion initiatives in the pursuit of poverty alleviation.

Keywords: Financial inclusion, financial usage, financial literacy, poverty alleviation.

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PATHWAYS TO A BRIGHT FUTURE: FINANCIAL LITERACY AND EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS AMONG CHILDREN IN RURAL CHINA

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Background and Hypotheses

How to achieve sustainable poverty alleviation has become the primary concern of anti-poverty research in China and the elimination of child poverty is the key to block the intergenerational transmission of poverty in achieving children's bright futures. Education is an effective way to enhance human capital and alleviate multidimensional poverty of children and children's educational aspirations and expectations have a positive impact on their educational attainment (Domina *et al*., 2011). In the classic Wisconsin Model, parents' educational aspirations and encouragement are focused as intermediary determinants through which family socioeconomic status (SES) influences children's educational expectations and achievement (Sewell & Hauser, 1980). However, less consideration has been given to how children's own cognitive and behavioral characteristics mediate the family-level factors affecting their educational expectations for future development. In recent decades, a large body of research has reached a consensus on the critical important role of financial capability, referring mainly to financial access and financial literacy in shaping children's lifelong success (Johnson & Sherraden, 2007). Financial literacy reflects the ability to understand and effectively use various financial skills (Huston, 2010) and is particularly important for children's development (Sherraden *et al*., 2011). Yet, the specific mechanisms of children's financial literacy between family factors and children's educational expectations still lack sufficient empirical evidences. Moreover, few research has examined children's financial literacy among developing countries suffering poverty.

This study thus attempts to bridge the research gaps by investigating the underlying mechanisms influencing children's educational expectations in rural China, and discussing its implications for policies and practices for sustainable poverty alleviations in the country of China and beyond. In this study, children's financial literacy is hypothesized as a mediating variable of family SES and parental involvement affecting children's educational expectations. Specifically, longer parental company, better parent-child communication and higher parental educational aspirations for their children would have positive effects on children's financial literacy respectively, which predicts higher educational expectations of children (Figure 1).
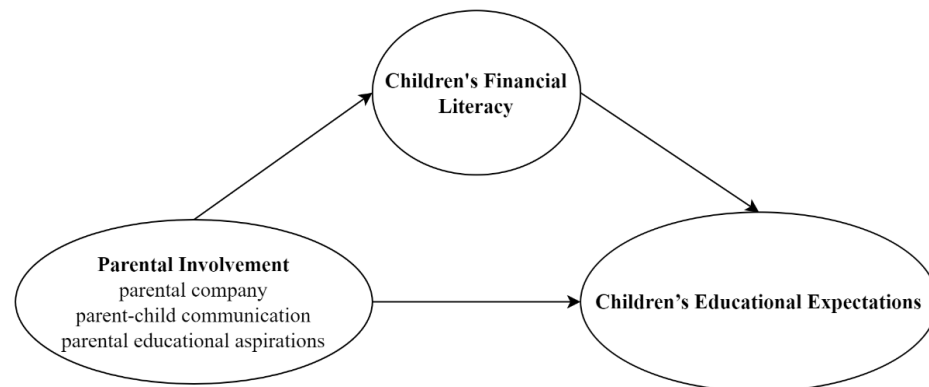
Figure 1. Theoretical model

Methods

This research is a quantitative study. The data came from the project "Parenting Capacity and Risk Assessment for Rural Children in Difficulty" funded by a charitable foundation. This survey conducted in October 2021 in Zhenxiong County, Yunnan Province, China. Based on stratified sampling, two towns with medium economic level were first selected, and then one junior high school and one primary school were selected from each of these two towns. In junior high school, two classes were randomly selected for each grade according to the class number. In primary school, all classes of grades 5 and 6 in each school were included in the sample. The questionnaires were filled out by the students themselves, with the assistance of investigators in each class, resulting in a final data sample of 749.

This study formed four observed variables of "ideal educational aspirations", "actual educational expectations", "university importance" and "future confidence" into a latent variable for the measurement of dependent variable. As for independent variable, parental company, parent-child communication and parental educational aspirations for their children were selected as the three measurement dimensions of parental involvement. Besides, Children's financial literacy was selected as mediating variable. Finally, gender, age and family SES were also included as control variables in the model.

In addition to simple descriptive statistics, this paper focuses on testing the research hypotheses by building a structural equation model (SEM). First, a factor analysis of the measurement model was conducted to identify appropriate dimensions and observed variables for parental involvement, children's financial literacy and children's educational expectations. Second, in the structural model, by controlling for family SES and age, path effects of parental involvement (parental company, parent-child communication and parental educational aspirations)-children's financial literacy-children's educational expectations were established and

the direct and mediating effects of children's financial literacy were analysed using a Bootstrap method of structural equation model to test the hypotheses.

Findings

It finds that rural children's financial literacy is relatively well-developed and girls are slightly better than boys. The results based on SEM show that parent-child communication and parental educational aspirations have positive effects on children's educational expectations and children's financial literacy and parent-child communication also acts indirectly on children's educational expectations through the pathway of children's financial literacy.

Other findings are as follows: 1) Parental company does not have a significant impact on children's educational expectations. 2) Although family economic situation has an impact on children's educational expectations, it is lower than that of parental involvement and children's financial literacy. Also, the effects of family economic status on each dimension of parental involvement and children's financial literacy were not significant.

Implications and Discussion

Children's financial literacy has formed a more developmental concept and behaviour for children's growth. This study gives effective evidence to attach importance to cultivate children's financial literacy for better educational achievement through family involvement in sustainable poverty alleviation measures.

Rather than emphasizing mere presence, how to promote effective parental company is perhaps a more meaningful issue. As an integrated financial service model, CDAs can be effective in enhancing child financial capability (Sherraden *et al*., 2011) and intergenerational interventions, especially in promoting parent-child communication and parents' attention and investment in children's development, which is important in blocking the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

This paper also suggests that children and their families may be able to escape the constraints of family economics and adjust educational aspirations and expectations. Similarly, financial literacy is not entirely dependent on family circumstances, which means children in economic less-developed region as rural China might still have good financial literacy. It seems to be a testament of the old Chinese saying that "the poor man's children manage household affairs earlier" and provides a window of intervention that could raise educational aspirations for rural children with low financial accessibility.

Keywords: Parental involvement, financial literacy, educational expectations, financial social work, child poverty alleviation.

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SECTION II
Vulnerable and Marginalized Groups

SOCIAL WORK WITH STREET CHILDREN

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When we describe social work with "street children", we speak of "street work". This form of social work first appeared in the United States and was designed only for teenagers to work with criminal gangs. In Germany, "social work with children in the street" is primarily intended to connect with dangerous groups of teenagers in the street (street gangs, drug addicts, other risk groups). The essence of social work with children exposed to street life was search activity, alternative proposals prepared for teenagers, which could not be achieved through other forms of social work. The social target category in the street is minors socially maladjusted and that are under the risks.

History of social work with street children

Social work with street children originated in the United States in the late 1920s as a professional form of social work. It has been connected with the constant increase of criminality among young people in large cities and social-pedagogical programs have been developed for this reason. Over the time, the number of these risk groups has been increasing. Based on the age groups, such persons were formed on the basis of poor general living conditions (poverty, unemployment, social and environmental problems).

Two ways have been suggested to reduce the rate of legal violations among teenagers: either to isolate the teenager from the full influence of such groups; or such groups themselves needed to be resocialized. The first path has been chosen as the preference because of the prevailing notion of individual assistance.

After the Second World War, social work with young people in the street began to develop in various European cities (Vienna, Amsterdam, etc.). In the late 1960s, social work emerged in Germany, especially in cities such as Hamburg, Berlin, Munich and Stuttgart. In Europe, the development of "social work with street children", unlike that of in America, has begun as based

on a model dedicated to the criminal teenagers in the neighbourhood communities by focusing solely on the geographical approach. In background of economic instability, the emergence of difficulties in the social situation of many teenagers and young people has embodied itself in the increase of the tension in the problems among them, especially in the increase in the consumption of the narcotic drugs and led to the increase in the number of risk groups. It was no longer possible to connect with such risk groups of young people through traditional social services, which prompted the emergence of mobile consultation forms in the relevant fields of social work, later called "street social work".

A social worker should work with certain characteristics to be effective:
- to have knowledge and skills about work;
- try to learn continuously;
- asking for help from others if necessary;
- to have maturity characteristics such as honesty, responsibility, patience, self-confidence, building empathy;
- to be determined, enthusiastic and curious;
- be creative and resourceful;
- to encourage by giving different alternative ideas and suggestions;
- create opportunities to recognize and find children exposed to street life;
- trying to get positive results by working purposefully.

Currently, physiological and psychological needs of children exposed to street life are not fulfilled. According to psychologist Abraham Maslow's pyramid of needs, these needs must be met in steps. It is not possible to go directly to the next step if any previous need is not fulfilled. For this reason, it is essential to assist on fulfillment of the children's needs by starting their fundamental needs.

First, surveys should be conducted with them, problems should be detected, effective solutions thereon should be proposed. Information about their families should also be collected during the survey. The reasons for their exposure to street life should be discovered. In order to collect detailed information according to the survey, precise, specific questions should be prepared. Positive emotional relationships should be created by having pleasant communication with children.

Features of social work with children exposed to street life:
- they must be placed in a shelter to meet their safety and other basic needs;
- it is necessary to check their health condition or to refer to the rehabilitation center for the problems that arise;

- the social worker must build self-confidence;
- should involve education;
- it should help those children to strengthen and solve their problems;
- it is necessary to discover and develop their skills by creating self-confidence in them.

To get successful results with children exposed to street life, social work should be done in a certain sequence. Meanwhile, educational measures should be implemented. By these ways, it would be possible to prevent problems that may occur in the future.

Keywords: Social work, street children, child protection, psycho-social support.

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IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

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The COVID-19 pandemic has severely constrained health systems around the world, exposing and exacerbating multilevel health inequalities. People with disabilities, who make up about 16% of the world's population, often experience worse health outcomes than people without disabilities due to multiple barriers to accessing health care. These inequalities have been especially pronounced during the pandemic, highlighting the urgent need to strengthen health systems to be inclusive and responsive to the needs of people with disabilities, including during crises.

Even in non-crisis situations, people with disabilities face inaccessible services, lack of adequate transportation to and from health facilities, high out-of-pocket costs, and stigma and discrimination from health professionals. COVID-19 has exacerbated many of these existing problems by increasing health inequalities. For example, a study in Vietnam found that people with disabilities were three times more likely to report that their access to health care was "much worse" during the pandemic compared to their non-disabled peers, and a third reported additional barriers to access to health care related to disability.

People with disabilities have been affected differently by COVID-19 due to three factors: an increased risk of poor outcomes due to the disease itself, limited access to conventional healthcare and rehabilitation, and adverse social impacts of pandemic mitigation efforts. Ten years ago, the WHO World Report on Disability noted that people with disabilities are more likely to be older, poorer, have underlying health conditions, and are female. Older age, deprivation, and comorbidities are also associated with an increased risk of severe COVID-19 outcomes.

The risk of dying from COVID-19 between 24 January and 30 November 2020 in England was 3.1 times higher for men with disabilities and 3.5 times higher for women with disabilities than men and women without disabilities.

People with intellectual disabilities living in crowded places, mostly in high-income countries, had a higher risk of dying from COVID-19 than people without disabilities. But even at home, people with mental retardation have an increased risk of dying from COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created negative effects for people all over the world. It created a double negative effect especially on people with disabilities. Before the pandemic, WHO tried to solve the problems of people with disabilities, such as transportation, education, etc., but after the pandemic, meeting the needs of people with disabilities has become a more important issue.

While individuals with disabilities are not inherently at a greater risk for contracting COVID-19, individuals with disabilities may be more affected by disruption of services, including:

- *Home and community support and service provision;*
- *Access to education;*
- *Access to information;*
- *Access to steady employment;*
- *Access to healthcare and other critical needs.*

Of the 35 people with a disability interviewed for the study, 34 reported an impact on mental health. Many participants spoke of feeling socially isolated and worsening anxiety and depression during the pandemic. Isolation can be particularly acute for people with disabilities that make it difficult or inadvisable for them to go out, such as people with limited mobility or immunocompromised people.

Technological solutions to reduce isolation were not a viable option for everyone with a disability. Virtual platforms, a common option for many to connect with family and friends, were often impractical for people with brain injuries. For someone with a brain injury, screen time can increase cognitive fatigue and worsen symptoms such as nausea and dizziness. One person shared that because the health care system was overwhelmed, they couldn't get an appointment to replace the battery in their wheelchair, which resulted in them not being able to leave their apartment for over two years.

While participants mostly reported on the negative effects of COVID-19 and measures to slow its spread, they also noted some of the positive effects of the pandemic. For example, to have great financial support; increasing opportunities for remote work, which facilitates the employment of some people with disabilities; and raising awareness of the importance of mental health during a pandemic.

In pandemic areas, a variety of mental health support strategies are needed to facilitate the lifestyle changes and re-adaptation activities needed after outbreaks occur, and it is the responsibility of the social work profession to ensure this. The goal of social work profession is to advance social cohesion and stability, promote social change development through empowerment and liberation of people as well as restoring social functioning while championing respect for the sanctity of life and drawing on the ideals of social justice and human dignity. Considering this,

social workers have the responsibility of playing crucial and frontline role of helping and supporting communities that are affected by COVID-19.

Responsibilities of social workers are not limited to the fight against the spread of COVID-19, ensuring inclusion of the most vulnerable in planning and response, organizing communities in ensuring the availability of essential items like food and clean water, advocating for social inclusion of the most vulnerable into the social service system, as well as facilitating physical distancing and social solidarity through campaigns and orientation programs. Social workers must recognize that stigma fuels the isolation of people and blocks access to care and support which in turn contributes to the continued spread of disease.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, impact, vulnerable populations, people with disabilities.

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INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AS A PART OF INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT POLICIES
(Evidence from the Russian nationwide survey of HRs)

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The issues of inclusive employment in the Russian business sector have never been at the top of the agenda, unlike foreign companies, for which the representation of, for example, people with disabilities (PwD), women, ethnic minorities among the staff is an important indicator not only of the social orientation of business, but also acts as an imperative of non-discrimination in the labour market and society as a whole. At the same time, it has been proven that inclusive organisations have better business performance than those that do not pay due attention to inclusion (Inegbedion *et al*., 2020). The intensive inclusion of PwD in the labour market leads to numerous positive effects for a society and social policy, such as higher incomes, improved quality of life and increased social inclusion (Patrini & Ahrendt, 2021). Also, Russia's inclusion in the global agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2020-2030: Decade of Action for the SDGs...2020) necessitates the adoption and maintenance of inclusion and diversity policies in Russian companies.

The development of such a policy and its implementation most often belongs to responsibility of HR managers (top and middle management). It is known from foreign experience that their role in managing diversity in companies is significant, if not leading (Mehng *et al*., 2019; Kessler Foundation 2017). Meanwhile, there have been no studies on such a topic in Russia until recently. That is why we conducted a nationwide survey of HR managers from large, medium and small businesses to find out for the first time their opinions on the status and prospects of inclusive employment in Russian companies, as well as the factors that, from their point of view, influence diversity management in the context of global challenges (Antonova *et al*., 2022).

The survey was conducted via a formalized questionnaire utilizing a combined method – respondents were offered a choice of face-to-face, telephone interview or online questionnaire (average interview duration was 20 minutes). Data collection took place during November December 2021. The sample size was 2,050 respondents, including representatives of large (200 interviews), medium (650 interviews) and small businesses (1,200 interviews). Large businesses include companies with more than 250 employees at the time of the survey, medium-sized

businesses – with 101-250 employees, and small businesses – with up to 100 employees. By type of ownership, the sample included foreign, Russian state-owned and Russian private companies. The geography of the survey covers all federal districts of the Russian Federation. The companies included in the survey belonged to FMCG, IT, retail, oil and gas, finance, consulting, construction business, pharmaceuticals, HoReCa, multi-functional holdings, and other spheres.

Attitudes towards inclusion policies and the role of the HR manager

According to the results obtained, 73% of the surveyed company representatives - HR managers - support the policy of inclusion and diversity to a greater or lesser extent. At the same time, in companies, regardless of their size, this policy is most often maintained without clearly defined inclusive rules. This may indicate not only the lack of a regulatory framework for inclusion at the organisational level, but also the importance of inclusion in the Russian business community, which is not yet fully understood and felt in practice. The percentage of respondents who believe that there are clearly defined inclusive rules and norms, which are always or occasionally maintained in organisations, generally decreases as the size of the company decreases: least of all in small businesses, and more in large businesses. At the same time, medium-sized companies (29%) agreed with the statement that "inclusion policies are most often not manifested in any way in the company". The second most frequent choice of this answer option was made by small companies (28%), while representatives of large businesses (19%) were the least likely to agree with this position.

Figure 1. HR managers' assessment of their own role in promoting inclusion and diversity values

Interestingly, at the same time, 66% of organisations that took part in the survey have no employees with disabilities.

As our survey focused on HR managers' views on inclusion and diversity management, we also asked what the role of HR professionals is in promoting the values of inclusion and diversity in companies.

What are the benefits of D&I policies in Russia?

Since, this was the pioneering survey conducted in Russia on such topic, it was important to find out what effect HR managers believe the D&I Policy has.

The results of answers to the corresponding question are shown in Figure 2.
It can be seen, that the opinions of respondents representing businesses of different sizes differ. In particular, respondents from small and medium-sized businesses (71%) more often voice their opinion about improving their company's reputation in the Russian business community than large businesses (60%). The situation is similar with regard to the growth of reputation with the state - representatives of small (66%) and medium-sized (71%) businesses are more likely to talk about the contribution of diversity and inclusion policies to this process than large businesses (59%). It is likely that such assessments have arisen because large companies consider themselves to already have a strong reputation both inside and outside the business community and do not think about how the inclusiveness of their organisation may in principle affect their image.

According to the respondents, I&D policies have a positive impact on:

	All	Large business	Medium business	Small business
Confidence in the company's management	71%	68%	76%	73%
Company reputation in the Russian professional/business community	65%	60%	71%	71%
Employee engagement	64%	62%	66%	70%
Your own personal growth as an HR professional	64%	62%	66%	69%
The company's reputation in Russian society	64%	60%	69%	68%
The company's reputation in the eyes of the state	63%	59%	71%	66%
Employee motivation	62%	59%	65%	67%
Employee commitment to the organization	62%	58%	66%	70%
Employee tolerance	62%	60%	66%	65%
The company's reputation in the international market\abroad	62%	58%	68%	69%
Creativity at work	61%	58%	64%	68%
Employee performance	60%	57%	63%	62%

* % of all respondents

Figure 2. HR managers' assessment of the effects of D&I policy in the company
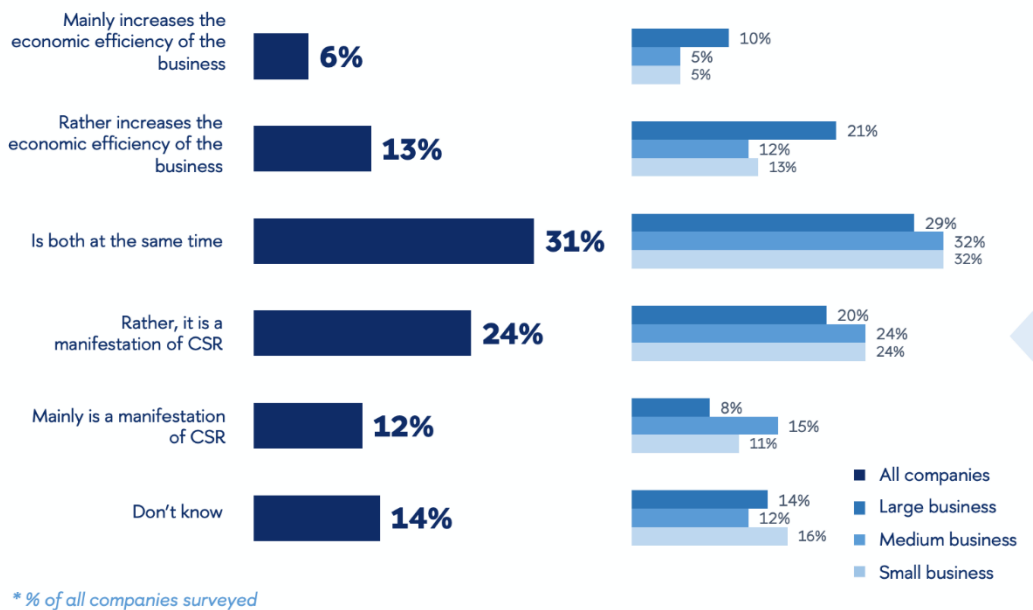
Figure 3. Implementing D&I policies: impact on cost-effectiveness or CSR?

As inclusion and diversity policies are gradually beginning to become part of business in Russia, the survey asked how company managers assess these policies, i.e. whether, in their experience, they consider them to be more part of the overall corporate social responsibility (CSR) agenda, or whether they regard them as charity, or whether they find a financial component to them.

Thus, at present it cannot be said that HR managers in Russia assess D&I policy in companies only as a part of CSR or only as a factor of increasing business efficiency: there is a diversity of opinions, which testifies to the ongoing process of "mastering" the inclusive policy by Russian companies, as well as to the possibility of business to develop its own position on this issue. Based on the results of the nationwide survey of HR managers, ¾ of companies operating in Russia support D&I policy to some extent, but this agenda and system of values are still poorly expressed and formalised in specific strategies/inclusive practices of businesses. Formalised practices of adaptation of workplaces and employees with disabilities are most noticeable in large companies. Inclusive practices of small businesses are more informal and spontaneous.

Keywords: Inclusive employment, D&I policy, HR-managers, people with disabilities, CSR.

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ANALYSIS OF FACTORS AFFECTING THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN NEED OF SPECIAL CARE

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One of the most urgent problems in modern society is the number of disabled children and their social development. Children with disabilities (CwD) experience certain problems in contact with the environment and society, including peers and adults. CwD and their families have psychological concerns related to issues such as alienation, isolation from society, dissatisfaction with their position in society, loneliness and self-acceptance, so there is a need to eliminate these challenges and ensure enhancing social protection and well-being of CwD and their families. The relevance of this problem and its impact on society leads to increase the number of CwD. From this point of view, forecasting the number of CwD, including persons with disabilities, is considered one of the important issues when determining the future directions of social policy. For this reason, statistical analysis of the factors affecting the number of disabled children is one of the important issues. According to international studies, the causes of children's disability are accidents, wars and other unfortunate events, as well as the health and behavior of parents during pregnancy (for example, smoking and drinking), complications during childbirth, infections during the mother's pregnancy, premature birth, etc. This study aims to analyze the statistics of the 2 main causes, among the above-mentioned causes, which are premature birth and the increase in diseases in women during pregnancy. A certain statistical relationship is identified between the number of CwD and the mentioned indicators. At the same time, there is a statistical relationship in the same direction between the number of children diagnosed with disabilities for the first time at the age of 0-3 years and the "anemia" and "proteinuria, edema and hypertensive cases" diseases of pregnant women.

In general, according to the data of the State Statistics Committee of Azerbaijan, the number of the population aged 0-19 in Azerbaijan in 2007-2021 has continuously declined due to the decrease in births, from 3352000 people in 2000 to 28718000 people in 2022. However, the number of children in need of special care under the age of 18 receiving pensions and allowances according to the same dynamics increased continuously from 2000 to 2019, from 21700 people to 73000 people (Graph 1). In the following periods, a relative decrease is observed in the

corresponding indicator, which can be explained by the decrease in marriages due to closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic and as a result, the decrease in births.
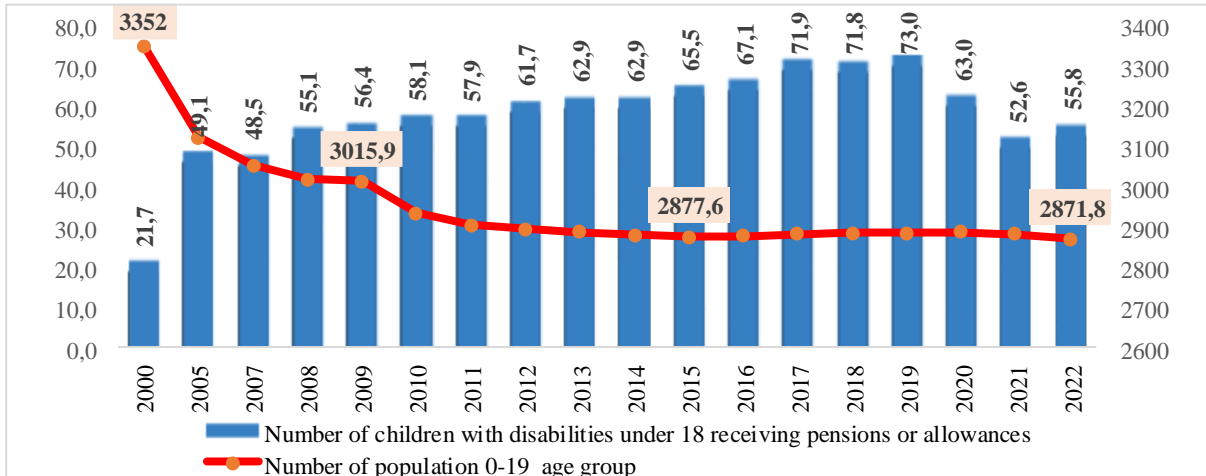
Graph 1. 2000-2022 dynamics of the number of children with special care needs and the population aged 0-19 receiving pensions or allowances (thousands of people)
Source: https://www.stat.gov.az/source/demoqraphy/

Thus, the increase in premature births and the decrease in the neonatal mortality rate (those living 0-27 days) with the development of medicine can lead to an increase in the number of children who have certain complications of early birth. For this reason, the paper describes the statistical relationship between neonatal mortality and early birth rates.

Graph 2 illustrates that the share of women who ended their pregnancy with premature birth (28-36 weeks) in the total number of births is continuously increasing over the years 2005-2021. The correlation of this indicator with the neonatal mortality indicator, r = -0.4, indicates an inverse statistical relationship. Although early birth increases, the neonatal mortality rate is decreasing.

The indicators on "diseases encountered in women during pregnancy", which hypothesized that the number of CwD has increased, our hypotheses are justified to some extent. It should be noted that there has been an increase in the incidence of various diseases among pregnant women during 2000-2021. Thus, in the dynamics of 2000-2021, the number of pregnant women who fell ill increased steadily from 2000, from 31.6% to 51.7% in 2021 (Graph 3).

Certain statistical analyzes are conducted between indicators of morbidity of pregnant women by types of diseases (2005-2019) and the number of children diagnosed with limited health opportunities for the first time at the age of 0-3 (for 2007-2021 with a shift of 2 years to considering the pregnancy period). A medium-level positive correlation was found between the number of

children diagnosed as disabled for the first time at the age of 0-3 and the diseases "anemia" (r=0.520) and "proteinuria, edema and hypertensive conditions" (r=0.417) (Table 1).
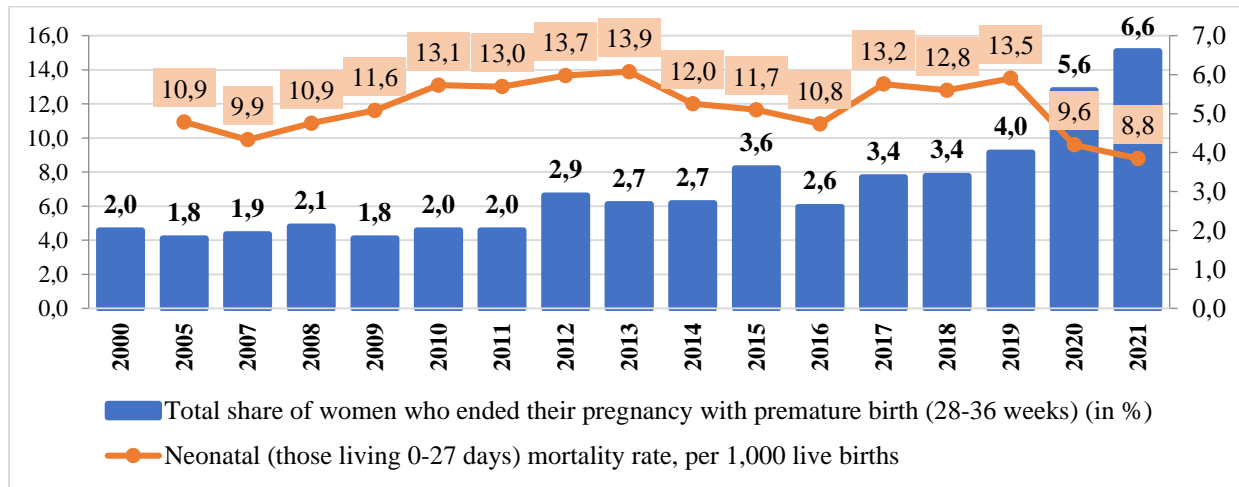
Graph 2. Neonatal mortality and preterm birth rates 2005-2021
Source: https://www.stat.gov.az/source/demoqraphy/
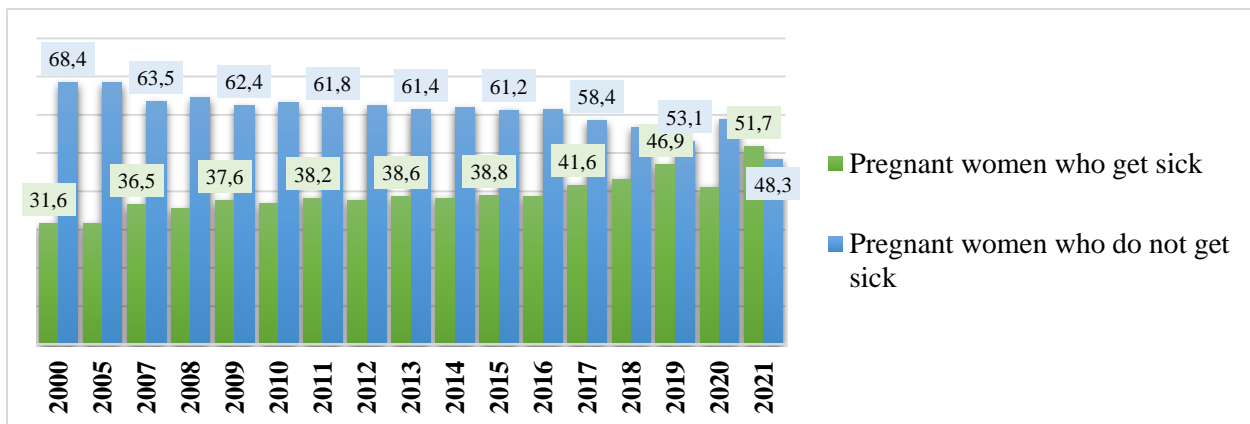
Graph 3. Distribution of pregnant women between 2000 and 2021 by diseased and non-diseased.

Overall, as a result, it was determined that there is a statistical relationship in the same direction between indicators of early birth, morbidity of pregnant women and the number of CwD. At the same time, there is a stronger statistical relationship between indicators of "anemia" and "proteinuria, edema and hypertension" in pregnant women and the number of CwD. In my next study, after considering other possible indicators, it is planned to build a regression model by including the indicators with a strong correlation references.

Table 1. Inter-factor correlation coefficients

	Anemia, X_1	Diseases of the circulatory system X_2	Proteinu-ria, edema and hyperten-sive cases X_3	Diseases of the genitou-rinary system, X_4	Venous complica-tions during pregnan-cy, X_5	Other diseases, X_6	Sick preg-nant women (Total), X_7
Children 0-3 age group who were diagnosed with a disability for the first time (Y)	0.8	-0.4	0.5	0.1	0.6	0.1	0.5

Keywords: Children with disabilities, social policy, premature birth, disability.

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Content source: National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities , Centers for DCP. https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/developmentaldisabilities/causes-and-risk-factors.html

DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY AS AN EMPOWERMENT TOOL FOR SOCIAL WORKERS

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Background

Digitalization has been reshaping radically human life in all aspects. People rely on digital technologies in carrying out the daily life activities and tasks. Without digital technologies, it is almost impossible to participate in the main domains of life such as work and education. The power of digital technologies in making the individual a social actor has been realized much more concretely during the Covid pandemic. Moreover, digital technologies have a more critical importance for individuals with disabilities compared to other individuals (Botelho, 2021). Director of the W3C and inventor of the World Wide Web Sir Tim Berners-Lee, articulated this importance when he launched the Web Accessibility Initiative in 1997 with the following quotation:

"As we move towards a highly connected world, it is critical that the Web be usable by anyone, regardless of individual capabilities and disabilities." (World Wide Web Consortium, 1997).

The importance of digital technologies for individuals with disabilities can be considered in two contexts as the advancement of independent living opportunities, and the advancement of effective participation opportunities in social life and labor market. The fact that digital technology tools have positive impacts on the lives of individuals with disabilities can be possible only by applying some predetermined standards in development and design of such tools (Botelho, 2021; Cooper, 2006; Marcus-Quinn & Hourigan, 2022; Mason *et al*., 2021). These standards, which enable individuals with disabilities to use digital technology tools are conceptualized as "accessibility" (Jaeger, 2008).

It is observed that the studies in the field of disability mostly discuss the accessibility on the bases of equality of opportunities and fundamental rights (Broderick, 2020; Gould *et al*., 2014; Holt, 2017). This study however suggests that the impact of digital accessibility on the lives of individuals with disabilities has a function beyond equality of opportunities. Digital accessibility can enable individuals with disabilities to participate effectively in production processes by revealing their potential. When individuals with disabilities become active in production areas

where they were not active before through digital accessibility applications, the power of stigmatizing social attitudes towards disability can be weaken over time. Therefore, this paper hypothesises that the main function of digital accessibility for social workers is to be a tool for empowerment and anti-oppressive practices. The problem of this study is to discuss the question of what position social workers should have in the face of the critical importance of digital technologies for individuals with disabilities. The paper is based on the literature review methodology.

The term of accessibility has become one of the key concepts as disability has been considered in a rights-based approach. Under the influence of disability activism, accessibility has turned into such a right guaranteed by legal regulations. The Rehabilitation Act of United States of America is known as the pioneering legal regulation to make physical spaces and public services accessible. Section 508 of the act mandates all public services provided by American federal agencies to be accessible (Jaeger, 2008).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which is the most comprehensive legal regulation that guarantees the rights of persons with disabilities, has also attached special importance to accessibility (Broderick, 2020). In the Preamble of the CRPD, accessibility is characterized as prerequisite for persons with disabilities in fully enjoying their human rights and fundamental freedoms. In the Article 3 of the CRPD, accessibility is defined as one of the eight principles which the convention is based on. According to the Article 9, which is fully dedicated to accessibility, "To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas."

At this point, it should be noted that in CRPD, term accessibility has been considered as an umbrella term, covering not only the usability of digital technology tools and contents by persons with disabilities, but also physical environments, transportation systems, all kinds of services and products. However, for the sake of the research problem of this study, the emphasis on accessibility in CRPD is discussed in the context of digital accessibility.

Digital Accessibility and Social Work

This paper approaches the capacity of digital accessibility as an empowerment tool for social workers from 2 perspectives. These are the advancement of independent living opportunities, and the advancement of effective participation opportunities in social life and labor market.

The fact that accessible digital technology tools offer many opportunities live more independently (Cabrera & Ozcivelek, 2008). It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss these opportunities in detail. However, the internet is the focal point of the independent living opportunities that digital accessibility provides to individuals with disabilities.

In today's world, major services such as health, banking, and education services are provided over the internet. On the other hand, governments and public institutions offer their services to the citizens by means of internet. individuals with disabilities can use the internet to access to public services, make their shoppings and participate in online activities without leaving their homes. Therefore, digital accessibility minimizes the dependence of individuals with disabilities on others and improves their capacity for being an autonomous individuals. Based on this fact, many independent living centers in the United States began to utilize the internet for providing services in addition to their traditional service delivery methods (Ritchie and Blanck, 2003). According to Ritchie and Blanck, the centers mainly focus on providing independent living services, peer connections, and disability advocacy over the Internet.

Another aspect that makes digital accessibility important for social workers is that it facilitates the participation of persons with disabilities in labor markets (Krutzinna, Floridi, 2018; Toldra, Santos, 2013; Yu *et al.*, 2019). Today, digital technology has transformed both the forms of working and the forms of participateing in labor markets. Transferring business processes and information resources to digital environments has made it easier for disabled individuals to access these processes and resources. Assistive technology products have provided persons with disabilities with new alternatives to become an actor in the digital world. For example, a visually impaired individual can serve customers in a call center with the help of "Screen Reader" software and a "Braille Monitor" device. The individuals who cannot use their hands can control the computer mouse by their feet with the help of a pedal.

By means of digital technologies, employees can also use their homes as offices. This provides extra advantages for persons with disabilities. Persons with Mobility limitations can participate in working life without need to leave their homes.

On the other hand, the virtual interaction opportunities provided by digital technology tools make face-to-face communication no longer a necessity. This factor can be considered as an opportunity for individuals with disabilities.

Numerous studies in the literature (Agmon *et al.*, 2016; Bailey *et al.*, 2016; Butler, Bowlby, 1997; Goodley, Runswick-Cole, 2013; Hughes, 2007; Hughes, 2009) show that the visibility of disability is an important factor in exposing individuals to social prejudices and negative attitudes. Communication processes taking place in virtual environments also reduce the frequency of

visibility of disabilities. Thus, the effect of social factors that make it difficult for workers with disabilities to be included in the labor market is weakened. The opportunities provided by digital technology have the potential to pave the way for persons with disabilities to be included in the labor market not only as employees but also as employers.

Being included in labor markets is the primary determinant of an individual's social status in modern societies. In this context, the employment of the persons with disabilities mediates both their reputation as autonomous individuals and their social participation (Toldra, Santos, 2013). Therefore, digital accessibility has a critical role on the social participation of persons with disabilities as well.

Various studies appearing in the literature (He *et al*., 2020; Schreuer *et al*., 2014; Sun & Zhou, 2021) show that the use of social media and the accessibility of digital contents positively affect social participation. In their systematic literature review, Neal *et al*. (2021) refer to wide range of researches showing that using digital technology tools and accessibility solutions increased the social participation levels of persons with dementia. It should be noted that it is possible to talk about the positive impact of digitalization on social participation to the extent that accessibility standards are implemented.

Implications and conclusion

While the usage areas of digital technologies are expanding, the issue of digital accessibility is gaining importance. Disability is one of the most important working areas of social work. This study carries out a conceptual discussion on the relationship between digital accessibility and social work. Discussing digital accessibility, which plays a critical role in improving the well-being of persons with disabilities, on the basis of rights alone is not sufficient in terms of both the importance of the subject and the main purposes of social work. The fundamental mission of social work is to empower the individual and reveal his/her own potential. Social work is a branch of science that aims to achieve sustainable well-being. Conceptualizing the digital accessibility as an empowerment tool will bring social workers' efforts to improve the well-being of individuals with disabilities on a more accurate ground.

Keywords: Digital accessibility, disability, social work, empowerment, participation.

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ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM OF CHILD NEGLECT IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL MOBILIZATION

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The degree to which child neglect is considered an actual social problem at the state level can differ in the context of time and place. For example, in some developed countries, such as Scandinavian countries, this problem is considered one of the most important branches of the child welfare system, but especially in countries that are lagging behind in economic development indices, this issue can appear as an issue that is generally not addressed in the state social policy. This diversity shows us the necessity of international mobilization to protect children's rights to be free from neglect.

The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19, reflects children's rights to be free from neglect. Even before that, the Convention on the Rights of the Child identified particular categories of child abuse, including neglect, even though the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924 acknowledged the right of children to be safeguarded from exploitation. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, one of the treaties with the greatest number of state signatories, mandates that member nations base their governmental, administrative, and social policies on safeguarding children from abuse and neglect. Every five years, States submit reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child regarding the convention's implementation, and the committee provides recommendations to the states. Additionally, the UN Secretary General's Special Representative on Violence Against Children is working to set up interregional collaboration in this area. The "2030 - Sustainable Development Goals" adopted by member states in September 2015 by the UN include the subject of child abuse as a sub-goal. Goal 16.2 of this agenda advocates for the abolition of violence and exploitation as a tactic.

The largest international organization founded on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is UNICEF, whose operations span more than 190 nations. UNICEF uses the term "child protection" to include all forms of child rights violations, exploitation, abuse and neglect. However, it is clear from its current operations that the approach of using local laws to address regional issues (child labor, sexual assault of children, female circumcision, refugee children, etc.) has the upper hand. If in the two decades after the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, its activities were mainly focused on a central problem, such as the strategy of

preventing and reducing child deaths, today, with the decrease in the rate of child deaths, we see that the problem of violence against children has been placed in that central problem. It is possible to assume that neglect of children will be the pressing issue of the next decades in the continuation of this practice, which approaches problems on the basis of priority.

UNICEF's activities related to the issue of child neglect can be divided into four groups: 1. Conducting analyzes of the current situation of child welfare in the world. 2. To educate people about this problem 3. To collect data with questionnaires suitable for international comparison 4. To try to influence the legislation and policy of states.

The first of the aforementioned activities is illustrated by the UNICEF Innocenti Research Center's report on "ill-treatment and death of children" in OECD nations, the second is by the "End Violence" campaign that UNICEF ran in Georgia in 2018, the third is by UNICEF's Multi-Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) in many countries, and the fourth is by its ongoing recommendations to the governments of Sweden and Finland.

Another international organization working most actively to solve the problem of child neglect is the World Health Organization. WHO considers child neglect as a form of violence within the broader concept of child abuse. As part of its four-step public health approach, WHO recommends interventions to address this social problem. These steps include identifying the problem, identifying causes and risk factors, designing interventions that minimize risk factors, and disseminating resulting interventions.

In 2016, WHO developed the INSPIRE strategies, which are among the most important global practices targeting violence against children. These strategies aim to make legislation work, change harmful norms and values, secure children's physical environment, establish a support network for those who care for children, ensure economic stability for the child, establish an intervention and support system for victims, and provide adequate knowledge and skills to the child. However, the assessment of these criteria shows that although the vast majority of countries (88%) have basic laws to protect children from violence, in more than half of the countries (53%), these laws are not strictly enforced.

In addition to international organizations of which states are members, other organizations such as ISPCAN, Save the Children, DCI, and SOS Children's Villages are also active in organizing mobilization on the problem of neglect. ISPCAN is an international organization that brings together professionals from different countries and fields to solve the problems of child abuse and neglect. DCI monitors violations of children's rights, while Save the Children works to promote child welfare in 120 countries around the world. SOS Children's Villages provides direct assistance to children in more than 130 countries.

The work done by these organizations can be grouped under three strategies: influencing governments, mobilizing professionals in countries as agents of change, and acting as a driving force of the organizations themselves by implementing small-scale programs in different countries. The international organizations of which states are members take the first strategy as a basis and come up with proposals for the states in various fields. ISPCAN represents the second strategy, while activities in the third strategy are mainly implemented as part of other programs related to child health and violence against children of that organization.

Regarding the difficulties in the activities of these organizations, we can finally mention that because the training of competent specialists in the field of child welfare, the organization of various aid programs and therapies are social policy measures that require large economic resources, countries with limited economic opportunities avoid their application, and sometimes international organizations are unable to influence them. Also, in most countries, the lack of statistical data in this field and the fact that the intervention programs are mainly developed in Western countries and are programs in accordance with their cultural values appear as factors that make it difficult to effectively organize child welfare in these countries. Taking into account the scale of these difficulties, international organizations of which the states are members, as well as other organizations operating on an international scale, organize joint projects and issue demands to the states in a systematic and coordinated manner.

Keywords: UNICEF, WHO**,** children's rights, neglect, violence, international organizations.

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CHILD LABOUR, RIGHTS AND REHABILITATION: A STUDY OF SELECT STAKEHOLDERS IN DELHI

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The study highlights the life of child labour after the rescue, repatriation and describes the rehabilitation. Children are the greatest gift to humanity and childhood is an important and impressionable stage of human development as it holds the potential for the future development of any society. The broader aim of the study was to know how far the government initiatives on rehabilitating rescued child labourers have proved effective, sustained and helped in reintegrating survivors into the educational and social mainstream. The study also aims to explore the number of issues that arises as impediments while implementing rehabilitation programmes. Some of the specific objectives were to analyse the current social, cultural and economic circumstances of rescued child labourer and their families; to get insights about child labour, rights, policies and child labour laws in India as well as global perspective; to understand the procedures and practices related to Rescue, Repatriation and Rehabilitation of child labour; to explore the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders of rehabilitation and realities of convergence of government programmes related to child labour; and to get an insight about major issues and key factors influencing the implementation of the government rehabilitation initiatives and suggest ways for child-friendly rehabilitation.

Research Methodology

The study has adopted a descriptive research design and has used both quantitative and qualitative methods. The universe for this study consisted of those children who were rescued in Delhi by government and non-government organisations. There have been primarily four organisations engaged in the rescue and rehabilitation of children, namely Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA); Salam Baalak Trust (SBT); Prayas Juvenile Aid Centre Society (Prayas) and Butterflies. However, the data was taken only from BBA which has more than 90 percent shares of all rescued children. The other organisations have not shared the data because of their own reasons and have not been included in the study. Using a non-probability sampling method, 124 families and children were drawn from two development blocks in the Katihar district of Bihar. Another 23 key persons were included in the study to examine different stakeholders viewpoints. Thus, a total of 271 (124 children+124 families, especially head of family+23 key resource persons) belonging to different groups were included in the study. For the purpose of data

collection, a structured interview schedule was used to gather data from children and their families. An interview guide was used to gather data from other stakeholders. Data analysis of quantitative data has been done by using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software and the qualitative data analysis has been done by the analysis of the interview transcription after categorizing it into different thematic areas.

Findings

An overwhelming majority of the respondents (98.38 percent) have been found belonging to marginalized groups- SC (38.71 percent); OBC (37.90 percent) and ST (21.77 percent). A greater number of respondents were illiterate (74.19 percent) and were living Below Poverty Line (87.10 percent). The majority of the rescued children's parents (62.90 percent) were working as either agricultural or unskilled labourer. The bigger size of the family was reported in the study, as the average family size was found 6 members for General category and 11 to 13 in the case of SC/ ST and OBC categories respectively. The majority of the respondents were living in the kacchaa house. An overwhelming number of the respondents belonging to OBC (82.98 percent); SC (95.83 percent) and ST (92.59 percent) groups reported the use of wood for cooking food. The hand pump was a major source of drinking water for most of them as the remote part of rural Bihar has a hand pump (chapakal) as the most prevalent source of drinking water. Further, most of the respondents belonging to OBC (82.98 percent), SC (75.00 percent) and ST (48.15 percent) reported the use of hand pumps for getting water for use and drinking. A large proportion of respondents belonging to OBC (74.47 percent), SC (77.08 percent) and ST (88.89 percent) have accessibility to Pakki (all-weather road) road. The average earning members in the family were almost 4 or more in all categories of the respondents and their income lies between 20,000 to 30,000 INR per month. A majority (74.19 percent) of child respondents were rescued in the year 2018 and one-fifth (20.97 percent) were rescued in the year 2016 whereas a marginal number (4.84 percent) of child respondents were rescued in the year 2019. The children's mean age at the time of the rescue was found 11 years who were taken by touts (77.42 percent) and relatives (12.90 percent) for the workplace. The reasons stated for migration largely reported poverty and family debt. The majority of the children stayed up to 20 days at a shelter home and a small number (3.23 percent) of children had to stay for more than a month. The majority of respondents (62.90 percent) of participants received an interim compensation amount of 20,000 INR in which more than one third of respondents (39.52 percent) received compensation amount within 6 months and a sizable number (22.59 percent) received within a year whereas none of the respondents has received in a month as expected. Further, the delivery of interim compensation to the beneficiary was delayed by 2 to 3 years. The majority of the respondents utilized funds in the construction of the home. A large

number of the respondents (77.4 percent) were not found living with their families at the time of data collection of the study. However, the remaining (22.6 percent) respondents were found living with their parents. The findings highlighted that 74.2 percent has not joined the school after repatriation whereas 25.8 percent joined the school after restoration with family in which the majority (21 percent) of participants of the study felt friendly behavior from friends after re-joining school. Though the parents have not openly accepted but almost three fourth rescued children have further gone into the workforce as they were not at home nor joined the school after repatriation.

Conclusion

It is very much evident from the findings of the study that there is a serious gap between what is expected and promised through law and what is delivered to the rescued children and their families. It is precisely visible in the study that significant achievement has been reported in terms of the identification and withdrawal of child labour whereas repatriation and rehabilitation of children rescued still is a distant reality as it was poorly reported in the study. The finding indicated that almost 8 out of 10 were found working at the time of data collection of the study whereas a marginal number of respondents (11.3 percent) were found studying at the time of research. The need of the hour for child-friendly rehabilitation is to create an institutional mechanism for the implementation of legal provisions at the ground level, mass-level awareness of the child rights among different stakeholders and their engagement in the processes, proper rehabilitation of the rescued children, and creating a compassionate community of caring childhood to prevent from the hazards of children working at a tender age through awareness, education and training of all the concerned parties.

Keywords: Child labour, rights, rescue, repatriation, rehabilitation.

TENDER-MINDEDNESS APPROACH, POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO REDRESS PROBLEMS OF CHILD MARRIAGE IN LOMBOK, INDONESIA

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Early marriage is a current problem in most parts of the world. The Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as a "human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child; the majority is attained earlier" (Greene, 2014). The most recent terminology used by many practitioners for early marriage is child marriage, which is the terminology used for this research. Child marriage disproportionately affects young girls, who are much more likely to be married as children than young boys (Malhotra *et al*., 2011). The United Nations Children's Fund/UNICEF (2014) stated that approximately 700 million women were married before 18. In Indonesia, there were over 1.3 million girls married before the age of 18 from 2008 to 2015, according to the reports of the qualified institution, Statistics Indonesia (BPS), and is supported by UNICEF. A report from the Centre for Gender and Sexuality Studies, University of Indonesia (2015) showed that Indonesia was the second largest country where child marriages occur in Southeast Asia.

In the province of West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), Indonesia, which consists of Lombok Island and Sumbawa Island, data from the National Population and Family Planning Agency (2015) mentioned that 60 percent of underage marriages occurred. It has been commonly said that child marriage in NTB, especially on Lombok Island, is habitual within the community. It is commonplace for children to get married early with the consent and permission of their parents. Researchers have suggested some solutions to cope with the child marriage problem, such as prolonged education, providing information on reproductive health, and strict marriage laws. Moreover, the Regional Government of NTB has initiated a local regulation (Perda) on the age of marriage. In the region of West Lombok, the Regional Government has promoted an anti-early marriage movement (Gamak). The two regulations have a similar key point: increasing the minimum age of allowed marriage, which applies a tough-mindedness approach. This approach solves the surface of child marriage problems but not the substance. Child marriages still happen in unregistered or hidden ways, for example.

In October 2020, reports were made in the Indonesian media about a boy in Lombok, aged 18, who was married to two girls simultaneously. One girl was in her senior high school, while the second had just completed her junior high school. Another current release by merdeka.com dated 20 October 2020, titled "Child Marriage has been a major problem in NTB," identified that child marriages are also shown to cause deaths of the mother and child, divorces, newborn stunting, reduced school attainment, and illegal identity. The data identifies the extent and effects of child marriage in Lombok, NTB.

Indonesian provinces have implemented many policies to challenge this phenomenon, including policies encouraging prolonged education and the adoption of strict marriage laws. Using the term coined by Stewart (2009), many policies tend to use a tough-minded approach, such as strict marriage laws. This study will investigate the need to use a more tender-mindedness approach rather than tough-mindedness one in solving the problems of child marriage in Lombok.

This research will be centered around the question, "How tender-mindedness approach could redress the problems of child marriage habits in Lombok?" This research aims to identify and address how the tender-mindedness approach could play a role in redressing the problems of child marriages in Lombok. This research will also detail how governments, primarily West Nusa Tenggara Province, could support the tender-mindedness approach through their policy designs.

This research will apply public policy approaches, as Stewart (2009) coined that there should be a balance between the instruments of tough-mindedness and of tender-mindedness. Both characterize how the subjects of policy are constructed and the types of policy instruments that are used. According to Stewart (2009), tough policies employ policy instruments that are coercive and sanction-based, while tender policies are those that rely on incentives, persuasion, and capacity-building. Tough policies rest on beliefs that most people are self-interested and will get away with whatever they can. Tender policies rest on beliefs that people are fundamentally well-intentioned and will do the right thing if shown what the right thing is (Stewart, 2009). In public policies, governments tend to rely on tough policies, partly for expedience, such as it is easier and cheaper to crack down on bad behavior than reward good behavior. This research will be expanded using the Planetary Passport concept to care for and protect the human rights of the unprotected by the social contract, including young people (McIntyre-Mills, 2018; McIntyre-Mills, 2017). This research wants to identify ways and methods that 'the will to make a difference is the challenge' (McIntyre-Mills, 2018) could be minimized and that there are possibilities to do things differently (Hirschman in McIntyre-Mills, 2018). This is a literature study. The qualitative method will use data from books, e-books, related journal articles, and in-depth interviews.

Most of the research undertaken on this subject focuses more on the causes and impacts of child marriage, such as considering married girls as victims (Malhotra *et al*., 2011; Van der Kooij,

2016), in which marriages are due to their parents' wish (Choe, Thapa *et al*., 2011). According to Kamal (2010), forced marriages are breaking girls' rights to enjoy their life. Van der Kooij (2016) found that girls were very rarely found to be forced into early marriage. On the contrary, their final decision to get married early was a matter of like for like, as many young people around their age were getting married early. In Indonesia, according to Choe, Thapa *et al*.,(2001) Child marriages are more common in rural areas than in urban areas. The process of getting married too young has been shown to have numerous negative consequences, including reproductive health (Jones, 2001; Bokaie *et al*., 2021), mental health (Gilbert, 2013), domestic violence (Jensen, Thornton, 2003), and financial insecurity. So far, the common attempt to solve child marriage problems is by applying a tough-mindedness approach. Governments of West Nusa Tenggara Province and West Lombok Regency, for example, made regulations to prevent child marriages by increasing the age of marriage. While much research has studied the causes and impacts of child marriages, and a few apply the tender-mindedness approach, the novelty of this current research is that it will elaborate on how a more tender-mindedness approach could redress the problems related to child marriage in Lombok, Indonesia. I would argue that policies that apply persuasion, incentives and character-building will be more effective than sanction-based and coercive-based policies.

Keywords: Child marriage, lombok, tender-mindedness, local governments.

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ASYNCHRONOUS AND IN-PERSON TRAINING TO SUPPORT EXPERIENCES OF CARING FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN ZAMBIA

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Disability is the "long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments, which in interaction with various barriers may hinder a child's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others" (United Nations, 2008, Article 1). Estimates of the number of individuals with a disability include 16% or 1.3 billion people, with the majority living in low-resource and low-income communities (United Nations, n.d., World Health Organization, 2022). The World Health Organization and World Bank (2011) identified between 13 and 93 million children have moderate to severe disabilities. Zambian data, collected in 2005 identified a disability rate of 11% based on a national, representative survey (Loeb *et al*., 2008). Researchers, however, caution statistics from low-income and low-resource countries as they tend to be undercounts, including only individuals with observable and severe disability in estimates (Eide & Loeb, 2016).

Multiple international organizations have collaborated to support the rights of individuals with disabilities worldwide, with the United Nations (2008) ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). This seminal document establishes rights and freedoms of persons with disabilities and represented an important ideological change from a medical model of disability to understanding disability from a social model, which views disability concerns as problems with discriminatory policies and environmental barriers (Degener, 2016). Key tenants of the CRPD include freedom to make choices, non-discrimination, equal rights and inclusion in society, equal opportunities, equal access, equal gender opportunities and respect for children with disabilities (UN, 2008). Degener (2016) explained that the CRPD establishes people with disabilities as right holders and that "impairment may not be used as a justification for denial or restrictions of human rights" (p.1). Zambia, as a signatory to the CPRD, seeks to accomplish these rights and freedoms for people with disabilities (U.N., n.d.).

Despite these protections, research suggests that families of children with disabilities in low-income and low-resource communities experience ongoing biopsychosocial challenges. Obstacles for families include increased risk of living in poverty, limited access to healthcare, and restricted educational opportunities (Mitra *et al*., 2013; Mont & Cuong, 2011; Scior, 2016; UNICEF, 2013; WHO & World Bank, 2011). Ambikile and Outwater (2012) noted that the amount of time caregiving for a child with a disability may create barriers for participating in employment, likely perpetuating the unremitting problems of poverty and meeting basic needs. Researchers have consistently identified a world-wide shortage of health care providers, but this gap is critical in sub-Saharan Africa (Haakenstad *et al*., 2022), with Schatz (2008) identifying that there are only a third of physicians needed to support the health of Zambian citizens. Van der mark and colleagues (2017) identified that affordability, availability and accessibility of services create ongoing obstacles for families of children with disabilities (CWD) in low-resource communities. Families and often mothers, experience increased subjective stress as they care for a CWD, particularly in light of considerable public stigma of having a CWD (Aldersey, 2012; Van Der Mark *et al*., 2017), which can also lead to social exclusion and curtailed rights, including difficulty accessing education and healthcare (Kiling *et al*., 2019; Paget *et al*., 2016; Tilahun *et al*., 2016; Witcher Hansen *et al*., 2014).

In response to these challenges and limited resources, faculty in Minnesota partnered with Catholic Medical Mission Board (CMMB) – Zambia to develop a community-based and ecological program to support families of CWD. Faculty from Minnesota included subject matter experts in occupational therapy, physical therapy, public health and social work. CMMB Zambia has an extensive track record of working with local health systems and communities for over 100 years with partnerships existing in Zambia since 1965. As a local non-governmental organization, CMMB has expertise with multiple maternal and child health interventions, including supporting child welfare to prevent child separation, family strengthening, and supporting health and governmental systems to assure essential services to enhance family stability. Kusamala+ is an extension of this work, specifically focusing on enhancing the quality of life for CWD and their families.

Kusamala+ uses a social-ecological model to guide the work. This perspective recognizes that changes at individual, program and environmental levels can create changes at other levels, due to the interactions evident between these different levels (Gitterman & Germain, 2008). Kusmala+ provides individual and family-level support through home visiting and playgroup activities, programs led by volunteer trained community health workers. It creates social-structural changes through community education about reducing stigma and discrimination toward individuals with disabilities, specifically children. It also supports environmental-level revisions

by strengthening service coordination with local health clinics (Hearst *et al*., 2022). One element of community education has been the use of photovoice, a participant-driven community education program.

COVID-19 has far-reaching implications for health and well-being, program implementation and evaluation, requiring innovative and adaptive responses. This revision is even more essential for children with disabilities (CWD) and their families as they rely on additional supports, such as health care and community-based services to thrive (Aishworiya & Kang, 2021). The global pandemic led to barriers in accessing these vital services, particularly in low-income communities (Mbazzi *et al*., 2020). However, evaluation has become challenging as communities enter lockdowns to mitigate transmission.

The purpose of this presentation is to describe the asynchronous and online trainings that took place during COVID lockdowns, which allowed CMMB staff to complete a photovoice project in their local communities when it was safe to complete these activities. Additionally, this presentation will describe an additional in-person training provided as a follow up training session with the trained CMMB staff to support their ongoing growth and development in implementing this community-based participatory action research method.

Methods

This presentation describes to trainings that took place between Minnesota faculty familiar with photovoice and CMMB trained staff. The two projects will be referred to as asynchronous, which took place in fall 2020 with a photovoice project completed in May 2021 and in-person.

Asynchronous

Minnesota faculty and CMMB program staff collaboratively agreed to complete a training program to support project achievement. Faculty members designed seven modules. These included: what is photovoice, ethical considerations, recruitment, conducting the workshop to train photovoice participants, completing individual photo-elicitation interviews with participants, conducting the focus group and planning the community exhibition. Faculty members completed VoiceThread recordings, provided written outlines of project steps and held consultation meetings with CMMB staff throughout the process.

An additional training took place in July 2023 by a Minnesota faculty member with four (three had gone through the previous training) CMMB staff actively working in the Kusamala+ project to build capacity and support in leading Photovoice projects and solidify knowledge and skills in data analysis. This training was driven by CMMB staff's perceptions of strengths and difficulties from the previous Photovoice project. The faculty member guided the staff through the

entire Photovoice process using the Rutgers Photovoice Facilitator's Guide (Rutgers, 2016) with an emphasis on developing the aim, objective, research questions, photography basics, facilitating participant photo narratives and facilitation of category creation. The staff developed their own research question, took photos, created narratives and categories with each other and held a "mini" exhibition for the CMMB office staff.

Results
Asynchronous

Five trained CMMB program staff recruited ten mothers of CWD who completed the photovoice project and continue to participate in the *Kusamala+* program. The CMMB staff accomplished all photovoice project steps. Beginning with a workshop, they described the project and explained its purpose, obtaining participants' informed consent. Participants were loaned digital cameras to record their *Kusmala+* experiences. CMMB staff then interviewed participants, using their photos to elicit information. Subsequently, CMMB staff convened a focus group session, at which parent-participants shared their photos and stories to develop common themes parents wanted to convey to the community. Additionally, parent-participants and CMMB staff held two community exhibitions attended by over 1,700 community members and leaders. CMMB staff was excited with the outcome. One team member applauded this training as a unique skill he developed, adding photovoice facilitation to his resume.

In-Person

The four CMMB staff acted as participants in a Photovoice study while practicing key skills for facilitating future projects. They carried out a "mini" project from start to finish over the course of 2 weeks and ended with an exhibition for their CMMB office colleagues. Staff appreciated the refresher and the chance to act as participants to broaden their perspectives of participatory action research. They especially liked the in-depth conversation, examples and practice of using symbolism, reality and arranged scenes in their photography. One staff member stated that the hands on experience was "a game changer". The CMMB office staff who attended the mini exhibition commented on how it helped understand their colleagues role(s) and challenges when working out in the field and started brainstorming other current projects that they could use Photovoice for monitoring and evaluation.

Conclusions

Due to the pandemic, online, asynchronous training was imperative in completing this project. With specialized training and consultative support, CMMB staff members completed this

project with high fidelity and sound ethical practices. This project could be replicated with other staff or programs, highlighting the versatility of online and asynchronous training.

In providing these trainings, it provides ongoing opportunities for CMMB-Zambia to conduct photovoice projects. An important end to these projects is a community exhibition, giving community members an opportunity to understand the experiences of caregivers of CWD. In providing this education, the program seeks to educate the community and reduce stigma and other hardships that create barriers for these families.

Keywords: Children with disabilities, sustainable training, interprofessional partnership, community based participatory action research, photovoice, family quality of life.

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SOCIAL CAPITAL OF THE OLDER VOLUNTEERS

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Volunteering is often discussed in the literature as a condition for the formation of social capital. Numerous studies have shown the impact of volunteering on the well-being of older people. At the same time, questions about the social construction of volunteerism, the production of symbolic borders and power hierarchies remain beyond the scope of research interest. Based on the materials of interviews with fifteen silver volunteers from several Russian cities, the nature of internal and external relations of participants in the context of the formation of social capital is reconstructed. Conceptualization of social capital in an integrative theoretical framework makes it possible to interpret trust relations, the meanings of participation and the contribution of institutional structures to the reproduction of social exclusion and inequality.

The involvement of the older generation in volunteerism was shown by the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (UN 2002) as a way to increase the active participation of older people in society, make fuller use of their potential and experience, and overcome social exclusion. And although the text of the Russian federal project "The Older Generation" refers to the concept of active longevity, volunteering is not mentioned here. For the first time at the level of strategic documents, the issue of the participation of older people themselves in volunteering in Russia comes into the Concept of Active Longevity Policy (Concept 2020), which mentions some of the ideas of the Madrid Plan, in particular, the fight against social exclusion and the importance of infrastructure development for volunteering and social activities.

The volume of scientific literature devoted to the topic of active longevity in general and the development of volunteerism of older people is growing today. The organization of silver volunteering has become a strategic task of the state, municipal social services and non-state actors in the field of social services. However, these targeted actions are not enough. The decisions of senior citizens to become volunteers can be influenced by the context – the social, political and economic structure, the nature of symbolic representations. According to a survey by the HSE Center for Civil Society and Non-Profit Sector Research, in 2022 in Russia 17% of people over 60 participated in volunteer activities, while official estimates are somewhat more optimistic: 26%. According to the most optimistic forecasts, three out of four elderly Russians do not participate in volunteering. In Europe, the proportion of elderly people participating in volunteering is 30-40%, but it decreases with age and among volunteers over 55 years old, residents of Northern Europe

are more likely than, for example, elderly Greeks or Italians (Population 2011). Researchers see the reasons for these national differences in welfare regimes, family models and the social environment (Salamon & Sokolowski, 2001). In a number of European countries, the development of volunteerism was influenced by the history of political activism in the 1960s-70s, as well as the integration of religious non-profit services into the state-funded system of social services (Salamon & Sokolowski, 2001).

As R. Putnam (2000) has shown, people's participation in public life depends on building horizontal relationships, since connections built on communication with others allow participants to coordinate their actions to achieve common goals and create a more trusting society. Cross-country studies of social capital have shown a lack of trust in countries with a history of totalitarianism, revealing low rates of formal volunteering among older people in Central and Eastern Europe.

We were interested in how the accumulation of social capital by elderly volunteers with various resources occurs, what kind of connections are formed at the same time? To answer these questions in the summer of 2023, we conducted eighteen interviews with silver volunteers, including two men and sixteen women aged 60 to 76 years in the cities of the Volga region: Kazan, Samara, Saratov and Engels. One of the Kazan informants has the greatest experience of silver volunteering since the Universiade 2013. The least experience – since 2021. Many informants joined volunteer groups through social service institutions, some through charitable foundations, veterans' organizations. Personal interviews were conducted using a thematic guide, transcripts were subjected to the procedure of open, axial and selective coding.

Numerous studies abroad and in Russia have shown the impact of volunteering on the well-being of older people (Gil-Lacruz *et al.,* 2018; Russell *et al*., 2018; Principi *et al.,* 2021; Boccacin, 2016). The main advantage of participating in volunteer activities is to improve the quality of life, including physical and mental health, well–being and life satisfaction. However, efforts to maintain and expand volunteerism are often based on the assumption that the third sector, in comparison with the sphere of education or the labor market is an arena of equality and justice. But both historical facts and current contexts indicate that social inequality is being reproduced in the field of volunteering (Qvist, 2018). People with richer individual and social resources take an active part in public work, compared to those who are not involved in voluntary activities. In this regard, we turned to the ideas of P. Bourdieu (1986), which takes into account the uneven distribution of social capital in the interaction network, where more advantageous, strategic positions open access to higher-quality resources and trust is stronger the more a person has the amount of economic and cultural capital.

Silver volunteering can be considered after P. Bourdieu as a field that has a structure, i.e. unequal distribution and unequal effects from the actions of capital. P. Bourdieu calls social capital "a set of real or potential resources associated with the possession of a stable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition- in other words, with membership in a group" (Bourdieu, 1986). Even before the start of volunteering, our informants were active, many still continued to work, did not feel a strong financial need. Despite the general positive attitude, our informants critically assess the living conditions of pensioners, recognize the existing inequality in the country and yet they are all very resource actors, they actively invest their economic resources, converting them into social capital.

Self-portraits of our interlocutors are created in the colors of cheerfulness, interest in life and altruistic ethics. However, not all elderly people have the opportunity to embody the principles of active longevity by example. Health, independence, prosperity, infrastructure development in various localities mediate the chances of the elderly for a "productive" or "beautiful" old age, for their social activity (Osmuk & Nezamayeva, 2021). The motive of poor health as a reason for non-participation in volunteering was voiced not directly, but in the context of motivation to overcome "sores" and in the context of getting out of depression as one of the benefits of active social life.

The activity of silver volunteers in their work with elderly lonely and infirm people, their trips to orphanages and nursing homes increase the social inclusion not only of elderly "activists", but also of those they help. In these acts of goodwill, social inequality is also manifested at the same time, including among the elderly: recipients of assistance and those who visit them with goodwill actions are on different floors of the public structure. Some informants recognize this huge social distance for the first time.

According to some informants, it is important to reconsider the prevailing view of older people as recipients of services. The image of active participants, initiators and leaders of various events and projects by default assumes a high quality of life, tangible human potential, post-materialistic motivation at the entrance. These are rational subjects corresponding to the principles of beautiful, productive, active longevity (Prisiazhniuk & Holavins, 2023). The interview raises the question of the subjectivity of the recipients of assistance. The participation of residents of nursing homes in feasible work will not only allow them to communicate, but also to see the meaning of life, to become more active actors. It should be noted that there is already an interesting experience in the world of organizing socio-cultural participation of elderly people with mental disabilities. Cultural capital is objictified in goods, institutionalized by diplomas and embodied in knowledge, interests and tastes. The various components of cultural capital are unequal, they contribute to the reproduction of social hierarchies. The accumulation of cultural capital requires efforts to master new forms of activity, time free from economic necessity – that is, just after

retirement. Informants talk about acquiring skills- videography and editing, modeling and sewing clothes, acting, preparing project applications, learning foreign languages. We were often given examples of how elderly volunteers came out with initiatives for events and projects, and in almost all interviews one of the key leitmotifs is leadership. Having no managerial experience, older people note the growth of managerial skills and qualities.

The resources at the disposal of silver volunteers are their age, personal qualities and skills. When society considers them prestigious, these resources become symbolic capital, providing the owner with a reputation, contributing to the increment of status (Bourdieu, 1986). Old age often acts as a limitation. But in the community of silver volunteers, it is a resource with symbolic value.

Self-denial is characteristic of many elderly women, as one of our interlocutors says, they fall into sacrifice, devoting all their time to their husband, grandchildren and other close relatives. The topic of balance, the scales in the stories of our informants is often connected with scheduling and reaching agreements. The connection established between economic and cultural capital is mediated by the time it takes to acquire them. Time resources are largely determined by the family structure. At the same time, a new fulfilled life is realized as bringing benefits, but requiring internal support.

Many of our interlocutors have not reconciled with their aging, they do not like to look in the mirror, do not want to celebrate birthdays, ask the family not to call them "grandma", emphasize their "young" qualities, first of all, their mood, but appearance is an important topic for them. Physical appearance can act as aesthetic capital and contribute to social inequality, depending on the social norms and rules governing the exchange processes (Kukkonen, 2021).

Becoming an integral part of the personality, habitus, cultural capital allows silver volunteers to recognize and understand each other, to get closer, increasing social capital. A stable network of relationships of acquaintance and mutual recognition gives its members a resource support in the form of collective social capital, allowing them to receive all kinds of benefits, first of all, reputation, status, identity. Recognition is not the only reaction of others that our interlocutors have to face. There is also a misunderstanding, for example, as in the situation of information campaigns, raising awareness of the population about new services that might be misunderstood or not tolerated by the others.

Keywords: Elderly volunteers, social capital.

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THE INFLUENCE OF THE FAMILY ON THE SOCIALIZATION OF A YOUNG MAN

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The relevance of the presented study is due to the fact that youth experience difficulties in the process of socialization. The family as an institution of the primary social formation of the individual can help young men become a full-fledged member of society or, on the contrary, complicate this process. Based on this, the purpose of the article is to study such factors of family influence on the results of the socialization of youth as the composition (complete, incomplete), the value orientations of parents, the upbringing of the type of child-parent relationship (dictatorship, guardianship, non-intervention, cooperation). As a result of the study, it was possible to conclude that the family has both a direct (using the reinforcement mechanism) and indirect (using the identification mechanism) influence on the socialization of a young man. As for the type of family relationships, only cooperation between parents and children has a beneficial effect on the formation of a full-fledged personality capable of entering society; diktat, guardianship and non-interference in family relations form a distorted model of behavior in a young man in society, which complicates his socialization. A favorable outcome of the child's social development also depends on the composition of the family.

Socialization is a complex process that occurs throughout a person's life. There are many definitions of the term "socialization". In social pedagogy, socialization is viewed as a two-way process of continuous transmission by society and comprehension by the individual throughout life of social norms, moral values and patterns of behavior that contribute to the successful functioning of the individual in this society.

At the same time, the young man is faced with a large number of psychological problems associated with building relationships with peers, assimilating a set of moral principles, and acquiring a sense of social responsibility. Also, permanent patterns of behavior and character traits are formed that determine the future life of the individual, his physical and mental state. At this stage of development of the individual, the family plays the most important role in the process of socialization. The family is the most powerful mechanism for the formation of a young man's personality, the accumulation of social experience by him.

The family, being the primary institution of the individual's socialization, has a decisive influence on him from the moment of birth to the formation of him as a person. The family is the institution in which the individual learns social life, gains experience in obedience and control, harmonious life with other members of society. Today, the family remains the most important institution for the socialization of a young man. Many foreign studies are devoted to the study of the influence of the family on the socialization of a young man. J. Coleman, T. Parsons in their works emphasize the inseparability of the processes of family education and the socialization of a young man.

The emotional connection of the child with the family is still quite strong, and the social development of the personality is influenced by such criteria as the composition of the family, the type of relationship between parents and young men, the style of family education, etc. At the same time, behavior, values, beliefs are of no small importance in the process of socialization that are shared by the parents.

Education is a comprehensive factor in the influence of the family on the child, which exists within the framework of the socialization process. Education as the creation of conditions for the purposeful and systematic development of a person, carried out in the process of interaction between people in various spheres of life in the system of social institutions. Family upbringing should help young men acquire the necessary moral values.

We can agree with the opinion of T.V. Dragunova that family education is practically comprehensive, since it is not only suggestion, but contains all forms of influence on the child: through direct training and indirect knowledge, work and example of parents, assessment of behavior, systems rewards and punishments.

This type of relationship in the family, such as cooperation, implies a strong bond between parents and the child, built on an understanding of the goals and organization of joint activities, as well as high moral values. Cooperation in the family forms it as a full-fledged team. The characteristic features of such a family are: the correct distribution of daily duties between parents and children, the appropriate assignment of responsibility for successes or failures in the implementation of joint activities of parents and children, cohesion as a manifestation of value-oriented unity.

A family with this type of relationship, where parents respect the opinion of a young man, communicate with him on an equal footing, involve him in useful activities, is able to form a harmoniously developed, responsible, proactive personality who can take his place in society. The mechanism of reinforcement in the process of family socialization of a young man plays a decisive role in the process of family education, since through it there is a purposeful influence on the social formation of the personality of a young man.

The mechanism of personality socialization, as identification, plays a decisive role throughout the entire period of personality formation, especially in adolescence. In the family, a young man is a witness and a direct child of various positive and negative life situations. The most important aspect of the identification method is that the family provides a variety of different behaviors and value orientations, which become key for it in the production of personal experience.

The style of family education forms in a teenager a certain model of behavior in society, influences the formation of his skills, personality traits necessary to be a full-fledged member of society. Only a combination of attention, love and care of parents within reasonable limits with readiness to help in difficult situations becomes the basis for the formation of a full-fledged personality capable of living in society.

However, today there is a problem of the prevalence of pedagogically incompetent families in which, under favorable conditions, the formation of relations with young men occurs incorrectly, pedagogical mistakes are made that lead to asocial phenomena in the minds and behavior of young men. This negatively affects his socialization. Pedagogical and psychological mistakes, a difficult psychological atmosphere in the family can lead to the fact that the family ceases to be the main institution of socialization for the young man, giving way to other institutions of socialization that play an unfavorable role.

In order to strengthen the positive and minimize the negative influence of the family on the socialization of a young man, L.I. Malenkova suggests that parents implement a number of intra-family socio-psychological functions: 1) take an active part in family life; 2) find time to talk with the child; 3) be interested in the young man's problems and provide assistance in solving them; 4) do not put pressure on the teenager, giving him the opportunity to make his own decisions; 5) respect the young man's right to his own opinion; 6) treat a teenager as an equal partner, who still has less life experience.

Thus, in the process of family education, a young man develops such personality traits, values, beliefs, skills, moral and moral norms, models and habits of behavior, without which he will not be able to feel like a full-fledged member of society, they should help the young man determine life goals, priorities, develop your own strategy of behavior, communication, interaction in society. The style of family upbringing, as well as the type of child-parent relationship, influences the result of the social formation of the personality of a young man, but the importance of such an aspect as the composition of the family cannot be underestimated.

Keywords: Socialization, family education, type of parent-child relationship, socialization, mechanisms of family socialization.

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SELF-REPORTED LIKELIHOOD OF SEEKING SOCIAL WORKER HELP AMONG OLDER MEN IN ISRAEL

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The current study assessed the association between demographic factors (age, relationship status and education), psychosocial factors (self-rated health and self-reported loneliness) and factors related to attitudes and behaviors associated with seeking help prior experience with social workers, attitudes towards social workers, and the stigma attached to seeking help from social workers and the self-reported likelihood of seeking social workers' help among older men in Israel. The data were collected through structured questionnaires, administered to a sample of 256 older men. The findings indicated several avoidance factors which might discourage older men from seeking social worker help. Older men who are more educated, experience less loneliness, report lower self-rated health, have no prior experience with social workers, have less positive attitudes towards social workers and higher stigma attached to seeking social workers' help, are less likely to seek social workers' help. The research conclusion is that it is important to develop tools and interventions aimed at helping older men deal with such avoidance factors affecting their tendency to refrain from seeking social worker help, as well as to develop practices adapted to their unique needs.

Keywords: Older men, social workers, seeking professional help.

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE STUDY OF ORPHANAGES AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION

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The article is devoted to the issue of the theoretical and methodological foundations of the research of orphanages. In the article, orphanages, the history of their creation, as well as the socialization of orphaned children in orphanages as a social institution are reflected.There is indisputable evidence that institutional care has negative consequences for both individual children and for society at large (Residential Care of children, 2009).

Children deprived of parental care

Demographic processes have usually influenced children's lives in various ways and these processes have played an exceptional role in the development of their relationship to society and themselves. However, as a result of the basic demographic changes that took place in families starting from the 70s of the 20th century, these processes became more important and the scale of negative demographic effects expanded orphaned children. With the establishment of orphanages, this problem began to attract attention on a wider scale. As a result of the miseries of World War I, orphaned children became the main social and pedagogical problem of the time. Many networks of orphanages were created in different countries of the world, as well as in Russia, including Azerbaijan. Currently, orphaned children deprived of parental care due to inter-ethnic conflicts still attract attention as a sociol-pedagogical problem.

An orphanage is an educational institution or a social service organization for children who have lost their parents or are deprived of their care, as well as those who need help and protection from the state.

If we look at the past, orphanages were created as a shelter for abandoned children from the first days. According to the research of historians, the first childcare institution was formed in the city of Constantinople in the 3rd century BC to prevent the killing of children. In the Middle Ages, the Catholic Church in Italy set aside special homes for abandoned children and this practice later spread throughout Europe.

Creation of orphanages in Azerbaijan

Centers for orphanages in Azerbaijan were established by Azerbaijani oil millionaires in the early 1910s in order to take care of children who lost their parents in World War I. Most of the

mass care centers in Azerbaijan began to be created in connection with a large-scale social disaster such as World War II. This system was under the control of the state as a whole and was financed only from the funds from the state budget.

İt is a charitable institution engaged in the education and upbringing of orphaned, abandoned and orphaned children aged 3-14. In the period before the revolution, it was called "Orphanage" and the concept of "Orphanage" came into existence after 1917. Keeping our social traditions and moral values alive with concepts such as friendship and neighborliness, it aims to master the needs of life in relation to the society, raise self-confident children who look to the future with hope and ensure their active participation in public life.

Before moving on to the methodological foundations of the establishment of orphanages, how were the orphanages before, what problems did they face, how was the network of orphanages built, etc. Let's take a look at such problems.

From 1760, one of the Spanish bishops wrote in his diary: "In the orphanage, children are sad and many of them die because of sadness". Indeed, at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, when the network of orphanages in different countries of the world expanded, such facts began to attract attention. There were many cases of death among preschool-age children deprived of parental care, especially in their first months. Other children were lagging behind their peers due to their physical and mental development. In this sense, they hardly speak, do not listen to the teachers' words, behave passively or aggressively. How can the formation of such characteristics in children be explained? Janusz Korchak gave a clear answer to this question . He called the orphanage a prison-barracks. He wrote that "in the role of an educator, I got to know in detail the sad secrets of the orphanage where 100 orphaned boys and girls were brought up". In his opinion, children in orphanages are very tired (Sadıgov, 2012). It is clear that there are certain defects in the physical and mental development of children. This is the retardation of mental development, the formation of specific disorders from the emotional side, etc. It is observed that it eventually leads to alcoholism and drug addiction.

State care for orphaned children

After the fall of the Soviet power, more than 20 thousand children lived, received education and training in 63 state children's institutions in Azerbaijan. Although this number was not so large compared to other former Soviet countries, it did not belong to the traditions of our people and the low financial status of internally displaced families and other social factors also led to an increase in the number of children in state children's institutions. After the collapse of the Soviet Power, Azerbaijan experienced a certain financial crisis, which led to a decrease in the living conditions of the population and widespread poverty. Improvement of the situation A number of measures

were implemented for this. Since the end of the 90s, UNICEF and other international organizations began to investigate the state of children's institutions and the children educated there. Significant work was done in the field of children's physical, social, emotional, psychological and intellectual development. As a result of research, information about orphanages and boarding schools was collected and presented to the Heydar Aliyev Foundation. Based on the analysis of collected data, a 5-year program called "Development Program of Orphanages and Boarding Schools" was prepared. In this type of institutions, an environment close to home conditions has been created for orphaned children of preschool age who have been deprived of parental care. All work in these institutions was carried out on the initiative of Mehriban Aliyeva, the president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation. Even if they have a home, it can never replace the family environment. One of the most important goals of the Foundation was to ensure that the children who were educated in these institutions were brought up in a family environment. In addition, it should be added that after the Republic of Azerbaijan gained independence, a number of approved international conventions. One of them is the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was ratified in 1992. Various laws and presidential decrees related to the rights of children have been adopted to solve the tasks here. According to these documents, growing up in a family is the right of every child and the family is the most suitable environment for the child's integration into society.

Keywords: Demographic process, orphanages, social institution, theoretical and methodological bases of orphanages.

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PARENTAL SELF-EFFICACY AMONG ISRAELI OLDER ADULTS

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Background

Parenting is one of the most important roles experienced by adults (Levitzki, 2009). It continues into older age and of endless significance for older parents' identity, well-being and psychological experience (Bar-Tur *et al.,* 2018). However, parents' responsibilities at an older age tend to be vague due to the need to gradually reduce control over the offspring and to "step back" (Levitzki, 2009). Given the uniqueness of the parenting role in the older person's life, this study seeks to focus on an unexplored aspect of parenting in older age, the concept of the older adult's parental self-efficacy.

Parental self-efficacy is the individuals' confidence in their ability to successfully fulfil their role as parents and its associated tasks. However, self-efficacy is an evolving dynamic component that is altered by changing circumstances and tasks, as well as by changing individual characteristics. The aging process necessitates changes in parental functioning of adult children. Therefore, it is assumed that parental self-efficacy will also vary in older age. In addition, older people must adapt to new roles in their lives that affect parental functioning, such as retirement, widowhood and grandparenthood (Cervone *et al.,* 2006). These changes require new depiction of the parental role, which might affect their parental self-efficacy. However, parental self-efficacy among older adults has rarely been examined.

Belsky's parenting determinant model (1984) serves as the theoretical framework in the present study. The parenting determinant model refers to three characteristics that influence parenting in the following order of significance: parental, contextual and offspring characteristics. These three determinants are known to positively influence or, alternatively, undermine parental self-efficacy. The first two domains of Belsky (1984) are the focus of the current study: a) individual characteristics that are represented by psychological distress and loneliness and b) contextual characteristics that are represented by social support. This comprehensive perspective enables reference to the specific socio-demographic context of parenting in the present study, older Israeli parents of adult children.

Psychological distress is an umbrella term that describes various kinds of mental difficulties. It is an emotional experience of discomfort that results in temporary or permanent harm to the

individual. When mental health is impacted, it might impair the person's perception of the ability to succeed in the parenting role. Indeed, psychological distress has been negatively associated with parental self-efficacy (Crnic & Ross, 2017). These links have been evident at different periods in the family life cycle and nevertheless, have not been examined to date among older adults.

Social support reflects the variety of sources that arise from relationships with significant others. These sources include emotions, instrumental help, knowledge, and evaluation for self-esteem appreciation. Social support facilitates feedback for the parent on its parental practices and attitude, as well as contributes to shaping parental identity (Belsky, 1984). The present study focused on informal support (spouse, family and friends). Informal social support becomes central in older age due to the many losses associated with the aging process. Studies conducted at earlier stages of life indicated that more informal social support predicted higher levels of parental self-efficacy (Jones & Prinz, 2005). This association was found consistent across the various stages of family life (Lavenda & Kestler-Peleg, 2018), however, as yet to be examined among older adults.

Loneliness produces distress resulting from an unsatisfied, subjective desire for emotional and intimate social relationships. Thus, it reflects a gap between desirable and existing relationships. Loneliness is experienced as particularly difficult among older adults (Ermer *et al.,* 2020). A negative relationship between parental self-efficacy among older adults and loneliness has so far only been examined in our previous study (Greenblatt-Kimron *et al.,* 2021).

In light of the above, and based on the parenting determinants model (Belsky, 1984), it is essential to consider the specific context of the present study, in the Israeli society. Israeli society is a mosaic of different national, religious and ethnic groups. As such, Israel is a very family-run society that combines traditional family values and norms with modern characteristics (Lavee & Katz, 2003). According to the OECD, Israel has one of the highest rates of marriage in the developed world. The country's birth rate is the highest in the developed world, as well. The Israeli high familism is also demonstrated by the close and deep ties between the generations and their mutual involvement (Lavee & Katz, 2003). Intergenerational relationships in Israel appear to be intense and common and they are characterized as strong emotional relationships, with a continuing sense of caring and that Israeli parents provide significant support for their adult children (Levitzki, 2009). Therefore, Israel provides a unique and fruitful arena for exploring parental self-efficacy in older age. We hypothesized that psychological distress, social support, and loneliness will predict parental self-efficacy in older age, while controlling for background variables (age, gender, marital status, education, income, number of children, living arrangements and offspring genders and ages).

Method

A quantitative cross-sectional survey was conducted and 362 Israeli parents above the age of 65 who were recruited through means of social media (Facebook, WhatsApp groups and Internet forums) participated. Participants were asked to report information regarding their age, gender, marital status, perception of their economic status, level of education, number of children and their living arrangements. Offspring ages and genders were also reported. Participants were also asked to refer to their child whose age was the closest to 40. Additionally, Participants were asked to questionnaires regarding their psychological distress, informal social support, loneliness and parental self-efficacy.

Results

The correlations between the study's variables indicate that parental self-efficacy among older adults was negatively associated with psychological distress ($r = -0.504$, $p < 0.001$) and loneliness ($r = -0.463$, $p < 0.001$) and positively associated with social support ($r = 0.390$, $p < 0.001$). Demographic variables that were associated with at least one of the study's variables were held constant during the conduction of the regression analysis to prevent the possible bias of results interpretation. The hierarchical regression analysis explained a total of 37.0% of the variance in parental self-efficacy in older age. The demographic variables contribute 11.2% to the explained variance $F(8,316) = 5.00$, $p < 0.001$, psychological distress and social support and sense of loneliness contributed an additional 25.8% to the explained variance of parental self-efficacy among older adults $F(3,313) = 42.70$, $p < 0.001$ above and beyond demographics.

Among the demographic variables, economic status and living arrangements were found to be the strongest predictors of parental self-efficacy among older adults ($\beta = 0.068$, $p = 0.010$; $\beta = -0.069$, $p = 0.031$, in accordance). Among the psychological variables, psychological distress was found to be the strongest predictor of parental self-efficacy among older adults ($\beta = -0.200$, $p < 0.001$), followed by loneliness ($\beta = -0.180$, $p < 0.001$) and then by social support ($\beta = 0.110$, $p < 0.001$).

Discussion

The present study is one of the first studies to examine parental self-efficacy in older age, and the first study to examine its predictors. It appears that parental self-efficacy in older age and in the context of the Israeli society is shaped by various individual and contextual characteristics. Parental psychological distress is a crucial component impacting parental self-efficacy, as well as perceived informal social support and loneliness. Our results suggest that researchers, social policymakers and practitioners working with older adults should broaden their knowledge

regarding the field of parenting at an older age. Social workers that are treating older people, should be careful not to ignore the parental components in adults' lives. Likewise, parenting should be considered an integral part of older adults' daily lives. Moreover, social workers should draw their attention to the varied aspects that might undermine parental self-efficacy in older age. In summary, it is imperative that social workers and support systems acknowledge the parental role, which is maintained in later life. The impact of parental self-efficacy on the health and well-being of both parents and their children will continue to contribute to the longevity of generations and create additional opportunities for continued social support structures within the family dynamic.

Keywords: Aging, loneliness, older adults, parenting, psychological distress, social support.

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FASHIONABLE ACTIVITY IN OLDER AGE: OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

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All over the world, people older than 60 y.o. are usually referred as the "third age". In Russia, this age category of people is called "elderly people". This period of life is still stereotypically associated with a decrease in activity and intensity of life, the end of the life path. Moreover, this is primarily due to the retirement age: 60+ for women and 65+ for men. In Russia, this is more a rule than an exception. The exception is for just mega cities: Moscow, St. Petersburg and other million-plus cities, whose social policy system involves advanced programs for active longevity.

The Mayor's program "Moscow Longevity" (2018) and "Moscow Longevity Centers" (2019) help to intensify and diversify the leisure time of older Muscovites.

The material presented in the article based on the experience of Moscow, because of the author lives and works in the capital of Russia. The presented data do not claim to be absolute research completeness and representativeness. It is rather an attempt at a sociological understanding of the passion for fashion as a new form of leisure specifically for mature people.

The author's research interest in this issue arose about 5 years ago, and it is associated with the emergence of a new trend in the fashion industry: age models, who are increasingly participating in various events: fashion shows and photo shooting.

The first and only modeling agency for older people "Oldushka" was organized in 2016 in Moscow by photographer Igor Gavar. The name itself represents a symbiosis of the russian "babushka" (grandmother) and the english "old". Not everyone can get into it, the concept is: "the older the better; the more wrinkles– the more beautiful". There is no stereotypical propaganda of the race for youth. On the contrary, age-related changes are emphasized. It is shown, that natural aging is beautiful.

There are other big private initiatives that allow older people to present themselves on podium work. The project "Mature beauty podium", held annually by Anastasia Lazibnaya, is very popular among the participants. For the first few years, this project was carried out only in Moscow and St. Petersburg, then later already in regional centers: Samara, Voronezh, Tula, Krasnoyarsk, Sochi, Nizhny Novgorod, Kazan. In 2019, the author managed to participate in this event on an

equal level with the elders, as the organizers expanded the concept to include middle-aged people-then the event was called "Podium of mature beauty and youth".

On August 14, 2023, a large fashion show "Designers' Workshop" was held at the Moscow Urban Forum, with only older models- participants in the "Moscow Longevity" project.

Besides that, the "Older Generation" Forum is held annually in October as part of the implementation of the "Strategy for Action in the Interests of Elderly Citizens until 2025". In 2023, in addition to an extensive business, scientific and exhibition program, the forum will also feature a fashion show with the participation of older models from St. Petersburg.

Inspired by the trends outlined above, as well as the own experience in organizing fashion events for older people, the author decided to explore the "fashion-elderly" link in an even narrower format (participation in fashion shows and runway at an older age).

The choice of topic was also facilitated by studies on the perception of fashion and style by older people in the context of active longevity (Nizamova, 2016, 2020; Manuilskaya, 2018), as well as the results of author's interviews in 2020[1] about "Moscow longevity" program:

First, it is necessary to note the appearance of the participants. Since the interviews were conducted via video link, the author noted, first of all, the elegant clothes of the informants, as well as the presence of jewelry, manicure, hairstyle and makeup. Despite the lack of personal contacts and the opportunity to go out (the study was conducted during the first wave of the spread of the coronavirus pandemic), the informants tried to maintain a well-groomed appearance.

Nadezhda, 70 years old: You know what, I call my mother [age 90] on Easter to congratulate her and she tells me are you done? Got yourself in order and can talk now? I had to put everything in order, right down to the parfum and then I can talk to her.

Secondly, informants associated activity with the prolongation of youth and beauty, the opportunity to be "in sight" (significant for society and the family), with good physical shape, and interesting activities under the Moscow Longevity program, among which there is an opportunity to prove oneselfs in the fashion industry:

Lyudmila, 73 years old: I studied at the V. Zaitsev Fashion House with other top models, to learn photo posing, <…> then I was invited… to the «Oldushka» agency where I was still with them and was on television programs <…> and then we already participated [in fashion shows] in these CHAPEAU [The largest annual exhibition of headwear and accessorizes], with our designers.

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[1]There were conducted 32 in-depth interviews. Age of participants: from 55 to 80 years old. Research geography: Moscow. Features of the event: April-May 2020 using online format (because it was the first acute phase of the spread of the coronavirus pandemic). Data receipt format: audio and video conversation in What'sApp messenger.

The main opportunities and risks of this type of activity are shown in Table 1 and will be presented in more detail in the report and presentation on a conference.

Table 1. Opportunities and risks of participating in fashion shows at an older age.

Opportunities	Risks
Transformation of appearance (aesthetic and physical)	Material costs for maintaining appearance, preparation and participation in events
"Another life" (easy and carefree) and new experiences	Hours of stress: emotional and physical
The manifestation of creative and leadership qualities	Condemnation of family/society/colleagues (ageism)
Memory of the time spent (photo and video materials)	Rejection of the proposed look and image (resentment, disappointment)
Importance, necessity, visibility for society	Concurrence, based on appearance and parameters
Fulfillment of childhood dreams	Self-ageism and inadequate self-perception (high / low self-esteem)

In addition, in September 2023, the author plans to conduct an independent reconnaissance study aimed at finding and collecting "estimated" information about the object and subject of research. The author hopes that the "preliminary stage" will initiate deeper and more extensive research on this topic.

One of the most accessible methods of collecting primary information for conducting intelligence research is interviews (personal and group), as a faster way to obtain information in a short time (Gorshkov & Sheregi, 2009). In total, about 30-40 personal and 3-4 focus group interviews are planned. The results of the research will be presented in the report in a Conference.

Searching in a Russian scientific publishing system «E-library» for the key words "fashion" and "elderly" has not yet been completed. But, at the time of writing the article, the author managed to record that publications on this topic mainly cover aspects of appearance and clothing for seniors and nothing about taking part in runways and fashion shows. This topic is very popular in internet-discussions, blogs and social networks. But, in a field of sociological research fashion activity theme for elderly has not been studied.

Despite the fact that the capital of Russia is a developed, modern city, more advanced and faster, the topic of the presence of older people in the fashion industry is perceived ambiguously.

Little by little, the situation is changing. At the Moscow Longevity Centers, in addition to traditional creative activities, elderly Muscovites are offered classes that were stereotypically

considered promising only for young people: acting and modeling. It should be noted that now in old age it is fashionable to be active and "young", which means beautiful, stylish and liberated. This relatively new trend, especially for Russians, resonates not only in government programs to activate the older generation, but also in business decisions, especially in metropolitan cities. The fashion industry demonstrates examples of the active participation of age models in advertising campaigns and fashion shows at various venues and modeling and acting courses for teaching the older generation of the capital are opened not only in state organizations, but also in private: commercial modeling schools and studios. This is a new trend and type of active leisure for older people, which is becoming more and more popular every year.

Keywords: Fashion, older age, fashion shows, active longevity, elderly, activity.

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THE POWER OF BREASTFEEDING AND POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONAL RESOURCES AND SOCIAL SUPPORT OF POSTPARTUM MOTHERS

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Pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding and mental coping are human life events, the same all over the world. The difference is social coping and a cultural approach to every event. Every woman knows her culture which is influenced by the sector she belongs to and her religious belief. Social reality is a product of interpretive processes, which are influenced by personal structures as well as social structures (Katan & Cromer-Nevo, 2010). Every mother is affected by the sector and the culture to which she belongs. Cultural differences have an impact on social support and the provision of support services (Moerling, 2015). Israel is a multicultural country consisting mainly of Jews 73.9% and a minority of Arabs 21.1% and 5% others (LMS, 2023). Parenting in the early postpartum period is a period of learning and adaptation for the mother. Mothers must learn new behaviors to effectively care for infants and achieve parental satisfaction (Mendes, 2007). Mothers who feel satisfaction and adaptation to the parental role will develop positive parenting that affects the child's development (Jones & Prinz, 2005)

Maternal security affects the mother. Bandura, 1997 defines this characteristic as self-efficacy. Competence is a person's belief in their ability to perform a certain behavior successfully. Parenting ability is related to child development (Coleman & Karraker, 2005). Bandura identified five main influences that build or enhance self-efficacy: prior experience, referral experience, verbal persuasion, physiological state and emotional state. The mother's self-efficacy affects her coping. Positive moods contribute to an increased sense of self-efficacy and negative moods contribute to a poorer sense of self-efficacy (Leahy-Warren *et al.*, 2011).

Breastfeeding

Breast milk is the biological way to feed the baby. Breastfeeding has nutritional, health, developmental, psychological and economic benefits for the baby, mother, family and even society. The World Health Organization recommends breastfeeding the baby exclusively until at least 6 months of age (WHO, 2021). Among the advantages of breastfeeding, the advantage of creating direct contact between the mother and her baby is important. Breastfeeding is the main expression of parenthood. During the contact between the mother and the baby immediately after

birth when the baby is placed on her stomach, "maternal" hormones are secreted, the prolactin which causes the formation of milk in the breast and the oxytocin which causes the contraction of the uterus. Also affects the mother's emotions and binds her to the baby (Stern & Klusky, 2005).

A mother's decisions about breastfeeding are also influenced by religious belief. The expectation for women to breastfeed their children is based on religious beliefs. The decision to breastfeed is influenced by beliefs and values. In a study conducted in the United States, which examined the relationship between religion and breastfeeding among economically disadvantaged populations where religious services are more present, it was found that mothers who often attend religious services tend to start breastfeeding more than mothers who never attend these services (Burdette & Pilkauskas, 2012). In a study conducted in Turkey on mothers' breastfeeding experiences, it was concluded that traditional breastfeeding practices are still common among mothers. Breastfeeding behavior of mothers was mainly shaped by various social and religious cultural influences imposed on them by their family, the immediate social network and the religious community (Demirtas *et al.*, 2011). In a study of 1307 Jewish women from the center of the country, in Israel, a higher breastfeeding rate was reported among religious women compared to non-religious women, 93% versus 68.4% respectively (Berger-Achitov *et al.*, 2005).

Breastfeeding is also related to the environment and when the mother is in an environment where it is customary to breastfeed, her chances of breastfeeding herself are higher. There are diverse cultural beliefs regarding pregnancy and childbirth as well as different actions and traditions in ethno-cultural groups that also affect the mother's position towards breastfeeding. (Purnell, 2002).

Postpartum depression

The effects on nursing mothers are physical and mental. Mental stress in the mother can manifest in depression during the first two weeks after giving birth. For some women, 10-20%, the situation does not improve and they suffer from postpartum depression (Quintero, 2014). Postpartum depressive symptoms negatively affect the functioning of mothers and babies and their quality of life. Maternal depression is associated with risky parenting, insecure bonding with infants, behavioral problems and poorer cognitive development (Howell, 2009).

The sectoral affiliation also has an impact on the individual's situation. Fitch, 2002 Miller, 2002, found that in cultures characterized by strong social support for mothers after childbirth, the incidence of postpartum depression is lower. It seems that postpartum depression is less common in traditional cultures, where it is customary for the woman to rest after giving birth, and grandmothers or relatives take care of the housework. Closeness between family members can help reduce the stress on mothers after childbirth (Deng *et al*, 2014). Israeli society is characterized by multicultural, social and linguistic diversity. In the Jewish sector, secular Jewish society has

Western values, is described as individualistic in its cultural orientation (Gith, 2018), on the other hand, ultra-orthodox Jewish society is characterized by a commitment to Jewish tradition and law and separates itself from any worldview or lifestyle that contradicts its values (Brown, 2017). Since its independence, the Arabs in Israel have been a religious, cultural and national minority in a Jewish state, most of them are Muslims and the others are Christians and Druze. Arab society in Israel is a traditional patriarchal society exposed to modernization (Gith, 2014). The sectoral affiliation may affect the mother and her decision regarding breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding and postpartum depression

There are studies that indicate a link between breastfeeding and postpartum depression. The exact direction and nature of this relationship is not clear yet there are studies that refer to postpartum depression as a cause of low rates of breastfeeding initiation and even its cessation (Seimyr, 2004). However, there are studies that indicate that breastfeeding may help recover from postpartum depression and even protect against it (Figueiredo, 2014).

Studies show a statistical relationship between not breastfeeding and postpartum depression, but it is not a causal relationship. Various socio-cultural studies show that depressed mothers tend to breastfeed less or breastfeed less time than non-depressed mothers. (Henderson, 2003; Dennis, 2009; Sharabani *et al.,* 2023). In a study by Nishioka *et al.* (2011) conducted in Tokyo, it was found that the proportion of women with a tendency to postpartum depression, according to the Edinburgh Scale (EPDS) was much lower among lactating women. Hamdan *et al.* (2012) found among Arab women a correlation between breastfeeding and postpartum depression, it was found that women who breastfed reduced the risk of developing postpartum depression during the first 4 months after birth. Flores-Quijano *et al.* (2008) compared breastfeeding with formula feeding and found an inverse relationship between postpartum depression and continued exclusive breastfeeding. At the same time, postpartum depression may reduce the rate of breastfeeding. In a study of Latina mothers, it was found that there was a significant interaction between the cessation of breastfeeding and the decrease of the oxytocin hormone in the blood and a state of postpartum depression. (Sandraluz *et al.*, 2017). On the other hand, a longitudinal study carried out near Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, that examined the relationship between various postpartum feeding outcomes and symptoms of postpartum depression in the mothers, found no relationship between the variables. In contrast, he found that mothers with a high score on the postpartum depression index were more likely to stop breastfeeding (Dennis & McQueen, 2007).

Conclusions

Cultural context affects parenting. Breastfeeding is a personal experience of the mother and is perceived differently by the mothers. The decision to breastfeed is influenced by the mother's personal resources, her self-efficacy and her environmental resources. The relationship between breastfeeding and depression is also influenced by the mother's intention to breastfeed. (Bora, 2015).

In light of the cultural diversity in Israel and its effects on the mother's attitudes towards breastfeeding, it is important to conduct a study that will include a reference to the sectoral affiliation of the woman after giving birth. Postpartum depression is a condition that makes it difficult for the mother, the baby and the environment. The mother's function decreases, the function and performance of tasks decreases and there are serious consequences for the mother, the baby, the family and the environment. The real danger is suicide. Prevention and detection are important. Studies have found that breastfeeding women have a reduced risk of developing postpartum depression compared to non-breastfeeding women (Henderson, 2003; Dennis, 2009; Hamdan *et al.*, 2012; Nishioka *et al.*, 2011).

Various studies have tried to answer the question of the correlation between breastfeeding and postpartum depression, but the direction of this relationship and the question of whether it is a direct relationship is still unclear. The studies show mixed results. Several researchers reported no relationship between these variables, others found that non-breastfeeding mothers were at high risk of developing postpartum depression. These results may be due to methodological limitations such as an unclear definition of breastfeeding and inconsistent assessment, so further research is needed. A study that will incorporate clinical interviews, will clearly define the time after birth for the onset of depressive symptoms, will take into account potential risk factors identified in the literature, will examine a large number of independent variables and will refer to the association of the cultural sectors. A study that can show the contribution and importance of each variable separately and together regarding breastfeeding as a mediator between the characteristics of the mother's self-efficacy and her social support and postpartum depression.

Keywords: Breastfeeding, social support, postpartum depression, quality of life, lifestyle.

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UNVEILING THE COMPLEXITIES OF HOMELESSNESS: A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO ADDRESSING MOROCCO'S SOCIOECONOMIC CHALLENGES

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Morocco is a country located in North Africa, bordering Spain, Mauritania and Algeria, with a population of 38,000,000 citizens. It has more than 700.000 citizens suffering from homelessness, 30.000 of those citizens are orphans. This crisis leads to major issues within the society such as increasing crime rates, drug dealing, consuming and grand theft, rape.

However, the strategy applied by Moroccan government and associations toward this situation is getting difficult due to people taking steps into the crime world, and drugs to find any fast source of income that only means building shelters and handing aids to the homeless families isn't the right solution for them, it's the lack of education and job offering that makes these people step toward homelessness. Moreover, there's a section of these people include divorced women, widows and well-educated people with no jobs, all of that leads us with a question, what is the right solution for homeless people? Is it building shelters or provide them with the tools to secure their future.

Homelessness is major issue in multiple countries it can affect the development of society and the nation as a whole, in Morocco the number one cause leading to homelessness is lack of a stable source of income, some will say it's an issue of people desire wealth with no work but it is more of providing people with their basic needs health, shelter, education.

In any Society we can't build and grow if we have the majority of citizens struggling to fulfill their essential rights, therefore the government and many associations are fighting to patch the problem of homelessness from a physical side, however we can't neglect the other side of it, let's dive into some of the top keys to fix within this worldwide problem:

- The struggle to make money: The difficulty of producing a steady income is one of the major challenges faced by homeless people. It becomes extremely difficult to purchase even the most basic essentials, much less safe housing, without consistent employment. The problem is made worse by obstacles such a lack of appropriate education, inadequate job skills and discrimination. The cycle of unemployment and poverty can appear unbreakable too many homeless people. We take as an example the data of lower income in Morocco: In 2019, 211 000

Moroccans lived below the US$1.90 poverty line and 1.9 million below US$3.20. This equals 0.6% and 5.1% of the population and is significantly below the average poverty rate for Africa's low-middle- income economies, behind only Algeria, Tunisia and Mauritius.

- Orphaned individuals: The incidence of orphans is another upsetting aspect of homelessness. While not all homeless persons are orphans, a sizable percentage have had their families upended by a variety of circumstances, such as domestic abuse, addiction, mental health problems or financial hardship. These conditions may result in a lack of social networks, which can make it challenging for people to establish stability on their own. Currently in Morocco, 6000-7000 babies are abandoned at birth each year (2% of total births). There are approximately 65,000 orphans across Morocco.

- Paths to Solution: Addressing homelessness requires a multi-pronged approach that tackles its various dimensions (Solutions include)

- Education and Job Training: Giving homeless people access to education and career training programs can equip them with employable skills and improve their chances of landing a good job. Young people are most affected: the youth unemployment rate in 2019 was 22.1%. The proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) is also high, at 22.1% in 2019, with a wide gender gap (13.2% for men and 31.3% for women), as the majority of women are family careers.

- Mental Health and Addiction Support: Helping homeless people regain control over their life requires providing mental health treatments and programs for addiction recovery. Mental health in Morocco has worsened over the past couple of years, with an estimated 26% of Moroccans aged 15 and above having suffered from depression at some point in their life, according to the Moroccan Network for the Defense of the Right to Health and the Right to Life.

Affordable Housing Initiatives: Governments and the private sector working together to create affordable housing options can give homeless people a step toward stability.

- Social Support Networks: Communities and NGOs are essential in building support networks that give persons who are homeless emotional, materialistic and practical support.

- The Role of Society, Shelters, and Government: The way that society views and treats those who are homeless has a significant impact on their wellbeing. Discrimination and stigmatization impede chances for reintegration and prolong the cycle of homelessness. Shelters and NGOs contribute by providing emergency aid, but the long-term objective should be to provide them the tools they need to independently reconstruct their lives.

- Governments also play a crucial role. Homelessness can be considerably reduced through programs and funding that emphasize access to affordable housing, mental health care, employment opportunities and addiction treatment. However, rather than only treating its

symptoms, government interventions must be able to address the causes of homelessness in order to be effective.

- Government Perspective and Challenges: There are different levels of dedication among governments worldwide to fighting homelessness. While some have successfully adopted comprehensive strategies, others have had difficulty making resource allocation decisions. A government's strategy is frequently influenced by political will, financial restrictions, and competing agendas. While some governments have acknowledged the severity of the problem and are making serious efforts, others might need to reassess their plans to make sure their efforts result in significant change.

- The Societal Barrier: One of the biggest problems homeless people confront is how society views them. The idea of "otherness" and negative preconceptions can cause isolation, making it difficult for homeless people to reintegrate into society. Widespread education programs to promote empathy and understanding are necessary to remove these barriers.

Last but not least, in any country you need to make people stop dreaming about their basic needs (Education, Health, Shelter) and make them as the essential keys for building a strong and developed country, therefore to fix any issue within society we must have well educated people with good health and a roof on top of their head, that way you will have a bright future for your country.

Keywords: Homelessness, government, education, health, shelter.

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BETWEEN LONELINESS AND TOGETHERNESS: USING PHOTOVOICE AS A COMMUNITY INTERVENTION TOOL WITH ELDERLY IN LONELINESS

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Elderly people may experience loneliness due to significant life events such as a change in their social role, retirement from the employment cycle, a decrease in their physical ability, a reduction in their social involvement and family changes (Zhang *et al.,* 2022). Loneliness as a social condition is accompanied by severe feelings of helplessness, anxiety and pressure, helplessness, depression and a sense of dissatisfaction with the way the elderly live their lives (Ang, 2016).

Photovoice is a critical methodology founded on the principles of Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR); it operates alongside an integrative theoretical framework which incorporates feminism as a theory of social criticism, the critical pedagogy school of Paolo Freire, and art-based visual research (Wang & Burris, 1997). Over the years, the pphotovoice methodology has been assimilated into the field of social work, both as a community mapping and intervention\research method (Sixsmith *et al.*, 2017) as well as for pedagogical purposes in social work education (Malka, 2022).

In the proposed presentation, I would like to demonstrate the use of the photovoice methodology as an intervention tool with Israeli elderly people who are Holocaust survivors and who face loneliness.

The project framework: Community work course: Part of the practical training of students participating in the course.

Project participants: 6 social work students and 6 elderly women (ages 78-90) from the city of Beer-Sheva, Israel.

The purpose of the project: Raising public awareness about the lived-experience of loneliness among the elderly community: Using a photovoice exhibition to express the elderly's point of view.

Project main results: The elderly report on a movement *between loneliness and togetherness* in their daily life.

Presentation outline: First, I will present the photovoice methodology implementation in the community social work course curriculum, which is part of the mandatory courses for

undergraduate social work students in Israel. Later, the photovoice project "Between loneliness and togetherness" will be described - as a community intervention with elderly in loneliness - following a community mapping that a group of 6 students carried out as part of the course assignments.

Then, I will describe how through the adapted use of the photovoice methodology among a group of 6 elderly people , the voice of the elderly who face social isolation was heard, based on several steps in the intervention program:

1) building an action system that was based on an academy-community partnership;

2) training the elderly in the photovoice methodology;

3) accompanying the elderly in documenting their daily life using photovoice;

4) The establishment of the exhibition

5) Initial results of the intervention.

I will conclude the presentation with several insights about the photovoice implementation in the community social work curriculum, both in relation to the learning process of the students and in relation to the results of the intervention.

Keywords: Community intervention, community work, elderly people, loneliness, photovoice, social work education.

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STOLEN CHILDREN: HOW POLITICS, POLICY AND PRACTICE HAVE VIOLATED THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

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In 1989 the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted. This document created a shift in culture from children being treated as chattel of their parents to a rights-based approach, recognizing children with unique needs and rights (United Nations & Office of High Commissioner, 1989). Children carry with them into adulthood a history of their vulnerability. Their traumatic memories come about as a result of the influence of the dominant culture, forced assimilation and children being instruments of war (Machel, 1996). Children subjected to these traumatic experiences have a loss of identity and place in the community. As these children reach adulthood the pain of the past does not disappear but leaves the individuals with a sense of psychological and social isolation. The hopeful intent of the UNCRC recognized the need to right the past and to prevent the abuses of the future. What have we learned and how will the UNCRC be realized? There are many examples of the exploitation of aboriginal families (native American) in the Americas.

The Indian Act proclaimed in 1867 served as the primary legal instrument for the colonization and assimilation of Indian peoples in Canada. It relegated Indian peoples from self-governing nations to wards of the Crown and spelled out that the federal government was responsible for Indians and Lands reserved for Indians. The Indian Act's provisions controlled almost every aspect of Aboriginal life. Throughout its evolution into modern times, this race-based piece of legislation has transgressed many fundamental freedoms enjoyed by other Canadians such as freedom of association, freedom of religion, freedom of mobility and the right to define one's racial and cultural identity (Blackstock *et al.,* 2004).

Laws such as the Indian Act were based on the Roman Catholic papal bull the Doctrine of Discovery which mandated the control of people and land in the name of the church (Blakemore, 2022).

From Canada to the United States and colonial actions in the Pacific, New Zealand and Australia, viewed the aboriginal child as property of the state. This resulted in the use of forced education through boarding schools where children with little preparation were removed from their families and placed in educational institutions. On arrival the child was punished for using their indigenous language, their hair was cut, they were given non-Indian clothes and forced to take an

English name. Some children did not survive with the 2022 discovery of unmarked graves in Canada and the USA. The practice of boarding schools the USA and Canada formally ended in 1969. The pain did not (Callimachi, 2021). Not to be deterred with the ending of boarding schools state protective services in Canada developed a practice of the "scoop" where aboriginal children were scooped up from their families and placed for adoption in Canada and the USA (Johnson, 1983). Many of these adults still suffer from historical trauma.

Children of war have suffered with loss of family and home, disruption of community life with schools and medical clinics destroyed by acts of war. Bowlby the father of attachment theory took a long look at attachment and had a considerable influence on the World Health's Organization policies on the mental health of children. Bowlby's work included travels through Europe meeting with child mental health experts. Bowlby was advised in the Netherlands of stories of Jewish children who survived war but lost their parents. In England Bowlby was aware of the work of Anna Freud who documented the behaviors of young children placed at the Hamstead War Nurseries in London during World War II. Bowlby concluded institutions were not best for children, but children needed to bond with an attachment figure and receive help when exposed to maternal deprivation (van der Horst *et al.,* 2019).

Even with Bowlby's cautionary words about institutional care, the practice continued in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) with the former Soviet Union (FSU) struggling to provide care for children. The former Soviet Union preferred institutional care but there were abysmal outcomes. Children entered institutional care often due to poverty but with other educational, medical or emotional needs. Some were abandoned by their families or were removed by the state. Institutions were poorly run, lacked resources and children were subjects of abuse and neglect. Movements to end the use of institutions required challenging political structures and policies supported by the dominant cultures. Today there is a global push to deinstitutionalization of children by introducing foster care, but resistance remains.

"For example, in Bulgaria, there is a common attitude that parenting is a biological phenomenon, expressed by the remark: "Giving the child to non-relatives? How can you imagine somebody would take care of a child who is not his/her own?" (Mihova 2004 as cited in Carter, 2005). In this view, non-family placement would inevitably result in inferior care; such ingrained attitudes take some challenging; nevertheless, it can be done, and it is possible to draw on experiences elsewhere in advocating it (Carter, 2005)".

The introduction of foster care then pushed against generations where the state has been positioned to control a child's socialization, education and development.

Currently, actions to end the use of institutional care of children in CEE has been slowed by a flood of refugees from Syria, Afghanistan, the Ukraine and other countries taxing social services. Parliaments and ministries working to shift policy are hampered by insufficient funds. Resources allocated for closure of childcare institutions come up short caused by socio/political pressures. Developing family strengthening programs and foster care have taken root as best practice, but socio-political conditions such as the war in the Ukraine has limited its progress.

Children of war and civil unrest experience compromised development. Often, they are political pawns. For example, work conducted by the Yale School of Public Health has uncovered a systematic Russian program to re-educate and relocate Ukrainian children, documenting the relocation of over 6,000 children from Ukraine via a network of 43 re-education and adoption facilities stretching from Crimea to Siberia (Khoshnood, 2023). These children are being forced into "re-education" and were like the aboriginal children "scooped up." Reports from the field in CEE suggest such aggressive tactics spill out to other nations beyond the Ukraine, violating the human rights of other groups of children and families.

A rights-based approach to the UNCRC recognizes the family as the unit needed by children to fully develop. This demands the government end past practices as discussed in this paper, have those governments accepting responsibility for harm done to families and children, and to develop practices to support healthy families and children even if the family is that of a foster family. In a framework paper, Childnomics, the authors argue an analysis of the cost of institutional care outstrips the cost of community alternatives. They argue in their framework for the support of families vis a vis the cost of related social issues like substance misuse, homelessness and treatment of disabled and those with mental health conditions. The institution (boarding schools) did not solve the "Indian Problem" but instead created the oppression of a group of people and other generational problems. Today, there is a need to shift funds from institutions to community-based programs for families and children. If children's rights and the UNCRC is to be realized action is needed and is particularly salient today.

This paper provides a discussion of current and historical oppression of children and families leading to poorly defined policies and practices imposed by the dominant culture. Those with power to control policy and practice also control resources which often fall short of correcting inequality experienced by vulnerable populations. It does not honor a child's right to live in a family and more specifically continue a relationship with their family. Azerbaijan and other nations in the region need to take stock of what is needed to assure for the rights of vulnerable children and families are given due consideration. The paper returns to the essential question of what we have learned and how we will promote the rights of the child as defined in the UNCRC.

Keywords: UNCRC, institutions, war, dominant culture, family-based care, childnomics.

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SOCIAL WORK PRACTICES WITH INDIVIDUALS HAVING DOWN SYNDROME

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Social work with individuals who have Down syndrome plays a crucial role in promoting their overall well-being, social inclusion and empowerment. This article explores the multifaceted aspects of social work with people with Down syndrome, highlighting the importance of person-centered approaches, family involvement and collaboration with various stakeholders. The article also delves into the challenges faced by both social workers and individuals with Down syndrome, such as stigma and limited resources. Through the lens of social work, the essay underscores the significance of creating inclusive environments, advocating for rights and fostering a supportive network for individuals with Down syndrome. Ultimately, this essay emphasizes that social work serves as a vital conduit for enhancing the quality of life for people with Down syndrome and contributing to a more inclusive society.

Introduction

Within the broad spectrum of social work, a profound and impactful domain revolves around individuals with Down syndrome. Down syndrome, characterized by the presence of an extra copy of chromosome 21, leads to distinctive developmental and cognitive variations. The significance of social work in supporting individuals with Down syndrome can not be overstated, as it encompasses a multifaceted approach that addresses their unique needs, promotes social inclusion and empowers them to lead fulfilling lives. In this intricate landscape, social workers act as advocates, educators and facilitators, bridging the gap between individuals with Down syndrome and the resources they require to flourish. This paper delves into the nuanced facets of social work within this context, emphasizing the importance of tailored interventions, family engagement, collaborative efforts and the creation of a strong support network.

Person-Centered Approaches

A cornerstone of effective social work with individuals with Down syndrome is the adoption of person-centered approaches. These approaches prioritize the individual's preferences, strengths and aspirations, fostering a sense of agency and self-determination. By recognizing each person's unique capabilities and tailoring interventions accordingly, social workers can empower

individuals with Down syndrome to actively participate in decision-making processes regarding their lives, education and employment opportunities (Skotko *et al.,* 2020).

Family Involvement

Social work extends beyond the individual with Down syndrome to encompass their families. Families often play an essential role in the support network and social workers collaborate with them to provide information, guidance and emotional assistance. By understanding the family's dynamics, social workers can address challenges and promote a nurturing environment that enhances the well-being of the individual with Down syndrome and their family members (Skotko, 2005).

Collaboration and Advocacy

Social workers collaborate with various stakeholders, including educators, healthcare professionals, policymakers and community organizations, to create an inclusive environment for individuals with Down syndrome. Advocacy is a critical component of this collaboration, as social workers work to dismantle societal barriers and promote policies that ensure equal access to education, healthcare and employment opportunities (Emerson *et al.,* 2016). Through their efforts, social workers amplify the voices of individuals with Down syndrome and contribute to the development of a more inclusive society.

Challenges Faced

While social work plays a pivotal role in promoting the well-being of individuals with Down syndrome, it is not without challenges. Stigma and misconceptions surrounding Down syndrome can lead to discrimination and exclusion. Social workers must confront these attitudes and advocate for greater awareness and understanding within communities and institutions (Skotko, 2005). Moreover, limited resources and funding can hinder the provision of comprehensive support services, highlighting the need for continued advocacy to secure adequate resources for individuals with Down syndrome.

Creating Inclusive Environments

Social workers contribute to creating inclusive environments by fostering supportive communities that embrace diversity. Through awareness campaigns, workshops and education, they help dispel myths and stereotypes associated with Down syndrome. By promoting understanding and empathy, social workers facilitate social integration and counteract the isolation that individuals with Down syndrome may experience (Sinclair *et al.,* 2021).

Supportive Network

Social work helps build a supportive network for individuals with Down syndrome, providing a foundation of emotional, psychological and practical assistance. This network encompasses peers, families, educators, mentors and professionals who collaborate to empower individuals with Down syndrome to lead fulfilling lives. By forging these connections, social workers contribute to the development of a holistic support system that nurtures personal growth and resilience (Olsen *et al.,* 2023).

Conclusion

In conclusion, social work is an indispensable force in promoting the well-being and inclusion of individuals with Down syndrome. Through person-centered approaches, collaboration, advocacy and the creation of supportive networks, social workers play a vital role in addressing the unique challenges and opportunities that individuals with Down syndrome face. While there are obstacles to overcome, the dedication of social workers to dismantling stigma, enhancing understanding and securing resources ensures that individuals with Down syndrome can thrive and contribute meaningfully to society. Social work not only transforms individual lives but also contributes to a more inclusive and compassionate society for all.

Keywords: Social work, Down syndrome, inclusion, empowerment.

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IMPORTANCE OF DEINSTITUALIZATION IN TERMS OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND ITS PERSPECTIVE FROM AZERBAIJANI CONTEXT

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Childhood is a period forming the base for future development and the more information brain receives at this stage of life, the more the child will be developed. The children have usually broader opportunities to improve their vital life skills and everything they get will have permanent imprint in their memories. The child will lag behind in development when he/she is isolated from getting such information.

The researches and practical experiences conducted have shown that children are in need of growing up in a family setting in order to fully enhance their emotional, social, and psychological capabilities. However, families will occasionally seek alternative ways of caring for their children, especially children with disabilities due to various reasons. The sole alternative services for families in countries without alternative care institutions become boarding schools.

The survey titled "Analysis of the status of child care institutions in Azerbaijan" conducted by UAFA in 2001 has shown that more than 75% of the children have parents and following the secondary outcome of the same survey, the key reasons of institutionalization is their poverty and family split-ups.

Still another survey has shown that some negative implications such as problem behavior and poor academic performance stem from poverty (Levine, 2002). It is also widely known that divorce has negative implication also in teenage period, resulting in psychic health problems and low academic performance (National Institute of Mental Health, 2002). Poverty is the first Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) faced in childhood having negative implications for child's future life and welfare (Mirzayeva, 2023).

Following the aforementioned results, we may state that poverty elimination and family integrity are to be the two matters of concern to be addressed by the government for de-institutionalization process.

The results of several surveys regarding the impact the child care institutions exert on child development have shown that the situation in families and child care institutions is entirely different. Various studies have been carried out regarding the development and adaptation of

children living and reintegrated in child care institutions. One of such institutions is Bucharest Early Prevention Project headed by Professor Zina Charles from the Medical Faculty of Tulane University. Researchers from the Bucharest Early Intervention Project studied a wide range of outcomes. When studying the Perception aspects, they found a significant IQ increase in children placed with foster care at the age of 30, 42 and 54 months as compared to the children at child care institutions.

If we look at the age at which children are placed in foster care, we may see a greater increase in IQ at an earlier age, especially in children placed in foster care before the age of 24 months (Zeanah *et al.,* 2007).

Further, studies have revealed a high percentage of mental disorders (about 38%), lack of attention, hyperactivity disorder and aggression in institutionalized children (Humphreys, 2015). Also, recovery processes were notably better with children placed in foster groups before 12, 15, 20 and 24 months.

In addition to IQ and brain function, improvements were also noted in language, social skills, control functions and attachment.

Based on a number of such studies, we may state that deinstitutionalization and the creation of an alternative care model for the well-being of children living in child care institutions today should be the main issue facing every country. It is also stated in Article 7 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: "The child has the right to be cared for by his parents".

If we were to approach this matter from the Azerbaijani context, we may refer to a number of approved schemes in the creation of a deinstitutionalization and alternative care model and it would actually be more useful to approach this issue from two aspects.

1. Prevent children from getting in care institutions;
2. De-institutionalize children from such institutions.

The first of this is gate keeping, i.e., prevention of children being placed with child care institutions. Gate keeping means 'controlling entry' into the public/institutional care system. This helps us to preserve resources, match the child's needs and available services, determine the child's best interests and address them appropriately.

If we were to look at the history of the processes in Azerbaijan in this direction, we may see that this has primarily been carried out within framework of projects. For example, the UAFA organization, which has implemented pilot projects in the field of deinstitutionalization and alternative care, prevented 28 children at a boarding school No.7 and 18 children at a boarding school No.3 from being placed in a child care institution from 01.09.2007 through 10.08.2009 within the project titled "ensuring life of children from vulnerable groups and children with disabilities in their respective families" implemented by UAFA in 2008-2009. As a result of it, 38

children living in the boarding school were reunited with their families. Also in 2008, 11 children were prevented from being institutionalized by trained Regional Social Department staff members from 18 regions.

If we were to look at the current statistics, we can witness active involvement of the public institutions in this process. From November 2022 to May 2023, the total number of applications for placing children in institutions was 220, the gender ratio of children in applications was 197 boys, 143 girls, 1 was of unknown gender, totaling 340 children. 72 of them were children in the age group 0-3, 139 of the applicants were namely parents themselves. Among some other reasons, the economic situation (97 applications) was pointed out to be a primary reason for placements. Also, 120 applicants were single parents, 62 applicants had both parents, 13 applicants had no parents and 21 were guardians.

109 of the applicants (including 61 boys and 48 girls) were placed in the institution. One of the most interesting moments is that the children placed mainly in Baku city (49 persons).

Assessment of 58 applicants was ongoing at the time of statistical calculations, 144 children were kept in their respective families with family support measures and 29 children were referred to other services. The second step is the deinstitutionalization of children living in institutions and if we were to consider the situation in Azerbaijan, the general statistical indicators (01.11.2022 - 19.05.2023) would be as follows:

The total number of applications for children who left the institution was 86, the number of children per general application was 131 (60 girls, 71 boys). The main reason for removal of children from the institution was stated to be improvement of the economic situation- 45 persons

The number of children who left the institution was 75 (a decision was made to leave because 3 persons were 18+). At the time of taking the statistics, assessment of 32 persons was ongoing. The number of applications, for which return of children to their families is not considered possible and children number was 10 applications and 19 children. 4 applications and 5 children were referred to other institutions.

As can be seen from these statistical data, poverty, financial situation of the family and lack of alternative systems play an important role in this field.

The experience of a number of countries shows that a variety of alternative services should be available and these are:

• Social work;	• Mother and child unions;	• Crisis intervention;
• Daycare centers;	• First medical are;	• Material aid;
• Family planning centers;	• Special education;	• Resources network;
• Interval care.	• Emergency receipt services.	• Consultation services and parent support groups and etc.

Further, there needs to be in place various services for denationalization these are:

• Reintegration;

• Placement with a relative family;

• Foster families – foster care (Emergency foster care; Short-and mid-term foster care; Long-term foster care; Foster care by professionals);

• Adoption;

• Permanent care by professionals;

• Therapy services.

Some of the aforementioned services are also available in Azerbaijan. However, their number is very limited and is primarily provided in the capital city. The followings are examples of alternative services available in Azerbaijan from above:

• Daycare centers;	• Family type group house;	• Rehabilitation services;
• CBR centers;	• Placement with relative family;	• Reintegration;
• Financial support.	• Adoption (who and how);	• Education for special needs children.

Some of the above services were initiated by government, some by private sector and NGOs. The government funded services operated under Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (MLSP), Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health.

Other services we outlined above haven't been arranged in our country yet.

Keywords: Deinstitutionalization, gate keeping, negative childhood experiences, NUT, institutionalization.

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SOCIAL WORK WITH HOMELESS PEOPLE

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Lack of adequate and stable housing puts people at physical risk. Unfortunately, the lack of access to adequate resources has made homelessness an unbreakable cycle that people struggle to overcome. Social support from social workers is necessary to break the cycle of homelessness and achieve a higher quality of life. Social workers play an important role in addressing homelessness because they have the skills and knowledge necessary to advocate for systemic change and provide non-directive assistance to people experiencing homelessness. By working at both the macro and micro levels, social workers can help minimize the impact of homelessness on society. Social workers can address the mental health needs of individuals experiencing homelessness. Qualified clinical social workers can provide counseling and therapeutic services to address the traumatic psychological disorders that are often associated with homelessness.

The Importance of Social Work in Eliminating Homelessness

Around the world, there are more than 150 million homeless people. That is equal to the combined populations of the United Kingdom and France. Covid-19 has only exacerbated the housing crisis and revealed it for what it is: a human rights calamity. The suffering of 150 million people without access to adequate housing, water and sanitation services is unimaginable. 1,6 billion people or more than 20% of the world's population, may not have suitable housing. There is no data on the exact number of homeless people in Azerbaijan, since their records are not kept by government agencies. Some researchers call the approximate number of homeless people in Azerbaijan within 30-50 thousand people. Reasons for people being homeless can vary across countries but typically are due to:

➢ **Addiction and substance abuse**. Many people who deal with addiction may struggle to maintain stable housing;

➢ **Lack of support networks.** Because of a lack of supportive networks, some persons may become homeless. They may lack relatives or friends who can give temporary refuge or financial assistance during times of distress, such as natural catastrophes and housing issues;

➢ **Natural disasters and housing crises.** Natural disasters such as hurricanes, earthquakes, floods or wildfires can lead to homelessness. Furthermore, housing difficulties such as a lack of affordable housing alternatives or fast gentrification can lead to homelessness;

> ➢ **Discrimination and systemic issues.** Homelessness can be exacerbated by discrimination and structural factors such as racism, sexism and ageism. Access to housing and work options for marginalized populations may be hampered, increasing their risk of homelessness;

> ➢ **Lack of access to healthcare and mental health services.** The lack of access to healthcare and internal health services can also contribute to homelessness. Numerous individualities passing homelessness struggle with internal health issues, and without access to proper treatment and support, their conditions can worsen, making it delicate for them to maintain stable casing;

> ➢ **Inadequate social safety nets and poverty.** Limited social safety nets and high levels of poverty can push individuals into homelessness. In some countries, there may be insufficient government assistance programs or welfare support for those who are unemployed, making it challenging for individuals to afford housing and meet their basic needs.

Dangers awaiting the homeless on the street

It's estimated that 20% to 25% of the homeless population in the U.S. suffers from severe mental illness. Studies similarly show that more than 92% of mothers who are homeless have experienced severe physical and/or sexual abuse during their lifetime, experiencing two times the rate of drug and alcohol dependency as their low-income counterparts. Unfortunately, the lack of access to adequate resources has made homelessness an unbreakable cycle that people struggle to overcome. This is why social support through the assistance of social workers is essential to empower individuals to break the cycle of homelessness and attain a better quality of life. Many homeless young people tend to hang out on the streets and participate in a variety of activities often as a means of survival. As such, the lifestyles and daily routines of these young adults may expose them to potential offenders thereby increasing their chances of becoming victims of physical and/or sexual assault. In the USA in comparison to the general population, suicide rates 10 times higher for a homeless sample. About 17% of homeless adults reported suicidal ideation and around one third have attempted suicide in a metropolitan area.

Homeless people are stigmatised as deviant and not quite human. They are often considered as 'outsiders' and treated as strangers. Negative perceptions of the homeless people may also hamper service delivery. For instance, the negative perceptions by public service officials concerning the homeless people as criminals and a lack of respect for the homeless people may create challenges in providing services. Homeless people often find it difficult to access the necessary services they need. Inadequate sanitation and hygiene, particularly concerning access to clean water and toilets, often make living conditions for the homeless people hazardous.

People experiencing homelessness encounter many barriers that impact their ability to access services such as health care, hygiene facilities, food and housing. Literature shows that barriers in rural regions may be the consequence of geographical circumstances, lack of government support services and discrimination. Negative public perceptions can lead to discrimination, resistance to community-based services and public opinion favouring punitive solutions toward homeless populations. In Canada 140 respondents were asked to describe homeless individuals in 3 words. 18% of respondents considered homeless people aggressive, dangerous, destructive of communities, hostile, rude, thieves and zombie-like. 32% of respondents used less contentious words to identify homeless individuals with descriptions such as "annoying, desperate, inhumane, manipulative, troubled, sad and sick". 12% of the data involved adjective attributes such as "cyclic, existing, hopeless, lost souls, valueless and wandering.

What Social Workers can do?

1) Client-oriented Strategies. Social workers should involve clients as equal partners or even leaders in all stages of work, namely assessment, intervention and evaluation on both individual and agency levels.

2) Providing counseling and basic services. Social work intervention with homeless people should aim at both individual (micro) and social (macro) levels to help them with their immediate problems and also prevent those problems from recurring in the future. At the macro position, they can endorse for policy change and engage in community organizing to address systemic issues that contribute to homelessness. On the micro level, social workers can provide case management services to homeless individuals and families. This includes assessing their requirements, connecting them to resources such as shelters, transitional housing and rental assistance programs, providing information about nearby places where homeless people can get help.

3) Access to affordable housing. Temporary housing options, such as emergency shelters or transitional housing, can be essential for individuals experiencing homelessness. Social workers can assist their clients in accessing these resources and provide ongoing support to address their immediate housing needs.

For instance, the New York City Department of Homeless Services is home to one of the country's most comprehensive homeless outreach initiatives, the HOME-STAT Street Outreach team. Composed of outreach workers and clinicians, HOME-STAT works around the clock to engage with unsheltered individuals, connecting them to resources to help transition them off the streets or homeless encampments.

4) Mental health services and Psychosocial support. Many homeless people may experience depression, anxiety, and other psychological problems. Social workers should create

professional alliances that cross professional and social boundaries for the purposes of helping clients and promoting change in the community.

5) Cooperation with other organizations. In view of homeless people's lack of access to basic human amenities and facilities, such as sufficient food, water, healthcare services, education and shelter, it is recommended that social workers working in the area of homelessness should partner or collaborate with stakeholders, such as the Departments of Human Settlement, Water and Sanitation, Health, Social Development, Police Services as well as institutions such as Lawyers for Human Rights, to advocate for the rights of the homeless people to shelter and healthcare.

6) Social adaptation. Helping the homeless to adapt to social life, promoting the development of social interaction skills and independence.

7) Develop employment programs. Strategies to eliminate homelessness should go beyond the issue of shelter. Social workers should, therefore, build the homeless people' skills in both the personal and political realms, so that they can participate in changing unjust personal and political conditions. Social workers can help people passing homelessness by connecting them to job openings. They can be transitional jobs that will allow them to gain work experience first, which will also come their advantage when looking for work in the future. Social workers should forge partnership with institutions of higher learning and further education and training to intensify skills development centres, advancing homeless people and presenting them with job opportunities in the labour market. The following qualities are required from a social worker dealing with homelessness:

- **Emotional stability** - you need to be able to control your emotions, not show anger and disgust towards your wards;

- **Empathy** - the ability to listen and understand the homeless is required from a social worker, but at the same time not to humiliate them with your pity;

- **Sociability -** it is necessary to be able to communicate and establish contacts with the most difficult contingent - even with those who are at the very "bottom".

- **Professionalism** - you need to have the appropriate competencies in working with this target group.

Keywords: Homelessnes, social workers, social policy, reasons to homelessness.

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THE PROBLEM OF SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR IN THE YOUTH ENVIRONMENT

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Suicidal behavior is a broader concept and in addition to suicide, includes suicidal attempts, attempts and manifestations. According to the author, suicidal attempts are considered demonstrative and staged actions, in which the suicide most often knows about the safety of the act used by him in the attempt. Suicidal manifestations include thoughts, statements, hints, which are not accompanied, however, by any actions aimed at taking one's own life. The scientific article shows that. İn half of the cases, suicidal attempts in adolescence are demonstrative, i.e. without a real intention to die, but only to play for others a performance that gives the impression of a suicidal attempt in order to attract attention to themselves, to achieve some advantages, to get rid of threatening troubles. Suicidal behavior can be tinged with a sense of revenge on offenders and the scourge of these demonstrative suicides is an accident.

One of the most relevant is the risk of suicide. Among the main factors of the riskogenic social environment that determine suicidal behavior, there are: socio-economic, socio-political, socio-demographic, political and legal, spiritual and moral, socio-cultural, socio-psychological, etc. The results of numerous studies confirm that young women encroach on their lives much more often than men.

The author of the first sociological study of the phenomenon of suicide and the founder of suicidology was the French sociologist Emile Durkheim. Various aspects of suicidal behavior were studied by V. Stern, V. Frankl, N. Faberow, E. Schneiderman and others. Suicide has become one of the most pressing problems in our society.

Suicidal behavior is a broader concept and in addition to suicide, includes suicidal attempts, attempts and manifestations. Suicide indicates the presence in society, in interpersonal relations of problems that a person cannot or does not consider necessary to resolve in the usual, generally accepted way, about experiences associated with personal grief, disappointment and pessimism. Attempted suicide often leads to long-term illness and sometimes disability.

It is believed that in half of the cases, suicidal attempts in adolescence are demonstrative, i.e. without a real intention to die, but only to play for others a performance that gives the impression of a suicidal attempt in order to attract attention to themselves, to achieve some advantages, to get

rid of threatening troubles. Suicidal behavior can be tinged with a sense of revenge on offenders, and the scourge of these demonstrative suicides is an accident.

Young men who attempt to commit suicide are not mentally ill and pose a danger only to themselves. For the most part, they are in a state of acute emotional conflict, which is why they think about suicide for a short period of time. Only a very small number of young people have serious chemical and physical disorders of brain activity and therefore their actions and feelings may differ inadequacy for a long time.

It is much more difficult for young men who are not loved, who themselves do not feel sympathy for their fellow students and teachers, who feel like strangers both at home and in an educational institution. Due to the fact that they study poorly, do not get along with their parents, friends and teachers, their self-esteem decreases, they feel their worthlessness, loneliness, "non-involvement". Hence the inability to solve many painful problems. Life begins to seem especially difficult when a person sees no way out, when it seems to him that he is at an impasse, and his problems become insurmountable, endless, unbearable.

E. Schneiderman identified the common features of suicide:

1. The common goal of all suicides is to find a solution. Suicide is not a random act. It is a way out of difficulties, crises or intolerable situations.

2. The common goal of all suicides is to stop the consciousness of unbearable pain. A desperate person comes up with the idea of the possibility of cessation of consciousness as a way out of the situation.

3. The common stimulus for suicide is unbearable mental pain. If the cessation of consciousness is what the suicidal person seeks, then unbearable mental pain is what he runs away from.

4. A common stressor in suicide is frustrated psychological needs. Suicide seems logical to a frustrated person, since he sees no other way to satisfy his important psychological needs and get rid of the state of frustration.

5. Common suicidal emotions are helplessness and hopelessness. When working with a person who is in mental turmoil with obvious suicidal tendencies, it is inappropriate to use exhortations, explanatory conversations, censure or pressure: this is either ineffective or even increases suicidal tendencies.

6. A common internal attitude towards suicide is ambivalence. A person can both want to die and desire (and even plan for) salvation through the intervention of others.

7. The general communicative act in suicide is the message of intent. In almost every case, people who intend to commit suicide consciously or unconsciously give distress signals: complain of helplessness, cry for support, look for the possibility of salvation.

8. The general pattern of suicide is its compliance with the general style of behavior in life.

Signs of suicide vary by age. In young men, the most obvious hint of suicidal tendencies is the abuse of alcohol and drugs. Approximately half of the young people who committed suicide were taking medication prescribed to their parents. Depressive disorders are one of the most common neuropsychiatric problems in our society.

Every fourth suicide is a patient suffering from neuroses, schizophrenia or manic-depressive psychosis. Patients suffering from psychotic depression often commit suicidal acts at the onset and subsidence of psychosis. Recent studies have shown that the most vulnerable are people who have made suicide attempts in the past or who have been in close contact with those who have attempted or carried out this desire.

Emotional disturbances are one of the main indicators of the possibility of suicide. Any sudden personal conflict is always a serious warning. Most potential suicides suffer from depression. Depression often begins gradually, anxiety and despondency appear. A sign of depression and the suicidal thoughts caused by it may be a decrease in sexual activity, they also complain of infertility and impotence. By carrying out the psychoprophylaxis of suicide, we must know that in each age period, psychological neoplasms appear in children, sensitive to psychological influence. In this regard, it is necessary to carry out continuous psychoprophylaxis, taking into account the main activities of students, especially adolescents.

Any suicide is a personal, conscious decision of the person himself. And the best suicide prevention is to enable a person to positively feel the right to manage his own life, as well as the right to look for other methods to solve his problems. If a person feels himself needed at least for himself, if he has the right to vote at least in relation to himself, then life becomes a rather great value for him. Little experience in solving everyday problems, which in modern society put a lot of pressure on the younger generation, also affects the psyche of young people.

Keywords: Suicidal behavior, suicide, suicidology, depressive disorders, emotional disorders.

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DECONSTRUCTION OF CHILD RIGHTS AND SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN AFRICAN CONTEXT: AN AFRICAN PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Globally, people overwhelmingly celebrate over three decades of the United Nations Child Rights Convention (UNCRC) for positively impacting public and social policies for the welfare of children. On the contrary, there is a lack of evidence in academic discourse to unravel the systematic contribution of the UNCRC on the disruptions of the African childhood epistemic welfare systems. This chapter seeks to contribute towards the narrative of epistemic decoloniality of the child rights philosophy and social work practice in Africa in sync with its unique philosophical epistemologies. In theory and practice, this article agrees that metaphysics, a branch of philosophy that studies the nature of reality, influences the construction of practical and philosophical narratives in child rights and social work practice. This suggests that studies of the nature of reality, in more ways than one, informed human behaviour and content of reflections on social reality, as in social work practice and child rights philosophy. That being the case, every society in the world has its worldview of both their cultures' physical and social realities. These worldviews and cultural, physical and social realities influence child rights philosophical systems and any sphere's social work practice. For instance, Western and African philosophies and worldviews manifest as products of cultural systems, significantly affecting social and political spheres. As such, in the world, communities' social and political realities come across different conceptualisations of social behaviours, ramifications and mitigations. This concerns the African epistemological frontiers such as ethnophilosophy, nationalistic-ideological philosophy, professional philosophy and philosophic sagacity. Some of these traditions are found to be in resonance with Ubuntu's philosophy that has outlived the colonial overlay. This article argues that universalising and particularising child rights without considering the cultural spheres of any given locality are philosophical criminality. In conclusion, using historical-cultural hermeneutics, this article postulates integrating some enduring African philosophical elements into the grand narrative for child rights and social work practice.

Introduction

Universalism and particularism are two broad underlying rival philosophical ideologies of the UNCRC of 1989 and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRW), adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) on 11 July 1999. The ACRW came into force after the African countries discovered that the UNCRC was more akin to the Western philosophy of neoliberalism than the African Indigenous Knowledge on child welfare (Faulkner & Nyamutata, 2020). In simple terms, the UNCRC took the universalistic philosophical ideology of disregarding the existence of African philosophies. According to Ikuonobe (1997), Universalists are a group of African philosophers whose point of view advocates that philosophy must have some meaning in all cultures, while the subjects and methods are dictated by cultural differences or the existing environment of the context. The Universalist critically questions the authenticity of African philosophy on a global spectrum. In doing so, the Universalists, mainly composed of professional and Western philosophers, attacked the Particularist (ethnophilosophers, sage and nationalist philosophers) point of view that advocates for the particularisation of African philosophy (Egbunu, 2013). On the contrary, Oruka (1990) argued that Africa, based on its unique culture and worldviews, has a philosophy that influences its social reality and human behaviours. On this basis, the OAU member states promulgated regional human rights instruments to address issues of particular interest and importance to children in Africa, the ACRW and to cushion the neoliberal dominance of the UNCRC in Africa (Ringson, 2019).

Notwithstanding the enactment of the ACRW as an antidote to the dominance of the UNCRC, neo-liberalism in childhood governance had already taken centre stage in most African countries because of the influence of colonialism. As such, by the time of the enactment of ACRW, the Western settlers in Africa had already established the institutions and governance infrastructures that pedagogically spread the Western doctrine of human rights and childhood philosophies. In post-independence Africa, most African countries inherited the Western legacy by ratifying most of the international conventions that promote Western philosophy and ideologies, including the UNCRC, which was endorsed by 196 countries except the United States of America to date (Faulkner & Nyamutata, 2020). The endorsement of the UNCRC cancerously spread Western education, religion and humanitarian interventions promoting their children's rights philosophies. The preceding institutions culminated in establishing higher education institutions and humanitarian organisations that train social workers and practitioners who advance Western perspectives while further subjugating the indigenous systems.

Even with the emergence of African academics promoting the decolonisation of education and politics in post-independence Africa, western perspectives are still dominating African

institutions in theory and practice. Despite the proliferation of the UNCRC doctrine in Africa, this Western child welfare model has not effectively modelled an African child to the optimum level. Instead, rival philosophies in social workers and practitioners have witnessed some African philosophical elements of childhood welfare enduring and outliving the colonial overlay. Such African doctrines and theories resonated with Ubuntu's philosophy and endured the onslaught of time and the emerging narratives which sought to bury it to oblivion. Predicated on the preceding context, this article hypothesises integrating some enduring African philosophical elements into the grand narrative for child rights and social work perceptions of the new era. This study adopted a historical-cultural hermeneutical qualitative desktop approach with a literature review and documentary analysis to glean the underlying factors, views, perceptions, and experiences that help identify and clarify the feasibility of integrating the closed and open child rights governance systems in Southern Africa. This approach followed the subjectivism philosophy, which resonates with the subjective interpretation of the actors' views and experiences based on the existing literature (Saunders *et al*., 2009; Matshabaphala & Ringson, 2022). Desk research collects data from existing resources; hence it is often considered a low-cost technique compared to field research, as the main cost consists of the researcher's time, telephone charges and directories. This grand narrative for child rights and social work practive can be feasible through an epistemic mediation of the rival philosophies through historical-cultural hermeneutics.

African Philosophy, Child Rights and Social Work Practice

As contextually argued in the preceding section, African philosophy can provide an epistemological deconstruction of child rights philosophy and social work practice in Africa. Africa has unique epistemology in childrearing that is different to the Western context and cultural relativity must apply in social work theory and practice. This article believes that failure to uphold indigenous philosophy's values in social work practice makes social work an elite-mass discipline. For many years, child rights philosophy and social work practice were more deeply entrenched in Western values and approaches than in African values (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2020). An epistemic deconstruction of the child rights philosophy and social work practice starts by acknowledging the existence of African philosophy and its contribution to humanity. Matshabaphala (2015) argues that recognising the value of Ubuntu and Batho Pele in shaping society within our communities as Africans help us to steer the patronising discourse on whether African philosophy exists. Mashabaphala further argues that a philosophical take on philosophy tells us that philosophy is about thinking or the pursuit of wisdom. All people on earth think and have their worldviews and respond in their ways to improve their lot. An African way of thinking manifests through collective intelligence and not individualism. As such, social work practice and child rights should follow the collective intelligence of the African communities. This collective

intelligence resonates with the Ubuntu maxim: "I am because we are". The society community shapes children's rights and is not detached from one's cultural values.

On the contrary, the neoliberal UNCRC child rights model has dismantled the African communities' collective intelligence in childhood governance. That being the case, this article intends to draw the lessons from the four trends of African Philosophy proposed by Odera Oruka in his defense of the existence of African philosophy. According to Oruka (1990), these philosophies include ethnophilosophy, nationalistic-ideological philosophy, professional philosophy and philosophic sagacity. Oruka argues that these African ways of thinking seek not to denigrate the colonial legacy but to draw the best homegrown philosophy in every sphere of life, including shaping child rights governance and social work practice in Africa. Table 1 below shows how these African philosophies contribute to the deconstruction of child rights and social work practice in Africa.

Table 1. Trends of African Philosophies, Child Rights & Social Work Practice

African Philosophy	Description & Proponents	Child Rights & Social work practice Africa
Ethnophilosophy	The philosophers that emerged on the plains of ethnophilosophy in African philosophy, such as Placide Tempels, Leopold Sedar Senghor and John Mbiti, described communities' worldviews and thought systems as philosophy.	This article has no problem with whether ethnophilosophy is universally accepted, as most philosophical traditions worldwide are born of this process. In terms of this approach, communities worldwide have a way, sometimes through their cultures, of communally agreeing on what constitutes child rights and social work practice. They have a way of deciding on what they regard as good for society and what they consider morally desirable to them. Thus, some cultural-based approaches do not agree with some UNCRC and neoliberalism approaches regarding child rights. This article advocates for deconstructing some child rights and social work practices in Africa to accommodate the indigenous ways of childhood governance and social work practices. Ethnophilosophy is a critical component that Western theories and social work practices cannot ignore if social work is to be effective in African communities.

Nationalistic-Ideological Philosophy	The nationalistic-ideological philosophy traces its origins and evolution to the founders of the liberation movements on the African continent. This concerns great leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Steve Biko, Robert Mugabe and others in their league who presented leadership models worthy of emulation in the social and public spheres.	As reflected in their writings, their contributions provide an epistemological base for further discourse in public leadership and narrative development. The Black Consciousness philosophy, for instance, calls for an informed understanding of the universe of the black people in Africa, as they happen to be the majority populace that receives services from the political leadership and social work practice. Suppose the black consciousness focuses on mobilising Africans to embrace their African philosophy and tenets for childhood development and social work practice. In that case, it will make social work practices more effective in Africa than only using Western models.
Professional Philosophy	The professional philosophy frontier in African philosophy, led by professionally trained students and philosophy teachers such as Kwasi Wiredu, Paulin Hountondji and Peter Bodunrin, rejected the ethnophilosophy approach as too anachronistic for epistemology.	This approach in African philosophy postulates the adoption of universal practices towards understanding reality. For this article, professionalism in social work and child rights governance is critical. As such, a universal approach towards understanding emerging realities in the universe of child rights and social work practice should be part of the integrated model for social work practice and child rights governance in Africa. This article also agrees with this approach, especially in social work practice, child rights governance and ethics. The basic principles of ethics, good practice and leadership are found to be universal and present in cultural, social and political systems across the world. Whilst African philosophy is rich in collective intelligence in social work practice and child rights governance, it lacks the professional component that needs to be borrowed from the Western model of child rights and social work practice.
Philosophic Sagacity	Odera Oruka pioneered the philosophical sagacity approach as he tried to preserve the philosophical thoughts of traditional Kenyan sages. The	Most of these people are today found to be providing leadership in the organs of civil society, raising issues, especially on child rights governance and social ills in their communities. In leadership parlance, it is said that these are

| | philosophical sagacity approach is predicated on the understanding that in both traditional and modern Africa, literate and illiterate men and women commonly reflect on various problems of human life and nature. | the people providing leadership from below. This article acknowledges that leadership capacity exists in the communities where the public service renders services. In this case, the social workers, no matter how loaded they are with the Western social work theories, must seek knowledge and wisdom from these community leaders for their services to be effective. |

Table 1 illustrates the complementary components from the African philosophy that are in sync with the Western UNCRC governance approach. The table indicated that while African philosophies such as ethnophilosophy, national-ideological philosophy and philosophical sagacity are very appropriate in Africa, they may lack professionalism which is in the professional philosophy from the UNCRC. Thus, the preceding gap in African philosophy calls for integration with Western professional philosophy to enhance African ethical leadership and social work practice.

Integrated Child Rights and Social Work Practice Model

The relevance and applicability of the cultural hermeneutical heritage by Okere in mediating universal child rights governance systems and social work practice in Africa rest on cultural and philosophical mediation, which paves the way for the integration of the two rival ideologies. Chinedu (2012) argues that the clash in positions between the Universalist and the Particularist schools of thought is primarily determined by the degree to which a philosopher has been globalised or modernised. Accordingly, Egubnu (2013) defines Universalist philosophy as an African school of thought advocated by those educated African philosophers trained abroad. The Particularist philosophy is the African indigenous and culturally oriented philosophy embedded in ethno-philosophy, sage and nationalist philosophy (Egubnu, 2013). In addition to colonialism and globalisation, Chimuka (2001) argues that the Universalist philosophers have done much to constrict and subjugate the traditional African systems in development.

Influenced by the historical hermeneutics protagonist, Okere propounds a cultural hermeneutical heritage theory to balance conventional African philosophies and Western philosophies (Okere, 1983). In contrast, contemporary perspectives include but are not limited to the Confucian tradition of Asia and the Platonic-Aristotelian tradition of Europe (Jacobs *et al.*, 1995). According to Okere (1983), historical hermeneutics is an epistemological tool for mediating cultures or philosophies. Mediating philosophies that underlie the coping strategies and

governance approaches will culminate in integrating the coping process. Okere (1983) argues that historical hermeneutics heritage focuses on interpreting. This common ground is envisioned as developing new knowledge by combining neo-liberalism, African philosophies, and social work practice in Africa.

Conclusion

This paper was motivated by the intellectual lack of a blended model necessary for mitigating the perennial clashes of neoliberalism and African Indigenous Knowledge Systems in dealing with child rights governance and social work practice. The intellectual paucity is vindicated by global rival philosophical thoughts competing for intellectual and explanatory supremacy in unravelling the mitigatory measures aimed at counteracting child rights and social engagement in Africa. Against this backdrop, a novel theoretical construct, the blended or integrated model, could be constructed through diplomatic mediation and deconstruction of these rivalry philosophies. This could be done using a cultural hermeneutics epistemological tool. In doing so, the theory was built by integrating the compatible relevant elements entrenched in these philosophies. In conclusion, this article postulates integrating some enduring African philosophical elements into the grand narrative for child rights and social work practice in Africa.

Keywords: Child rights, social work practice, childhood, epistemology, Westernization & Africanization.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW SERVICE FOR ELDERLY IN GEORGIA

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Background

According to the latest census (2014) in Georgia, 14.3 percent of the Georgian population are pensioners, while 3.1 percent is aged 80 or older, which makes Georgia an ageing country, ranking 95th in the world (GeoStat and UNFPA Georgia, 2017). With increasing number of older adults, promoting quality of life becomes a priority for aging well. Quality of life is a complex phenomenon and it is considered as a central concept in ageing research during the last decades (Diener & Suh, 1998). According to WHO (2019) the Quality of Life is an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns. Quality of Life (QoL) is measured using objective and subjective indicators and pre-defined life domains such as health, social integration and participation.

Hence, the new service - House of Support Healthy Ageing Centers in the towns of **Gori** and **Dmanisi of Georgia,** that was funded by the Austrian Development Cooperation and implemented by support of local (IDP Women Association "Consent" (IDPWA), Georgian Association of Social Workers (GASW), The Center for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia– CSRDG) and international NGOs (Hilfswerk International), builds on the conceptualization of healthy ageing as process which leads to improvement of both objective and subjective indicators of the quality of life in old age in the domains of health, social interaction/inclusion and participation. These centers aim to enhance independence and quality of life of older persons by facilitating their active and healthy lifestyle. The centers started operating in February, 2022. The Center provides sustainable services to older persons of all nationalities, sex, religion, political affiliation, economic or other characteristics, for them to socialize with people of their age, share their experience, learn about evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention programs, gain new skills, plan activities and events interesting for them, do volunteer work, etc. the Center ensures equal inclusion in its activities of older persons representing different groups of a society. By engaging qualified professionals (healthy aging specialists, social workers and psychologists), the Center provides high-quality services.

The aim of this study was to study implementation of new service - House of Support Healthy Ageing Centers - for elderly and its impact on their quality of life (see the concept of quality of life below).
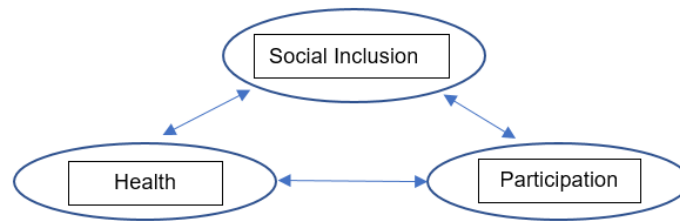
Figure 1. Domains of Quality of Life and Healthy Ageing

Methods

A mixed method research design in the context of quantitative interviews (N=45, Mean age 72.69 (SD=6), 36 Female and 9 Male) and qualitative focus groups (N=4, including 27 participants, age 60+, 25 Female and 2 Male) were used to study two healthy aging centers in Gori and Dmanisi, Georgia.

Results

Majority of beneficiaries in both regions are satisfied with the services in accordance to the Timeliness, Appropriateness/Relevance and Effectiveness. Beneficiaries from Gori as well Dmanisi mentioned that their centers are very important for them as older people are able to visit centers and spend meaningful time with peers, in planning and participating in different activities. As a result, their lives become more active. Before using this program, they had difficulties in socialization.

In general, 32.5% of respondents showed high levels of inclusion, 13% of respondents showed high level of health and 11% of high levels of participation. Qualitative Data were analyzed using a qualitative interpretative thematic approach described by Braun and Clarke (2022). Five major themes were identified, "satisfaction with services", "satisfaction with life conditions", "access with social, health and legal services", "security" and "hope". The participants showed that their inclusion was increased by attending services for elderly.

Conclusion

This study contributes to get a better insight concerning older adults' perspectives on quality of life. Enhancing physically active lifestyle, participation in social and leisure activities and having a purpose in life are all contributing factors to aging well. Overall, implementation of new service for elderly in Georgia is a good example of how to enhance and maintain independence and quality of life of older persons. The current status of beneficiaries in the both centers facilitates mental and physical health of elderly by providing a venue for socialization in a friendly and non-stigmatizing environment,

offering knowledge and information. In addition, gaps are identified to promote gender specific services and strengthen rights based approaches while implementing new services for elderly.

Keywords: Elderly, Georgia, quality of life, house of support healthy ageing centers, social services.

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JUVENILE JUSTICE AND REHABILITATION

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The concept of "juvenile justice and rehabilitation" pertains to a framework encompassing both legal and societal procedures designed to cater to the requirements of youthful individuals who have been involved in illegal activities. This framework is oriented towards supplying interventions, assistance and suitable consequences to minors, usually those below 18 years old, who have committed transgressions. The fundamental objective of the juvenile justice and rehabilitation system extends beyond merely ensuring that young wrongdoers face consequences for their actions; it also aims to offer them avenues for self-improvement, shifts in behavior and a successful return to the community.

Juveniles or children in conflict with the law" are terminologies used to describe individuals who are under 18 years old and are under suspicion or facing allegations of engaging in criminal conduct or participating in unlawful activities. Children entangled in legal matters cannot be subjected to arrests by law enforcement officers; rather, their apprehension is the permissible course of action. It is only those minors aged between 16 and 18 who have committed severe crimes that could potentially undergo the process of being considered and tried as adults.

The child in conflict

A child entangled in legal matters cannot undergo trial within criminal courts and must be presented before the Juvenile Justice Board, presided over by a Magistrate and comprising two social worker members. Including social workers on the Juvenile Justice Board serves the purpose of managing the child's situation with consideration for their future and ensuring their proper treatment and care.

The juvenile involved in legal disputes possesses certain entitlements as outlined in the Child Rights Convention. These rights encompass fair treatment, the prohibition of physical punishment during detention, separation from adult offenders within correctional facilities, the right to legal representation, the opportunity for bail and release based on recognition, privacy, diversion, which includes access to education, skill development and sports activities. Additionally, the rights entail a fair assessment that factors in age, the least restrictive measures on freedom, the automatic suspension of sentences, potential probation based on merit, confidential proceedings, protection against discrimination and preservation of constitutional rights.

Key components of juvenile justice and rehabilitation include

Preventive Measures: Initiatives aimed at averting juvenile delinquency by means of community initiatives, education, familial assistance and timely intervention to address potential risk factors.

Alternative Paths: Offering substitutes to formal court proceedings, like counseling, mediation or community service for minor offenses to sidestep labeling and the legal process.

Comprehensive Evaluation: Appraising the requirements, background and circumstances of the young offender to ascertain suitable interventions and assistance.

Reconstructive Endeavors: Crafting and executing programs with the goal of addressing the root causes of juvenile delinquency, encompassing familial challenges, substance misuse, mental health complexities and educational gaps.

Educational Empowerment: Ensuring access to education and vocational training for juvenile offenders to cultivate skills essential for reintegration into society.

Therapeutic Guidance: Providing psychological and emotional aid to address trauma, behavioral complexities and mental health issues.

Restorative Approaches: Concentrating on the reparation of harm brought about by the offense, involving the participation of victims, offenders and the community in the resolution procedure.

Societal Reassimilation: Assisting the reentry of young offenders into their communities, armed with the necessary skills, assistance and resources for productive lives.

Reintegration: Vigilantly monitoring and mentoring juvenile offenders within their communities, in alignment with court-mandated conditions.

Secure Detention: When warranted, offering secure facilities for the confinement of juvenile offenders, ensuring their safety and granting access to education, treatment and rehabilitation initiatives.

Social workers in juvenile justice and rehabilitation

Social workers hold a pivotal role in the realm of juvenile justice and rehabilitation, rendering essential services to young offenders, their families and the wider community. Their responsibilities span a spectrum of tasks geared towards addressing the distinct needs and complexities of juvenile offenders. Here are key dimensions encapsulating a social worker's role within the context of juvenile justice and rehabilitation:

Assessment and Case Management: Social workers evaluate the individual requisites, backgrounds and contexts of juvenile offenders to forge tailored rehabilitation strategies.

Collaborative engagement with fellow professionals and organizations ensures a holistic and synchronized service approach.

Individual and Family Guidance: Social workers furnish both personal and familial counseling to confront underlying factors contributing to juvenile delinquency, encompassing issues like family discord, trauma, substance misuse and mental health challenges. They facilitate the development of coping mechanisms and the cultivation of healthier relationships.

Rehabilitation Initiatives: Social workers devise, enact and guide rehabilitation initiatives meticulously tailored to cater to the distinct needs of young offenders. These programs encompass interventions such as anger management, life skills enhancement, substance abuse therapy and academic support.

Facilitating Reintegration: Social workers assist juvenile offenders in crafting a trajectory for successful reintegration into society. They provide guidance on life planning, educational pursuits, vocational training and the establishment of connections with community resources.

Advocacy: Within the legal framework, social workers champion the rights and welfare of juvenile offenders. They ensure that the best interests of these individuals are factored into court proceedings and decision-making processes.

Restorative Justice Facilitation: Social workers can be instrumental in steering restorative justice initiatives, facilitating dialogues among victims, offenders and the community to mend harm and cultivate mutual understanding.

Collaborative Endeavors: Social workers collaborate with probation officers, educators, mental health practitioners and other stakeholders to establish a comprehensive approach to rehabilitation.

Preventive Measures and Early Intervention: Social workers engage in community outreach and proactive endeavors to identify at-risk youth, offering early interventions that address potential risk factors before delinquent behavior escalates.

Crisis Management: Social workers promptly respond to crises and emergencies involving juvenile offenders, ensuring their safety and well-being while promptly addressing immediate needs.

Advocating for Policy Evolution: Social workers can advocate for reforms within the juvenile justice system, working towards the adoption of more effective and humane approaches to rehabilitation.

Trauma-Informed Support: Acknowledging the prevalence of trauma among juvenile offenders, social workers adopt trauma-informed methodologies to provide aid and establish secure healing environments.

Educational Empowerment: Social workers contribute to ensuring access to education for young offenders, a cornerstone for their rehabilitation and successful reintegration.

These aspects delineate the multifaceted and indispensable role that social workers play in fostering the rehabilitation and reintegration of juvenile offenders within the realm of the juvenile justice system (Smith, 2003).

The approach to juvenile justice and rehabilitation

The approach towards juvenile justice and rehabilitation may differ substantially across different regions, contingent upon the legal structures, cultural standards and accessible resources. The fundamental ideology frequently accentuates the prospect of transformation and development among youthful wrongdoers, spotlighting their rehabilitation instead of solely punitive actions.

The effectiveness of juvenile justice and rehabilitation remains a persistent subject of discourse and investigation. The appraisal of programs, regulations and results plays a role in honing strategies aimed at curbing juvenile delinquency and offering juvenile offenders optimal opportunities for achieving triumphant reintegration into society.

Overall, social workers play a pivotal role in advocating for the rights and well-being of juvenile offenders, helping them address their challenges and guiding them toward positive change and reintegration into society.

Keywords: Juvenile offenders, delinquent behavior, social work in juvenile justice, reintegration support for juveniles.

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TO CARE OR NOT TO CARE? WHY DO NURSING STUDENTS OPT FOR CAREERS IN ELDERLY CARE?

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Nursing is a broad profession that integrates the various aspects of patient care (Sandvik *et al*., 2023). People who practice nursing are known as registered nurses. Over the past decade the field of nursing has experienced a substantial shortage in qualified workforce. In 2022, the World Health Organization published a report on the workforce in the health system. The report indicated that the medical staff, including nursing staff, obstetrics staff and psychologists in Israel is well below the European ratio. While the European ratio is 121 caregivers to 10,000 patients, in Israel there are approximately 90 caregivers for the same ratio of patients (https://www.who.int).

Nursing is a vital profession that fulfills a significant role in promoting patient health and care. Nevertheless, due to its grinding nature, the burnout rate of nursing students negatively impacts the overall content and demand for workface in the health field. Therefore, strategies for sustaining the enrollment of first-degree nursing students, especially during their first year of studies, is of significant importance (Messineo *et al*., 2019).

A study conducted in China indicated a positive correlation between a choice of a career in nursing and students' attitudes and prejudices towards a certain population. This supports the claim that exposing nursing students to various fields and various populations during their clinical experiences can either increase or decrease their motivation to choose a certain subfield in the nursing profession as their career path. The curriculum and the clinical experiences should be inspiring and the clinical and theoretical mentoring staff should provide guidance efficiently (Cheng *et al*., 2015).

Prior studies conducted in Israel have also indicated that exposure to various clinical aspects during the years of education influences nursing students' preferences regarding their work post-graduation. For instance, many nursing students do not find the community health services appealing due to their limited understanding of the nurse's role in this environment. Students prefer working at hospitals since they perceive the work to be more challenging and involving more complex techniques. The students' preference for hospitals over community nursing is evident as early as during their first year of studies. The students believe that working in a hospital is vital

for accumulating professional experience and confidence in their nursing skills (Sela-Vilensky *et al.*, 2020).

The general social perception of the elderly population (over the age of 65) and overall ageing influences the career choice of healthcare students, leading to the fact that negative stereotypes and attitudes towards the elderly in a society can deter nursing students from considering geriatric care as a possible career choice (Haron *et al.*, 2013). In addition, geriatric care appeals to a low rate of nursing students as a profession. This is a known and troublesome fact that is spread across many countries, including Israel, where a study examining the factors behind the nursing students' choice of whether or not to treat the elderly, was conducted (IBID).

Furthermore, there is a general lack of understanding among researchers regarding the influence that nursing training courses have on the students' career path choice. While some researchers believe that nursing training courses can impact the students' preferences, others disagree (IBID).

The ageing population is known to pose a challenge for global health services due to an increasing number of elderly people with complex and multiple health diagnosis that require advance medical care. For example, in Sweden recent reports predict that the elderly population (over the age of 65) will grow from 19% in 2013 to 25% in 2050. Despite this significant growth in percentage, only 1.6% of the Swedish nurses specialize in geriatric care, which poses an imminent threat on an already vulnerable population (Carlson & Idvall, 2015).

In several instances, nursing students have described caring for the elderly as a least desirable practice, reasoning their decision by indicating that the field is demanding, depressing and comprises of repetitive and unchallenging actions. These positions were attributed to limited theoretical and clinical experience working with the elderly population. Therefore, training nursing students to work with the elderly population is both an acute and challenging task for their trainers across the world. It is known that clinical training plays a critical role in the learning process and in the perception of nursing among nursing students. The socialization process in both the academy and the clinical framework as well as the media presentation of the issue, can impact the perceptions of the nursing profession among nursing students. Prior studies conducted in this field have shown that nursing students see less value in working with the elderly population and their desire to work in geriatric care decreases as they advance in their nursing studies (Carlson *et al.*, 2015).

In light of the above, the main question is what can be done to recruit as many personnel as possible to care for the elderly?

In 2015, a large study among nursing students was conducted in Turkey. In that study the average ages of the students ranged between 17.9 and 20.34, 30% of the students were 2nd year

students and majority of them (76%) were females. The findings of the study indicated that although over half of the students (60.2%) opted to work in geriatric care post-graduation, only 18.5% of the students took geriatric nursing courses. 84.2% of the students had an elderly relative and 39.7% resided with an elderly person at home. Among all the students who participated in the study, those who had an elderly relative, those willing to reside with an elderly person and the ones who opted to work in geriatric care, had more positive attitudes towards this population (Türgay *et al.*, 2015). This data indicates a positive correlation to socialization processes of individuals who grow into a certain culture. For example, the Muslim culture sanctifies respect and dedicated care of the elderly. As a result, there is a greater inclination to care for the elderly among this population.

Furthermore, it can be deduced that education and training programs focusing on gerontological nursing and on the identified related gaps in knowledge, can transform the attitudes of the nursing students towards this population. Promoting gerontological nursing in low- and mediocre-income countries can improve the quality of care provided to the elderly and promote healthy ageing in these populations (Abudu-Birresborn *et al.*, 2019).

Keywords: Nursing students, elderly adults, socialization, cultural differences, nursing study programs.

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SECTION III

Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Migrants and Internally Displaced

THE PERSPECTIVE OF ARAB SOCIAL WORKERS REGARDING THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI CONFLICT

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Israel's Arabs are citizens, but they are an ethnic minority and a national minority (Palestinians) in a Jewish-majority state. The decades-long Palestinian-Israeli conflict has erupted in recent years in violent outbursts between Arab and Jewish citizens. April-May 2021 saw severe violence against individuals and businesses on both sides and damage to holy sites. In this context, a qualitative study using in-depth interviews was conducted among 15 Arab social workers in Israel (mean age 45, mean experience 20 years), to examine their perspective regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, particularly the April-May civil dispute. The findings revealed that the social workers wanted to be involved as leaders.

The study aimed to examine the views of Arab social workers in Israel regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, particularly the April-May 2021 events, revealing three main themes: the desire to lead, the wish not to be excluded, and being caught in between. The participants presented their skills and many years' experience in managing difficult situations as justification for their desire to lead. The exclusion was expressed as exclusion of the sane voice, exclusion of the treatment of scars, and exclusion of opportunities for addressing the big problems. The bind of being caught in between was manifested on several levels: between local government and the committee that represents all the country's Arab citizens; between the demands of the community they serve and the demands of the employer; and between their personal values and their professional values.

The events of April-May 2021

In April-May 2021, the decades-long Palestinian-Israeli conflict in Israel erupted in severe violence on both sides. Israel's Arab social workers see the long-term Palestinian-Israeli conflict as a large, complex, and knotty problem (Allassad Aluzail, 2022). They believe that their role as agents of change will not help to resolve it and that only a leader emerging from their ranks can bring about change (Allassad Aluzail, 2022). In this context, this article addresses how veteran Arab social workers in Israel view the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, particularly the April-May events, and a possible role for themselves.

Social work in the Arab population

Some 59% of Israel's Arab social workers are employed in the welfare bureaus of local authorities, considered the main employers of Israeli-Arab social workers. Approximately 37% work in Arab private and nongovernmental welfare organizations, and a small number are employed by government ministries (Mahajne *et al*., 2022). Social work in the Arab population developed with shortcomings on three levels: unequal investment—for example, inadequate funding and infrastructure that prevent achievement of professional goals for clients; nonrecognition of the Arab narrative in most training programs and professional interventions; and lack of participation of Arab representatives in decision-making and setting of policy. This has left its mark on the quality of social work in the Arab population since its inception (Mahajne & Bar-On, 2021). According to Zouabi and Sawiya (2010), Arab social workers view the professional theoretical framework as a knowledge base from which to draw intervention strategies. When the strategies do not suit the values and norms of Arab society, the social workers lack professional resources.

Social workers in conflict areas

The role of social workers in conflict areas has become a relevant topic in the professional discourse, in both theoretical and practical terms. This is especially the case when social workers in conflict areas face difficult challenges: providing appropriate social support and coping with a complex work environment (Ramon, 2004). Ignoring conflict in social work training programs harms social workers, because they are trained only to handle the classic problems, including poverty and unemployment. A study conducted among social workers in Israel found that they knew about the ramifications of the state's oppression and neglect of the Arab population and that they said the writing was on the wall, but that they did nothing for fear of opening a Pandora's Box (Allassad Aluzail, 2022). According to Nadan and Ben-Ari (2015), the conflict in Israel colors everything: Exposure to conflict arouses complex, intense, and emotional responses that include

anxiety, despair, anger, hatred, and fear of physical harm. Yet most social workers refrain from expressing political opinions openly, even when their values are opposed to the views of their employers (Nadan & Ben-Ari, 2015).

Keywords: Arab citizens of Israel, Palestinian-Israeli conflict, social workers in conflict areas.

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THE FEMINIZATION OF MIGRATION

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Migration is a phenomenon that has gained a conceptual identity as a result of the movements of people from one place to another with different expectations and goals (Adıgüzel, 2023). Migrations sometimes arise from force majeure such as war, oppression and conflict, and sometimes from the search for new opportunities and a better life (Lotfi & Porsuk, 2021). Resistance to an event or phenomenon can be realized for different reasons between genders. In this context, migration affects women and men differently in terms of their experiences and outcomes (Yılmaz, 2019; Schrover & Moloney, 2013). According to Migration Data Portal 2020 data, the number of migrants in the world is 280.6 million. Half of this number is made up of female migrants. Looking at the last 50 years, it is stated that this ratio has remained at similar levels (Migration Data Portal, 2020). According to the World Migration Report (2022), the number of female international migrants in 2020 is 135 million. This number corresponds to 3.5% of the world's female population (McAuliffe & Triandafyllidou, 2022).

The fact that women's migration has become more pronounced all over the world and in some continents has given rise to the concept of "feminization of migration". For example, more than half (52%) of migrants in Europe in 2017 were women, and studies in this area are essential (Alam *et al.*, 2019). The common perception of migration is that migrants are predominantly men. However, global estimates suggest that since 1960, the number of international female migrants has been almost the same as male migrants (Jolly & Reeves, 2005). This perception is based on the idea that men have the role of breadwinner (Castles & Miller, 2008). However, when the data is analyzed, it is understood that female migrants sent 300.6 million dollars out of a total of 601.3 million dollars that migrants sent home in 2016. This situation reveals how women contribute to the livelihood of their families by participating in employment in the country they migrate to (Western Union Company, 2015).

Approaches to women's migration started to change in the 1970s, especially with the feminist movements. With this process, migration ceased to be a concept attributed more to men and it became important to examine women's migration experiences (Kofman *et al.*, 2005). Migration studies on women have focused on the migration-gender relationship and its consequences and have revealed the status of womanhood in the migration process (Buz, 2007; Carling, 2005). The

need for a separate study of women in the migration process was first expressed in international fora such as the UN World Conference on Women (1975-Mexico) and the World Conference on the Decade of Women (Copenhagen, 1980) (Şeker & Uçan, 2016).

Studies examining migration on the axis of women have revealed that women do not migrate only for economic reasons, but also for reasons such as domestic relations, types of violence, unhappy marriages, broken families, threats from partners about divorce (Kofman *et al.*, 2005; Heering *et al.*, 2004). This paradigm shift in migration has made women more prominent in the field of migration. However, Ravenstein, who is recognized as the first migration theorist, emphasized that women migrated more than men in internal migration in the 19th century. Nevertheless, for a long time, migration has been read only in terms of men. With the emergence of more accurate and comparable numerical data, it was determined that women migrate at least as much as men and the concept of "feminization of migration" began to be discussed (Dedeoğlu & Ekiz-Gökmen, 2020; Reeder, 2017).

In order to better understand the process of feminization of migration, it is important to examine women's reasons for migration. The relevant reasons include the labor market, seasonal work, family ties and wars. All these reasons will be discussed in turn below.

The main motivation for women's migration is to earn economic income. Most migrant women migrate and work to send money to their families. However, it is also a fact that migrant women cannot start working as soon as they migrate. This is because intermediary organizations and/or employers demand large sums of money from migrant women. In this case, women start working in the country of destination primarily to pay off debts. At the same time, they have to accept the conditions they are exposed to in the places where they work (Cheng, 1996). With the feminization of migration, some areas of employment specific to women have emerged in labor markets. One of these is the lines of work that are divided according to cultural codes. In destination countries, migrant women have easier access to jobs identified with women such as house cleaning, home care worker, child care, nursing. On the one hand, this situation helps women to participate in working life quickly, but on the other hand, it causes a woman outside her country to be imprisoned in private spaces instead of the public sphere (Mısırlı, 2019; Piper, 2006).

Women's work is very important for families who see seasonal agricultural work as a source of livelihood. The sustainability of seasonal agricultural work depends on women's regular participation in production (Dedeoğlu, 2019). For this reason, women migrate to work as seasonal agricultural workers. While working in the fields, women also fulfill other family responsibilities. Along with their long working hours in the fields, women also need to allocate time for household

chores. If the dominant cultural perceptions accept these tasks as routine, both women's labor and the problems they face become invisible (Güneş, 2015).

With the concept of feminization of migration, different types and reasons for migration specific to women have also increased. Marriages for the establishment of a new family as well as following a family have become one of the reasons for women to migrate (Carling, 2005). Along with migration movements, the boundaries, procedures and perceptions of marriages have also changed. Especially the transnationalism brought about by globalization has made it possible for people from different regions, countries or continents to migrate and marry (Özbey & Beyaz-Özbey, 2020).

Most of the life changes that come with migration also include changes in the marital status of individuals. In this context, migrants' actions such as marriage, divorce, cohabitation, separation, death of spouse and/or remarriage can be the cause or consequence of migration. In addition, women may also turn to marriage migration for better living conditions. Women may be attracted by the idea that they will be more visible, develop themselves and participate more actively in employment in the place of migration. In this case, marriage functions as a means as well as a cause and effect for women (Özgür & Aydın, 2010).

Another reason for migration that needs to be examined in the process of feminization of migration is wars. While wars take women away from their home countries, they can also cause the breakup of families. Women who have lost their husbands in the war and/or who have been recruited under arms may suddenly have to become the head of the family. In addition to all the difficulties, having to bear such a heavy responsibility both within the family and in society can jeopardize women's psycho-social health. According to a UNHCR study, 94% of the Syrian refugee women in the sample stated that their responsibilities increased due to being the head of the family with migration and that this negatively affected them (Yılmaz, 2019). Another problem of women who migrated due to war is the violence they face during the migration process. During the migration process, women face various types of violence both by migrants in the community they migrate with and by professionals in refugee camps (Jolly & Reeves, 2005).

In this study, which examines the disadvantages experienced by women during the migration process with a special focus on the feminization of migration, it is seen that women face various difficulties in the pre-migration process, during and after migration. Accordingly, it is thought that women may be exposed to violence and abuse in their own communities before migration, similar situations may occur during migration, and after migration, they may become isolated and traumatized due to their previous experiences. In addition, the behavior of members of the host community, socio-economic problems and language problems may increase the severity of the difficulties experienced by individuals in the post-migration process. In this context, it is concluded

that there is a need for qualified social policies regarding the migration process, studies on language problems, culturally sensitive approaches and increased job opportunities

Keywords: Woman, immigrant, women in the migration process, the feminization of migration.

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ADAPTATION PROBLEM OF UKRAINIAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN REFUGEES LIVING IN AZERBAIJAN

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On February 24, 2022, the socio-economic and demographic problems that occurred as a result of the conflict caused by Russia's large-scale military intervention in Ukraine have lost their local character and have become one of the main problems on the minds of all states in a short time. In particular, with the beginning of the war, there was a mass flow of millions of Ukrainian refugees to European countries and other countries, and according to the information of the UN Refugee Agency, more than 6 million refugees from Ukraine were registered worldwide. This, in turn, can result in a number of long-term socio-demographic problems depending on the duration of living and social-cultural adaptation of Ukrainian refugee migrants in a country with a strong migration flow.

Considering religion, race, household, high probability of finding a job in the destination country, greater similarity of the socio-cultural value system and other characteristics, the countries that Ukrainian refugees prefer to migrate are European countries. Although the intensive flow of refugees to Azerbaijan is not observed as in various European countries, it can be noted that after the war, Ukrainian refugees crossed the border of Azerbaijan and started living here, second only to Georgia in the Caucasus. According to the official statistics of the UN Refugee Agency, the number of Ukrainian refugees registered in Azerbaijan from the beginning of the war until June 12, 2023 is 4,780, and the number of those who applied for asylum is 210.

The research work includes the features of socio-cultural adaptation of Ukrainian women and children migrants who migrated to Azerbaijan as refugees after the war, and the problems they experience. Several methods were used to obtain data. Initially, the statistical data of various international organizations were referred to by using Internet resources to obtain official statistical data. Interviews were conducted in order to study the features of adaptation of Ukrainian women and children living in Azerbaijan after the war. Interviews were conducted face-to-face, remotely via the Zoom platform, and with a Google-Forms questionnaire. At the same time, public shares and comments in groups operating in various social networks were analyzed.

The influx of refugees, mainly caused by military conflicts, political regime persecutions, and environmental disasters, means the emergence of socio-cultural, psychological, and economic problems in a new environment for every individual who faces this type of migration. From this point of view, it is inevitable that women and children who migrated to Azerbaijan as a result of the Russia-Ukraine conflict will encounter such problems in Azerbaijan.

Women and children were selected as subjects of the study based on gender and age category. This is not accidental. So, since men are mainly involved in the battle line, most refugees are women and children. During the interviews, there were more women who migrated to Azerbaijan alone with their children. This, in turn, makes the refugee problem, which is already a sensitive issue, even more sensitive. Thus, after coming to Azerbaijan, women mentioned that they were only dealing with all the problems of the family, that trying to adapt, taking care of the child, and trying to solve everyday household problems at the same time increased their responsibility and burden.

As a result of the interviews, the problems faced by Ukrainian women in the new environment in Azerbaijan can be grouped as follows:

Socio-cultural: Problems faced especially in everyday life due to different cultural value system; problems in education; inability to adapt to a new environment;

Psychological: psychological traumas related to refugees, psychological stress and despair caused by the prolongation of the war; not being able to communicate much with the local population due to the language barrier; the tension caused by refugees' neglect of their rights, in some cases not being aware of their rights at all, and the fear of deportation if they face any problems;

Economical: Unemployment; low income and poor quality of life; deficiencies in social protection; lack of life insurance and humanitarian assistance.

To sum up, the interviews with migrants, it can be concluded that due to the deterioration of the financial situation after the refugee and other factors, it is not possible to fight alone with the problem faced in several cases. In this regard, we can mention the more desirable supports that most informants specifically emphasized as follows:

Provision of psychological support through professional psychologists for Ukrainian refugees, especially children, in order to eliminate the psychological tensions caused by the war and living in a new environment;

Organization of intensive courses for the purpose of learning the Azerbaijani language or organization of distance lessons by organizing an online platform in this direction.

Keywords: Migration, refugee, adaptation, women and child refugees.

RUSSIAN MIGRANTS IN MONGOLIA: SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECT

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Relocants 2022-2023 The beginning of the Special Military Operation in 2022 was organized for the departure from the territory of the Russian Federation of the average population, who became relocants in Abkhazia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, and the Baltic countries. The local population, according to sociological research, has a fairly positive attitude towards arriving immigrants.

In Georgia, more than 40% of those who believe that visiting Russians can be useful. In Armenia there are 73% of them. The emergence of highly qualified specialists, the growth of the service sector, and earning opportunities for local residents are welcomed by residents of Tajikistan (55%) and Kyrgyzstan (42%). In Uzbekistan, respondents indicated that they were happy about the arrival of specialists (46%), but only 23% believe that this will affect the technological advancement of their country. Some nominated citizens chose to display their behavior and countries, such as the United Arab Emirates, South Korea, countries of the European Union, and Southeast Asia. Mongolia is one of these countries.

From a regulatory point of view for cooperation between our states is the Treaty on Friendly Relations and Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the Russian Federation and Mongolia, signed in Ulaanbaatar on September 3, 2019. The corresponding Federal Law of the Russian Federation on the ratification of this treaty was signed by Russian President V.V. Putin July 13, 2020. The document presents various areas of interaction, including in Art. 7, for security purposes, this agreement obliges us to cooperate in the field of France, to create the necessary conditions for the implementation of agreements in the field of assistance in civil, family and criminal matters.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation and Mongolia and other laws limit the rights of foreign citizens. In both friendly states, the fundamental principle is that foreign nationals have the same rights and bear the same responsibilities as citizens of their own state, except as provided by national obligations. At the same time, the leaders of Russia and Mongolia have repeatedly noted in their public speeches that, having a long history of friendship, cooperation and mutual

complementarity of peoples, both countries should work to create a positive image in the eyes of visiting citizens.

Many Russian citizens of Asian origin consider Mongolia a brotherly and hospitable country where they vacationed or were passing through. Mongolia is easily accessible for entry through the Republic of Buryatia. Between Russia and Mongolia there are both direct railway connections (Irkutsk ↔ Ulan-Ude ↔ Ulaanbaatar), as well as road and bus connections.

In the border regions of Russia there is a high level of migration, in contrast to the border aimags of Mongolia. Migration is most negative in the Trans-Baikal Territory. Since 2000, the average annual loss here has been about 5.8 thousand people. Interregional migration flows have equally centripetal directions on both sides. Thus, in most cases, the population of the border regions of Russia moves for permanent residence to the central regions of the country, large cities of the Siberian Federal District. Internal migration of border regions is directed to regional centers. The centers of attraction for migrants in Mongolia are mainly the cities of Ulaanbaatar, Darkhan and Erdenet. Ulaanbaatar is one of the fastest growing cities in the world; the average annual influx of internal migrants is estimated at 100 thousand people. The main reasons for migration in neighboring regions of Russia are similar in their conditionality and severity. Among the dominant factors of migration are the following: high unemployment, poorly developed socio-economic infrastructure, as well as low quality of life, economic instability.

Since the beginning of the Special Military Operation of the Russian Federation in Ukraine in 2022, the Mongolian leadership has taken a position of neutrality. "In the international arena, a strict policy of condemnation and isolation of Russia is being pursued, but our country steadily follows the principle of neutrality, not taking either side, and continues to successfully develop good-neighborly cooperation with our two eternal neighbors - Russia and China. It is a priority of Mongolia's foreign policy," said the country's Foreign Minister Batmunkhiin Battsetseg.

In 2022-2023 a new wave of emigration from Russia to Mongolia began. Thus, sources report that in the period from 2022 to 2023. 22,540 Russian citizens entered Mongolia, of whom 85 percent had left the country as of mid-October. In other words, there are 3,465 Russian citizens left in the country. Of these, about 98% permanently reside in the capital Ulaanbaatar. Unofficial reports indicate that most Russian citizens traveled to visa-free countries such as Kazakhstan, the Republic of Turkey, Uzbekistan, Georgia, as well as European Union countries, Thailand and South Korea, while only a few returned to Russia.

The fact that there is no large gap in the gender ratio means that Russian citizens were able to enter, exit or remain in the country with their families. Other Russian citizens can seek residence (provided they do not want to return) in the following ways, such as:

- temporary residence;

- mixed marriages;

- migration to rural areas (Darkhan, Erdenet, Dornod, Khentii);

- investing

- unauthorized employment;

- application for citizenship or immigrant status.

Perhaps the peculiarity of the current wave of emigration to Mongolia is that residents are actively going there not so much from Central Russia, but from regions such as Buryatia, Tuva and the Irkutsk region.

In November 2022, it was noted that Russian citizens constitute the largest group of citizens located in the country. "As of November 21, 2022, there were more than 22 thousand foreigners from 124 countries in Mongolia. Most of these people, more than 6 thousand people, are citizens of the Russian Federation. They came to the country for study, work and family reasons," the department for foreign citizens reported.

These migration trends correlate with the decision of the Government of Mongolia to announce 2023-2025. "For years of visiting Mongolia" and develop a "post-Covid" campaign to attract tourists from the Russian Federation. However, "most likely, this is a temporary situation. I don't see Mongolia accepting too many refugees. Most of them are heading to other countries such as South Korea, Turkey and Thailand. If you think about it, Mongolia is not really a receiving or economically friendly country for migrants." – points out The Diplomat.

Mongolian non-governmental organizations pay close attention to issues related to Russian migrants. For example, the Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MNCCI) conducted a survey among Russian migrants in Mongolia from October 10 to 25, 2022 and brought the issue to the attention of the government. For example, the report notes that 28.8% of Russian migrants were in the country for tourism, 18.3% were looking for work and 12% said their goal was to study in the country. About 98% were in Ulaanbaatar. The survey also found that 28.3% said they planned to stay for more than a month, 28.5% planned to live in Mongolia permanently, and 34% were unsure of their stay plan. Additionally, 82.6% of migrants expressed their willingness to extend their visas, while about 90% hoped to work in Mongolia.

According to media reports, in the period from January 1 to May 31, 2023, more than 60,000 Russians entered Mongolia from Russia, which, according to the above figures, is not close to the period from January 1 to December 31, 2022. A special outflow of Russians occurred in period from September 22, 2022 to November 31, 2022.

Thus, the migration of Russians to Mongolia in the period 2022-2023. Amounted to approximately two hundred fifty thousand people. Some of the migrants are Buryats from the

Republic of Buryatia adjacent to Mongolia. For many migrants, Mongolia is a transit point, and only a small percentage of the total takes out a residence permit in Mongolia. At the same time, as we noted in the text of the article, 98% of the remaining Russians remain in Ulaanbaatar. First of all, this is due to the infrastructure of the capital, which is closest to the developed infrastructure of Russia, however, 2-3%, having received a job, move for permanent residence to the rural areas of Mongolia.

Based on the above, we move on to conclusions.

Firstly, the historical migration flows of Russians to Mongolia were determined by the common cultural and civilizational code that persists for the peoples of Eurasia and shapes the Eurasian civilization, which is especially relevant within the framework of the policy of Russia's turn to the East.

Secondly, the Cossacks and Mongolian peoples living on the territory of the Russian Federation and acting as conductors of Russian "people's diplomacy" play a special role in interstate cooperation.

Thirdly, the modern migration of Russians to Mongolia has a direct relationship with the Special Military Operation, but carries the potential for developing a positive attitude towards Russians on the part of the country's indigenous population and, in the future, can be a conductor of Russian "soft power" in the country.

Keywords: Cossacks, migrants, Mongolia, Soviet specialists, Russia.

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ISSUES OF INTERSECTIONALITY IN RETURN MIGRATION AND REINTEGRATION – THE CASE OF ROMA AND EGYPTIAN RETURNEES IN ALBANIA

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Albania is one of the countries with the highest migration rates in Europe. Covid-19 pandemic seriously challenged mobility globally but outward migration trends in Albania persisted (EASO, 2019; OECD, 2019; Dhembo *et al*., 2019). The major drivers of migration, as outlined in various studies and reports include those related to economic conditions, namely poverty, unemployment and underemployment, low income from formal and informal sectors, difficult/poor living conditions, limited social protection and debts. Other factors connect to the shortage and poor quality of healthcare services, housing, conflicts and physical security that generate constant psychological stress, including the low quality of education (Gëdeshi & King, 2020; Gëdeshi *et al*., 2016). Issues of access to social protection and (quality) social services also act as factors shaping issues of migration, return and re-migration (Dhëmbo, 2020; Duci *et al*., 2019). For certain subgroups, such as Roma and Egyptian (R&E) minorities, discrimination is an additional factor (Gëdeshi & King, 2020; ECRI, 2020).

In the recent years, there has been an escalation in the commitment of central and local governments in adopting policies and action plans aiming for Roma and Egyptian integration and participation, as well as a growing engagement in targeting issues of returnees and their reintegration. However, there is little evidence in terms of how they are being implemented and with what level of success, be it for Roma and Egyptians, the returnees or the intersect between these groups of interest. It is in this context that this paper targets the intersect between issues of migration, return and re-integration and those of Roma & Egyptian minorities in the country, with the primary purpose to better understand chances and opportunities of reintegration of Roma and Egyptian returnees by assessing institutional and individual capacities and bottlenecks for them to access quality local services in their reintegration processes.

To this aim, a mixed methods model was designed and implemented, in the logic frame of an ecosystem approach to reintegration, collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative secondary and primary data for three different local government units (municipalities). Primary data were collected form a total of 190 participants (including service providers, (Roma and

Egyptian) returnees and potential outward (re)migrants and key-informants) on three main topics a. needs of (Roma/ Egyptian) returnees for service support; b. available services and capacities to address those needs; c. individual & institutional bottlenecks and needs for capacity building. This approach ensures a robust mapping of the institutional and individual capacities, opportunities and challenges in delivering quality services at the local level to support (Roma and Egyptian) returnees' reintegration upon return. It further enables a deeper understanding of the bottlenecks, best practices and opportunities to improve these services with a final aim of facilitating, supporting and enabling a sustainable reintegration[1] of returnees in the communities they return to (Hall, 2017).

Findings show that besides variations which result mainly from the size and economy of the local government unit, most of the needs, problems and challenges faced in considering, assessing and addressing issues of (Roma and Egyptian) returnees and their integration are commonly shared. They include low levels of awareness, sensitivity and/or attention (in terms of budgets, resources, infrastructure, human resources etc.) which are being dedicated to issues of returnees; lack of data that are intentionally and systematically collected on returnees and/or Roma and Egyptian minorities; poor coordination among service-providing institutions and agencies, as well as among public institution, CSOs and the private sector; and limited typology and coverage form the available services and poor accessibility. Policy recommendations are provided underlining the need for the proposed interventions at the local level to be harmonized and supported at the national level too. Local level interventions can benefit from a legal/regulatory framework which is complete, clear and operational as well as form learning from and replicating best practices form national level and/or the civil society sector.

Keywords: Return migration, reintegration, minorities, Roma, local governance.

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[1] Reintegration can be considered sustainable when returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities and psychosocial well-being that allow them to cope with (re)migration drivers. Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees are able to make further migration decisions a matter of choice, rather than necessity (Hall, 2017).

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GROWING UP DIVIDED IN A VIOLENT CONFLICT ZONE: THE PERSPECTIVES OF MIXED ARAB-JEWISH OFFSPRING

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This paper describes and analyzes the experiences, hardships and dilemmas of children in Israel whose parents are aligned with opposing sides of the Israel-Palestine conflict. The dataset is comprised of three data sources: First, narratives emerging from in-depth interviews with six adult male and female offspring of mixed marriages/intimate partnerships (Israeli Jewish women and Arab/Palestinian men) who grew up in Israel and in some cases partly in the Palestinian territories. The offspring describe their childhood and adolescent experiences in mixed families, the hardships and challenges they encountered with their nuclear and extended families, peer groups, community and in other spheres of life. Second, input from social workers employed by an Israeli NGO that assists women in mixed marriages/relationships and their children and who describe their observations of children with mixed ancestry. Third, the offspring's mothers' stories, in which they narrate their observations of and experiences with their children's views, feelings and hardships. Preliminary analysis suggests that the offspring are often burdened with social expectations that they "take a side," challenges to their identity, stigma and at least initially, being treated as outcasts by both the Israeli Jewish and Arab communities. The offspring's adaptations to these situations and dilemmas are described as on a continuum in which Jewish or Arab identity lies at its two extremes, while a more bicultural identity is located at its midpoint. The paper concludes by considering the findings' implications for theory and practice.

Keywords: Mixed couples' offspring, Identity, stigma, conflict zone.

DISCUSSING ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOR UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS THROUGH A CASE STUDY

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The United States (US) is a nation of immigrants with an estimated 45.3 million immigrants (Migration Policy Institute, 2023). Among these, an estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants live in the US (Migration Policy Institute, 2023).

Undocumented immigrants and their families struggle to achieve financial security because their lack of legal status creates substantial barriers to finding higher wage jobs (Capps *et al*., 2018). Approximately one in four immigrant families have household incomes at or below the federal poverty line (Capps *et al*., 2018). Further, undocumented immigrants lack access to federal safety net programs including unemployment benefits, health insurance and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (Ramírez, 2018).

In this talk, we will share a classroom activity that social work faculty can use in the classroom to engage students in a conversation around economic justice for undocumented immigrant families. We will provide audience members with a case study which begins with the community context so that students can better understand the lives of undocumented immigrants, and goes on to discuss one particular high school student and her family's situation. We end with a series of discussion questions and conversation points to assist faculty members in conducting this activity in the classroom. There are a variety of discussion questions included and we encourage faculty to choose the ones that are most relevant to their class whether it be an introduction to social work, social policy course, immigrants and refugees class, or other. After sharing the case study and discussion questions with audience members we will allow time for question and answer. We will ask the audience to share reservations about using this activity, practical questions about implementation, and invite others. The goal will be for attendees who are social work faculty to leave the session prepared to bring this 60 minute activity into a social work course, or for those attendees who are working as social workers, we hope that they will leave feeling empowered to share the activity with their colleagues through a brown bag lunch seminar where all can benefit from the new knowledge.

Applying Theory to Practice

Social workers cannot effectively convey the tenets of economic justice without considering both their own, and the client's learned life experiences - this is invaluable practical wisdom. Kessels and Korhagen (1996) call attention to the efficacy of these analyses when they report that practical wisdom, not concerned with scientific theories, but with understanding concrete, variable cases, or complex and ambiguous situations, then elicits appropriate behavior. Practical wisdom or perceptual knowledge (insight) is predicated on life experiences of perceiving, choosing courses of action, assessing, judging and suffering consequences (Kessels & Korhagen, 1996). The case study and subsequent discussion provided in this paper enable students to gain insight and hone in on their own and the client's behaviors regarding economic justice and an undocumented high school student.

Where do social workers come into the conversation?

Several reasons substantiate the duty for social workers to learn about and provide financial social work assisting clients with achieving the acumen needed to attain their personal financial well-being. Social workers are ethically held responsible to address issues of poverty and inequality (NASW, 2021) and are required to engage in practices that advance and promote economic justice (Council on Social Work Education, 2022). Sherraden *et al.* (2015) consider financial capability and asset building no longer optional for clients. They reiterate how teaching clients these skills enables them to move towards self-determination and ultimately a more just financial status. Citing social work's person-in-environment concept, Sherraden, *et al.* (2015) point out that social workers assisting clients to elevate their financial capabilities is not simply done via changing individual behavior but also by increasing access to financial opportunities via changing institutions.

Classroom Activity

This activity will 1) provide social work students with background information on undocumented immigrants and economic inequality; 2) share a case story that illuminates racial and economic injustices faced by an immigrant teenager and 3) provide discussion questions for students around our roles as social workers with the family, in the school system and at the policy level.

Faculty can begin the session by setting the stage for the topic of the class, economic justice for undocumented immigrants, with lecture materials if they choose. However, we provide a written section below, titled "Understanding the Context for the Case Study" so that students can read this material.

Step 1: Have students independently read the information here on undocumented immigrants, and their financial vulnerabilities in the US as well as Catalina's story. Please note that assigning this reading for homework to be read before class can shorten the amount of time you dedicate to the activity in class and that we provide a brief overview of Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth theory which could be augmented by asking your students to read the article prior to class. Allow 10-20 minutes.

Step 2: Break into small groups (3-4 students recommended) for students to discuss. We have provided a number of discussion questions below the case study. We invite you to choose the questions that will be most relevant to your particular class. For example, some focus at the individual or family level while others are looking at the systems level/policy. At the same time the content shifts across questions (ie. school social work and theory). Allow 3-5 minutes per question.

Step 3: Bring the class back together for a larger discussion. Many faculty like each group to go around and recap their individual conversations, and offer insight into what they discussed. Allow 5-7 minutes per group for this option. If you are short on time, you could ask just a few groups to answer each question aloud, or to recap key points yourself.

Sample Discussion questions include:

• As a social worker, what are your initial thoughts? What do you do to assist Catalina? Where in the community might you refer Catalina or her family for services?

• Discuss the impacts of family separation for the five years that Catalina's mom lived in the US before her, and the ways that Catalina may be struggling to reintegrate into her family.

• Discuss the ways in which the financial insecurity of the family might be affecting Catalina and the ways she is choosing to live her life?

• What policies influence (or have influenced) the systemic economic inequality that undocumented immigrants face in the US?

Keywords: Undocumented immigrant, economic justice, case study, teaching tools.

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THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES AMONG REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE

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Background

War in Ukraine changed hundreds of millions of lives. Families have been displaced, communities have been disrupted and the region's social fabric has been significantly altered. The consequences of this conflict extend far beyond geographical boundaries, touching the lives of not only those directly affected by the war but also resonating on a global scale. As we delve into the complexities of this conflict and its aftermath, it becomes clear that understanding its implications requires a comprehensive examination of the multifaceted challenges and transformations that have emerged. This exploration is crucial to shedding light on the experiences of those affected and developing strategies for addressing the far-reaching consequences of the war in Ukraine. More than 180,000 citizens of Ukraine have entered the territory of Georgia since 24 February 2022 (UNHCR data). As of November 2022, around 25,000 remain in Georgia. Around 25% of Ukrainians staying in Georgia are minors. The present study aims to investigate and describe the needs assessment process among refugees with disabilities from Ukraine and gaps in response to this crisis from the volunteering organization in Tbilisi.

Methods

Specifically, we conducted: 1. Conversation analysis with members of nonprofit organizations in Tbilisi (N=5) who assist refugees from Ukraine, counting people with disabilities. 2. Case study that entailed the detailed and intensive analysis of activities of the single case volunteering organization "Volunteers Tbilisi". In addition, the secondary data analysis method was performed to describe the needs of Ukrainian refugees in Georgia. In particular, we studied different information sources about Ukrainian refugees who crossed the border with Georgia after 24 February 2022. We gathered secondary data through websites, Telegram chats, and Facebook groups of national and international agencies involved in refugee assistance to Ukrainian. Existing knowledge, interpretations and conclusions were researched from the relevant studies focusing on refugees in Georgia and other countries. Understanding the organizational structure of humanitarian agencies addressing the needs of refugees with disabilities across different levels was a crucial initial step in our research. Our data analysis method was based on the following

thematic categories: the nature of the problem, children and adults with disabilities among refugees from Ukraine, and its linkage to the purpose of the broad research to identify practical pathways to reach children and adults with disabilities among refugees from Ukraine.

Results

Refugees' needs, including shelter and accommodation, were a key priority for many new arrivals. Some initially came to live with family and friends already in Georgia. However, many did not have a destination in mind, and those without family support networks locally were likely to be more vulnerable. One local solution that was offered was encouraging refugees to resettle Ukrainian citizens in hotels with three meals a day. Protection risks included family separation, loss of support networks, mental health trauma, potential discrimination, limited services and resources access, and gender-based violence risks. Another concern was the risk of infectious diseases and access to medical care. The lack of patient health records worsened the risk of disruption for chronic disease treatment. Refugees experience significant psychological distress due to family separation, loss, fear, and future worries. Pain manifested as child behavior issues, adult anxiety and sleep problems. Refugee awareness of available services is limited, mainly affecting people with disabilities. 43% of respondents thought they were not receiving enough information about available assistance and services. Information about health care services was highlighted as unclear and insufficient (44%) (UNHCR, 2022).

The refugee situation in Georgia is less tense than in 2022, but it will inevitably require long-term solutions. Within this context, there has been growing attention on developing civil society organizations' professional skills to respond to the country's many challenges with refugees. The current reports reveal several gaps between theory and practice (Popescu, 2018).

The case of the charity organization in Tbilisi, "Volunteers Tbilisi," described the general structure and process of needs assessment, which showed that more than 5000 people receive humanitarian aid every month, 200 people get housing, and 20 people get evacuated and receive medical services. The results of the analysis indicate a significant help for refugees from Ukraine.

Qualitative interviews revealed that this organization doesn`t use the needs assessment of people with disabilities as a complex approach. Humanitarian aid is given to all Ukrainian citizens that moved to Georgia on the first of January, 2022. In that case, we can find much feedback highlighting gaps between the needs of beneficiaries and delivering assistance.

With reference to the interviews, we can suggest that the nonprofit organization lacks a comprehensive approach to needs assessment for people with disabilities and has limited fundraising capacities. Insufficient government support also poses challenges to providing social assistance to outreach and understanding beneficiary needs. To ensure inclusivity for vulnerable

groups, such as individuals with disabilities, organizations should address these issues more effectively.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the combination of social research methods such as content analyses of websites and conversation analysis, and case- studies activities of the non-government organization gave a comprehensive view of people who are helpers' perceptions of the strategy of humanitarian response and responses to the needs of children and adults with disabilities among refugees from Ukraine. The unique aspect of this study is that it has captured opposite points of view of providers of social services and eventually, those who receive them. Although it only gives a snapshot of the attitudes of both groups to needs assessment as a method of social work with refugees. It provides a vivid picture of gaps between theory and practice. Further research may analyze the social services system for people with disabilities among Ukrainian refugees and the effective pathways they outreach.

Keywords: Needs Assessment, community-based protection.

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REFUGEE POLICY OF TURKIYE: THE CASE OF SYRIAN REFUGEES

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Turkiye's response to the refugee crisis, notably stemming from the Syrian conflict, presents a multifaceted approach that balances humanitarian assistance and practical considerations. As a country hosting a significant number of displaced individuals, Turkiye's policies have evolved to address challenges in providing protection, services and integration. The intricacies of this approach reflect a blend of compassion, resource management and collaboration with international organizations, while also raising questions about long-term sustainability and the impact on both refugees and host communities.

Since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, Turkiye has become one of the countries hosting the largest number of refugees globally and initially had an open-door policy for the Syrian refugees. Turkiye has hosted millions of Syrian refugees, with numbers fluctuating over the years. As of August 17, 2023, the number of Syrians under temporary protection registered in Turkiye is 3.307.882 people. This influx placed immense pressure on infrastructure, services and resources.

Syrian nationals, refugees, and stateless individuals from Syria who have entered Turkiye singly or in groups are given temporary protection status. Therefore, in addition to Syrian citizens, the "Temporary Protection Regulation" also applies to Palestinians and other stateless people coming from Syria.

The temporary protection regime creates a safeguard to prevent the forced return of people with temporary protected status to Syria. Those who are registered with Turkish authorities are also granted legal residency under this system. Last but not least, having temporary protection status gives registered people access to basic rights and entitlements like health care, education, social services, and interpretation.

Turkiye initially implemented an "open door" policy in the early years of the Syrian conflict, allowing refugees to enter the country without stringent border controls. This approach aimed to provide immediate assistance to those fleeing the conflict.

Open Door Policy which began in 2011 has resulted in a number of issues throughout time and de facto ended in 2016 (Dora, 2020).

Turkiye established refugee camps to accommodate and provide essential services to a significant number of refugees. Turkiye has so far housed more than 194,000 people in 17 refugee camps under the coordination and direction of the Prime Ministry's Emergency and Disaster

Management Presidency (AFAD). The continuous provision of assistance to Syrians in the areas of food, health, security, social activities, education, interpretation, communication, banking, career training and other services is to their advantage.

Turkiye has allowed Syrian refugees to apply for work permits to seek employment legally. This was intended to promote self-sufficiency among refugees and reduce their dependence on aid. In January 2016 Turkiye adopted the "Regulation on Work Permits of Foreigners under Temporary Protection". Six months after the registration period for temporary protection has ended, individuals under temporary protection are eligible to apply for a work permit.

Many Syrian refugees have chosen to settle in urban areas rather than camps. Turkiye has extended services and assistance to refugees living outside the camps to ensure their well-being and integration. 9 of the 10 cities most preferred by asylum seekers living in Turkiye have metropolitan status. According to the statistics published by the Refugees Association in April 2022, the city hosting the highest number of refugees is Istanbul with 542,045 people. Istanbul is followed by Gaziantep with 462,697 people, Hatay with 433,875 people and Şanlıurfa with 430,124 people, respectively.

Turkiye has introduced measures to integrate Syrian refugees into society, including language courses and cultural orientation programs. These efforts aimed to facilitate social cohesion between refugees and the host population.

Turkiye has collaborated with international organizations, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), to provide aid, coordinate assistance and manage the refugee crisis effectively.

Turkiye has engaged in military operations within Syria to create safe zones and combat extremist groups, with the goal of allowing displaced Syrians to return safely to their homes.

Conclusion

Turkiye's refugee policy, particularly in response to the Syrian crisis, reflects a complex balance of humanitarianism, resource allocation and societal integration. With an open-door policy initially, Turkiye welcomed millions of Syrian refugees and established camps to provide basic services. Over time, efforts shifted toward urban integration, granting access to healthcare, education, and work permits. International cooperation, including collaboration with UNHCR, played an important role. The policy's effectiveness lay in its adaptability and resource management, though questions about long-term solutions and the evolving dynamics of the Syrian conflict continue to shape Turkiye's approach to this pressing humanitarian issue. As the situation unfolds, Turkiye's commitment to providing assistance and finding sustainable solutions remains central to its refugee policy.

Keywords: Turkiye, Syria, refugee, refugee policy, "open door" policy, temporary protected status, humanitarian issue.

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THE IMPACT OF MIGRATION PROCESSES ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING ISSUES

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In the modern world, various political-economic processes, wars, ethnic conflicts, natural disasters have contributed to an increase in legal and illegal migration. Hunger, poverty, unemployment and anarchy force people to seek better living conditions elsewhere. Millions of migrants from different social strata migrate within their own countries and to foreign countries. Skilled, labor-capable and highly intellectual migrants are considered a social-economic resource for developed countries. The United States, France, Canada, Sweden and other developed countries compete to benefit economically from migration and implement migration programs. Overall, migration is a complex social process with a spontaneous nature and its consequences are difficult to predict in advance (Dimaev, 2009). Migrants earning income through informal employment can deplete state budgets, contribute to the formation of the "shadow" economy and result in the outflow of money to foreign countries.

Migration processes have a significant impact on the dynamics of the population, affecting social, economic, political and cultural processes, which in turn shape society. Economists, sociologists, cultural scholars and ethnographers primarily study the innovations brought about by migration in our lives.

Additionally, it should be noted that in Western Europe, the shortage of the younger generation, declining population and a significant portion of social resources being comprised of the elderly have contributed to an increase in the population through migration.

The complexity of the migration process, the need to combat illegal activities and the effective regulation of the process have led to the adoption of migration legislation (Yudina, 2006). Some individuals migrate legally, settling in foreign countries. Strengthening migration laws is essential to combat illegal migration and human trafficking. Irregular migrants voluntarily give money to "human smugglers" to cross the border. It's important to distinguish between "human trafficking" and "human smuggling". Human smuggling involves the transportation of individuals across state borders, while human trafficking can occur both domestically and internationally. Human trafficking encompasses the entire network of origin, transit and destination countries (Forced labor and human trafficking, 2020). Raising awareness of the distinction between human

trafficking and human smuggling is part of the efforts against human trafficking by government and non-governmental organizations.

During various crises, human traffickers exploit individuals with diverse needs who belong to vulnerable groups, resorting to illegal and inhumane practices to achieve their goals. Individuals subjected to human trafficking have their rights violated and their dignity compromised. All of these factors necessitate international organizations to develop and implement action plans to prevent the exploitation of migrants as subjects of human trafficking.

Migrant workers fulfill the demand for labor in the community without causing significant changes in the economic structure but are often paid low wages. Their living conditions, food, and daily needs are characterized by labor exploitation, including excessive working hours, subpar working conditions, and inadequate access to healthcare. All of these factors are elements of human trafficking. Human trafficking related to migration processes carries specific characteristics for different countries and regions (Yudina, 2004). Factors contributing to irregular migration by citizens include factors such as the absence of families, single-parent households, challenging socio-economic conditions, unemployment and situations where the state cannot protect its citizens. Each individual's specific characteristics, such as gender, race, ethnicity, education level, resources and opportunities, can make them vulnerable to human trafficking. Therefore, factors contributing to migration and human trafficking include poverty, globalization, restrictive migration policies, labor laws, armed conflicts, political pressure, lack of rule of law, natural disasters, corruption, harmful social and cultural experiences, consumer demand and consumption patterns.

As a result, poor, illiterate, and unskilled professionals and ordinary citizens often believe the false promises of human traffickers. They come from developing countries as a source of cheap labor. They are willing to work in subpar conditions, for low wages and with excessive working hours. Employers exploit labor and cheap materials, increasing their profits. This indeed reflects the characteristics of human trafficking. According to the ILO's 2008 report, the estimated annual global profit from human trafficking is approximately $32 billion USD. According to ILO calculations, around 600,000 to 800,000 women and children migrate in the hope of better living conditions. The inability of irregular migrants to demand their rights, their vulnerable situations and their lack of language skills make them targets for human traffickers. This modern-day trafficking bears similarities to historical forms of slavery. The existing socio-economic conditions, wars, ecological situations suggest that human trafficking is likely to increase worldwide. Globalization enhances economic ties between states while increasing the demand for cheap labor and materials.

Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery that degrades human dignity, violates human rights, occurs in the absence of the rule of law and is linked to criminality, inequality, discrimination, corruption, economic isolation and conditions related to migration.

During the thirty-year occupation by the Republic of Armenia of Azerbaijani territory, a significant number of our citizens became refugees and internally displaced persons. Despite the implementation of numerous social and employment programs for refugees and internally displaced persons by the country's leadership, Azerbaijani citizens have mainly migrated to countries such as Russia, Israel, Turkey, Germany and other European countries. The migration of highly skilled medical professionals, ICT specialists, and talented young people from our country to countries like the United States, Germany and Turkey could potentially lead to a decrease in scientific, social, and economic potential (Aliyev, 2017). It's worth noting that the ongoing economic reforms, incentivizing measures in the workplace and social programs in our country indicate that the migration problem is not as acute as it once was.

Thus, human trafficking effectively affects all OSCE member states as source, transit, or destination countries. This modern-day form of slavery is a disgrace to human dignity and is often associated with psychological terror and physical abuse. OSCE member states are actively engaged in various issues related to human trafficking, including human rights and the rule of law, corruption and crime prevention, discrimination and inequality, economic, labor and migration policies.

In conclusion, it can be deduced from the above that,

• Wars, socio-economic problems, environmental conditions, ethnic conflicts, anarchy, political and military upheavals, globalization, harmful social and cultural experiences have all contributed to an increase in migration levels.

• Legal and irregular migrants find themselves in vulnerable situations, making them targets for human traffickers.

• Given that human trafficking affects many countries worldwide, OSCE member states have established a unique center within OSCE- the OSCE Special Representative and Coordinator for Combating Human Trafficking.

• To prevent migrants and irregular migrants from falling victim to human traffickers, the implementation of migration programs and cooperation between governments, non-governmental organizations and civil society are essential.

Keywords: Human trafficking, human smuggling, migration, socio-economic processes, labor exploitation.

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ORGANIZATION OF SOCIAL WORK WITH MIGRANTS RETURNING TO THE NATIVE LANDS

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People migrate for various reasons. In addition to personal initiatives such as education, the desire for a better life, new job opportunities, political conflict and wars, environmental disasters and many exogenous factors drive people to leave their homelands. Migrants undergo social and psychological readaptation in their new places of residence. Accepting a new environment and being accepted by others by asserting oneself here depends very much on the level of people's preparation. People who migrate on their own initiative try to gather detailed information about the place they are going to, as well as consider the issues of staying for a long time in the new environment or returning unacclimated, taking into account possible successes and failures.

However, as a result of exogenous influences, migrants who are faced with the fact of unexpectedly leaving their native place of residence experience a deep psychological shock and undergo long-term social adaptation in a new place. War and conflicts force them to leave their homeland. Returning to one's original habitat after the end of war and conflicts is a process that requires a new re-adaptation. For what reasons did they leave these places? What happened when you were forced to flee from here? Will the feeling of fear, the horror of losing loved ones, living secretly or openly with them for many years, affect the second re-adaptation or will it be repeated?

How can social workers help migrants in such a situation? Are there visible and invisible aspects of the second readaptation? How should social work be organized with people who have already returned to their homes and migrated? After all, in the initial migration process, they have appropriated the places that were considered foreign to them and now they live together with their relatives and relatives of the new generation?

Voluntary migration

Population migration is a complex process involving three stages. At the first stage, the migrant makes a decision to move to another place of residence and prepares for its implementation. Then the actual resettlement of the migrant takes place. At the final stage, the migrant adapts to the new natural and climatic conditions and integrates into the new social environment. Migration movement of the population is the aggregate of all types of movements

between settlements, which the subject of migration performs during the migration process itself from the moment the subject of migration makes a decision to migrate and ends at the stage of getting used to a new place (unusual conditions) (Slobodchikova & Stroeva, 2016).

Return is the act or process of returning to a place of origin. This can be the return of internally displaced persons and deportees within the country's territorial borders, or return of migrant workers, refugees or asylum seekers between the country of destination (transit) and the country of origin. Different ways of implementing return are distinguished: voluntary, forced, assisted and spontaneous and repatriation (Glossary on Migration, 2019).

Voluntary migration or return – can be carried out freely by an individual. Another form of voluntary migration is organized or organized migration. Organized migration is the movement of the population to return to the territory where they had to move in time, carried out with the support of the state, as well as organized by private and public organizations. Organized migration has played an important role in the development of many states (Slobodchikova, & Stroeva, 2016).

Social work with migrants

Social work with migrants can be differentiated by levels. In addition to elderly migrants, there may be a need to conduct social work with young people and children. At this time, the social worker has to build his activities based on many demographic characteristics.

International experience shows that the return of displaced persons who tragically had to leave their lands over time, even if on a voluntary basis, requires the application of social work as a process requiring re-adaptation. Social work with people who spent their childhood and youth here, who have special memories and at the same time tragically left these lands, requires a special approach from professionals. At this time, the social worker should take into account the fact that people who have settled in different places for a large part of their lives (30 years) adapt and integrate into those societies, have a feeling of separation again and have to adapt and reintegrate again.

On the other hand, social work with young migrants who have heard about them together with their families, but have never seen them and have no special attachments and memories, shows itself as a direction of social work with young people. In the process of adapting to an unfamiliar place and adapting to changed living conditions, young migrants may experience problems in establishing new relationships and interacting with representatives of the new social environment. The social worker should take into account the social aspects of supporting young migrants in the adaptation process, such as individual, family, group, community support, as well as age characteristics (Tkacheva, 2008).

Social work with Azerbaijani settlers returning to their native lands

The victory won in the 44-day Second Karabakh War and the return of the occupied territories, which took place between September 27 and November 10, 2020, opened up new directions of development for the government of Azerbaijan. In the pre-occupation period, the areas that were ancient cultural centers and were considered developing economic regions were completely destroyed by the invaders. In order to make resettlement possible, the construction of new-type cities and villages has become an urgent issue. As a result of the social policy carried out by the government of Azerbaijan, the social infrastructure created in the liberated territories made it possible for a group of displaced people of the First Karabakh War to return. If in the 90s of the 20th century, the Azerbaijanis who were subjected to the armed attack of the Armenian aggressors were subjected to forced internal migration, after 30 years they returned to their native land voluntarily and of their own accord.

What has been mentioned makes the problem of training social work specialists to support migrants in the new place of residence urgent.

The program of the government of Azerbaijan to realize the return of displaced persons to the liberated territories is an activity aimed at the future progress of our country. Today, the deurbanization process is observed all over the world, and the return from big cities to developed regions is becoming the basis of significant economic, ecological and social changes.

The return or migration of Azerbaijani settlers to their native territories has a number of specific socio-political aspects:

1. There is no population in the areas where the displaced people return, that is, the place of initial settlement after 30 years and this situation means the impossibility of a hidden or open conflict between "settlers" and "newcomers" in the place of return.

2. The government is rebuilding the economy and social infrastructure, which were completely destroyed by the invaders for 30 years, according to new, modern requirements. Newly built and planned "smart villages" and "smart cities" provide for the prosperity of the population that will live there.

3. This return starts the process of deurbanization realized with the support of the government.

At the initial stage of the return process, the main goal and activity of the social worker is to help all categories of migrants to overcome their fear of security, to strengthen the confidence of the displaced people that they will live in these places forever and to motivate them.

Keywords: Return, forced migration, voluntary migrants, organization of social work, re-re-adaptation.

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THE WAYS OF SOCIAL WORK WITH WAR VICTIMS AND SOLDIERS IN AZERBAIJAN

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The Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict entered the history of the 20th century as one of the most tragic conflicts; its consequences had a serious impact on the fate of millions of Azerbaijanis. As a result of the first Karabakh war, hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis were forced out from their native land, killed and injured. Azerbaijan tried to settle the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict peacefully by negotiating with Armenia, which occupied 20% of its territory for nearly 30 years. But the negotiations did not give Azerbaijan any result. Armenia continued its aggressive policy and on September 27 2020, in response to the large-scale front-line provocation by the Armenian armed forces, the Azerbaijani Army launched a counter-offensive operation, which later was named as "Iron Fist". The Second Karabakh War, which lasted for 44 days, resulted with the restoration of Azerbaijani territorial integrity.

The glorious victory in the Second Karabakh War was won at the cost of the blood of the brave children of Azerbaijani people. 2907 soldiers of Azerbaijani Armed Forces were died in the war. The heroism of killed and wounded soldiers is highly appreciated by the people and government.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and the first lady Mehriban Aliyeva always took special care of war veterans and disabled people, the families of the martyrs. They always are interested in their problems and are working on solving these problems. The fact that President Ilham Aliyev personally presented the keys of many apartments and cars to the families of the martyrs is welcomed by the public and highly valued by the people. So Government support is very important in this case. On 8 December 2020 the President of Azerbaijan signed a Decree on the establishment of the "YASHAT" Foundation to support the families of the wounded and died soldiers families.

"YASHAT" Foundation was established in order to form a transparent, effective and accessible platform for providing additional support to disabled military servicemen and families of martyrs who protected the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Applying to the Foundation is electronically through the official website of the Foundation www.yasat.gov.az. The Foundation also has a Call Center which obtains detailed information and

operates all difficulties that may arise during registration. I would like to note that calls to the short number 8110 are free for all operators.

The resources of the Foundation are formed due to the voluntary contributions (donations) of the citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan, compatriots living in foreign countries. Funds are collecting online through electronic payment portals, 8110 SMS number, bank transfer and payment terminals.

The financial resources of the Foundation are used in the following directions: payment of the taken consumer loans and other debt obligations until the martyr's family receives status or disability is determined; payment of treatment and psychological support costs; payment of expenses related to helping to receive education, as well as additional education, increase of professional training, as well as development of creative potential; improvement of household conditions. Applications are reviewed in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Citizens' Applications" and information about the result is sent to the applicant.

Another social support is the online "Psychological support line" (050-406-75-85) of the Social Services Agency under the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population for war-affected citizens. The purpose of opening the psychological support line is to provide prompt psychological assistance to people who affected by the war. The help provides online by psychologists and psychiatrists of the agency. Specialists support citizens in two forms: voice and video call (through ZOOM and other programs) through a phone call. The citizen who calls to the mentioned phone number can choose the form of psychological support (telephone conversation or video). The "Psychological Support Line" provides continuous and fast psychological service to the soldiers who participated in the Karabakh War, the families of martyrs, as well as those people whose first degree relatives were killed as a result of the enemy's terrorist attacks, also people who are deeply traumatized.

As we see psychological support is very important factor after any war. The government of Azerbaijan pays special attention to this type of support. "ASAN Volunteers" organization and the Azerbaijan Delegation of the UN Children's Fund jointly organized psychological assistance to more than 1,500 children living in frontline areas under the "Child Protection in Emergency Situations" project. The project has a particular importance in terms of providing psychological and psychosocial support to children who experience anxiety and fear during the armed conflict. So this project has started on November 2020 and is implemented with the aim of strengthening the work of psychosocial support for children living in the front zone, whose mental health is at risk after the war. In this framework, the main goal is the assessment of the severity of symptoms and psychosocial rehabilitation of the children of families living in the most affected areas, including the children of martyred soldiers and civilians who have experienced a traumatic or

stressful event. The organizers organize a special program for professional psychologists and social workers involved in this project to teach international experience, including methodical courses on determining the post-traumatic psychological state, the risks of a strong reaction in children related to grief, loss and sadness.

This year "ASAN Volunteers" project expanded its scope of activities by providing services outside the Azerbaijan. So, after the earthquake that occurred in Turkey in February 2023, ASAN Volunteers immediately were sent to Malatya. Youth volunteers have worked in disaster areas and have served thousands of victims and hundreds of vulnerable children. Azerbaijani volunteers unloaded, sorted and distributed food, clothing, medicine and various aids in various locations of the affected regions. They provided great support to the region by distributing water and hot drinks to the victims, delivering aid to the neighbourhoods which were located in different areas and providing other support services.

In addition, Azerbaijani volunteers provided care and psychological support services to hundreds of children in order to minimize the shocks and traumas experienced by children during the disaster. Various games and other types of activities were organized in order to effectively organize children's free time. For example, in one of the children's centers were created special conditions for showing movies and cartoons to children. And should mention that it is the first experience for "ASAN Volunteers" project.

Azerbaijan always wants and supports peace in the region. Such projects are one of the main priorities of the government which helps to people to recover from the serious losses (physical, psychological) of the war. One of the important charactercistics of these projects is that the range of service activities increases every year. So these projects now successfully operates not only in Azerbaijan, but also outside the country and are continuously expanding its activities. Without a doubt I can say that in the future these projects will become a great example for the world community.

Keywords: Azerbaijan, Karabakh, War, Yashat Foundation, ASAN Volunteers.

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JAPANESE RETIREMENT MIGRATION IN THAILAND: EXPECTATIONS ANDEXPERIENCES

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The rationale for this study has two foci: first, to acquire a deeper understanding of the international retirement migration (IRM) through the case of Japanese retirement migration (JRM) to Thailand; second based on empirical data to address the necessity of developing a new analytical framework to study IRM.

The paper to be presented at the International Conference on Social Work and Social Research: Financial Capability and Asset Building for All, Baku, Azerbaijan, 24-25 November 2023, is based on the ongoing field research and tries to show the theoretical and practical value of the studying Japanese retirement migration. It aims to reposition JRM not only within current migration theory developments but what is more vital, within policy practices in the region. The output of academia is no longer confined to a purely intellectual debate but is increasingly part of current policy activity and real managerial practice.

Introduction

It has passed decades since the announcement that we live in the "age of migration" (Castels *et al*., 2013). According to IOM's World Migration Report 2022, the number of international migrants has increased in all UN regions. Specifically, it has risen more in Europe and Asia than in other regions. Asia experienced the most remarkable growth from 2000 to 2020, at 74 percent, around 37 million people in absolute terms. Reflecting on this migration flow, the research on international migration, which focuses on migration flow to Asian countries, is growing. Especially in recent years, the empirical research addressing North-South migration is expanding, and this research sees such flows of people from North to South as an emerging global trend (Husa *et al*., 2014; Toyota *et al*., 2012; Sasiwongsaroj, 2022; Nuntiya *et al*., 2022).

The IOM describes North-South migration as migration towards countries of lower GDP. For example, Nuntiya *et al*. (2022) point out that a growing trend of North-South migration flow is shown because several countries of the South, including Thailand, were listed among the top 20 destinations of international migration in 2019. In such a study on North-South migration, it is a common understanding that the big reason for expanding North-South migration has been

generated by the migration of elderly people from Western countries, so-called 'International Retirement Migration'.

This study focuses on IRM as it is one of the new migration patterns in the emerging global trend of North-South migration. Husa (2014) funds that, in American literature, one finds the term "international retirement migration" as the primary designation for migration across international borders at an advanced age. Also, he suggests that the terms "migration of the elderly" and "retirement migration" can be used mostly interchangeably. This study also follows this definition that means 'IRM' and 'Migration of the elderly' will be used mostly interchangeably.

Also, our study addresses Japanese retirement migration in Thailand as little previous research has been done in this research target and clarifies the characteristics of Japanese retirement migration in terms of the concept so called "amenity-migration" or "lifestyle migration" through the analysis of interview data of Japanese retirement migrants living in Thailand.

Methods

This study employs interview research to collect qualitative data on Japanese international retirement migrants living in Thailand, one of the significant target areas for Japanese retirement migrants. The data collection methods include participant observation and a life history interview, which we carried out from February 2023 to March 2023. We conducted the life history interview with the Japanese retirees in Thailand onsite. The participants include 12 males and one female, aged from 62 to 83 years old. The participants are selected using convenience sampling and snowballing.

Discussion

Our research reveals that IRM today cannot be observed with only an existing framework, 'amenity migration', which means attaining a standard of living they would never reach at home country. Most Japanese retirees in this research base their lives on only pension and they can't access care resource such as nursing home, which is provided to foreign elderly people. While some participants want to continue living in Thailand until they die, most must return to Japan when they need care. No matter how much social participation and integration they appear to have achieved in the host society, they have not secured full membership in 'aging and dying'. In other words, they are not guaranteed to age and die in the host society. In this sense, in a transnational aging society, the focus on the 'phase of aging and dying' of the immigrants will be essential when the research addresses migrants' social adaptation and participation.

Keywords: International migration, transnationalism, transnational aging society, international retirement migration, global care chain.

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CHALLENGES FACED BY AFGHAN REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS IN GERMANY IN 2022-23

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Background

Germany provided a haven for Syrian refugees and now also for Ukranian refugees. Without Germany's support, many refugees would have floundered or perished. Sandwiched in between the influx of Syrian and Ukranian refugees were many asylum-seekers from Afghanistan. They were forced to depart their country quickly for safety after the U.S. withdrawal was completed on August 30, 2021, despite the Taliban's toppling of the Afghan government earlier that month. These Afghan refugees live with a great deal of uncertainty about their futures in Europe. They have a precarious legal status and must learn German quickly before they can qualify for employment. This paper documents other challenges they face as they attempt to make new lives in Europe.

Methods

The data collection took place online from November 2022 to January 2023. The questionnaire was designed in Google Form and distributed with a snowball method to the refugees and asylum seekers from Afghanistan, but now living in Germany. A total of 50 individuals participated in this data collection. The questionnaire consisted of 9 demographic questions, as well as 15 quantitative and 3 qualitative questions.

Results

The majority of the participants in the study felt that Ukrainian refugees had better chances of employment and were better received by the German people. Most respondents found that cultural shocks and trauma from the war deeply affected their everyday lives. Fears about their families still in Afghanistan persist. Finding the services that they need has been challenging, and they feel that Ukrainian refugees are prioritized over them.

For example, in accessing healthcare, language training and housing there are differences in resources available with Afghan refugees having fewer options and support.

Conclusions

Afghan refugees and asylum seekers have faced unique challenges in their adaptation process in Germany. Understanding the human needs of Afghan refugees as compared to other refugees, along with campaigns on equal rights for all immigrants and asylum seekers is recommended. Specific recommendations are given in this oral presentation to assist them in the adaptation process. These recommendations also apply to many countries accepting Afghan refugees and asylum seekers.

Keywords: Refugees, asylum seekers, Afghanistan, Germany, resettlement, survey.

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CAN CHINA ATTRACT THE BEST INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS/TALENT?

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International students are short-term migrants whose stay is defined in host countries and return home countries once they complete their degrees (Brooks & Waters, 2011; Knight & De Wit, 2018; Geeraert *et al*., 2019). While studying abroad, they can learn about new cultures that might not be available in their home countries, enhancing their self-esteem (Yakunina *et al*., 2013). Studying abroad also has a significant role in job markets where a foreign degree holder may avail of better offers in the increasingly globalized markets. The increasingly globalized structure necessitates interaction between societies and international knowledge transfer. According to Yang (2002), participation in cross-border activities in higher education has led to a more incredible application of the internationalization idea. Internationalization is defined as a growth in cross-border operations. Whereas internationalization was once associated with specific international programs and student exchange, it is now a more complicated and ongoing process that includes strategic initiatives and broader implications (Bostrom, 2010). According to Ayoun *et al*. (2010), the internationalization of higher education contains numerous elements, comprising students, faculty, curriculum, research, management support and foreign collaboration.

In the meantime, international students are considered an essential source of income for host countries, impacting the economy and foreign policy (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Huang, 2007). These students often deposit high university fees compared to local students and their living expenses contribute to the local economy (Kreber, 2009). In the future, international students with higher education and professional skills may integrate into the host society and contribute to the economy (Trilokekar, 2015). After graduation, international students are employed in host countries and decide to stay in the host country, referred to as global talent procurement (Trilokekar, 2015; Trilokekar, 2010). Many parents consider international education necessary for their children to gain high-quality education and international experience, which is valuable for employment in multinational organizations (OECD, 2020).

In the last two decades, the mobility of international students has been growing consistently. Compared to 2005, the cross-border flow of international students has doubled globally, numbering 5.6 million in 2018. International students' mobility is derived from critical factors

such as aspiration for better career opportunities, quality education and research institutes, the attraction of foreign universities, government cross-cultural programs and the unavailability of quality educational opportunities in home countries. International education intends to meet the needs of more knowledge-intensive and innovative economies that compel children of the growing middle class to seek educational opportunities abroad. In the contemporary scenario, some factors facilitate international education for students. These include but are not limited to English as a common communication channel, visa processes and access to the internet and media for social connectedness.

The Rise of Internationalization of Higher Education in China

Recently, Chinese education has been transformed into an extensive system due to the progress of the internationalization of higher education (Rui, 2014). In international students' literature, China is a leading country in sending its students abroad for higher education; however, China has emerged as an essential destination for international students across the globe (Ma & Zhao, 2018). According to statistics of the Ministry of Education, PR China, published on April 18, 2019, a total of 492185 international students were enrolled in 2018 from 196 countries, pursuing their studies in Chinese higher education degree-awarding institutes (except Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan) which made China as a top destination for international students in Asia. This increases international students by 3013 (0.62%) compared to the academic session 2017 (MoE, 2020). In 2018, 85062 postgraduate international students were enrolled in various departments, including 25618 PhD students. Furthermore, the number of non-degree international students in this period was 234063. The data further depicts that 63,041 international students (12.81%) received scholarships from the Chinese government and the number of self-funded international students was 429,144 (87.19%).

China's emergence as a global economic and technological powerhouse has triggered a concerted effort to attract the best international students and talent. As the world's most populous nation, with a rich cultural heritage and a rapidly expanding higher education system, China has set its sights on becoming a global hub for education and innovation. The study explores the multifaceted factors contributing to China's efforts to attract international students and talent. One of the principal factors to attract international students and talent is the quality of China's education system. The country has made substantial investments in its universities and research facilities to compete with traditional study destinations and gain international prestige. China's top-tier institutions have gained recognition on the global stage, offering competitive academic programs in various fields. Nevertheless, maintaining and further improving the quality of education is imperative to sustain its appeal to international talent.

Table 1. Number of International Students by Country of Origin

Rank	Country	Number
No.1	South Korea	50,600
No.2	Thailand	28,608
No.3	Pakistan	28,023
No.4	India	23,198
No.5	United States	20,996
No.6	Russia	19,239
No.7	Indonesia	15,050
No.8	Laos	14,645
No.9	Japan	14,230
No.10	Kazakhstan	11,784
No.11	Vietnam	11,299
No.12	Bangladesh	10,735
No.13	France	10,695
No.14	Mongolia	10,158
No.15	Malaysia	9,479

Source: moe.gov.cn (April 18, 2019)

Financial incentives also play a positive role to attract the international talent. The government has introduced a range of scholarships and funding opportunities for international students, making education in China more accessible, especially for those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. These incentives, coupled with the relatively lower cost of living compared to Western countries, create a compelling value proposition for prospective students. Research opportunities and partnerships are another critical component of China's strategy. China has invested heavily in research and development to attract the best talent, fostering an environment conducive to innovation and discovery. Economic opportunities are a driving force in attracting international talent. China's rapid economic growth and the emergence of technology hubs have created high-demand fields such as technology, engineering and business. Offering job opportunities and career advancement prospects is critical to attracting and retaining top international talent. As the world continues to evolve and competition among nations for global

talent intensifies, China's ability to adapt and refine its approach will be crucial in achieving its goal of becoming a leading destination for international education and innovation.

Keywords: International Students in China, talent attraction, internationalization of higher education, student's mobility.

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EXPLORING THE EFFICACY OF BIOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH METHOD IN ENHANCING SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH MIGRANTS: A PATHWAY TO INTEGRATION AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION

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The integration of migrants into host societies remains a complex and vital global challenge. This thesis delves into the use of biographical research as a powerful tool within the field of social work to address the multifaceted issues faced by migrants. Biographical research captures the life stories, experiences and aspirations of migrants, serving as a foundation for informed interventions that foster integration, preserve culture and identity and ultimately contribute to the development of inclusive societies.

The increasing mobility of individuals across borders underscores the importance of effective strategies for supporting migrants' integration and well-being. Biographical research, rooted in qualitative methodologies, offers an innovative approach to comprehending migrants' unique trajectories, challenges and aspirations. By valuing the individual narratives of migrants, social workers can identify the barriers they face and the strengths they possess, thus enabling the tailoring of interventions that best address their needs.

Preserving Identity and Promoting Integration

One of the central challenges for migrants is maintaining their cultural identity while integrating into new societies. Biographical research facilitates this delicate balance by allowing migrants to express their cultural backgrounds, experiences and values. (Banks, 2006) This not only promotes understanding between migrants and the local population but also empowers migrants to preserve and celebrate their heritage. By recognizing the importance of cultural identity, social workers can encourage a more inclusive and harmonious integration process (Rapenko, 2019).

Case Study: Biographical Research in Social Work with Ukrainian Migrants

As an illustrative example, this thesis examines the application of biographical research in social work with migrants from Ukraine. More than 8,000 Ukrainians settled in Azerbaijan. A little

more than half of them came to Azerbaijan after February 24. The legislation allows them to settle in the territory of Azerbaijan for 90 days. This period is automatically extended if they do not leave the country. Through interviews and narrative analysis, social workers delve into the life stories of Ukrainian migrants, uncovering their motivations, challenges and dreams. By doing so, social workers gain insights that guide culturally sensitive interventions, empowering migrants to navigate the intricacies of their new environment and fostering a sense of belonging. (https://www.migration.gov.az/)

Social workers in Azerbaijan play a pivotal role in providing essential assistance and support to refugees and internally displaced persons from Ukraine. Effective aid encompasses not only practical assistance but also an understanding of the cultural, social and psychological intricacies of migrants. The following scientifically substantiated approaches outline how social workers can aid Ukrainian refugees in Azerbaijan:

1. **Needs and Resources Assessment:** Thoroughly assessing the needs and available resources of refugees is crucial in developing individualized support plans. This process ensures that material, medical, educational and psychosocial requirements are addressed effectively.

2. **Information Provision:** Furnishing refugees with information about their rights, available services, employment opportunities and education possibilities is essential. Social workers can serve as intermediaries between refugees and relevant official bodies.

3. **Psychosocial Support:** Addressing trauma and stress resulting from displacement and loss is common among refugees. Social workers can offer psychological support, aid in adapting to the new environment and help develop coping strategies.

4. **Sociocultural Adaptation:** Cultural sensitivity and the consideration of refugees' traditions and values are vital in formulating support programs. Assisting refugees in grasping new sociocultural norms facilitates a more successful adaptation process.

5. **Family Well-being Support:** Ensuring family stability significantly contributes to refugees' adaptation. Social workers can assist families in resolving conflicts, accessing medical care and securing educational opportunities for their children.

6. **Employment and Education:** Facilitating employment opportunities and access to education has a substantial impact on refugees' long-term integration. Social workers can assist in job hunting, resume preparation and educational pursuits.

7. **Building Social Networks:** Facilitating the creation of new social connections within both the refugee and local communities diminishes feelings of isolation and promotes rapid integration.

8. **Partnership with Organizations:** Collaborating with local NGOs, international organizations and governmental agencies enhances coordination and effective distribution of aid (Banks, 2006), (Semenova *et al*., 1994).

Supporting Ukrainian refugees is a multifaceted and intricate process. Effective engagement by social workers with refugees requires not only technical skills but also empathy, cultural sensitivity and the ability to build trusting relationships.

Skills and Knowledge Required for Effective Implementation

Effectively utilizing the biographical research method demands a range of competencies from social workers. These include active listening, empathetic engagement, cultural sensitivity, ethical considerations in research and the ability to collaboratively design interventions with migrants (Schütze, 2007). Furthermore, a solid understanding of research methodologies is essential for accurately collecting and interpreting life stories, thereby shaping meaningful interventions that promote successful integration (Rubilar, 2013).

Future Prospects and Concluding Thoughts

As societies become increasingly diverse, the role of social work in facilitating migrants' integration becomes ever more crucial. The biographical research method stands as an invaluable approach for understanding migrants' journeys and developing informed interventions that promote cultural preservation, enhance well-being and contribute to the fabric of inclusive societies (Burd'e, 2002). It is imperative that social work training and education incorporate the skills necessary for effective implementation of this method, enabling practitioners to bridge the gap between migrants and their host societies (Clarke, 2007).

In conclusion, this thesis asserts that biographical research, when harnessed within the realm of social work, has the potential to significantly contribute to migrants' successful integration, while simultaneously preserving their cultural identities. The examination of the case of Ukrainian migrants exemplifies the method's efficacy. By addressing the nuanced challenges migrants face, social workers pave the way for a more harmonious and inclusive society, underpinned by a deeper understanding of individual life stories.

Keywords: Biographical method, social work, migrants, refugees, individual case history.

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SOCIAL MEDIA MICROAGGRESSION ON CENTRAL ASIAN IMMIGRANTS IN RUSSIA

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In 1991, after the fall of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation had become one of the most important destinations for immigrants from the former Soviet countries. High unemployment and low wages drove millions of former Soviet Union citizens to seek work in Russia (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 2022). Most of these immigrants come from the Caucasus region of Central Asia (Kirgizstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan). According to data from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) (2023), there are 5.99 million foreigners living in the Russian Federation, and Central Asians are the most followed group.
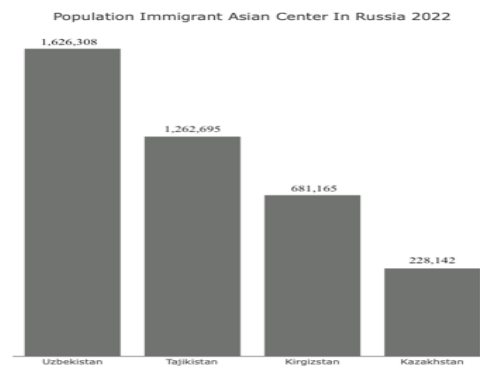
Figure 1. Population Immigrant Asian Center in Russia 2022
Source: (Wikipedia Contributors, 2023)

However, Russian citizens fear that an influx of immigrants will steal their jobs and increase crime and social inequality. The Russian populace does not even treat immigrant workers well (Mirovalev, 2017). In addition, it is exacerbated by their stigmatization, which causes many immigrants to experience discrimination and hate crimes. This study uses Publish Or Perish with the keyword Immigrant Workers from Central Asia in Russia to see the previous research. Then,

from 200 previous studies, we analyzed them through Vos Viewer to identify groups of entities that often appear together in previous research.
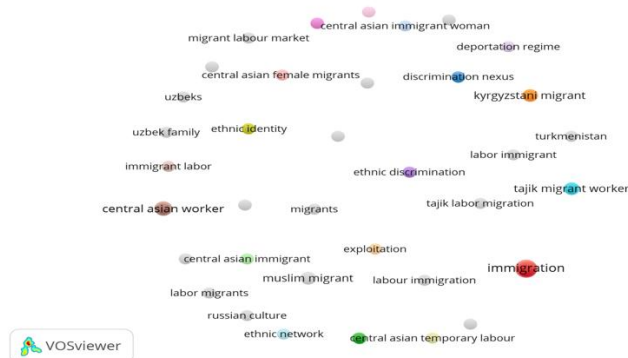
Figure 2. Result Keywords Vosviewer Imigran Asia Tengah
Source: Analysis Vosviewers

Previous research with the keyword immigrant Workers Central Asian in Russia stated that there are many elements that become problems related to Central Asian immigrants in Russia, especially in the clusters that we found, namely ethnic discrimination and discrimination nexus, indicating a cohesive set of values. Then we specify adding one keyword, Discrimination, to Immigrant Workers from Central Asia in Russia from 200 studies taken from Publish Or Perish, then analyzing them through Vosviewer, which describes:
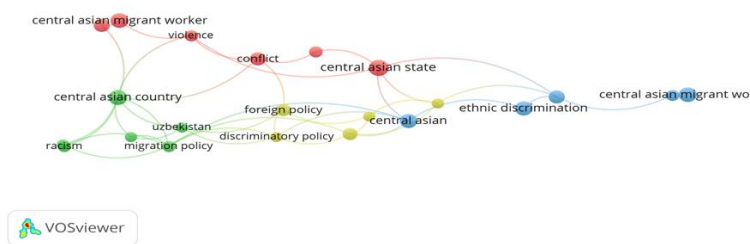
Figure 3. Resut Keywords Discrimination Immigrant Workers Central Asian in Russia
Source: VOS viewer

The presentation of the data that has been presented and obtained through Vosviewer states that the formation of discrimination is getting worse, which can not be controlled, so that from 200 studies, a new cluster was formed, which we found to consist of racism, violence, conflict and ethnic discrimination. Along with that, social media users play a very important role in shaping public opinion about Central Asian immigrants. These social media users harbor feelings of

discomfort, which result in an attitude of racial intolerance towards Central Asian immigrants (Institute For Strategic Dialogue, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic has also brought a new wave of racist hate speech against Central Asian immigrants, which has led to verbal attacks via social media. However, this research will expand our understanding of how the mediocre use of social media contributes to the growth of anti-immigrant and racist sentiments in contemporary society. So we then discuss a methodological approach using social media data, with a focus on users of social media networks.

This paper uses the theory of Racial microaggression, which is explained in the research of Sue D.W (Sue *et al*., 2007) racial microaggression is a conscious and intentional act of insulting (slurring). Racial microaggression is verbal and non-verbal communication that is insensitive and demeans human identity. Then the theory is strengthened by research from Madonna G. Constantine (Constantine, 2007), who found that microsocial aggression has significant implications for the practice of social work humiliation.

Research on racial microaggressions involves a very sensitive approach to understanding and analyzing prejudice and discrimination. This research method uses a study of racial microaggression, namely a qualitative study. Targeting Central Asian immigrants in Online Russian or English.

Racial microaggressions, which are indicators of analysis material and sub-discussion, have three categories and relationships between them, namely:
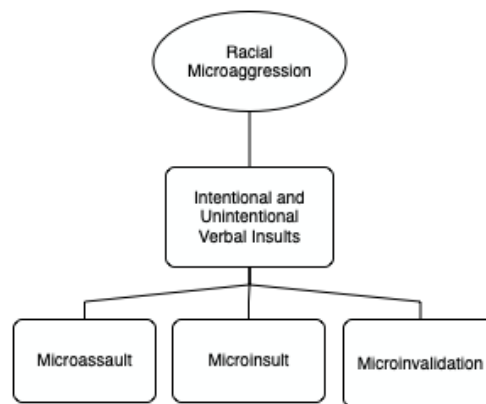
Figure 4. Categories of and Relationship Among Racial Microaggressions

Then this study determines the parameters of Racial microaggressions, which will be discussed in the following discussion:

Table 1. Parameter Racial Microaggressions

Hidden Prejudice	Degrading Language	Troll
Gaslighting	Conspiracy	Passive Aggressive Communication
Rejection	Infiltrating Criticism	Tokenism
Unequal Statements	Backhanded compliments	Hostile Humor

Through the parameters of words, sentences and thoughts that are expressed by race that are published through social media platforms are analyzed by applying sentiment analysis which includes several steps, namely tokenization, feature extraction, sentiment aggregation and visualization using the NVivo application. The analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics to describe the overall communicative pattern in the microaggression racial comments discrimination according to the theory used.

Keywords: Racism, workers, social media, immigrant, Central Asian, microaggression.

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"OUR BLOOD IS NOT CHEAP": A PHOTOVOICE PROJECT ON BEING ARAB IN A RACIALIZED U.S.

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The Arab American community has faced a history of racialization dating back to the late 19th century. The events of 9/11 and the heightened rhetoric of hate during the Trump presidency encouraged anti-Muslim sentiment and increased racial profiling and harassment. This community based participatory research (CBPR) project uses photovoice as a methodology to better understand the lived experiences and narratives of Arab Americans and as a tool for advocacy. The findings from the photo sharing sessions underscore the continued challenge of identity and representation, in (visibility) and pushing back against anti-Arab/Muslim racism. The findings also underscore religion as a protective factor against structural and systemic racism. Overall, the participants of this study demonstrated their community resilience and navigational capital as they survived and thrived in the midst of racializing experiences and microaggressions. Implications of this work include the need for increased consciousness raising about the lived experiences of the Arab American community and opportunities for allyship and advocacy.

Keywords: Photovoice, Arab Americans, Anti-Muslim racism, participatory research, racialization.

REFUGEE OR IDP OR BOTH? COMONNALITY OF THE GRIEF RESOLUTION IN THE CASE OF AZERBAIJAN

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Background

 This paper discusses impact of the forced migration on mental health among refugees and IDPs in Azerbaijan. Refugees and IDPs loose their homes, lands, face psychological devastation as a result of the armed conflict and being repeatedly exposed to different traumatic events and stressors (Shultz *et al*., 2014). This increases risks common mental disorders such as depression, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), generalized anxiety disorder, psychosomatic pathology, addiction, cultural bereavements and attachments issues (Bhugra & Becker, 2005; Comtesse et al., 2021; Mengistu & Manolova, 2019; Shultz, 2014).

This study focuses on impact of the forced migration in Azerbaijan and mental disorders related to the forced migration. So far situation of the refugees and IDPs in Azerbaijan and impact of the force migration was not researched in this filed. Targetgroup of this study are refugees and IDPS from Khojaly, who are forced to resettle twice, loose their homes twice. This specific problem is not studied among people from Khojaly in Azerbaijan either.

Khojaly is a city in Karabach with almost 25000 inhabitants[2]. Between 1980-1990 Khojaly was becoming a new industrial area in Karabakh. Around refugee 400 families (almost 900 inhabitants) refugees from Armenia and Uzbekistan were settled in Khojaly. These inhabitants had to flee again in 1992 from Khojaly as a result of armed conflict. 26 february 1992 Khojaly was attacked and inhabitants had to flee from their homes with bare foot to stay alive in a cold winter night. It took them couple of days to arrive to a safe place. Many of them lost their lives in that night. Couple of families are missing till today.

The purpose of this study is to find out mental effects of forced migration on refugees and IDPs from Khojaly. And whether was an adequate mental help.

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[2] http://xocali-ih.gov.az/az/page/10.html, 29/09/2023

Methodology

Qualitative, case study based on individual talks to investigate impact of armed conflict /forced migration on mental health outcomes of refugees from Armenia, Uzbekistan and IDPS from Karabach. Sample size was 50 people. 10 of them were from Uzbekistan, 10 people from Armenia and 30 from Khojaly. Data collection took place at the beginning of 2021 to august 2023. Initial interviews were 15 to 30 minutes and some were continued in a therapy session. Certain data was collected from different testimonials of the victims of the Khojaly survived tragic night on 26 February 1992.

Findings

Participants with displayed symptoms of complex PTSD, complicated, PGD even cultural bereavement associated with ambiguous loss and low social support. The study reveals that despite complex PTSD, PGD symptoms and cultural bereavement there was not sufficient psychosocial and psycho education was provided to refugees.

Discussion and Conclusions

Refugees and IDPs experience mental health issues. Mental and social support in resolving traumas is important. Integration of the refugees and IDPs into the society is essential and contributes to improve their mental health (Shultz *et al*., 2014). Further study on ways to support this group of refugees and IDPs may contribute to their welfare and can contribute to identify ways to support communities face with similar mental health issues.

Keywords: Refugee, IDP, complicated grief, PTSD, secundary trauma, Karabakh Conflict, cultural breavement, forced migration.

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http://xocali-ih.gov.az/az/page/10.html, 29/08/2023

SECTION IV

Social Policy, Health Care and Education

DECENTRALIZATION IN SOCIAL POLITICS, SOCIAL MUNICIPALITY AND SOCIAL WORK

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Aims of the Study

Social policy aims to establish socio-economic balance among individuals and provide services to meet the needs of disadvantaged individuals such as the poor, disabled, women, children, and the sick. The economic and financial crises of the 1980s, during which welfare state practices were debated and neo-liberal policies were implemented, have allowed various actors to participate in shaping countries' social policy decisions (Kalaycı, Akın, 2021). The decentralization of responsibilities and duties to local governments in determining and implementing social welfare policies in countries has led to assigning social, cultural, educational, health, and social service responsibilities to municipalities, which represent local governance structures in our country. In the present day, municipalities have gained importance in constructing a welfare society, highlighting the concept of social municipality in order to promote social well-being.

Together with social municipality, numerous social service activities are aimed to be swiftly and easily accessible to the public by local governments, aligning with the concept of a social state. However, the lack of uniform criteria for the services of social municipality for each region, province, or district poses a challenge. Therefore, this study aims to explore the impact of localization on social policy and to examine the concepts of social municipality within the perspective of social services.

Methodology

Document analysis is a qualitative research method used to meticulously and systematically analyze the content of written documents (Kıral, 2020). In this study, a qualitative research method, specifically document analysis, was employed to conduct a literature review and systematically examine documents. Existing studies, including books, articles, journals, and master's/doctoral theses, related to social municipality and the localization process of social policies developed between 2008 and 2022 were reviewed. Within the scope of document analysis, studies were examined that specifically addressed the localization process of social policy, particularly the concept of social municipality.

Results

The topics covered in the analyzed documents were discussed within the framework of the concept of social municipality from the perspective of social services. The examined documents encompassed social policy, localization, the evolution of municipal governance, social justice, and the concept of social municipality. Since the purpose of social policy is to improve individuals' living conditions and thus create a welfare society as an imperative of the social state, social service and social policy are complementary concepts. Therefore, the products of social policy are closely related to social municipality.

Conclusion

The historical trajectory of local governance in Turkey reveals three types of municipal governance paradigms. The first is the classical municipal governance paradigm, followed by the socialist municipal governance of the 1970s. Lastly, the current paradigm is referred to as social municipality. Examining municipalities that provide services in accordance with the concept of social municipality reveals that the welfare level of the population residing within these municipalities is higher compared to those served by other municipalities. Disparities in the quality and content of services offered by district municipalities, which are under the same metropolitan municipality and hold the same status, undermine the achievement of societal welfare, social equality, and justice goals. While social services, the social state, social policy, and social municipality constitute an indispensable domain, complexities and legal intricacies have unfortunately hindered their complete reflection in the field. Yet, having a profession like social services, which aims to create a welfare society, operating within local governments, especially large municipalities that embrace the concept of social municipality, would be more beneficial.

Keywords: Social policy, localization, social municipality, social work.

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TOWARDS SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY IN POLICY AND PRACTICE

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The current situation with research in the field of disability in Azerbaijan is limited to occasional situational analysis reports by organizations like UNICEF, WHO and UNDP. The voices of people with disabilities are not presented in the official data. One of the ways to fill the gap is to promote opportunities for people with disabilities to speak up about societal attitudes, barriers, and opportunities for change and to work with health and social care professionals to bring about this change. The EU-funded project " Support to reform the system of rehabilitation of people with disabilities" initiated in March 2022 as a part of the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Population of Azerbaijan (MLSPP) for 2021-2025 aims to transform services for people with disabilities from the current medical rehabilitation system towards the new approach based on social model thinking.

The internal obstacles to the transition to a social model of policy and service provision, through the conceptual lens of the social relational model of disability and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, will be identified as a result of my research among disabled people and service providers. It was the UK disability activist and writer, Mike Oliver who introduced the phrase social model of disability in 1981. The understanding of disability according to social model is that disability is socially created and appears as the systematic exclusion of people with impairment. As a result, the term 'disability' was equalized to social barriers and distinguished from impairment. A social relational perspective further directs attention to the impacts of the social behaviours enacted between the non-disabled and the disabled people in familial relationships, in communal interactions, and in encounters with health, welfare, and education services. As was suggested by Thomas (1999), a social-relational model should also consider the processes that undermine the emotional and psychological wellbeing of disabled people (Haydon–Laurelut, 2009). According to Thomas, one important aspect includes the way disabled people respond emotionally to social exclusion like physical barriers, for example, or feelings of anger and frustration or feeling shame because of social reactions of non-disabled people. This type of emotional disablism leads to internalised oppression.

As is still observed in developing countries that use the medical model framework for interaction with disabled people, when non-disabled people position people with impairment as

'abnormal', they are simultaneously constructing themselves as 'normal' (Price & Shildrick, 2002). However, like the European Union and all its Member States, Azerbaijan is a party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) having ratified the convention in 2009. The transformation of the rehabilitation system for people with disabilities in Azerbaijan, that was initiated by the government, is seeking to advance the right of people with disabilities to independent living and community inclusion articulated in Article 19 of UNCRPD. According to Article 19, people with disabilities should have the opportunity to choose their place of residence, have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance, while community services and facilities should be fully inclusive and responsive to individual needs of people with disabilities. Prioritization of independent living will shift away from the view that people with disabilities are dependent people who need to be looked after, cared for, or pitied because they are disabled. These ideas are, unfortunately, is still in place in Azerbaijan. As a result of these misconceptions, disabled people are left permanently dependent upon 'expert' others to solve their problems for them within a limiting able-bodied social and physical environment (Finkelstein, 1984). Such disabling systems, where rehabilitation workers persuade disabled people into accepting that the present able-bodied world is the only world that everybody should fit in, are outdated and unacceptable.

On the contrary, the fundamental goal of independent living is empowerment rather than "care". It is about choice by people with disabilities themselves and it respects each person's understanding of what independence means to them. Living independently does not mean living alone or in isolation. Rather, it means exercising freedom of choice and control over decisions affecting one's life on an equal basis with others (UNHC report, 2014). The tendency towards independent living systems start with the articulation by disabled people that they must become directly involved in setting up, staffing and running their own services at mezzo and macro level. As stated in the annual report of United Nations High Commissioner (2014), persons with disabilities and their representative organizations should be actively involved in the implementation of article 19, including in the development and implementation of legislation, policies and programmes, as stipulated in article 4, paragraph 3, of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Generally, my plan is to work on a qualitative research project here in Azerbaijan, as a key expert of above mentioned project and a part-time doctoral student of the University of Malta which will help to analyse our current situation in order to get a better understanding of which aspects in the process of inclusion of people with disabilities should be facilitated by the government, society, and people with disabilities themselves to stimulate the conscious choice

towards the social model approach at micro, mezzo, and macro levels within the country and, eventually, the wider region. I have decided to use action research as the methodological approach to my doctoral study since it aims to simultaneously investigate and solve an issue. The research will start with data generation through focus groups and interviews with services providers – health and social care professionals and people with disabilities to explore their views on disability and independent living in connection to the environment. The data will identify both environmental obstacles as well as attitudinal ones, including internalized societal attitudes among disabled people as well as service providers as an illustration of social and cultural construction of disability. The project experience points to the reality where the main obstacle to the transition to social model policies and practice is medical model based thinking and attitudes forming the mindset through which the transition is associated with a number of fears, such as the fear of medical doctors that they will not be needed in rehabilitation system within the social model practice for example.

The findings of disability experienced at micro, mezzo and macro levels, through analysis of several cases, will then transit to the next stage of the research which is the selection of the intervention that will take an action towards mindset and practical changes. Together with service providers which may include psychologists, social workers, occupational therapists or others, I will identify group activities through which the facilitation of mindset change will take place. After listening to the perspective of people with disabilities, engaged service providers will start the process of questioning their own limitations in the professional role towards dismantling barriers for people with disabilities. This will become the first step in the direction of the much-needed change. Furthermore, as the next step, some groupwork interventions will be applied to empower people with disabilities by inviting them to look at social and cultural nature of visible and invisible barriers they deal with on a daily basis. Finally, after the intervention phase of the research is completed, another series of focus groups and interviews will be organized to collect data and analyse the impact f the intervention.

It is expected that, as a result of this action research, the collaborative team of service providers will switch from the "person-fixing" to "context-changing" paradigm, while people with disabilities will become more confident with their own advocacy strategies promoting freedom of choice and articulation of will for all people with disabilities in the country.

Keywords: Social model, disability, inclusion, mindset change.

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PROBLEMS OF SOCIAL WORK ORGANIZATION WITH PEOPLE IN NEED OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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Organizing effective social work for individuals in need of social services is a complex endeavor that often faces various challenges. These challenges encompass issues related to resource allocation, access to services, coordination among different stakeholders, and the evolving nature of societal needs.

For instance, constraints in resources can impede the delivery of comprehensive aid to individuals requiring assistance, resulting in the need for prioritization and the possibility of coverage gaps (Smith & Sumarokov, 2016). Moreover, ensuring fair access to services poses a difficulty, given that marginalized or distant communities might encounter challenges in accessing the available support (Naganathan & Lazar, 2020). The coordination of endeavors among governmental entities, non-profit groups, and local services can be complex, potentially leading to duplicated endeavors or unaddressed requirements (Karr & Cook, 2018).

"The relevance of the article's topic is connected to the necessity of organizing social work that aligns with modern requirements for individuals in need of social services. It is known that the scarcity of jobs and the low rate of employment strongly affect people's lives; their material living conditions and social well-being do not reach a satisfactory level. To provide for their families, heads of households flock to big cities in search of employment, depleting the labor force; this strains the psychological situation within families, leading to an increase in divorces. In certain cases, children become involved in labor, diverting them from education. The lack of security sometimes leads to immoral lifestyles among women. The number of people in debt to banks is on the rise, and due to their inability to repay debts, the rates of suicides, criminal cases, and overall criminality increase. This is also reflected in the expanding prevalence of arranged marriages (Machulskaya, 2019).

Issues related to the organization of social work for individuals in need of social services

In our modern era, it is crucial to differentiate the category of individuals requiring social services within the societal framework. Existing legislation correlates the necessity for social services with the challenging life circumstances faced by these individuals. According to the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated December 30, 2011, titled "On Social Services," social

services are defined as assistance provided to citizens who face obstacles in their life activities and are unable to overcome them independently. This particular circumstance is labeled as difficult living conditions according to the legal framework. The legal definition identifies difficult living conditions as the foundation for offering an individual (or family) access to social services, addressing impediments to life activities that cannot be resolved autonomously. According to the law, the presence of minors in neglect or requiring social services indicates their exposure to challenging life circumstances. In literature, challenging life conditions are characterized as social instability, encompassing crises, stress-inducing, extreme, uncertain, and acute situations.

At the same time, the Law "On Social Work" characterizes the social alienation (non-compliance) and social deprivation (deprivation) of a person as difficult living conditions. Therefore, in this law, concepts such as social alienation (incompatibility) and social deprivation (deprivation) are used and their legal definitions are given. Therefore, according to article 1 of the law, social alienation (incompatibility) is the loss of the ability of the person (family) to adapt to the social environment, and social deprivation (deprivation) is the restriction of the ability of the person (family) to act independently. meeting and/or deprivation of basic life needs. As can be seen, the minors who need social services in families living under conditions of social alienation (incompatibility) and social deprivation (deprivation) are considered to be in a difficult life situation. Minors act like persons in child status.

As a result of the conducted research, people in need of social services can be understood as persons whose life or health is threatened due to neglect or abandonment, or who are in conditions that do not meet the requirements for upbringing or maintenance, or who commit legal violations. As can be seen from this concept, a person's need for social services is characterized by the following signs: neglect; loneliness; being brought up or kept in conditions that do not meet the requirements; committing legal violations.

It's important to highlight that the group encompassing individuals requiring social services comprises both minors, signifying children, and individuals who are 18 years of age or older.

The problems encountered by people in need of social services in the Republic of Azerbaijan can be classified as follows:

Lack of accommodation. We believe that in this regard, the network of "Mazun evi" Social Institution for graduates of state children's institutions deprived of parental care should be increased.

Being out of education and not having a certain profession. We believe that the function of determining that mechanism, preventing such problems from arising or eliminating problems that have already arisen, controlling orphans, children whose families are in a difficult social

situation and those who avoid education for other reasons, and comprehensive management and coordination of affairs from a single center is the function of the Ministry of Education. - institutionalization and transfer to the Department of Child Protection (hereinafter the Department) would be appropriate. The department is responsible for identifying school-aged children who are engaged in labor activities while avoiding education or are exploited by their parents and other persons, and when such cases are discovered, to raise the issue of bringing the employer who exploits child labor illegally to the responsibility provided for in the legislation, or about it should have the authority to provide information to the State Labor Inspection Service, as well as to investigate the social situation of the families of those children and to provide assistance in providing the types of social security provided by legislation (for example, targeted state social assistance, unemployment benefit, etc.) to families in a really difficult social situation. At the same time, it would be appropriate to make proposals for changes to the legislation regarding the administrative responsibility of parents who distract their children from compulsory education without a valid reason.

Low amount of payments to people in need of social services. We believe that benefits should be paid to people who need social services based on the principle of individual approach and targeting, depending on the family's financial situation.

Neglect refers to the lack of control over the behavior of individuals as a result of the parents or other legal representatives not fulfilling or improperly fulfilling the duty to educate or maintain. Desolation should be understood as the absence of a certain residence or place to stay. The indication of being reared or kept in substandard conditions is mainly related to minors. This mainly includes children living in incomplete families.

Among the persons in need of social services, children, mainly children exposed to street life ("street children") are specially distinguished. The reasons why street children go to the street or live on the street can be classified according to the following factors: 1. Socio-economic factor - poverty, unemployment. 2. The "cultural" structure of the family - child labor as a continuation of the external structure. 3. Disintegration of the family - divorce, death of parents. 4. Exploitation - economic exploitation of the child by the family. 5. Family problems - violence, rejection, conflict, etc. 6. A way to get rid of the demands of hard work in the family. 7. Parents' use of alcohol and drugs. 8. The desire of children living in social institutions to escape from the institution. 9. Street freedom for children - the charm of street life. Sometimes children and teenagers think that life on the street is more interesting, that there is freedom, freedom, that they will express themselves better there, they will be better provided for. At the same time, a sharp increase in migration processes and migration from regions to big cities can also be attributed to this.

Conclusion

It would be reasonable to implement the suggestions regarding the involvement of people in need of social services in the self-employment program:

1. We suggest that in order to systematically implement social work with people in need of social services in the country, a manual should be developed that includes the wide application of the case management method.

2. Within the framework of the Self-Employment Program, initiatives are being undertaken to provide incentives for tax and social payments over a period of 2 years to small business owners who have established their own businesses, with the aim of enhancing the sustainability within the competitive business environment. Furthermore, educational measures related to tax and social payments are being organized specifically for the mentioned category, in addition to the implementation of measures to enhance competitiveness.

3. The self-employment program serves as an active employment initiative aimed at transitioning individuals from a state of dependency to self-sufficiency, motivating them to establish their own independent sources of income. It is crucial to refine the standards that dictate eligibility for participation in the self-employment program, while also reinforcing the software infrastructure governing application procedures and the registration of program applicants. These individuals typically lack formal education or have discontinued their schooling prematurely, often possessing a significantly low level of educational attainment.

Keywords: Social work organization, social services, vulnerable individuals, advocacy, welfare.

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THE MAIN DIRECTIONS OF DEVELOPING NON-GOVERNMENTAL SOCIAL SERVICES SECTOR IN RUSSIA

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Introduction

The development of the non-profit sector of social services, including the involvement of NGOs in the field of social work, in the face of social challenges, is one of the key research issues. The researchers are currently focused on the analysis of the main factors under the influence of which the public's attitude to the non-profit sector of social services is formed and its development takes place. The non-governmental sector of social services develops as response to the needs of vulnerable social groups, that could not be satisfied by public social institutions.

Research methods

The main research methods were expert interviews conducted with heads and specialists of both non-governmental and state organizations working in the system of social services (N=35). In addition, an analysis of the literature and an analysis of empirical data on the development of the non-state sector of social services in Russia was carried out.

Research results

The institutional core of the non-profit sector is traditionally formed by NGOs and voluntary associations, the distinguishing characteristic of which is the lack of focus on making a profit. However, at present, there are prospects for the participation of NGOs in social and entrepreneurial activities, which may have different vectors (Smirnov, 2021). On the one hand, NGOs could claim and even move to the status of a social enterprise and operate in the field of social services in accordance with this status. Most often, non-profit organizations begin to develop entrepreneurial activities as an income-generating activity, the results of which are directed to achieve social goals. At the same time, the expansion of the non-profit sector of social services occurs not only due to the emergence of new institutions, but is determined by the social conditions in which NGOs operate. In particular, government support, including financial support, contributes to the development of non-governmental social services sector. The issues of providing income, overcoming the financial vulnerability of NGOs, achieving financial sustainability are the focus of a number of studies. The sustainability of NGOs is an indicator of their viability (Crotty & Ljubownikow, 2020). The ability of organizations to diversify income sources in order to predict

and overcome financial vulnerability is a condition for its stability, and therefore largely determines the efficiency of organizations.

The presence of multiple funding streams and a certain combination of earned income, government contracts, grants, and private donations and raised funds create conditions under which NGOs could stabilize the financial situation of the organization and thereby reduce the risk of financial crises or interruptions in funding. Grants are one of the main sources of financial support for NGOs, but at the same time, grant dependence is a risk factor for the financial well-being of NGOs (Starshinova & Borodkina, 2022).

In most countries, including Russia, there is a clear relationship between federal and local funding and the size of non-profit sectors, and vice versa, which confirms the theory of the interdependence of these factors (Bae& Sohn, 2018). At the same time, it should be noted that Russian experts assess the impact of state funding on the non-profit sector of social services ambiguously. Permanent public funding can gradually crowd out other sources of income, but it can also attract various financial flows, as organizations seek to intensify their efforts and diversify their sources of income in order to maintain a budget source, including by increasing their authority and recognition.

The activities of NCOs are influenced by the level of integration with state social service institutions; the frequency of cooperation between NPO specialists and government agencies can be especially important to improve the organizational planning and performance of these organizations. Network interaction has an impact on the likelihood of an increase in the number of recipients of NGO services, recognition and increased confidence of potential donors and volunteers, and opportunities for interaction with other participants in the social services market. A significant factor influencing the development of the non-profit sector is public trust, which largely affects the willingness of citizens to receive NGO services and it is a strong predictor of donations to charitable purposes.

An analysis of the structure of the non-governmental sector demonstrates that organizations keep citizens informed about the current situation. About 70% of Russian citizens demonstrate the highest level of awareness about NGOs, that strengthens confidence in the effectiveness of non-profit organizations. At the same time the special attention should be paid on the risks of NGOs' activities to the quality of social services. A feature of the development of the sector as a whole and in the separate segments is the pronounced uneven distribution of organizations across regions of countries and territorial entities (Arkhipova *et al*., 2023; Arkhipova & Borodkina, 2022). Most NGOs are in the central regions in megacities and large cities; a quarter of all Russian non-profit organizations are located in Moscow, the Moscow Region and St. Petersburg, the Leningrad

Region. The high rates of identification of NGOs in outlying regions, such as the Far East and North Caucasus regions, may be explained by the fact that the participation of citizens in their activities is rather a way of employment, and not just the motivation and willingness of citizens to participate in solving the social problems.

Conclusion

The research data show that over the past 20–25 years, a non-profit sector has developed in Russia, which has its own infrastructure, rules of existence, ways of interacting with Russian citizens and government bodies, having reached a fairly high level of development (Benevolenski & Toepler, 2017; Bindman, 2017). Most experts participating in the study admit that the state, while providing support to socially oriented NGOs, simultaneously strengthens control over their activities, this is also confirmed by the experts participating in the study. The consequences of strengthening control measures on the part of the state hinder the initiatives of NGOs and their ability to realize the innovations in working with citizens. The experts also believe that state control leads to a decrease in the independence of NGOs. This process has a negative impact not only on the development of the non-government sector, but also on the social policy. The emerging model of relations between the state and non-government sector, with an emphasis on directive methods of regional governments, reduces NGO resources. The citizens of various regions recognize that the greatest benefit to people and society is provided by non-government organizations that help people in difficult life situations. One of the distinguishing features of the current state of interactions between Russian citizens and NGOs, which determine the public attitude towards the activities of the third sector, is not yet high enough level of trust.

Despite the high level of development of the Russian non-profit sector of social services, NGOs will have to go through the path of further building up human and social capital by organizations, as a result of which there should be expanding activities, changing organizational culture, and increasing professional staff competencies in non-governmental sector. The follow changes in the social environment for the functioning of the non-profit sector are also important: development of legislation, support of charity culture, formation of partnerships not only with the state, but also with business.

Keywords: Social services, NGOs, trust, non-profit sector, social legislation, Russian citizens.

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DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN FORMAL, INFORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION: A THEORETICAL APPROACH

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The purpose of this theoretical approach regarding the use and impact of digital technologies on informal, formal and non-formal education is to underline the importance of comprehensive research in the decision making process. With the punctual event of closing schools between March 2020 and February 2021 a population of 1.6 billion students (app. 95% of the school population of the Globe) no longer benefited from a formal education at normal parameters for the societies in which they lived. In post-pandemic studies, several negative effects on K-12, teachers and families from marginalized communities/ vulnerable communities have been listed: (Vanderlinde, 2015). Existing socio-economic and gender inequalities have increased; (Anderson, 2011). Although most countries adopted distance education/ online school, communities that did not have access to resources and infrastructure implicitly did not benefit from information; (Bell, 1973). The poor results in the evaluations also affected the general condition of the children and considerably reduced their chances of having access to jobs (students in the final years); (Bonal & González, 2020). For some students, the closing of schools also meant the loss of the right to receive a hot meal, and for some of them this meal represented the only possibility to feed themselves; (Blau & Shamir-Inbal, 2017) Increasing illiteracy and school dropout rates; (Careaga-Butter *et al*., 2020). In poor communities, the existing social problems were accentuated: school dropout, domestic violence.

Nevertheless, we all accept the benefits of digital technologies in our lives and notice the importance of being up-to-date in this technology field in order to prevent social-exclusion. At informal and non-formal level digital technologies brought changes in communication styles, parenting styles and created opportunities for social innovation, improving social relations (e.g. teachers – families; families – K-12).

The integration of technologies in formal education practically depends both on the technical capacity but especially on the relationships between the social actors involved, on their own cultural values, beliefs, motivations and determinations. In this context, in order to have also a critical approach, we must know the daily routine that these social actors have and how they relate to digital technologies from the comfort of their own homes, whether or not they have integrated digital technologies in non-formal education and informal, thus also touching on some changes

that occur when the two previously stated plans (formal and personal context) coincide, as was the case with the online school period.

The pandemic period and the decision to close schools amplified unequal access to education. The phenomenon of the digital divide can occur firstly because of unequal access to educational resources and technologies, secondly because of the different level of skills and competences in the use of digital technologies and thirdly as a manifestation of inequalities accumulated from the combination of the manifestation of the previously mentioned causes .

The problems that exist in society reflect on education and education identifies mechanisms to react in order to progress. During the pandemic, the educational process was affected by numerous obstacles that highlighted the limits of the administrative system for ensuring the universal right to education. Social inequality, the digital divide, social injustice were augmented during the pandemic and the educational system had to identify unique and innovative measures to solve these problems. The transfer to families and teachers of the responsibility of providing resources (technical, empathic, ethical, security) for the continuation of studies had different reverberations on these categories of social actors. We consider the impact of the way the didactic act was carried out (throughout informal and formal education) during the pandemic to influence the option of integrating digital technologies in post-pandemic education. This paper will present also data on how TAM (Technology Acceptance Model) model can offer a prediction on the use of digital technologies in formal education.

The paper presents also critical opinions expressed by researchers who question the quality of the content of information used as teaching material and also the concerns about the security of data stored in the digital environment and the invasion of private space.

Education faces major challenges when it comes to the impact of the use of digital technologies: (Vanderlinde, 2015) must capitalize on digital innovations and improve educational policies, by supporting teachers in terms of educational resources, improvements, investments and effective management plans in all schools, adapting the school curriculum to the demands of society in transformation; (Anderson, 2011) must ensure a suitable environment for the improvement of students' digital skills and also family's digital skills, taking into account the need for their adaptation in a society undergoing an accelerated digitization process.

Keywords: Digital technologies, critical approach, digital parenting, social integration.

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SOCIETY'S COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY TO SENIORS[1]

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In our society, many changes occur over time in various areas of life. From a demographic point of view, we notice a change in the structure of the population, which is also caused by developments in medicine, innovative treatment procedures and the achievement of higher quality in social services. Prevention, educational activities, a rational diet and a healthy lifestyle also contribute to a large extent. However, this fact is also significantly helped by the trend of reducing the birth rate and establishing fewer families, as well as increasing the educational level of potential mothers. The prognosis is not favorable because we are not adequately prepared for the demographic development. This fact applies not only to the Slovak Republic, but also to neighboring countries. In 2050, according to Štěpánková *et al*. (2014) the share of seniors among our neighbors in the Czech Republic is twice as high as in 2000. The Czech Republic is thus ranked among the countries with the fastest aging population. Zvěřová (2022) states in her publication that according to the UN report from 2019, the number of elderly people in the world will probably reach almost 12% in 2030 and up to 16% in 2050. The aging trend is expected to continue and in 2100, up to 23% of the world's population will be over 65 years old. Similarly, Hogenová (2020) in her Comparative Analysis draws attention to the fact that in the countries of the European Union the share of people of productive age is decreasing and the number of people of retirement age is increasing. The consequence of population aging in the European Union will be very significant in the coming years. The low birth rate and higher life expectancy are changing the shape of the age pyramid of the European Union.

A large number of publications and articles have already been written about aging and seniors. We are convinced that it is necessary to pay special attention to seniors, which is why we also address them in our abstract. Aging is usually referred to as a period with a whole complex of accumulating problems, be it health, social, financial, economic, environmental and many others. It is therefore essential that we start approaching the target group of seniors responsibly and solve their complex problems rationally and efficiently. As Klevetová (2017) states, we are at the

beginning of the third millennium and we have the opportunity to reevaluate the way of life and understanding of old age.

Collective responsibility towards the elderly means the duty and commitment of care, respect and social protection towards the elderly population in our society. This responsibility is based on the recognition that seniors have rich experience and contribution to society, but may find themselves in a vulnerable situation in terms of impaired health, physical limitation, psychological problems, absent social security and other factors.

Collective responsibility towards seniors includes several aspects:

a) health care - ensuring that seniors have trouble-free access to health care and an adequate course of treatment that helps maintain the good health and life of seniors (medicines, medical stays – spas, rehabilitation, therapy, etc.),

b) social services - provision of social services for seniors in a home environment or in a social service facility,

c) membership in interest organizations - provision of social support through membership in the Union of Pensioners of Slovakia/pensioners' clubs for the purpose of meetings and the possibility of gaining new contacts and social interaction, which contributes to their social and emotional well-being,

d) economic security - financial stability in the form of the payment of adequate pensions, so that they do not feel threatened by poverty in difficult economic periods and can ensure their basic life needs (purchase of medicines, vitamins, food, fruit, vegetables, payment of rent for housing, etc.), so that they could live in dignified conditions,

e) lifelong education - provision of opportunities for continuous education and development of new knowledge, abilities and skills, thereby maintaining the cognitive activity and self-confidence of older persons, for example universities of the third age, various courses, seminars, etc.,

f) protection against violence and discrimination - ensuring protection against abuse, discrimination and violence and assuring seniors that they have the opportunity to report any inappropriate or unethical approach towards them,

g) barrier-free environment - creation of public spaces and institutions that are accessible, barrier-free and friendly to the elderly and fully meet their needs,

h) consideration of needs - in the framework of policy making and decisions, accept the needs and opinions of seniors so that their opinion is perceived and taken into account,

i) family and community care - support of families and communities in caring for their elderly members,

j)   support of active aging - support of social interactions, community and volunteer activities and programs to involve seniors in society,

k) climate change and environmental science - elimination of the consequences of climate change, for which seniors are not prepared due to their old age,

l) education - spreading awareness about the importance of older people and their contribution to society in order to mitigate negative stereotypes and prejudices against seniors and eliminate irrational ageism.

The most important aspects include health care, because various health problems appear in seniors as they get older and with them comes the need for help from another physical person in taking care of themselves and their own household, that is, social services and social protection, and a third aspect that is currently very relevant is climate change and environmental science, which affects the entire global society, but seniors somewhat more intensively. Due to the high outside temperatures, we notice overheated panel houses in which seniors live and due to low incomes, do not have enough funds to ensure their cooling with air conditioning. Elderly people are more susceptible to the effects of extreme heat and cold because they do not have sufficient thermoregulation. High temperatures can cause health complications such as heat stroke, overheating, dehydration and body collapse. In addition, such extreme conditions can aggravate already existing health problems, such as respiratory diseases or heart diseases. Seniors generally have a problem with adapting to new, changed conditions and adaptation failures can often occur. It is therefore essential that we help them in such stressful situations.

Collective responsibility towards seniors is based on basic values such as solidarity, respect for people's experience and dignity and protection of the most vulnerable members of our society. It is a company-wide effort that creates a better environment for everyone. In the long term, creating and maintaining this collective responsibility requires the efforts of governments, organizations, communities and individuals. It is important to realize that taking care of the elderly is not only our moral duty, but also an investment in a sustainable and healthy social environment.

Keywords: Seniors, collective responsibility, climate change, environmental studies, health, social services, social protection.

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LEVERAGING THE POWER OF STORYTELLING: EMPOWERING SOCIAL WORKER COMPETENCE IN TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE SERVICE

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Storytelling is a recognized and powerful educational and intervention tool in social work practice (Riessman, 2008; Barraclough *et al.*, 2019; Morgan, 2019; Spector-Mersel, 2010). Using picture books as a means to develop narrative literacy and utilize narrative techniques is an innovative way to nurture and empower social workers.

This presentation reviews and reflects on a participatory action research project that has run from April 2021 to the present. The author serves as a trainer, working with participants to develop and design the various forms of learning and practice. The participants in the project are social workers from three Chinese nongovernmental organizations who are mainly involved in protection and intervention for high-risk, abused children and families. Child protection is a newly developed service area that requires social workers to have a high level of competencies including professional judgment, multidisciplinary coordination strategies and knowledge and skills in trauma-informed care. Young social workers in their early thirties faced significant challenges in practice, particularly in terms of how to demonstrate their professional skills and confidence.

The "Picture Book" training workshop introduced participants to picture book reading, co-reflection, practice, and story creation. The social workers develop great interest in these activities. Their senses of perception are awakened, their spirit of inquiry is stimulated and a sense of hope is created through the habitual practice of reading. When encouraged to incorporate the techniques into self-healing and case or group interventions, they demonstrated commitment and competence in transferring their understanding.

The presentation will focus on introducing the underlying philosophy of the program with illustrations of the program content and the educational methods chosen. Two examples of trauma stories created by social workers will be presented and how they develop a sense of narrative and transfer of learning into self-development and professional practice will be discussed.

Keywords: trauma-informed service, innovative pedagogy, professional competence.

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SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) stands as a pivotal instrument in the human rights landscape of Europe. Established in 1950, its primary focus has been on safeguarding civil and political rights. However, the intricate relationship between these rights and the broader spectrum of social and economic rights has been a subject of evolving interpretation and understanding. This paper delves into this evolution, examining the nuanced ways in which the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has expanded the scope of the ECHR to indirectly encompass certain facets of social and economic rights.

While the ECHR does not explicitly enumerate social and economic rights, a closer look reveals that its provisions have been interpreted in ways that touch upon these rights. For instance, the prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment, as enshrined in Article 3, has been extended by the ECtHR to cases of extreme poverty or subpar living conditions, suggesting that severe deprivation can, in certain contexts, be equated with inhuman treatment. Similarly, the right to respect for private and family life under Article 8 has been invoked in cases of forced evictions, indirectly acknowledging the right to adequate housing.

Furthermore, the interconnectedness of civil, political, and socio-economic rights is evident in the ECtHR's jurisprudence. Rights such as the right to a fair trial and freedom of assembly have been linked to property and labor rights, respectively, emphasizing the intertwined nature of these rights. This interconnectedness underscores the indivisibility of human rights, challenging the traditional bifurcation between civil-political and socio-economic rights.

Complementing the ECHR is the Revised European Social Charter of 1996, which provides a more explicit framework for the protection of socio-economic rights in Europe. The synergy between these two instruments offers a holistic approach to human rights protection in Europe, ensuring that individuals enjoy a comprehensive range of rights.

In conclusion, this paper underscores the dynamic nature of human rights interpretation within the European context. Through a detailed examination of the ECHR and the jurisprudence of the ECtHR, it highlights the growing recognition of the importance of social and economic rights and their inextricable link to civil and political rights.

Introduction

The European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) is a testament to Europe's commitment to safeguarding the fundamental rights and freedoms of its citizens. Established in the aftermath of World War II, the ECHR was conceived as a bulwark against the atrocities and human rights abuses that had scarred the continent. Its primary focus was on civil and political rights, reflecting the immediate concerns of the post-war era. However, as the decades have unfolded, the understanding and interpretation of human rights have evolved, leading to a broader appreciation of the spectrum of rights that underpin human dignity. This paper seeks to explore this evolution, particularly the nuanced ways in which the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) has expanded the scope of the ECHR to indirectly encompass certain facets of social and economic rights.

To fully grasp the significance of the ECHR's focus on civil and political rights, one must first understand the historical context in which it was birthed. The horrors of World War II, marked by gross human rights violations, including genocide, forced labor and torture, underscored the urgent need for a robust mechanism to protect fundamental freedoms. The ECHR was Europe's response to this challenge. Drafted under the auspices of the Council of Europe, the Convention sought to ensure that the dark days of the war would never be revisited.

The primary focus of the ECHR on civil and political rights was a reflection of the immediate post-war concerns. Rights such as the right to life, prohibition of torture and the right to a fair trial were seen as essential bulwarks against the kind of state-sponsored oppression that had characterized the war years. However, while the ECHR was groundbreaking in many respects, it was also a product of its time. The emphasis on civil and political rights, to the exclusion of social and economic rights, was indicative of the prevailing understanding of human rights in the mid-20th century.

Keywords: European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), social and economic rights, civil and political rights.

SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION AFTER THE 6TH FEBRUARY 2023 EARTHQUAKES IN TURKEY: FIELD OBSERVATIONS AND NOTES FROM THE EARTHQUAKE ZONE

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Social work is an essential support system during challenging times (including natural disasters, economic declines, health epidemics, wars and personal struggles) faced by both individuals and society as a whole. In such times, social workers play a vital role by providing prompt emergency aid in the field. Hence, they coordinate the provision of food, shelter and health services. However, social workers are not exclusively limited to emergency interventions. They also offer guidance for coping with the psychosocial impact of crises and help to prevent issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder. During times of crisis, social workers play an essential role in constructing community resilience and fostering learning from experiences. Additionally, they contribute to the successful management of resources and assist in restoring social welfare. Social work addresses the underlying reasons for crises and develops techniques to enhance the resilience of societies. Consequently, social work provides a diverse and comprehensive approach to addressing crises, while also contributing to the empowerment of both individuals and communities. On the other hand, social workers working in the field also have different needs, particularly in terms of protecting workers' rights and supporting psychological resilience. Therefore, in addition to social work interventions in times of disaster or crisis, support services for social workers are crucial.

Regarding these issues, two field visits were conducted, following the earthquakes on the 6th February 2023, where observations were made regarding social workers and social work interventions in the earthquake zone. As it is commonly acknowledged, on the 6th February 2023, Türkiye experienced two earthquakes measuring 7.7 and 7.6 in magnitude, with the epicenters located in Kahramanmaraş, impacting a total of 10 provinces including Kahramanmaraş, Malatya, Adıyaman, Hatay, Kilis, Adana, Şanlıurfa, Osmaniye, Gaziantep and Diyarbakır. The earthquakes significantly impacted a population of approximately 13-14 million people residing in these provinces. From the outset of the earthquake, social workers participated psychosocial support services in the field.

First, it was found that many social workers were young and freshly graduated from universities. While possessing theoretical knowledge, they lacked practical experience. Also, there was inadequate coordination in providing social work interventions and psychosocial support services, leading to challenges in crisis management. As it is well known social workers were particularly vulnerable to secondary trauma. In addition, their workload affected their ability to intervene and continue with a case. This study will explore various issues relating to social work intervention in this kind of crisis in depth.

During a crisis, it is crucial to identify the support and resources required for social workers. These people should receive training and counselling in crisis management, post-traumatic support, pre-crisis preparation and post-crisis recovery. Besides, support groups and psychological counselling services should be available to reduce the psychosocial burden on social workers during crisis processes. Thus, social workers can more effectively respond to the needs of society and individuals during times of crisis. Such professional support and resources can help social workers meet the needs of societies and individuals in crisis. These findings establish an imperative guide for social workers to improve their crisis intervention. However, attending to their own needs can enhance the success of crisis intervention.

Keywords: Social work, social workers, crisis intervention, earthquakes, Turkiye.

SOCIAL CAPITAL, SELF-ESTEEM AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS AMONG ARAB, JEWISH, SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS STUDENTS STUDYING AT PRIVATIZED AND STATE SCHOOLS

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Privatization processes in the education system are evident in learning gaps and eligibility for a matriculation certificate between the center and the periphery, between Jews and Arabs, and between the rich and the poor They are also reflected in higher education, for instance, through opening off-budget programs (Yogev *et al*., 2015). More broadly, they are rooted in the concept that education is a product, tradable and subject to the forces and rules of the free market (Dagan-Buzaglo, 2016). These processes are part of a broader phenomenon with the strengthening of neoliberal ideologies within which the state's responsibility for the provision of social services is eroded, which is reflected, for example, in cuts in public funding, in the transfer of services to private bodies and in the application of the private market rules of conduct to social services (Ichilov, 2012).

In modern society, education is a lever for social leadership. Economists, sociologists, political science researchers, educators and the general public are in widespread agreement regarding the link between academic education and integration into the labor market. The trends of the higher education system expansion that have occurred in recent decades in many countries, including Israel, are directed at increasing access to academic education, especially among disadvantaged populations (Gamoran *et al*., 2007). In practice, education has become stronger as a mechanism of exclusion, and inequality in access to academic education remains the same (Feniger et al., 2016; Shavit *et al*., 2019.)

Children from financially sound families enjoy a higher standard of living and their parents are willing to invest in their education. Their cultural capital strengthens their educational aspirations (Bourdieu, 1977) and their parents are educated role models for them (Goldthorpe & Breen, 1997). Their parents are members of social networks that help them in their education decisions (Schneider & Kim, 2005). Even in school there are advantages for the members of the financially sound groups. In classes where a high proportion of students come these groups are enrolled receive better treatment from their teachers (Shavit & Leopold, 2011). Despite the expansion of the higher education system in Israel, research findings indicate the existence of

social gaps between financially sound and disadvantaged groups regarding access to higher education. Shavit (2017) reinforced this conclusion and claimed that the educational gap between social strata due to socio-economic background has not narrowed over the years.

Research Aims

− To compare privatized and state schools in terms of social capital, self-esteem and academic achievements;

− To examine the association between cultural cross-sections (Arab Jewish; secular religious) and social capital, self-esteem and academic achievements;

− To examine students', studying at privatized and state schools, perceptions of academic and professional aspirations;

− To examine educational attitudes and views among principals and parents.

Research Questions

1. Will significant differences be found in the motivation and self-efficacy for learning, social capital, school grades on the core subjects (language, math and English) and the academic and professional expectations by school type (state schools, private schools) and SES (low SES, high SES)?

2. Will significant positive correlations be found between the motivation and self-efficacy for learning, social capital, school grades on the core subjects and the academic and professional expectations among each school type and each SES level?

3. Will significant contribution of the background and demographic students' characteristics (such as: gender, age, religious, parental education level etc. and not just for school type and SES level) be found to the Explained Variance (EPV) of the motivation and self-efficacy for learning, social capital, school grades on the core subjects and the academic and professional expectations?

4. Will unique contribution of the motivation and self-efficacy for learning, social capital and school grades on the core subjects be found beyond the other background and demographic students' characteristics to the EPV of the students' academic and professional expectations? The present study will include 320 high school students. 160 students will be sampled from four private schools and 160 students will be sampled from four state schools.

5. The students from the four private schools and the students from the four state schools will be sampled from two grades (two eleventh grade classes and two twelfth grade classes – total of four classes from each school). Since some of the private schools in Israel compose of just 10-12 students per classroom as opposed to state schools in which there are between 30-40 students per classroom, the sample will comprise of 10 students from each class. The 10 students from each class will be randomly sampled for the purpose of the current study. A sample of only 10 students

in each class was designed to avoid a large difference in the size of the samples between students studying in private schools and students studying in state schools. The classes from both school types and SES will be matched according to gender.

Conclusion

The education gap between social strata on socio-economic grounds has not been bridged over the years. At the same time, there are also findings showing the existence of horizontal inequality. Ayalon and Yogev (2006) found that students from established groups integrate into prestigious universities at higher rates than students from disadvantaged groups. They found that the social profile of students studying in prestigious fields in universities and colleges is similar, while members of disadvantaged groups tend to integrate into the higher education system mainly in less prestigious fields (Yogev & Ayalon, 2005). Their parents often have high economic capital. Family capital allows parents to advance their children towards higher education. While parents are able to provide the general encouragement for education, the children and families lack the actual entrance to the academic institution, acquaintance with the relevant concepts, the study routes and relevant skills.

Keywords: Privatization processes, higher education, social services.

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THE ROLE OF WORK-RELATED SELF-EFFICACY IN LINKING ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS AND SOCIAL WORKERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

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Introduction

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the potential linkage between organizational contextual factors and social workers' attitudes towards embracing evidence-based practice (EBP). These attitudes were found in previous studies to be an important predictor of the actual implementation of EBPs among social workers (Gray *et al*., 2007). EBP is an approach that purports to integrate professionals' personal knowledge, experience, and assessment skills with the most reliable and current research evidence, with the aim of promoting optimal intervention decisions for the client (Grady *et al*., 2018). It is defined it as a "process that blends current best evidence, community values and preferences, and agency, societal and political considerations in order to establish programs and policies that are effective and contextualized" (Regehr *et al*., 2007).

The implementation of EBP might be compromised by a list of barriers (Kagan, 2022). Some of these barriers are related to social workers' organizational context (such as lack of suitable organizational resources, absence of guidance on EBP, a heavy workload, role ambiguity and inadequate workplace social support) and some to their own personal features (such as lack of acquaintance with EBP principles and low self-benefit).

Although previous studies list the barriers to EBP, the process through which these barriers affect social workers` attitudes toward implementation of EBP remains unclear and is initially explored in the current study from a perspective of social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986, 2012). According to social cognitive theory, the lack or negative evaluation of organizational resources hampers employees' sense of self-efficacy, which is reflected in turn in negative work outcomes (Lunenburg, 2011). Therefore, it was hypothesized that workplace social support and accessibility of work-related data and information resources will be positively associated with work-related self-efficacy and that role ambiguity will be negatively associated with work-related self-efficacy, which in turn will be positively associated with social workers` attitudes towards adoption of EBP.

Methods: For the purpose of the study, 559 social workers were sampled, with a mean age of 36.34 (SD = 9.5) and a mean length of professional experience of 9.46 years (SD = 8.93). Most of the respondents were women (84.1%, n=470).

Results: Structural equation modeling (SEM) with AMOS 25.0 (Analysis of Moment Structures) was conducted to examine the research hypothesis. The findings revealed that the mediation effect of work-related self-efficacy in the association between role ambiguity, accessibility of data and information resources and workplace social support and social workers` attitudes towards adoption of EBP, was confirmed. Thus, accessibility of data and information resources and workplace social support were positively associated with self-efficacy and role ambiguity was negatively associated with self-efficacy, which in turn was positively related to social workers` attitudes towards EBP (Figure 1).

Conclusion: This study holds several important implications for the field of social work practice. The findings underscore the complexity of EBP adoption and suggest that successful implementation strategies should not only consider organizational context but also focus on bolstering social workers' work-related self-efficacy. To enhance the adoption of EBP, interventions should be tailored to address both these dimensions, acknowledging the interplay between organizational factors and individual beliefs.

In line with Bandura's social cognitive theory, this study provides a theoretical framework that can guide policy development and practice enhancement. Policymakers can draw from the insights gained to craft guidelines that encourage organizations to create supportive structures, resources, and training opportunities. Practitioners, can benefit from these insights in shaping their professional approach to incorporating EBP.

The study's emphasis on the role of work-related self-efficacy suggests that professional development initiatives should extend beyond technical skills to encompass confidence-building measures. Organizations should invest in training programs that empower social workers with not only the necessary skills but also the belief in their ability to effectively implement EBP. Furthermore, the findings underscore the importance of work-related social support in shaping work-related self-efficacy. Organizations are advised to promote collaboration and communication among social workers, creating platforms for knowledge exchange and mutual assistance. Such initiatives can contribute to the development of self-efficacy and positive attitudes towards EBP adoption.

Additionally, the study's identification of factors explaining work-related self-efficacy suggests that organizational structures can play an important role in shaping attitudes towards EBP. By ensuring easy access to data and information resources, reducing role ambiguity and clarifying

role expectations, organizations can create an environment conducive to positive attitudes and successful EBP adoption.

The implications of this study extend beyond organizational dynamics. By promoting the adoption of evidence-based practices, organizations indirectly influence the quality of services provided to clients. Positive attitudes towards EBP adoption can potentially lead to improved client outcomes, more effective interventions and enhanced service delivery.
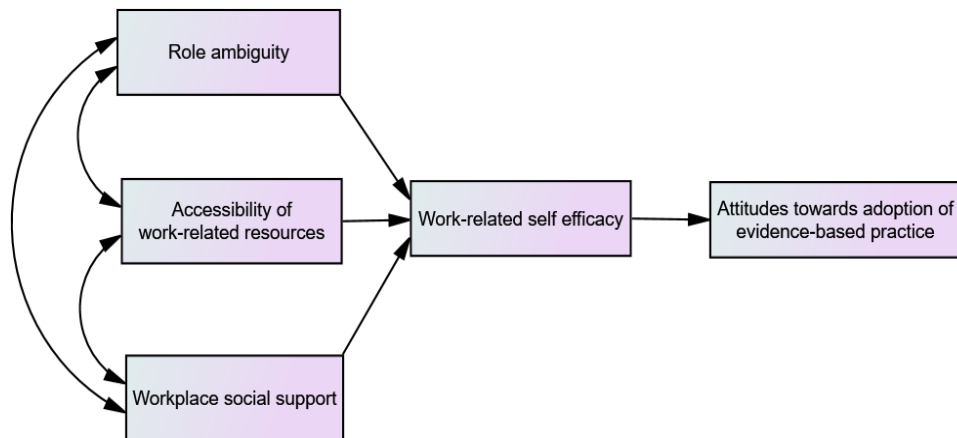
Figure 1: Results of the confirmatory factor analysis.

Keywords: Accessibility of resources, attitudes towards evidence-based practice, role ambiguity, social workers, work-related self-efficacy, workplace social support.

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AN ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL POLICIES RELATED TO YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT: TURKIYE'S EXAMPLE

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The increase in capital movements with globalisation has created separate effects in both developed and developing countries. While these effects manifested themselves as an increase in foreign trade volume in developing countries, they caused an increase in the rate of external dependency in countries that have not yet developed. This has led to foreign trade deficit and caused problems in microeconomic indicators of countries with foreign trade deficit. One of the most basic problems that can be read as a problem in microeconomic indicators is unemployment (Uğurlu, 2022). According to its types, unemployment is one of the social problems affecting developing or developed countries because this social problem deeply affects societies in terms of education, technological progress and political structure (Tolgay & Çakır, 2022; Telli Üçler *et al.,* 2023).

One of the main problems of the labour market is youth unemployment (Erikli, 2022). In 2008, youth unemployment, which became more visible after the global crisis in the USA, affected young people, who are considered as the "weak" link in the employment field, more (Isıl Alkan & Çelem, 2022). However, youth employment is important for the development of a country (Avcı, 2022).

Youth unemployment, in its simplest form, is the inability of individuals between the ages of 15-24 to have employment opportunities (TÜİK, 2023). Similarly, international organisations also define youth unemployment in terms of age range and people between the ages of 15-24 who have not yet entered the labour market are considered young unemployed (ILO, 2020). Although the general acceptance is in the 15-24 age range, there are also studies that adopt the 15-29 age range (ILOSTAT, 2022).

Turkey ranks 12th among countries with a young population (TÜİK, 2023a), which gives the impression that Turkey has a potential in studies and practices related to the young population. This situation also manifests itself in the demographic window of opportunity. The demographic window of opportunity means that the working age population is higher than the dependent population (Aydın, 2023). Turkey's window of opportunity opened in 2005 and is assumed to close between 2035 and 2045 (Can & Avcı, 2019). In fact, Turkey is one of the countries with the

potential to increase its human capital and reduce social inequalities. However, in order for this potential to be realised, the human capital raised should be employed in the economic fields needed (Taş & Bilen, 2014; Özdemir, 2019). However, since not enough new jobs have been created in Turkey, the problem of youth unemployment has increased and an employment strategy is needed to solve this problem (Erdayı, 2009). This situation is also reflected in the data. According to the current data of the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), the youth unemployment rate in Turkey is 19.4 per cent (TÜİK, 2023b). This rate is 8 per cent in the USA (Statista Research Department, 2023), 12.3 per cent in the UK (Ward *et al.,* 2023), 17.75 per cent in France (O'Neill, 2023a), 5.75 per cent in Germany (O'Neill, 2023b) and 9.64 per cent in Norway (O'Neill, 2023c). While the youth unemployment rate is 15.6 per cent worldwide (ILOSTAT, 2023), it is 10.9 per cent in OECD countries (OECD Data, 2023) and 14.1 per cent in the European Union (Eurostat, 2023). Although it is understood that these rates vary across countries and regions, it is possible to state that Turkey's youth unemployment rate is high compared to others.

Although youth unemployment is mostly analysed from an economic perspective (Uğurlu, 2022), it is not possible to read the related problem only economically. The fact that young people cannot find a job and that this situation becomes chronic brings with it hopelessness, political and social marginalisation. As a result of the stress experienced, young people may face depression, nutritional problems, substance abuse, anxiety and mental illness (Emeç *et al.,* 2021; Tolgay & Çakır, 2022). Due to the risks mentioned above, social policies and social security instruments are needed to solve the problem of youth unemployment.

Turkey has emphasised this issue in the Eleventh Development Plan (2019-2023) to reduce youth unemployment. According to the Plan, in order to ensure youth employment, issues such as completing the transition processes of young people from education to employment, participating in internships and courses/trainings and ensuring their adaptation to working life were focused on (Presidency of the Republic of Turkey, 2019). Taking the Plan as a reference, the National Employment Strategy (NES) document was prepared. The NES is a document that includes targets, policies and actions to ensure youth employment and reduce the youth unemployment rate. The policies planned to be made within the scope of the NES are; strengthening the education-employment relationship, reducing the proportion of young people who are neither in education nor in employment, and determining the jobs of the future (Republic of Turkey Ministry of Labour and Social Security, 2020). However, there are problems in Turkey's labour market regarding the supply of qualified labour and this is one of the structural problems for both youth and general unemployment (Orkunoğlu, 2020). In this context, active employment policies are utilised to solve youth unemployment in Turkey. The basis of active employment policy is skills training. In other words, it is assumed that the problem of youth unemployment will be solved if the skill mismatch

of young people is eliminated. Within this framework, vocational skills courses are emphasised (Kayaduvar, 2021). As a result of the studies carried out, the rates of youth unemployment have started to manifest themselves in two ways. In the short term, the increase in the number of wage and salaried employees based on inflation contributed to the decrease in youth unemployment rates. However, in the long run, it has been determined that this process works in the opposite direction and youth unemployment has started to increase despite the increase in the general rate (Avcı, 2022). This is because the effects of financial crises, inflation, economic growth and foreign capital on youth and general unemployment are different. Although the mentioned situations decrease the general unemployment rate, they increase youth unemployment (Güney & Cin, 2020).

Comparison of Turkey's policies on youth unemployment should also look at the examples of other countries. In Germany, one of the countries with the lowest youth unemployment, regular transition system programmes are used to prevent this problem. In the regular transition system, young people are stratified according to their education and ethnic origins and are provided with job opportunities according to their qualifications. However, it is known that non-German youth experience more disadvantages than German youth in this system (Kohlrausch, 2012). When we look at the policies of other European countries, we come across expenditures on active labour markets. These expenditures include job search assistance, training courses and public work programmes (Caliendo & Schmidl, 2016).

There are also international efforts to develop policies to prevent youth unemployment. The Recommendation on Creating Better Opportunities for Young People, published by the OECD in 2022, was adopted by all OECD countries. According to the relevant recommendations, OECD countries have agreed to support young people by producing policies on skills, education, employment, social and public spheres (OECD, 2022). The European Commission has also issued recommendations on youth unemployment and made recommendations to prevent youth unemployment, which increased with the global economic crisis in the USA in 2008 and grew in severity with the COVID-19 outbreak. In the recommendation published by the Commission, it was stated that joint work should be carried out at the level of social partners, education sector and non-governmental organisations to prevent youth unemployment (European Commission, 2020).

As a result, the global economic crisis, which started in the USA in 2008 and affected the whole world, affected young people the most and the COVID-19 pandemic increased the severity of the process. Turkey has been among the countries affected by these processes and the rate of youth unemployment in Turkey has exceeded the averages of the world, European Union and OECD countries. Social policies are produced by Turkey to solve the related problem and these social policies are also included in the national texts of the country. According to the decisions

taken from these texts, Turkey tries to reduce youth unemployment by creating an active labour market and for this purpose, it focuses on training/vocational courses. In fact, similar efforts are also implemented by other European countries. However, the high inflation rate, the number of young people who are neither in education nor in employment and the problems related to foreign investment cause Turkey's active labour market policy not to be successful enough. In this context, it is suggested that Turkey should focus on education-employment cooperation, develop programmes for new business areas, increase internship/scholarship opportunities and carry out harmonisation studies on the transition from education to business life.

Keywords: Youth unemployment, social policy, social problem, unemployment, Turkiye.

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POLITICAL PUBLICITY IN THE CONTEXT
OF VISUAL CULTURE

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In the modern era, is it "visual culture" that has taken a leading role in the daily life of society? Probably because in the ontological development of thinking, both the first – "visually-effective" and the second – "visually-figurative" stages form a person as an interpreter of stimuli, a significant part of which is accompanied by visual nature. At the third stage of the "verbal-logical" thinking acquires strong connections between images and concepts that stand behind them in cultural terms, find symbolic embodiment in verbal, visual and other forms of representation of reality (objective, subjective, social). Verbal-logical thinking does not act in isolation from ontological experience, therefore, it appeals to images learned before. What defines the current stage of socio-cultural development is based on the ontological vector of the development of thinking in relation to the products of progress in the possibilities of information exchange.

Publicity, in turn, begins to play a dominant role in visual culture, crowding other spheres of public life represented by visual content. News stories, political discussions successfully form discourses, provided that the content of the life of public figures is included. Between the news that "an event took place in city N" and that "person X attended an event in city N", preference is increasingly given to the second option. The same can be observed on video streaming channels, where politicians and experts from various fields conduct thematic broadcasts in a dosed, conscious, directed manner, revealing details of their private lives. "As the most important news, Internet portals can place a selfie taken by the Prime Minister in an elevator. State officials are beginning to work with their image in the very newfangled genres in which ordinary citizens work with their own, taking selfies periodically or even chronically, in the course of daily activities. Another wave of genre blurring of the boundaries of official and unofficial culture, the world of private entertainment and the world of big politics is coming, as everyone and everyone strives to realize themselves in interaction with the latest mass media technologies. In the current cultural situation, it is absolutely impossible to determine which phenomenon has an impact and which is under influence, since culture as a whole is developing as a kind of boundless mix of mutual influences".

The question of why publicity began to occupy so much of the audience's attention is rather philosophical, since it concerns the distance between people in spiritual terms. The thesis about Homo Confusus, a confused man of our time, who is in dire need of positive examples of social well–being, wealth, fame and power, gives a sociological extension. The visual culture of publicity is designed to show the "accessibility" of these presented samples. The peculiarity of the nature of this visuality, which we analyzed above on the example of Hoffmann's theory, is also that these samples can never be reached by the viewer as shown to him, since they are always on the other side of the screen. R. Barth makes the following observation: "... the invasion of the private into the sphere of the public corresponds exactly to the era of Photography, more precisely, the generation of a new social value, which is the publicity of the private: the private as such is consumed publicly (this is evidenced by the endless invasions of the press into the privacy of the "stars" and the growing uncertainty of legislation related to this area)".

Having dealt with the nature of what is happening in our communicative environment, we can give the following definition to the subject of research: The visual culture of publicity can be represented as the art of creating and presenting imaginative content that demonstrates unique personality traits (subject), transforming them into socially significant examples of lifestyle and mode of action. Such a "factory of meaning" is engaged in the production of objects of imitation or, on the contrary, rejection within the framework of visual culture (i.e. symbolic or real images) in the interests of a social community formed by a single media space, similar goals and socio-cultural values.

As the Western researcher P. Vaclavik notes, there is no single reality. But what exists are different versions of reality that may even contradict each other. His proposed psychotherapeutic method "Be spontaneous!" means a call to play with reality, to soft mutual adjustment to the surrounding world, to create yourself and the world in order to better adapt to it.

Wattslavik built his constructivist theory of communication on the following axioms:

1. It is impossible not to communicate. Every behavioral act entails communication.

2. All communication has two aspects: content and attitude (manner, transmission code). Moreover, the second aspect, "removing", is metacommunication (the main thing, as we are told).

3. The nature of the relationship (affirmation, opposition, denial) depends on the arrangement of pauses in the sequence of acts of communication between partners. In order to establish harmonious relations, means should be found for the resumption of relations. The most unbearable thing is to be ignored.

4. Human beings use two ways of communication: digital (complex logical syntax with a lack of semantics) and analog (the use of images, personalized stories, wordplay, quotations, reformulations with rich semantics).

5. Every communicative exchange is symmetrical or complementary, depending on whether it is based on equality or difference.

Recently, the general political unity of this media space has also acquired a special character. The inclusion of public figures in this sphere, observed by the example of political representation, does not indicate profanation, but: "of course, the reason for everything is the pre–election struggle; nine-tenths of the bloody clashes that disgrace our city are generated by rivalry, anger and envy brought to life by these damned elections".

UDI IN THE MODEL OF DIVERSITY AND MULTICULTURALISM IN AZERBAIJAN

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Since Azerbaijan restored its independence, favorable conditions have been created for the further strengthening of inter-church relations, promotion of national and spiritual values and further development of the historically-formed environment of tolerance, inter-ethnic and inter-religious dialogue. Therefore, today Azerbaijan has become a center of the cross-cultural space, confessional discourse and inter-religious dialogue.

Part of the united multi-national people of Azerbaijan that includes both the titular ethnic group and more than 20 indigenous national minorities are Udi, i.e. Albanian-Udi Christian Community, the origin and history of which has been of great interest to scientists for more than two centuries.

The Udi are an autochthonous people of Azerbaijan, one of the most ancient Caucasian indigenous ethnic groups and belong to ancestors of the modern Azerbaijani people. The history of the Udi ethnicity that has repeatedly suffered from political, religious and confessional intrigues as well as from rivalries between the major powers or stronger neighbors, is worthy of great respect and sympathy.

Details on the Udi population going back to the last quarter of the 19th century suggest that there were 10-12 thousand of them in the Russian Empire until the beginning of the 12th century, close-knit Udi communities lived in several villages of Azerbaijan.

Today, the total Udi population is more than 10 thousand people, most of which (about 5 thousand people) live in Azerbaijan. They live compactly in the village of Nij and in a dispersed manner reside in Oguz and Baku. The Udi also live in southern regions of Russia, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Ukraine and the Republic of Belarus. Several families have been found in the south of France, England, Italy, Latvia and the USA. In Azerbaijan, tight Udi communities are only found in Nij, where their population is half of 7,500 inhabitants of the village. The Udi have outlived several great empires they had formed part of, such as the Sasanian Empire, the Islamic Caliphate, the Ottoman Empire, the Russian Empire, the USSR and have managed to preserve their language, religion and culture.

The Udi, being the direct descendants of Caucasian Albania, have survived as an ethnicity and have preserved, in addition to the language, culture and traditions, their Christian faith, despite all the historical cataclysms, due to the multicultural environment in which they still live.

Today, the Udi are bearers of Eastern Christianity and are specifically focused in the modern environment to the revival of the Albanian-Udi Christian ethno-cultural heritage and their Church, abolished by the tsarist autocracy in 1836 with the support of the Armenian Gregorian Church.

As a result, ancient chronicles and antique books had been destroyed, tremendous values had been lost, and the two-thousand-year-old cultural and religious ordination experience had been disrupted. In a word, a huge layer of the spiritual culture of Azerbaijan has been lost forever, including the Udi culture, ancient and medieval historical and literary monuments, the traditions of prayer and liturgy, the memory of centuries and the set of values. The Udi, deprived of their own Church, despite all the official protests, had to bear all the rigours and hardships, even to the extent of refusing to become parishioners of their Church. However, the Udi have managed to preserve their native language and religious roots to this day. Today, more than 100 monuments of the Albanian confessional heritage are located in the territories liberated from the occupation by the Armenian armed forces. Their fate has no parallel in the history of Christianity. The Udi, being the direct descendants of the ancient Caucasian Albanians, are among the ancestors of the Azerbaijani people, as well as bearers of elements and symbols of the Albanian Christian heritage. They are proud of their ancient culture, their centuries-old traditions, spiritual wealth, language, ethnography and further enrich them in Azerbaijan, their historical homeland.

Inter-religious spiritual relationships that have existed for centuries in the history of Azerbaijan pave the way for the development of the ethnic diversity of this region. The multi-confessional people of Azerbaijan is an example and a symbol of religious harmony in the history of peoples of various faiths. Muslims, Jews, Orthodox Christians, Catholics and representatives of non-traditional confessions have lived here together in harmony and without any confrontation. Instead, they have been and are complementing each other. The very existence of their sacred sites, such as ancient temples of various confessions, synagogues, churches and mosques, next to each other symbolizes the common past of Our Country.

A bright example is the places compact residence of the Udi in Nij: ancient sacred places of worship, three churches and two mosques in such a small space. There are two Christian communities and one Udi cultural and educational center here. The phenomenon of religious tolerance has always been present in our historical environment and a small oasis of tolerance within the Udi community, first of all, confirms the existence of diversity.

Against the background of the apparent dominance of the Muslim religion in Our Country, the ideals of respect for religious rituals, holidays and mutual visits are promoted today. Today, Udi Christians still celebrate the sacrifice as a ritual holiday. That is, the spread of Islam created favorable conditions for the Udi through strengthening the existence of religious tolerance, especially in the context of the Udi community.

Hospitality is one of the traditions that have survived among the residents of the village of Nij. Since ancient times, the Udi gladly welcomed both bearers of their own religion and representatives of other confessions. Along with Christianity, the community has also managed to preserve folk customs, ceremonies, beliefs and holidays. Organization and holding of the celebration of Novruz Holiday is a very important factor promoting the religious tolerance in our community. This ancient spring festival that goes back centuries serves as a factor of cooperation and integration between Muslims and Christians.

From this point of view, it can be noticed that there is no document that could confirm the fact of any inter-religious conflict. Historically, religious tolerance and respect between the communities have developed and existed from the outset.

The historical experience shows that the Azerbaijani have always been tolerant of other religions and perhaps, Azerbaijan is the only country in the European environment where there were no religious wars. Such friendly co-existence can be observed in education, in daily life, in language and beliefs. An example of this is the joint worship of common sacred places places, indicative of the core connections incorporated in our genes. All these values make us to believe that in the model of tolerance, a thin line of good and evil runs between peoples, ethnic groups, religions, as well as through the dialogue and our hearts.

We feel strong governmental support, in particular, by Mr. President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev (who visited Nij in 2005, 2011 and 2021), the State Committee for Religious Affairs, various ministries, NGOs and ordinary citizens of Azerbaijan.

In the name of restoring historical justice and realities, the Albanian Udi Church of St. Elishe "Chotari" was renovated in 2006.

A specific feature of Udi houses, also common for houses of Azerbaijani and Lezgins, is the prayer room. The main horticultural crop in their gardens is hazel. Today, the village's economy is mainly based on cultivation of hazelnut. In Nij, everyone has its own plantation. On the display, there are many pottery objects because Christian Udi, unlike their Muslim neighbours, were engaged in wine-making and aged wine in clay vessels. In the estate's courtyard, there is an apparatus used by the Udi to make dogwood or cherry-plum vodka. Today, nobody dries tobacco under the roof and only tourists are shown the process of alcohol home-brewing. Guests can stay

in houses located right in the park-museum's territory. Forums, conferences and round tables are also held there.

Nij is called an example of multiculturalism that aligns with the policy implemented in Azerbaijan at the state level. Its objective is to create conditions for the co-existence and co-development of different cultures within the Country. When the Udi celebrate Easter or Christmas, Protestants, Jews, Orthodox Christians and Muslims sit all together at the same table. In the village, two mosques are functioning and two of three churches have been restored. Of the five schools, three are Russian and two are Azerbaijani.

As part of the "Azerbaijan- the Address of Tolerance" program, the Heydar Aliyev Foundation launched a project for the restoration and renovation of the Church of the Most Holy Mother Mary and the courtyard around it in Nij, which has been completed by November, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. In Soviet times, the church was used as a warehouse and was slowly breaking down. Its dome collapsed, grass and trees grew on the roof and the walls began to crumble. Now, the new conical dome is surmounted by the Albanian cross, which differs from the crosses of other churches. There are three sharp petals at each of its four ends: the central one symbolizes the flame tip and those at the extreme edges denote the moon sickles (crescents). These patterns are relics of the pagan cults of the peoples of Caucasian Albania, who worshiped the Moon and fire. Workers found vase-like hollow clay indentations in the walls and vaults, which served as resonators to improve the hall acoustics. In 2006, they were removed during the restoration of the first of the three churches in Nij, but in this church they were left in their original places. Also, font basins were restored in the churchyard, where three springs shoot up from the ground. In the old days, the sacraments of baptism were held in the point where the springs merged together. The restored church was passed over to the Albanian-Udi Christian Community of Azerbaijan. It is planned to be solemnly consecrated after the end of the pandemic.

Today Azerbaijan is an example of tolerance and cooperation among representatives of different confessions and cultures. The Udi are represented by the Community Leader at the Supreme Religious Advisory Council, at the UNESCO session, as well as at various international conferences, forums and meetings.

In conclusion, it should be noted that, despite the difference between religions and confessions, the role of the Udi in the formation of the state of Caucasian Albania and in the preservation of the rich Eastern Christian heritage, ethnic language, culture, customs and traditions is indisputable.

Today, the Udi Church is an integral part of the Albanian Apostolic Autocephalous Church. The Udi have played an important role in the consolidation of the Azerbaijani's ethnogenesis, so

the Udi and the Azerbaijani have centuries-old genetic connection. During the last decade, the Udi ethnic group has been experiencing another peak of renaissance characterized by a surge in their national identity and ethnic consolidation. A bright example and an oasis of this phenomenon is the conglomerate of associations of harmonious relations among different nationalities and confessions and places of compact residence of the Udi as a model of tolerance in the multicultural environment of Azerbaijan. This is, undoubtedly, a result of the historical impulses of the great Albanian heritage taken through the ages and preserved in the genes of this ancient people and calling of modern time, granting the Udi a chance to identify and preserve their niche in the model of the ethnic and cultural environment of their historical homeland- Azerbaijan.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, Udi, Azerbaijan, Udi Church.

SOCIAL INFLUENCES ON SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIOR

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Purpose - This study aims to examine social influences on the manager's contribution when implementing sustainable procurement initiatives, as the existing literature indicates low level of support of procurement managers for such endeavors.

Design/methodology/approach - This conceptual paper investigated the potential behavioral influences on the manages and constraints faced by them while having procurement.

Findings - The relation and effect of three forms of commitment, affective (ACC), normative (NCC) and continuance (CCC) was studied. Study suggests that managers ACC and NCC positively influence the behavior supports the change in sustainable procurement.

Practical implications - This study contributes to the emerging literature of sustainable behavior of managers, highlighting the role that affective (ACC), normative (NCC) and continuance (CCC) commitment plays in sustainable procurement by the managers.

Originality/value - This study provides a better understanding of sustainable behavior of managers by using the theory of reasoned action.

Keywords: Sustainable behavior, Affective commitment to change, Continuance commitment to change and Normative commitment to change.

SOCIAL CYBERSECURITY: CONCEPT, PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CHALLENGES

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The digital information and communication (İC) revolution, high-speed development of cyber technologies as well as artificial intelligence technologies and the challenges that they provide each of us with both: new forms of communication and new opportunities, as well as new risks associated with digitalization, affecting our information and cyber security in the context of the emergence of a digital society.

Along with the digital society, the formation of digital identities, virtual operations make it possible to monitor and even control national infrastructures from anywhere in the Metaverse. An attack on one strategic critical information point can lead to the disruption or destruction of several vital systems not only in the country, but also in the world.

This trend requires a search for solutions to the threats and problems of the emerging digital society.

In turn, this requires the search for new concepts and the identification of new methodological approaches both to ensure personal information security and to counter the negative consequences and prevent cyber threats caused by modern conditions of digitalization and the formation of a digital society are impossible without comprehending and understanding the essence of both the positive and negative aspects of these processes.

In the past few years, especially in the context of the emergence of a global pandemic, the further expansion of online activity, the increasing pace of cybersecurity - the "cyber pandemic" - this issue has become a strategic priority.

Cyber threats and cybersecurity issues in a digital society are studied by many disciplines. A relatively new scientific direction in this area is research called "social cybersecurity".

The rapidly growing impact of cyber threats on society requires an analysis of the social aspects of cybersecurity and the search for solutions, respectively. It is no coincidence that in recent years intensive research has been carried out all over the world in this area, a new field of science has already emerged - social cybersecurity.

In 2019, recognized expert in the field of cybersecurity, Dr. Kathleen Carley, introduced the very concept of "Social Cybersecurity", which has now become a separate scientific field. Social cybersecurity is an emerging branch of cybersecurity that deals with the understanding of human

behavior. Studies in social cybersecurity cut across different and seemingly unrelated fields such as (communication) technology, machine learning, psychology, sociology and forensics, among others.

The paper examines issues related to social cyber security in Azerbaijan. Author notes that, Azerbaijan, is one of the leading states in the region in terms of the development of ICT technologies and e-state building, as well as the number and rapid growth of Internet users. The country's leadership is paying close attention to the preparation of the relevant legislative framework in this area, the creation and development of infrastructure.

Nowadays, cybersecurity is becoming a strategic national issue affecting all sectors of society. A flexible, efficient and effective response to cyber threats requires a clear definition of national goals and priorities, roles and responsibilities of stakeholders to be achieved over time. In the conditions of the information society of the 21st century and the formation of electronic government, high technologies act as a life support system for the daily existence of society.

Keywords: Social cybersecurity, society, Azerbaijan.

SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE: HUMANITY AND SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT

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The United States of America and other countries of the world progressing technologically, and economically and the infrastructure is improving a lot. Social researchers understand that the development process is a robust combination of all aspects of human life including social, political, cultural, religious, health and environmental. In order to sustain the development of society, we need humanitarian development which is not happening here. Researchers think that is why many social problems are being created nowadays and becoming more complex. Government can solve economic, political and religious issues. However, it's repeated again and again. Then what is next? This is the main challenge of social workers. Humanitarian development especially ethics, norms and values are unique solutions to sustainable development. To find sustainable solutions to any problems, society needs humanitarian development. The humanitarian-development is also depends on people's own culture and religion. Researchers should be concerned about the issues also. Love is the most potent instrument in the world to solve or reduce social problems. However, in all development processes, rural areas are sometimes ignored or avoided. The Rural area is the main root of all development all over the world. Researchers found that sustainable rural development depends on advocating for rural communities. The purpose of the study is to critically analyze the impact of humanity on social issues. A systematic review of literature and research documents by online libraries, research reports and learned educationists has been conducted. Therefore, data from secondary sources has been critically reviewed and discussed. The value of the study is the development of guidelines for social work practice. Social work practice guidelines serve as a valuable resource for social workers looking to address and alleviate social issues. It is important for social workers to identify the underlying causes of these issues, with research indicating that humanity is often at the root of many problems. Various tools such as awareness-building programs, campaigns, motivational support and counseling can be utilized to promote humanitarian development. The development of social work practice guidelines must take into account the unique cultural, ethical and societal norms of each community. Social workers should always approach their work with cultural sensitivity and respect. Achieving a peaceful and respectful resolution requires a commitment to human development and a deep understanding of

cultural and religious philosophies. Sustainable rural development heavily relies on humanitarian efforts. Rural norms values ethics are always related to humanitarian development.

Keywords: Humanity, rural development, spirituality, social work practice, sustainable development.

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COUNTERING INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE IN KURDISTAN REGION OF IRAQ: THEORIZING A MULTI-LEVEL SOCIAL WORK APPROACH

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There are various global social work approaches and initiatives that are focused on countering domestic violence. Domestic violence is considered to be any abuse that happens within the home or anyone that is close to you, and this includes intimate partner violence, child abuse and elder abuse. However, the nature of intimate partner violence is different and unique in the sense that it significantly disproportionately affects women. Therefore, there must be initiatives by global social workers that are rooted in culturally congruent approaches to countering IPV by raising awareness, shifting narratives around IPV, empowering women and ensuring that they get the care that they need.

The term 'domestic violence' is used in many countries to refer to intimate partner violence, but the term can also encompass child abuse, elder abuse, or any other sorts of abuse by a member of a household. However, I distinguish and focus on intimate partner violence because I think that it is a unique form of violence and must be approached according to the local contexts and global contexts. I will be focusing on the geographically and politically complex Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The Kurdistan Region is an autonomous region in federal Iraq where the indigenous Kurds have established a local government, but are also under the governance of the Iraqi government. Confronting IPV or other issues in this region requires a strategic approach because of the political, cultural and socio-economic circumstances. I will be proposing a multi-level approach that is focused on the micro, mezzo and macro aspects of countering IPV in Kurdistan. I will argue that feminism can be used as a practical theory for global social workers approaching issues that disproportionately impact women. I will then conclude by discussing the insider/outsider perspective I bring to countering IPV in Kurdistan, both as a global social worker and a Kurdish woman living in the diaspora.

According to the WHO, intimate partner violence refers to behavior within an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including acts of physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviors (WHO). In 2021, the WHO estimated that globally 26% of women have been subjected to physical or sexual violence by a male intimate partner at least once in their lifetime (WHO, 2021). Although women can be

violent in relationships with men, and violence sometimes occurs in same-sex relationships, the most common perpetrators of IPV are male intimate partners or ex-partners. According to the data, men are far more likely to experience violent acts by strangers or acquaintances than by someone close to them such as an intimate partner.

Risk factors consistently associated with a woman's increased likelihood of experiencing violence by partner(s) include: low level of education; exposure to violence between parents; sexual abuse during childhood and exposure to other forms of prior abuse. That includes exposure to trauma and violence from war, considering the fact that women who are refugees or asylum seekers are 5.8 times more likely to be a victim of IPV (WHO). Other risk factors are also depicted in the chart to the left. According to the World Health Organization individuals that have encountered IPV are: 2.7 times more likely to experience mental or neurological disorders; 4.4 times higher chance of internalized behavior problems; 2.5 times more likely to experience unplanned pregnancy and 3.1 times more likely to experience cognitive impairment (WHO). Likeliness of other health issues related to experiencing IPV are depicted in the graphic below. There are also many reasons why people do not leave in cases of IPV, including: fear of retaliation; lack of alternative means of economic support; lack of support from family and friends and stigma or fear of losing custody of children associated with divorce.

Looking more closely at Kurdistan, official statistics show that there has been an increase in the rates of violence against women, female suicide and femicide in the region over the years (Parvaz, 2016). In a study done with 800 women in Erbil, the capital city of Kurdistan, they found that the prevalence of overall lifetime exposure to IPV was 58.6% and 45.3% of women reported having experienced IPV within the past year. The most common form of IPV was emotional abuse followed by physical violence (Al-Atrushi *et al*., 2013). In 2015, there were 7,436 registered complaints of violence against women in Iraq's Kurdish, an increase from the 6,673 complaints recorded in the previous year (Parvaz, 2016). Currently about 200 women reside in unmarked shelters or women's centers because they are subject to threats of violence by their spouse or guardian (Rudaw, 2022). Taking all of this into consideration, and using the UN's metrics for gender inequality – where inequality is scored between zero and 1, with higher numbers indicating more inequality – the region scored better than the rest of Iraq at 0.41, but worse than some of its neighbors, such as Turkey (0.36) and Lebanon (0.38) (Parvaz, 2016).

There have been efforts to counter intimate partner violence internally within the Kurdistan Regional Government. There was a domestic violence law implemented in 2011 by the KRG, but it was not up to the standards of other nations and was heavily criticized by human rights groups and NGOs such as the UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights for being an

insufficient piece of legislation. However, along with this legislation, the KRG also created the Independent Commission for Human Rights, a body tasked with studying violence against women in the region and developing strategies to combat it. The region has been criticized by Western human rights groups and NGOs for not implementing more punitive laws that protect women from female genital mutilation, domestic violence, sexual assault and femicide (Parvaz, 2016). However, little research and data has come of this since there is still only one study on IPV in Kurdistan that fulfills international standards of research.

Overall, the region has been criticized for not implementing effective, more specifically punitive, laws that protect women from female genital mutilation, domestic violence, sexual assault, and femicide. However, we must consider that the laws passed in Kurdistan are still some of the few pieces of legislation condemning domestic violence in the larger MENA region. It is important to recognize that these statistics, measurements and criticisms come from Western nations and oftentimes create inaccurate narratives about the region. I argue that current laws in place are ineffective because they primarily focus on punitive measures and little on the development of resources and services to address the needs of people experiencing IPV. Some organizations currently working towards countering IPV in Kurdistan: SEED Foundation and Gender Studies and Information Council (SEED). Some people feel that the increasing number of DV and IPV complaints indicate that things are improving for women in the region. Although, it is still culturally frowned upon to make formal complaints about IPV and women are still living in fear of being ostracized if they speak up. We must approach the issue with the local political and cultural contexts and be conscious to not fall into assumptions and culturally irrelevant programming.

When considering the approaches individually, they may seem ineffective; but when they are implemented simultaneously, they can effectively shift the narrative and tackle IPV as a public health issue.

Keywords: Kurdistan, IPV, multi-level, intervention.

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ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF STATE AND THE THIRD SECTOR IN INTERVENING EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITIES IN INDIA – EVIDENCE FROM A 10 YEAR PANEL DATA

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The Research context

It is said that post 1960s on the supposition that both State and the markets have not been able to provide welfare (Levitt, 1973) and particularly that the State has not been able to take part in inequality reduction effectively, the civil society organizations, collectively called the Third Sector has come in to being. The third sector since then has become a supplemental welfare provider and major actor in inequality reduction (Kothari, 1988; Kohli, 1991; Jha, 2004; Munshi & Abraham, 2004; Wiepking & Handy, 2015; Igalla *et al*., 2019). While there are others who caution against incivilities of the civil society/Third Sector organizations. They seriously question its limitation, particularly in terms of its scope to take over the role of state in inequality reduction and intervene in provision of social welfare without an agenda of its own (Chandhoke, 2003, 2009, 2012; Payne & Smith, 2015; Duquette, 2018). Both of these intervene into inequality differently; based majorly on the scale of operation, geographic locations that they reach and the type of interventions that they engage with, in societies across the world. Notwithstanding these differences, in todays' world both State and the Third Sector are primary actors in inequality reduction and welfare provision and particularly so in Intervening education al inequalities (Jha & Jhingran 2005; Nambissan, 2012; ASER, 2015; Collado *et al*.,2022).

In the context of both State and Civil Society emerging as major actors of inequality reduction, the present study aims at evaluating the comparative effectiveness of both State and the Third Sector in intervening Educational inequalities in 4 villages of rural Karnataka of India.

Methodology

Four Villages - Kurikota, Harsoor, Mahagaon Cross and Harkanchi - of a backward district called Gulbarga in Karnataka, India–which are broadly homogeneous on social economic and Political parameters such as size of population, amenities available, Caste, lifestyles of populations, Prevalence of Social capital, type and system of governance etc., have been chosen for this study. These four villages have been further so selected such that; in one village (Kurikota)

there is a strong State intervention in the form of an effectively run government School; in the second village (Harsoor) there is a strong Third Sector intervention in the form of a NGO run School active in providing primary Education; in the third village (Mahagaon Cross) there is both State and Third Sector intervention in the form of both a state run School and the NGO run School being active in providing primary Education and in the fourth village (Harkanchi), there is minimal State and Third Sector intervention in the form of the villagers of this village not having easy access to a primary School either run by government or a NGO.

Data on Educational inequalities, particularly the relative intervention of State, Third Sector and combined intervention of State and Third Sector on more than 20 critical parameters that express Educational Inequalities is collected. These 20 critical parameters relate to access to elementary education, financial burden of elementary education, parental interest in children's education, learning conditions for children to study and the reasons why children drop out from schools.

In each of these 4 villages 30 households have been randomly selected for data collection, culminating in a total of 120 households.

This data on educational inequalities has been collected twice in the gap of 10 years. The first set of data was collected in the year 2004-5 and the next data in the same villages with the same interventions existing has been collected in 2014-15 and this data is analyzed with reference to welfare schemes propounded by state and interventional approaches of civil society in to educational inequalities during 2005 – 2015.

Main Findings

Broadly results from the study indicate that Educational inequalities are best addressed when State intervenes in Educational inequalities; however, there are indications that on some critical parameters that sustain good practices in primary Education are reinforced when there is a strong Third Sector intervention. Third sector intervention is particularly strong in fostering the learning climate at home as civil society intervention fosters a strong parental interest and action in educational attainments of school going children.

On different intervention and elementary education, it could be concluded that effective state intervention is the best as cost of education is the least compared to the Third Sector intervention, though, Third Sector intervention at times on some specific parameters provide better quality of elementary education. In this context, it is highly recommended that the state make its intervention in elementary education more effective on select parameters.

The study also brings out important dimensions of educational inequality that are abetted by lack of interventions by either state or the Third sector.

Schemes introduced to reduce inequality by state and the central government in India at time run counters to each other while at the other times they complement each other. The multiplicity of schemes introduced by the central and state governments most often creates confusion in the minds of the beneficiaries. All these leads one to believe that there is lack of coordination among state and central governments since education is a concurrent subject as per the constitution of India.

Keywords: Educational inequalities, state intervention, civil society intervention, NGOs, educational attainments.

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HUMAN CENTERED AI AND INCLUSIVE SMART CITY AS THE NEW FRAMES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL WORK

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Our proposed presentation at the Baku Conference is developed in a context of issues relating to the processes of technological, socio-economic and cultural transformation that we are observing nowadays. It will be focused on the analysis of such phenomena as Human Centered AI and Inclusive Smart City related to Sustainable Development and Social Policies.

The specific data and examples to be presented come a) from the overview of the specialized literature on AI and Smart City and b) from the original research of the specific case studies: Aizuwakamatsu city in Fukushima, Japan and Rasht city in Gilan, Iran.

After reviewing the concepts of "Inclusive Smart City (ISC)" and "Human Centered AI (HCAI)", the authors will introduce the idea of new frames for sustainable development and social work. The presentation then will be concentrated on the discussion of data and specifics of two case studies.

Below is the general description of the case studies.

1. Aizuwakamatsu city in Fukushima, Japan

The Aizuwakamatsu city in Fukushima prefecture, is in the northeast of Japan. It is an example of cooperation between company, the government and the private sector through smart cities to solve social problems in the city. Following the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident in 2011, the Japanese government asked companies to start businesses for industrial development in Fukushima. In addition, to solve the social problems of population decline and aging, a smart city plan was launched with the goal of creating employment to maintain a population of 100,000. Currently, Aizuwakamatsu city has a population of about 113,000, making it the fourth most populous city in Fukushima, but population decline is underway. In addition, population aging is in progress and the reality is that even the solution of smart city cannot solve the social problems of population reduction and aging, which were originally targeted.

City OS, one of Accenture Japan's smart city plans, is not a smart city platform from the perspective of service providers (administration, businesses etc.), but from the perspective of service users (tourists, citizens etc.) to create a platform. Opt-in is a method of collecting data after

citizens agree to the terms and conditions, such as personal information, regarding data collection. For example, after the company collects and analyzes data for healthcare provided by citizens, it provides services. An elderly man in his 70s has a chronic disease and must go to the hospital once a month to receive medicine. Through his watch device, the blood pressure data of the day is linked with the hospital every day and if there is a risk, it provides a systematic service that allows you to go to the hospital after consulting with a doctor online in advance. Likewise, when a natural disaster occurs, the app can be used to check whether the family is safe or not and to check the route to the shelter (Joichi, 2020).

Figure 1. Overview of City OS -Utilization of data by the commitment of residents

Note. From A potential to deploy a unified smart city platform (City OS) in Makassar and a case study of Aizuwakamatsu City in Japan [image], by E. Joichi, 2020.

(https://www.jasca2021.jp/ascnjapan2020/dl/document/ebihara.pdf)

AI development requires open personal big data. This is based on the premise that there is consent from citizens through cooperation between local governments, businesses and the government.

2. Rasht city in Gilan, Iran: Disaster prevention AI in developing country

Rasht is one of the largest cities in Gilan Province in Northern Iran. Destructive floods have occurred on 25 March 2019 and 2 April 2019. It caused widespread damage to infrastructure, bridges, roads and dwellings (Taromideh *et al*., 2022).

In this case study, they are creating flood risk mapping for using questioners and ML techniques. The analytic hierarchy process (AHP) and 6 machine learning techniques (CART, RF,

BRT, MARS, MDA and SVM) were used for the flood-risk map. 40 experts evaluate the urban flood vulnerability by questionaries. Indicators of vulnerability assessment are such as population density, dwelling quality, household income, distance to cultural heritage, distance to medical centers and land use (Taromideh *et al*., 2022).

The result of flood-risk mapping, the north and southeast area are high risk in the map. The north and southeast of the area are more exposed to flood risks and several parts in the west and central areas have high flood risks. This case shows us that it possible to make flood-risk mapping with little data. It is no need complex rainfall–runoff modeling and costly field surveys (Taromideh *et al*., 2022).

As in the case of Aizuwakamatsu city in Japan, city planning led by the government and participation of local governments and companies can collect citizens' data and create services in various fields. However, in developing country or lack of data in area, can do things like flood mapping to prevent natural disasters by incorporating AI technology after collecting data.
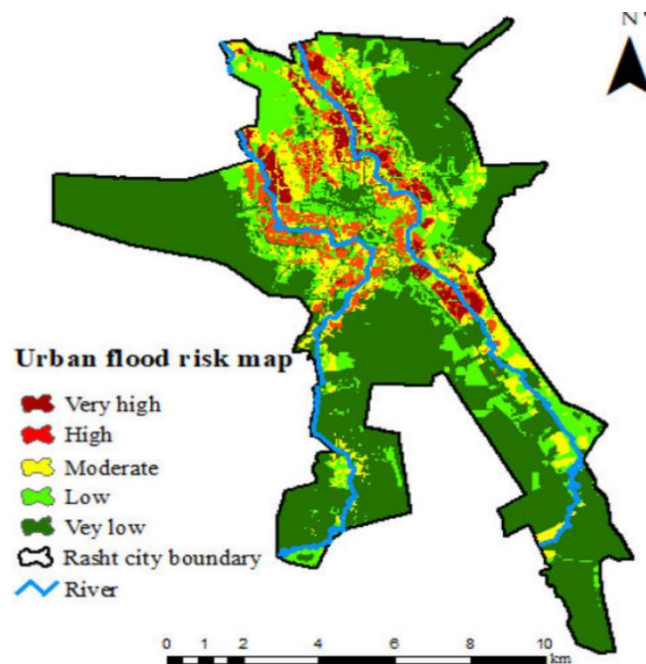
Figure 2. Flood-risk map for Rasht based on the CART (best hazard model) and AHP methods
Note. From Urban Flood-Risk Assessment: Integration of Decision-Making and Machine Learning map, by F. Taromideh *et al*., 2020, (https://doi.org/10.3390/su14084483).

Keywords: Human cantered AI, inclusive smart city, machine learning, socio-economic vulnerability.

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THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS IN ENHANCING HEALTH, SOCIAL AWARENESS, AND EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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This research aimed to investigate the role of social media networks in promoting health, social and educational awareness among university students during the COVID-19 pandemic while identifying the challenges associated with their use. A descriptive-analytical methodology was employed using a social survey method on 380 undergraduate students at Sultan Qaboos University. Results showed that social media networks significantly raised health awareness related to the pandemic, helped students achieve social benefits and fulfilled their educational needs. However, challenges such as spreading rumors and untrusted information, high internet costs, technical challenges and exploitation of fake accounts prevented students from fully benefiting from social media. The study recommends developing academic programs for electronic social work and improving social workers' ability to use ICT and social media effectively. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the need for more research to evaluate the role of social workers in pandemics and crises and to develop practical proposals to enhance professional practices. In conclusion, this research highlights social media networks' potential benefits and challenges in promoting awareness during the COVID-19 pandemic and provides recommendations for improving social work practice.

Keywords: Social media networks, COVID-19 pandemic, health and social awareness, educational needs, academic programs, social work practice.

THE LANDSCAPE OF SOCIAL PROFESSIONALS IN THE UAE: DEMOGRAPHICS AND SERVICES

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In this paper, we present the preliminary results of a study conducted to provide a current snapshot of what the United Arab Emirates (UAE) calls Social Professionals. Social Professionals are licensed individuals made up of Psychologists, Counselors and Social Workers with undergraduate or graduate degrees (Community Development Authority, 2020). However, little is known about Social Professionals in the UAE except that the country faces a shortage of Social Professionals (Quasem, 2022) and they lack a system of ethical principles or code of conduct. Before establishing the boundaries or frameworks of practice for Social Professionals, we first need to understand who Social Professionals are. This will determine who currently works as a Social Professionals, their scope of work and existing practice competencies and codes of ethics utilized. Notably, this study is part of a larger research program that seeks to develop *Guidelines for Competency and Practice for Social Professionals* to promote access to mental health services and improve delivery of services.

It is important to note that the formalization of Social Professionals is fairly new in the UAE given the seven emirates that make up the UAE were founded in 1971. Very shortly after its founding, the field of psychology was first established with an undergraduate program at United Arab Emirates University in 1971 (Al-Darmaki & Yaaqeib, 2015) and has experienced rapid development within the past 20 years. Since then, bachelor's and master's degrees in psychology, counseling, and social work have emerged across the emirates (Amity University Dubai, 2022; Middlesex University Dubai, n.d.), but doctoral-level training in psychology, counseling and social work is not available at this time. While training opportunities have developed, Social Work, Psychology and Counseling are loosely regulated (Community Development Authority, 2020) leading to their lower status compared to medical professions (Al-Darmaki *et al*., 2012). The implementation of ethical guidelines and a framework for competency and practice is necessary to elevate the status of Social Professionals, provide consistency and protection for service recipients and establish clear professional boundaries and expectations. But in order to do so, we need to

understand who current Social Professionals are. Thus, our research question asked who are Social Professionals in the UAE with regard to their professional background, training and experience?

In the emirates of Dubai and Abu Dhabi, Social Professionals are expected to obtain licensure for practice through Dubai's Community Development Authority and Abu Dhabi's Department of Community Development. We obtained a list of all licensed Social Professionals, as of April 2023, in the emirates of Dubai and Abu Dhabi. For each person, this list included the licensee's full name, license number and specialization (e.g., psychology, counseling, social work). We then enriched this data through internet searches to collect additional information such as current place of employment, phone number, email address, country of origin/nationality, sex, age, country of training, university degree obtained, university program and highest degree earned. We sought additional information on each licensed Social Professional through online surveys asking information like, but not limited to, types of services provided, cost of services, and length of waitlists.

Our analyses employ both qualitative and quantitative techniques to yield a comprehensive description of who licensed Social Professionals are and their practices. By examining the varied aspects of their professional spectrum, from demographics to specializations, we're poised to generate a holistic view of the current landscape. With this information, we will provide recommendations for policy and practice to improve upon the education of UAE-based students and practice standards for all Social Professionals working in the UAE. We anticipate the insights gleaned from this study deepen our understanding of the training and practice of Social Professionals, particularly with regard to who they serve (e.g., populations, costs, waitlists) and the frameworks that inform their practice (e.g., training, professional development, codes of ethics).

Keywords: Social Worker Demographics; United Arab Emirates; Social Professionals; Social Work; Counseling.

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KEY ISSUES OF GRANT SUPPORT FOR SOCIALLY ORIENTED NGOs IN RUSSIA

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Non-profit organizations in the modern theory and practice of social states are considered as important participants in the development of a public welfare system that insures citizens against increasing social risks in an era of uncertainty.

The involvement of non-profit organizations as representatives of civil society in the production of social services forms one of the current directions of the social policy of the Russian State. The status of such organizations as socially oriented NGOs (SONKO) is formalized by law and assumes significant state support (Federal Law, 2010). From the standpoint of the theory of new management, as well as the theory of social partnership and the concept of sharing resources of social partnership participants close to it, the state applies new ways of regulating relations with non-profit producers of public goods and motivating them to participate in this area (Benevolenski & Toepler, 2017). In social policy, in the development of the non-profit sector of social services, the state applies such tools as subsidies, access to state and municipal contracts, indirect subsidies/VAT benefits, additional benefits. In 2015, Russia decided to gradually allocate to non-profit organizations up to 10% of the funds intended for financing regional and municipal social programs, so that NGOs could participate in the provision of social services that are funded from budgets. A roadmap has been developed to support the access of non-governmental organizations to the provision of social services. A special place among the ways of support is occupied by state grants for SONKO (Starshinova & Borodkina, 2022).

Grant financing, in comparison with other financial sources, is characterized by the greatest flexibility and stability, which is especially attractive for representatives of NGOs who need constant support for financial stability, since they are "unprofitable" by their nature. Therefore, the number of NGOs participating in grant competitions increases annually. Grant support creates new opportunities for the functioning of non-profit organizations in the interests of their target groups. The implementation of social projects of NGOs that have received grant support contributes to their professional development, increasing material and technical equipment, improving organizational culture and management, expanding the services they provide to citizens.

A significant role in supporting NGOs is played by the Presidential Grants Fund, which was established in 2017, combining several previously operating grant operators. The Foundation holds competitions and bases on their results, provides grants to Russian non–profit organizations for the implementation of social projects in 13 areas, including social services, social support and protection of citizens, support for family, motherhood, fatherhood and childhood. Unlike other grant operators, the FPG is characterized by more significant grant sizes and the development of an ecosystem of grant support. According to one of the informants who took part in our study, *"The Presidential Grants Fund is suitable in a comprehensive way – it provides significant financial support, develops competence systems in the field of social design and management and also helps in the support and implementation of projects"* (representative of the FPG, 2022). At the same time, he stressed that 80% the work of the Foundation's specialists is associated with the support of projects of NGOs that have received grants. In turn, all representatives of SONKO participating in the study highly appreciated the Fund's activities in organizing competitions for SONKO to receive grants, the openness and transparency of its activities, as well as the significant role of grant funds in ensuring the financial stability of these organizations. One of the study participants drew attention to the significant amount of grant funds that make it possible to implement financially costly projects for the social rehabilitation of children with disabilities: *"One of the six grants we had was small − up to 500 thousand, all the rest in the amount of 2-3 million. These are big projects. <...> And we have long-term grants. The minimum was for 7 months and the maximum for 1.5 years"* (Director of the ANO, 2022). The Foundation holds 2 contests within one calendar year. However, in 2020, the Foundation additionally held a special competition in three areas (protection of citizens' health, support for family, motherhood, fatherhood and childhood and social services for citizens) for those NGOs that showed high activity during the pandemic to support citizens in need of assistance.

At the same time, during the study, certain problems identified by the interview participants were also identified, and to which Russian researchers pay attention (Starshinova, 2022; Smirnov, 2020). These include the small number of NGO employees and in this regard, there is an increase in the workload during the preparation of the project for participation in the grant competition and its subsequent implementation. When writing a grant application, NGO employees face a lack of experience and the necessary competencies for high-quality preparation of competitive applications. When implementing a grant project, it is difficult to establish the systematic work of the entire NGO team. Employees of non-profit organizations do not always know how to make estimates and justify financial costs, make reports in accordance with project requirements. The problem is the lack of a fundraising specialist or a grant writer in a non-profit organization. The

work with partners that is supposed to be carried out as part of the preparation of the grant application also often causes significant difficulties, for example with banks: *"When we won the first presidential grant, we had to immediately open a special account with Sberbank. Because the Fund cooperates only with Sberbank and on special conditions. It turned out that the Foundation did its job perfectly, but the bank was not ready for this"* (director of the NGO, 2022). However, a more complex problem that almost all participants in the study discussed was the risk of non–profit organizations forming grant dependence. One of their informants formulated the problem as follows: *"If an organization provides only grant funding, then it immediately acquires the status of financially unstable, its programs become ineffective if they do not have their own development trajectory"* (head of the NGO, 2022). All representatives of NGOs associate the possibility of preventing such a risk with the search for alternative financing options, establishing partnerships with corporate donors, because private donors can provide more stable financing. According to our informants, the grant is the starting point at the project launch stage, it allows you to gain primary financial stability for the organization, but continuing to work with a focus only on grant funds is not an effective strategy. At the same time, they believe that not all SONKO can diversify income today: *"In the income structure [SONKO – auth.] last year, income-generating activities took the leading place. This is the criterion of large NGOs. Our income-generating activity is more than 50%. There are only a few such organizations in our region".*

Thus, the empirical data obtained during our research indicate the role played by grant financing of the activities of non-profit organizations that form the social services sector for citizens in need of support. The Russian Presidential Grants Fund accumulates funds for the allocation of grants from federal and regional budgets. In addition, SO NPOs actively participate in competitions for grants from private foundations, the study of which presents the prospect of further research on the role of grant support to these organizations.

Keywords: Grants, financing, Presidential Grants Fund, socially oriented NGOs, social services.

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INVESTIGATION OF MARITAL ADJUSTMENT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES İN TERMS OF SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

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Problems of the Study

Harmony between couples in marriage is an important issue in terms of the continuity of the family institution and the maintenance of healthy relationships. When the literature is examined, it is seen that issues such as marriage and harmony, satisfaction, marital commitment, conflict and conflict resolution are often discussed together, as well as which issues affect continuity in marital relationships and which issues are tried to be examined with various variables.

Marital adjustment means that individuals live in harmony and adapt to each other according to changing/transforming life conditions (Gümüşdaş & Ejder, 2016). According to Spanier (1976), marital adjustment is a dynamic process and it is a changing process that can be evaluated on a scale from a harmonious process to a disharmonious process at a certain moment in time. It is stated that as a result of disruption of harmony or conflict in marriage, both individuals and families and as a result, society may become unhealthy (Stack & Eshleman, 1998). In cases where marital harmony in the family is impaired and/or weakened, conflicts may occur between spouses. While conflict is perfectly normal between spouses and families, the important thing is how to manage the conflict (Poyraz, 2018).

In the family, which has not only the function of having children, but also functions such as meeting emotional security-oriented psychological needs such as friendship, love, affection, etc., it is not expected that the harmonisation process between the spouses will always have a static structure in the marriage process due to its dynamic structure that can change. It is an indisputable fact that conflicts between spouses can also be observed in this harmonisation process that can be affected by many factors. In this context, in the family, which is seen as the foundation of a healthy society, it is important to examine marital relations by predicting the conflicts that may arise in the adaptation processes in marriage, the factors affecting them and conflict resolution styles, as it will positively affect the healthy development of the family. For this reason, the relationship between

the socio-demographic characteristics of married couples and their marital adjustment and marital conflict resolution styles constitutes the problem of the study.

Aims

In this study, it was aimed to examine marital adjustment and conflict resolution styles of couples in the marital process. The research was carried out with quantitative research method and survey technique. In this context, the problem statements of the research were determined as follows (Karasar, 2014; Bursal, 2017).

* Is there a statistically significant relationship between marriage styles and years of marriage?

* Is there a statistically significant difference between individuals' gender and their marital/relationship adjustment and conflict resolution styles?

* Is there a statistically significant difference between the frequency of individuals sharing their feelings and thoughts with their spouses and their marital/relationship adjustment and conflict resolution styles?

* Is there a statistically significant difference between individuals' economic status and their marital/relationship adjustment and conflict resolution styles?

* Is there a statistically significant relationship between individuals' education level and their marital/relationship adjustment and conflict resolution styles?

* Is there a statistically significant relationship between individuals' marriage styles and their marital/relationship adjustment and conflict resolution styles?

Methodology

The population of the study consists of married individuals residing in the province of Sakarya, and the sample consists of a total of 500 married individuals, 264 women and 236 men, who reside in various districts of the central district of Sakarya, and who are volunteer participants selected according to the condition of being married and living with their spouses. Personal Information Form created by the researchers, Conflict Resolution Styles Scale and Revised Couple Adjustment Scale were used as measurement tools in the research.

The Personal Data Form consists of 14 items and includes questions to determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The Conflict Resolution Styles Scale was developed by Özen, Salman-Engin and Sakallı-Uğurlu (2016) as a result of two separate studies to measure the conflict resolution styles of couples. Scoring of the scale is done only depending on the sub-dimensions and the total score of the scale is not taken. Getting a high score indicates that the frequency of use of the conflict resolution style that constitutes the sub-dimension has

increased. Getting a low score means that the conflict resolution style that constitutes that sub-dimension is used infrequently. Another scale used in the study was the Revised Couple Adjustment Scale (RAS) developed by Bayraktaroğlu and Çakıcı (2017). The scale developed to evaluate the relationship quality of married or cohabiting couples in marriage or similar bilateral relations; 7. 8. 9. 10. items are scored in reverse and the highest score that can be obtained from the scale is 70. In addition, the score obtained according to the scale scoring shows the relationship quality (Bayraktaroğlu & Çakıcı, 2017). The study was collected through face-to-face interviews with individuals residing in the central district of Sakarya province, reached by snowball method, between October 2022 and November 2022. The obtained data were analyzed with SPSS 22 program.

Findings

As a result of the research, a statistically significant relationship was found between the type of marriage and the year of marriage (p<0,05). According to this, it was determined that couples with 0-5 years of marriage were more likely to marry by dating, while those with 16 years or more of marriage were more likely to marry by arranged marriage. There is no statistically significant difference between marital adjustment according to gender (p>0,05). However, there is a statistically significant difference between conflict resolution styles according to gender (p<0.05). Women use both positive and negative conflict styles more than men.

There is no statistically significant difference between the frequency of sharing feelings and thoughts with their spouses and marital/relationship adjustment (p>0,05). Conversely, there is a statistically significant difference between the frequency of sharing feelings and thoughts with their spouses and conflict resolution styles (p<0.05). People who share their feelings and thoughts with their spouses have higher positive conflict resolution styles, while people who never/rarely share their feelings and thoughts with their spouses have higher negative conflict resolution styles.

There is no statistically significant difference between the economic status of the individuals and their marital/relationship adjustment (p>0,05). This significant difference was found only in the Negative Conflict Resolution Style Subdimension (p<0,05). Accordingly, the negative conflict resolution styles of couples whose economic income is minimum wage and below are higher.

There is no statistically significant difference between the educational status and marital/relationship adjustment (p>0,05). However, there is a statistically significant difference between educational status and conflict resolution styles (p<0,05). While those whose educational level is below high school have more negative conflict resolution styles, those whose educational level is high school and above have more positive conflict resolution styles.

There is no statistically significant difference between the marriage styles and marital/relationship adjustment (p>0,05). On the contrary, there is a statistically significant

difference between marriage styles and conflict resolution styles (p<0,05). Individuals who eloped/are eloped while getting married have more negative conflict resolution styles than those who dated before marriage. Individuals who had a dating period before marriage had more positive conflict resolution styles than those who had an arranged marriage.

Conclusion

As a result of the research, marital adjustment and conflict resolution styles of couples were examined according to sociodemographic variables in the relevant sample. Inadequate resolution skills and styles in the conflict process in marriage may require the spouses to need professional support from outside. Although social workers, who are part of this professional support system, "already" carry out family counselling practices, especially with disadvantaged families experiencing adaptation problems and various problems, they may also find themselves in the middle of the debate on "who should primarily carry out family counselling". Social workers carry out divorce process and family counselling practices on issues such as communication and relationships within the family, ensuring a healthy family environment, evaluation of the roles and obligations of spouses with each other and in the family regarding the care and responsibility of children and reorganisation of family relationships. In these studies, social work discipline and social workers function as an important part of the process with their roles such as advocate, educator and case manager as well as their practices and interventions.

On the other hand it is thought that protective and preventive programmes and practices with educational and developmental content that will support married couples on issues such as adaptation, conflict resolution, style and skills should be developed and the existing ones should be reviewed and revised periodically. Also, methods for ensuring and increasing participation in premarital education programmes should be reviewed.

Keywords: Family, marriage, marital adjustment, conflict resolution styles.

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OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN UNORGANISED SECTOR WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCES TO COBBLERS

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In India, Ministry of Labour and Employment, under Unorganised Workers Social Security Act 2008 (UWSS Act 2008), defines Unorganised Worker as 'a home based worker, a self – employed worker or a wage worker in the organised sector who is not covered by any of the Acts mentioned in the Schedule– II of the Act'.

In order to bring them on to the main stream economy and provide opportunity, Government of India has launched various schemes, viz, 1) eShram – for registration of unorganized workers; 2) Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maa-dhan – for old age protection; 3) Aan Admi Beema Yojana – for social security cover. According to the data by this ministry, 93% of the total work force in India are unorganised workers. As per the economic survey 2021-22, about 44 crore (440 million) were unrecognised workers during 2019 – 20 of which about 147 million are in Manufacturing and Service sector and about 28.96 crores were registered under the eShram portal. As per the UWSS Act 2008, all registered workers will get a smart identity card with a unique number which will provide the worker with easy access to information and government schemes.

Across the world, unorganised workers face problems of low wages, work hazards, lack of proper work place, safety issues and harassment. International Labour Organisation has convened policies in order to ensure economic security, equal opportunities and wellbeing of labours.

Karnataka is a state in the Republic of India. Government of Karnataka started Dr Babu Jagjivan Ram Leather Industries Corporation Ltd in 1976 to support leather industry and the corporation is known with the brand name LIDKAR. It provides schemes and training programmes to worker in the leather industry, which includes cobblers, to improve skills for the growth and poverty alleviation.

This indicates that, there are concerted efforts at various levels to address issues concerning unorganised workers. However, still there is ample opportunities and challenges to create better socio – economic conditions

Methodology

In this study an attempt is made to understand the plight of Cobblers, who are a part of unorganised work force. Cobbling is one of the world's oldest professions that still exists. Cobblers earn their living by repairing and restoring footwear. Some of them may even make and sell new footwear. They usually work out of small shelters on streets. Some of them also move across different streets to find customers.

A structured questionnaire was prepared to collect data on demographic, socio-economic and profession related variables. Different localities in Bangalore, the capital city of Karnataka, were selected based on the judgement of finding a good population of cobblers. Training Enumerates collected the information from the respondents after obtaining their consent. The results of the survey presented in this paper is based on the responses by 71 Cobblers from 15 different localities in and around Bangalore.

Major Findings

- Among the respondents, 68% are males and 60% are in the age group of 35 to 50 years. 90% of the sample respondents are physically fit and only 10% of respondents are differently abled.

- 28% are illiterates, 38% have Higher Primary education (up to 7th standard) and 6% have Higher Secondary (up to 12th standard). 15% of respondents are in the profession for more than 20 years. However, given an opportunity, only 13 % of respondents with primary or higher primary education would like to take up other professions, 69% do not wish to change their profession.

- Majority (90%) of respondents are from Hindu community, of which 77% are from Scheduled Cast and 18% from Scheduled Tribe.

- 38% are migrants of which 80% are from Tamilnadu, a neighboring state and 95% are living in Bangalore for more than 10 years, 10 % are living in Bangalore for more than one generation

- A good 91 % are married individuals of which 42% have 2 children and 31% have 3 or more children. About 25% of children belonging to these families neither study nor work, 42% study and 32% are engaged in work. It is interesting to note that, 80% of respondents would not like to see their children take up Cobbling as profession.

- 100% of respondents have Aadhar Card, a social Identity card mandated for all Indians and 91% have Ration card which will help families to get groceries at subsidized price.

- 72% of respondents have shelters in their place of work, however, only 50 % of the total respondents have permanent shelter. Among those who have shelter, 18% got it through government schemes, 28% got through Dalit welfare associations and remaining are self-made.

- 94% of respondents are full time workers and have no alternative work/earning. 90% of them work 6 to 7 days in a week. 5% cobblers earn less than 100 per day, 24% earn Rs 100 to 300, 45% earn Rs 300 to 500 and 26% earn more than Rs 500 per day. 20% save up to Rs 500 a month, 20% save Rs 500 to 1000 a month and 16% save more than Rs 1000 a month. However, only 17% save in Bank and 31% save at home.

- Only 25% Know about the identity cards issued to individuals engaged in self-employment in unorganized sector and also have one. A good 65% neither know nor have. Remaining are doubtful about such facility. 50% of those who have identity card have got it through the local leaders and only about 8% of them paid money to get it.

- 31% of respondents are aware and have Certificates issued to Cobblers of which 72 % got it through local leaders, only about 8% of them have sent money to get one. 65% are not aware and do not have the certificates.

- 47% of respondents are members of some association, usually based on the caste or profession, to support individuals such as Cobblers, who are a part of unorganized sector. However, 80% of these associations never had a meeting to discuss and support members.

- Thanks to the government efforts for Digital Transformation that India witnessed during COVID. 87% of cobblers have a bank account and 90 % of them even use Unified Payment Interface (UPI) which helps them to transact also through QR code. Among those who use UPI, 33% use PhonePay, 7% use GooglePay and 7% use PayTM. Others have opted not to answer.

- State Government has made schemes to provide: 1) Training; 2) Self-employment opportunities; 3) Development of Basic amenities and 4) Help individuals with Product/ Service promotion. However, only 1% of respondents are aware of these schemes and have derived benefit.

The findings of the study clearly indicates that the cobblers are not aware of the government schemes which target unorganised sector workers and their benefits. There is a need for intervention from government and non-government organizations to spread awareness and help deserving individuals get benefit of available schemes. This will not only help individuals in unorganised sector but contributes positively to the economy.

Keywords: Unorganised sector, Inclusive growth, Social intervention, Public policy.

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SOCIAL WORK WITH DIVERSE COMMUNITY GROUPS: STRATEGIES, CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONS

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Social workers are increasingly facing a range of diverse community groups during their professional engagements. This paper delves into the methods, difficulties and outcomes of social work practiced within these diverse scenarios. Recognizing diversity as spanning facets like culture, ethnicity, age, gender and socioeconomic standing, this paper scrutinizes the significance of cultural proficiency in fostering connections and building confidence. It tackles obstacles such as language hurdles, cross-cultural misconceptions and the intricate interplay of intersecting identities. It also explores ethical considerations and the repercussions for policy shaping and program formulation. Through case studies and instances, it underscores successful interventions, underscoring the continuous necessity for professional advancement in this ever-evolving sphere.

Introduction

As communities grow increasingly diverse, social workers come across an extensive range of community collectives characterized by unique cultural, ethnic and socioeconomic origins. This diversity underscores the requirement for a refined and culturally attuned methodology in the realm of social work practice (Adams *et al*., 2018). In the context of our contemporary globalized landscape, social workers hold a pivotal position in catering to the distinctive requirements of diverse community clusters. The escalating heterogeneity observed in societies underlines the imperative for an all-encompassing comprehension of strategies, challenges and outcomes that underpin the effectiveness of social work practice.

Understanding Diversity in Community Groups

Diversity encompasses a multitude of dimensions, spanning culture, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, age and socioeconomic status. Achieving cultural competence is pivotal in ensuring effective engagement with such diverse populations. Social workers require strategies to cultivate trust, forge connections and communicate proficiently. It's imperative for them to actively engage community members in the decision-making process, cultivating a sense of ownership and empowerment (Brager & Holloway, 2018).

Strategies for Effective Engagement

Effectively engaging diverse community clusters necessitates a blend of sensitivity and adaptability. Constructing trust, employing culturally pertinent communication and integrating participatory methodologies empower these communities, thereby amplifying the efficacy of social work interventions (Brager & Holloway, 2018). Continual professional growth and training are essential for social workers to elevate their cultural competence and hone their aptitude for collaborating with diverse communities.

Challenges in Working with Diverse Community Groups

Working with diverse groups presents challenges in the form of communication obstacles, cultural misconceptions and the intricate concept of intersectionality. Intersectionality underscores the convergence of identities and how various layers of diversity interact, resulting in distinctive lived experiences (Crenshaw, 1989; Goffman, 1963).

Cultural Competence and Ethical Considerations

Cultural competence entails comprehending and valuing a wide array of belief systems, practices and norms. Ethical considerations revolve around delivering services that are impartial, respectful and equitable to diverse populations (Banks, 2012).

Engaging in social work practice with diverse community groups contributes to shaping policy development aimed at meeting the requirements of diverse populations. This underscores the significance of designing programs with cultural sensitivity to ensure their efficacy (Mullen & Bacon, 2004; Bhatta, 2020).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the effective practice of social work with diverse community groups demands a seamless integration of cultural proficiency, characterized by an astute understanding of various cultural norms and sensitivities. This integration is reinforced by the implementation of comprehensive strategies that encompass tailored approaches, proactive engagement and adaptive problem-solving techniques. Ethical deliberations play a pivotal role in navigating the intricate web of values, beliefs and power dynamics that arise when working with diverse populations, ensuring that services are consistently impartial, just and equitable.

Moreover, the evolving and dynamic nature of diversity further underscores the perpetual relevance of this subject within the expansive realm of social work. As societies continue to undergo transformation, embracing new cultural paradigms and expressions, the intricate interactions between cultural identities, socioeconomic factors and lived experiences continually

reshape the landscape in which social work operates. Thus, the enduring significance of adeptly addressing the complexities of diverse community groups reverberates through time, forging an ongoing commitment to attaining cultural insight, refining methodologies and upholding ethical standards within the multifaceted tapestry of social work practice.

Keywords: Diverse community groups, cultural competence, inclusive strategies, community engagement, cultural sensitivity.

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THE ROLE OF INTERMEDIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN THE HOUSING TRANSITION OF ROMA AND SINTI MINORITIES. COMPARISON BETWEEN TWO CASES-STUDY IN ITALY

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Introduction and research purpose

In early 2023, the Council of Europe reprimanded Italy because "the negative portrayal of Roma and Sinti remains widespread in general perception, including social media". This leads to a reflection about the implementation of international, national and local regulations designed to improve the conditions of these minorities. The paper intends to investigate the premises and results of two processes of housing transition and to describe a comparison between the case of some Sinti families in the municipality of Bologna and the case of Roma community in the municipality of Rome. The research has three main objectives: 1) retrace the legal process of two housing transition which was influenced by the political alternation of different parties; 2) identify specific similarities and differences from involved social workers in the management of this very complicated project; 3) try to suggest consistent experiments and co-planning methods to guarantee efficient public policies in a user-centered perspective.

Bologna

The first step to adapt to European legislation was carried out by the Emilia Romagna in 2015. The Regional Law 11/2015 defined objectives and strategies to comply with European standards and started an interdisciplinary work to guarantee access to services and to suppress all forms of discrimination. The commitment of the region translates into the drafting of a document that sets some specific goals, such as the overcoming of the so-called "rest areas": informal and temporary spaces, that hosted some Sinti families. Finally, the operational steps for the housing transition are formally launched with the municipal program for the identification of so-called "micro-areas". The passage from rest-area to micro-area provides to give Sinti families a parking space for their caravans, campers etc. and then to initiate education, training and employment projects. The need to overcome housing precariousness has been experienced above all for the Sinti community, which lives on the outskirts of Bologna, precisely in Via Erbosa. It was necessary to dismantle the rest-area in Via Erbosa due to the poor hygienic-sanitary conditions and the difficulty of carrying out maintenance work on the surrounding spaces.

The rest-area in Via Erbosa was born as a spontaneous settlement after the Sinti families of the place had been hit by a violent act, deciding to move. The municipality has launched the project to overcome the rest-area by identifying the most suitable areas to host families and the criteria for assignments. A few months before the move, one of the areas identified for construction of micro-area is classified as unsuitable. The municipal institution decides to renounce the construction of a micro-area, establishing as an alternative the transfer to houses for the families who would have remained outside the assignments. This decision has two very important consequences.

The first was that the Sinti community is beginning to develop a certain hostility for various reasons: risk of disintegration of families and fear of having difficulty in reaching essential services, especially for the elderly, because the micro-areas are located in peripheral areas of the city. This could make it difficult to implement the other fundamental steps to overcome socio-economic vulnerability: access to health care, school education and job training. The second was that the residents of the areas adjacent to the micro area formed a "No micro-areas for Roma e Sinti" committee and organized a demonstration to protest the municipality's decision to relocate Sinti to their neighborhood. These actions of a racist nature confirm legitimate fears raised during the interviews with Sinti men and women. In August 2022 families were transferred to the two micro-areas.

Rome

In February 2010 the mayor of Rome cleared the area where it was a gypsy camp called Casilino 900, one of the largest gypsy camps in Europe which hosted 600 people. After the removal, Roma were assigned to some informal villages. Already after a year, all the weaknesses of this housing solution emerged. In one of the new villages, located in Via Candoni, there is a strong overcrowding problem: the population has increased from 600 to 900 after the clearance of Casilino 900. Furthermore, there is also a problem of coexistence between ethnic groups. The Romanians, veterans of the structure, complained about the latest arrivals, all Bosnians. Even in the village of Via Salone, the situation is similar: after the eviction of Casilino 900, the inhabitants have become 1200: 500 new arrivals, Bosniaks and Montenegrins. The municipality also demonstrated negligence by renting to the Roma of the former Casilino, caravans in poor condition and in the areas of the villages the sewers often do not work. The social workers declare that they are unable to carry out their work because the new structure of camp does not guarantee an equal relationship between actors: the Roma, who live in gypsy camp, stay in a dimension of institutional dependence and are subject to controls and tacit forms of repression. The Roma have developed a deep aversion to the institution because the promises of an interim solution, which lasted 13 years, were disregarded. On 24 July 2023, the municipality of Rome launched a call for tenders aimed at associations and social organizations interested in involvement in the project of overcoming the

villages. The future of the Casilino 900 gypsy camp is yet to be written and it would be very important to investigate the intermediation role of social workers.

Methodology

The used methodology was mixed-methods. In Bologna, was carried out a one-month period of participatory observation carried out in the rest area of Via Erbosa in May 2019, especially during visits by operators in order to collect information such as: the types of homes, the number of resident households, job position, cases of taking over by social services. The participatory observation was integrated with some individual interviews. Individual interviews with members of the Sinti families and with social workers were important to study and to test orientation towards the housing transition and to extrapolate impressions and opinions. For the case of Rome, the literature on the issue has been collected to receive information about the dismantling of the Casilino 900. The individual interviews with social workers are important to investigate the composition of the population, the status of the villages, the housing solutions used, the existing services and sanitary conditions.

Outcomes and conclusions

The survey allows to detects some potentialities and some criticalities for the future of housing policies aimed at Roma and Sinti minorities, understanding similarities and differences between involved social workers in two presented cases. In Bologna, the institutional negotiation process that preceded the housing transition included meetings, work tables, multidisciplinary équipe in which institutional actors and social workers participated. In Rome, the institutions resorted to forced removal of gypsy camp, preceded by acts of sabotage such as cutting off electricity.

In both cases, institutions could have enhanced the role of intermediation of social workers and organizations. Political actors could have to plan exploratory meetings and they also could have proposed strategies for harmonization with institutional needs through dedicated sessions of co-design with social workers, who know the specific requests of Roma e Sinti families. The range of action of social workers remains, however, influenced by the predispositions of Roma and Sinti families and above all, by the attitude of the two municipalities which set the perimeter of the specific autonomy of non-institutional bodies. The municipality of Bologna has shown a partial interest in not affecting the cultural freedom of Sinti families, by providing the allocation of simple space for parking where they could stay with their caravans. The city of Rome, however, has provided solutions without overcoming the precarious housing and the logic of the nomad camp. In fact, some of the Roma of the camp ex-Casilino have requested to be transferred to their homes,

giving up caravans: a sign that the condition of equipped villages was not good at all. The limits of both negotiation processes derive, above all, from the lack of agency of Roma and Sinti minorities within society, which produces a systematic lack of recognition also by the institutions themselves. A rethinking of housing solutions for Roma and Sinti minorities is desirable. The policies designed for Roma and Sinti seem to be affected by a sort of "culture of the temporary", without real long-term planning to overcome the socio-economic vulnerability of these minorities.

Keywords: Social work, housing transition, Roma and Sinti minorities, public policies.

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THE EFFECT OF CAREER ANXIETY ON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL DECISION MAKING

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Profession is defined as an important tool that constitutes a significant part of an individual's life, enables them to fulfill their vital roles and determines their quality of life and social respect (Coşgun, 2019; Turan & Kayıkçı, 2019). Therefore, career choice forms a critical process that determines an individual's life career planning and should be emphasized. If an individual's career planning is not aligned with their life preferences, it is likely to cause discomfort in later periods and will directly impact their life career (Öztemel, 2012).

The adolescent period, corresponding to high school age, constitutes a decisive period in terms of individuals' identity development, the formation of their professional identity, and their decision-making regarding their future profession (Aydın, 2019; Gülbahçe, 2009). Simultaneously, it is important for individuals to plan their lives and determine their life standards (Şeker & Kaya, 2019). During the high school years when adolescents conduct environmental research on professions, discover their talents and interests, and ultimately make a career choice, they strive to fulfill a critical developmental task, such as career choice (Rowland, 2004).

In adolescence, career development is related to many aspects of the adolescent's development process, such as cognitive development, identity development, educational goals, and objectives (Staf *et al*., 2009). According to Ginzberg's developmental theory, this process, which is a transitional period, begins to realize the responsibilities that career choice will bring by recognizing interests, abilities and values (Siyez, 2011). In this phase, corresponding to the research stage of Super's (1983) developmental stages, adolescents are expected to make a career choice by discovering their own interests and abilities and understanding the characteristics of the profession. If students cannot fulfill their career development tasks during this period, making a correct and rational decision becomes more challenging (Aydın-Orhan & Ünaltır, 2014).

During the career choice period, individuals are observed to face difficulties in self-discovery, researching professions, identifying suitable professions for themselves, and making decisions about a profession (Öksüz & Karalar, 2016). In the process of career development, while students try to decide on their career orientation, dream about and create ideals for their profession, factors such as family expectations, frequently changing education systems, curriculum changes,

changes in university entrance exams, academic success, desire to make a decision compatible with interests, abilities and personal qualities and job opportunities can lead to negative feelings in the decision-making processes (Çetin-Gündüz & Nalbantoğlu-Yılmaz, 2016; Pisarik *et al.*, 2017). Anxiety is one of these negative feelings.

When reviewing the literature, it is observed that studies related to career anxiety are generally conducted with university students, but there are also studies related to adolescents. Agun, Işılay-Üçok and Aydın-Küçük (2021) have identified the factors that cause career anxiety in employees in the settlement and maintenance period of their careers and the coping methods they use through their study (Göncü-Akbaş & Okutan, 2020; Çalı & Doğar, 2021).

In line with this general aim, the relationship between some demographic variables (gender, type of school, grade level) and vocational decision-making and career anxiety has been examined and the power of career anxiety in predicting vocational decision-making has been determined as a sub-goal. The study group of the research consists of a total of 449 students, including 146 males (32.5%) and 303 females (67.5%) who continue their education in different high schools in Konya city center and districts. The research data were obtained using the "Personal Information Form" prepared by the researchers, the "Career Anxiety Scale" developed by Çetin-Gündüz and Nalbantoğlu-Yılmaz (2016) and the "Vocational Decision-Making Inventory" developed by Çakır (2004). Parametric statistical techniques such as t-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), Tukiye test, correlation and regression analysis were used in the analysis of the data.

Keywords: Career, career anxiety, career decision making, high school students.

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RESEARCH ON GROUP WORK TO IMPROVE RESILIENCE OF RETURNING YOUTH

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In recent years, under the influence of China's rural revitalization strategy and the policy of returning to their hometowns to start their own businesses, a large number of young people have returned to China and are in a disadvantaged position. In the face of the group consensus of "big urbanization" among contemporary Chinese youths, the returning youths have many problems at the psychological level. A large number of studies have shown that resilience has an important impact on vulnerable groups. This paper tries to explore the impact of resilience level on returnee youths, and from an ecosystem theoretical perspective, utilizing group work methodology, it is found that the resilience level of returnee youths can be improved by constructing an integrative mechanism of diversified support from the family, peer relationship, and the community, etc. The policy level should pay attention to the construction of the returnee youths. We should pay attention to building the ecological assets of returning youth at the policy level, create a community atmosphere of caring for returning youth at the community level, establish a good peer relationship network, and focus on parenting education at the family level to enhance parents' social support for their children. The ecosystem should be integrated to enhance resilience and help returnee youth to reduce their anxiety.

Keywords: Returning youth, resilience, ecosystems theory.

MEDIA'S ROLE TO PROMOTE SOCIAL WORK PRACTICES IN NATURAL CALAMITIES IN PAKISTAN

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Throughout the world, communities have continually faced significant obstacles as a result of natural catastrophes, necessitating prompt reactions and assistance for the impacted people. In times of great urgency and severity, the functions of disaster charity and social work assume significant importance. These practices not only provide immediate alleviation, but also contribute to long-term rehabilitation and the development of community resilience. Mass media plays a crucial role in this equation, since it has the capacity to not only disseminate information but also to effectively allocate resources and motivate individuals to take action.

Mass Media and Natural Calamities. A Global Perspective

Global media channels, which include both conventional and digital sources, have an unprecedented level of power in shaping public opinions and influencing individual actions. The role of media in promoting disaster philanthropy and social work during natural disasters is undeniable. Media holds the potential to evoke empathy, disseminate crucial information, and mobilize resources, placing it at the forefront of disaster response efforts. However, the exercise of this influence necessitates a responsible approach, one that takes into account both the immediate needs of disaster-affected communities and the prolonged challenges they confront on their journey to recovery.

The capacity to rapidly access extensive audiences has been successfully used for global disaster relief and the promotion of philanthropic endeavours. According to Tierney *et al.* (2006), the presentation of reports that portray humanitarian situations, use emotive imagery and include tales of resilience have the potential to elicit empathy and mobilize people, organizations, and governments to actively participate in disaster relief endeavours and social work. The global media plays a significant role in raising awareness of catastrophes on a global scale, rallying support and highlighting the efforts of relief organizations.

While the media has considerable promise in facilitating catastrophe charity and social work, it is not without its limits. The continuous and rapid flow of news cycles, coupled with the emphasis on sensationalism, may lead to a shallow examination of the intricacies involved in long-term recovery happenings (Oxfam, 2015). Moreover, the level of media coverage tends to diminish

as the initial sense of urgency around a tragedy diminishes, so diverting focus away from the continuous difficulties that communities face in their recovery process. The difficulty of maintaining a delicate equilibrium between prompt reporting and continuous coverage persists as an on-going endeavour.

Disaster Philanthropy and Media in Pakistan

In the context of Pakistan, a nation characterized by a high susceptibility to recurrent seismic activities, inundations and many other forms of natural calamities, the media assumes a pivotal function in moulding public perspectives and exerting an impact on collective reactions. The expeditiousness of news coverage facilitates the swift distribution of information pertaining to the effects of disasters and the needs for relief efforts (Ali & Ahmad, 2017). Collaborations between media entities and humanitarian organizations often enhance the efficacy of fundraising campaigns, volunteer recruitment efforts and resource allocation. The media in Pakistan plays a crucial role in facilitating the connection between people' desire to contribute and the tangible channels via which their efforts might be realized.

It is pertinent to mention that the media environment in Pakistan has similarities to worldwide patterns, as it demonstrates a proactive engagement in response to natural catastrophes. Television broadcasts are often characterized by the prevalence of marathon telethons, charity drives and awareness initiatives, which effectively capture the attention of viewers and encourage their active participation in contributing to various causes. Organizations such as the Edhi Foundation, Al-Khidmat, Akhuwat and Saylani Welfare Trust have effectively used media channels to mobilize contributions and provide prompt aid. The research conducted by Khan (2019) brought attention to the notable impact of media on the mobilization of money after the 2010 floods. It emphasized the mutually beneficial connection between media and disaster relief efforts.

The objective of current research paper is to investigate the role and influence of Pakistan's media on the advancement of disaster philanthropy and social work in the context of natural catastrophes. The research also aims to examine the current strengths and limits of different media channels in performing this function.

Research Methodology

In order to conduct a thorough examination of the role and influence of media on the promotion of disaster philanthropy and social work, current study research study employs a mixed-methods approach. In this regard, a survey will be conducted to investigate the influence of media especially television channels to incline the general public towards social work, charity and

volunteering etc. Furthermore, the inclusion of qualitative in-depth interviews with officials from governmental and non-governmental relief organizations will provide a comprehensive perspective on the effects of media coverage on the social work practices of concerned organizations and authorities.

Expected Outcomes and Implications

This research endeavour anticipates several outcomes, including the identification of successful strategies employed by global and Pakistan's media to promote disaster philanthropy and social work. Furthermore, it aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the strengths and limitations of Pakistani media in their disaster-related coverage. The research findings are poised to have far-reaching implications for media organizations, disaster relief agencies, policymakers and other stakeholders. This research can pave the way for enhanced collaboration between media and relief organizations, ultimately leading to more effective disaster responses and recovery efforts.

Keywords: Social work practices, disaster philanthropy, natural calamities, Pakistan's Mass Media.

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PARA-PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK AND THE EFFECTIVE PARADIGM SHIFT TOWARDS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF BANGLADESH

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Para-professional social workers offer a wide range of social services in many countries across the world, but their roles and responsibilities are often not well defined or established within or between these locations. The availability of formal social services and social welfare structures, the professional and cultural stance on how marginalized people are to be supported and helped and other factors all influence/ depend on how paraprofessional social workers are trained, credentialed, supervised and evaluated (Interest Group on Paraprofessionals in the Social Service Workforce (IGPP), 2017). In Bangladesh, the history of professional social work education crossed more than 50 years. The recruitment of Government/NGO staff for any community development program only considers academic qualification from any discipline (sometimes with some relevant experience). Nothing preference has been given for the academic background and professional skills of social work. As on before social work education and NGO interventions, the philanthropic initiatives-mostly considering the socio-cultural & religious spirit, had effective evidence of the conventional community development especially in the field of disaster response, primary health care, drinking water and humanitarian services. NGO interventions contributed significant development but at the same time due the gaps in between the philanthropic and indigenous approaches and NGO initiatives, people's participation in program design to implementation is a big question. In case of promoting the NGO initiative and partial combination of professional social work, it has a big dilemma in terms of nurturing and promoting philanthropic social welfare and social capital for societal peace and harmony. As a result, the impact of sustainability and community ownership is still a frustrating issue in the development sector in Bangladesh. Throughout roundtable discussion with multilevel stakeholders i.e., NGO professional, govt. officials, academicians and extensive literature analysis, this study focus on the role of paraprofessionals towards paradigmatic shift from community development to sustainable development. This study found that professional social work is one of the best solutions to solve

the problem but unfortunately, there is a big gap between academicians and practitioners in Bangladesh while para-professional social work is one of the successful and tested initiatives for sustainable community development in many countries. This study tried to develop an outline for promoting Para-professional social work in Bangladesh.

Model for Developing Para-Professional Social Work in Bangladesh

Work Values
(According to Professional Social Work), Service, Social Justice, Values, Human Relationships, Integrity

These core values are inherent to the effectiveness of social work activities and programs. These core codes serve certain purposes.

Necessary Personal Skills
Empathetic, Patient, Organized, Persistent, Respectful, Open Minded, Flexible, Ethical/Moral

-Commitment to Preparing People for Participation
-Testing Values and Belief
-Promotion of Acceptance and Understanding

Process of development
Self-development, Group interaction, Social action

-includes behavior change, personal stances of young people, ownership of social issues, relating to others and reflecting on one's own experience. -includes mobilizing community support, discussing across caste/gender divides, creating an environment for open discussions and bringing the passion of young people to an issue.
-includes campaigns (for the visibility or inclusion of particular issues), demand for entitlements for oneself as well as others (e.g) distribution of

Pre-Job Training, Post-Job Training, & Regular Assessment Process

Equity, Diversity and Interdependence

Review, Participatory Evaluation, re visit Project Design, Final Evaluation, Next Course of Action

Ensure Community Empowerment

Figure 1: Proposed Model for Developing Para-Professional Social Work in Bangladesh.

Informally, a wide number of Para-professional development workers have already been working in Bangladesh in the NGO sector. They are capable enough to work to solve the socio-economic problems but due to absence of professional social work training, lack of professional relationship between academicians and practitioners, it remains as a dream not reality in Bangladesh. Considering the SDGs target, indicators and time bound, need to scale up paraprofessional social work for effective, significant and evidence-based initiative. Without meaningful coordination, communication, mutual trust and shared vision between Professional Social Workers (Academicians), Practitioners, Development agencies, CBOs, NGOs including public and private sector, it is really difficult to achieve SDG 2030 Agenda. Based on the issues, this study also recommends a model of Institutional Mechanism to Practitioner Mechanism for paraprofessional social work practice and development.
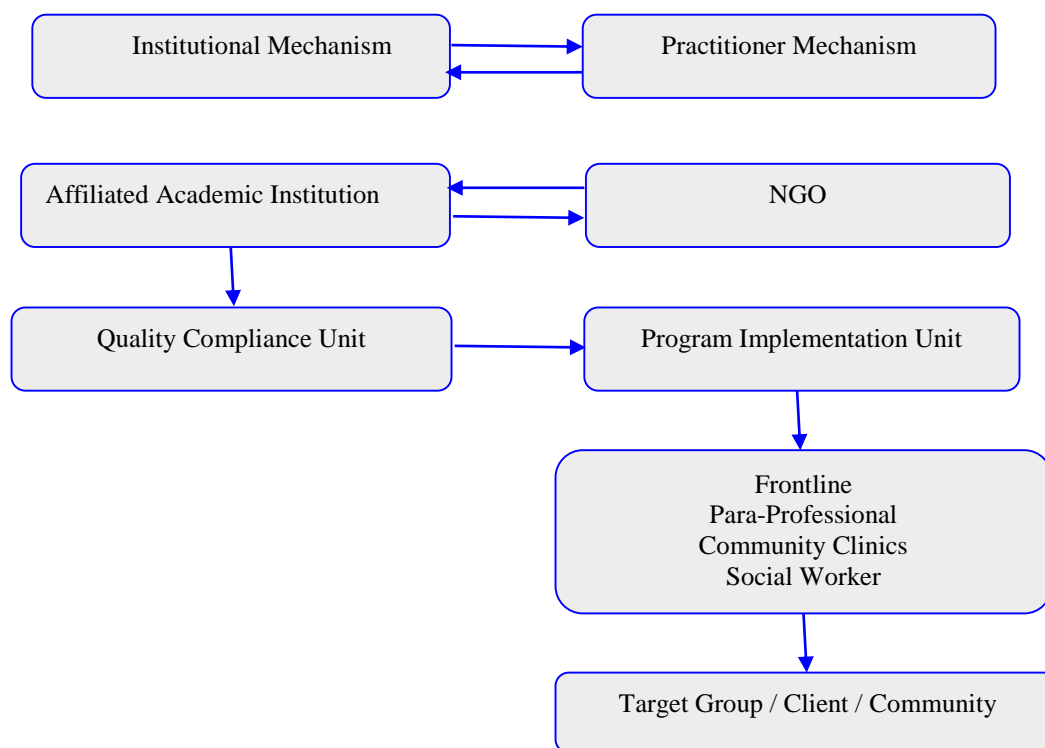
Figure 2. Model of Institutional Mechanism to Practitioner Mechanism.

This is the high time for Bangladesh, to initiate Para-professional social work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) unless the initiatives for achieving SDGs will remain challenging to be finished.

Keywords: Professional social work, Para-professional social work, Community Development, SDGs.

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SECTION V

Substance Abuse, Addiction and Mental Health

COMPLEXITY AND COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH BUILDING IN CRISIS TIMES: IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL RESEARCHERS[1]

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The complex ways a local economy is organised is not often mentioned in mental health research undertaken by social researchers (Naik *et al.*, 2019). The structure of societies through social interactions, norms, and institutions affects population health and requires multiple forms of intersectoral policy action (Solar, Irwin, 2010).

Social researchers are more likely to examine the mental health effects of national trends and policies or individual-level treatments and interventions. When local area variation is considered, it is typically neighbourhood characteristics like population density, crime, or unemployment rate, rather than local systems, values, and activities (ibid).

The polycrisis of Covid-19 crisis and the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis continue to affect our understanding of human systems and the impacts of these multiple crises on people's lives call for new conceptual tools which are available and accessible to social work and social researchers.

Complex systems thinking calls for a new way of thinking about real-life problems as experienced by diverse populations within multiple ecosystems that are characteristic by interacting elements and a multiplicity of actors.

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[1]Some of the background literature in this paper has been previously published in The Lancet as a Comment. However, the discussion of complexity theory, implications and considerations for social work and social researchers are unpublished and could possibly feature as a full paper in the journal Social Issues.

Complex systems can be challenging both to action and evaluation in public health (Rutter *et al.*, 2017). This emerging approach in social and public health research provides a space for us to pay adequate attention to the ideas, interests, relationships, power of actors and institutions in community mental health building.

The core concepts and epistemological contradictions of complexity theory in relation to community mental health are outlined, and implications for practice, policymaking and research are discussed. Additionally, we draw on own experiences as social theorist and researchers in integrating complexity theory to surface better understandings of complex social phenomenon such as health inequalities and violence.

Keywords: Complex systems, community mental health, social researchers, complexity theory, public health.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PERSONALITY OF SOCIAL WORKERS

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The professional activity of a social worker, regardless of the type of work performed, belongs to the group of professions with increased moral responsibility on the health and life of individuals, population groups and society as a whole.

The professional qualities of a social worker are considered as a manifestation of the psychological characteristics of the individual, necessary for the assimilation of special knowledge, skills and abilities, as well as to achieve a substantially acceptable efficiency in professional work.

Constant stressful situations in which a social worker finds himself in the process of complex social interaction with a client, constant insight into the essence of the client's social problems, personal insecurity and other moral and psychological factors have a negative impact on the health of a social worker.

Personal qualities of a social worker

Social work is a complex process that requires solid knowledge in the field of management theory, economics, psychology, sociology, pedagogy, medicine, jurisprudence, etc. Its effectiveness largely depends on the social worker himself, his skills, experience, personal characteristics and qualities (Guslyakova, 1995, Nikitin, 2002).

Personality is a concept developed to reflect the social nature of a person, considering him as a subject of socio-cultural life, defining him as a carrier of an individual principle, self-revealing in the contexts of social relations, communication and objective activity.

By "personality" is meant: 1) a human individual as a subject of relations and conscious activity ("face" - in the broad sense of the word); or 2) a stable system of socially significant features that characterize an individual as a member of a particular society or community. Although these two concepts - the person as the integrity of a person (lat. persona) and personality as its social and psychological appearance (lat. parsonalitas) - are terminologically quite distinguishable, they are sometimes used as synonyms (Bodalyov, 1995).

Vocational training of workers of any specialty is closely related to the problems of personality psychology. On the one hand, the characteristics of the employee's personality have a

significant impact on the process and results of vocational training and professional activity. On the other hand, the very formation of personality occurs in the course of professional training and further work (Barker, 1994; Kudashova, 2002; Shapiro, 1992).

The professional qualities of a social worker are considered as a manifestation of the psychological characteristics of the individual, necessary for the assimilation of special knowledge, skills and abilities, as well as to achieve a substantially acceptable efficiency in professional work (Barker, 1994; Shmeleva, 1997).

Professionally significant traits of the personality in socially oriented professions have their own specifics. The American psychologist J. Holland, who identified professional personality types, described such specifics of the personality. According to J. Holland, the representatives of such types have social skills and need social contacts. The essential traits of the personality are interest in people, the desire to educate, the ability to compromise and being engaged with its activity. Representatives of the type solve problems, rely mainly on emotions and feelings and they have ability to communicate efficiently. They are somewhat superficial, inaccurate, restless, experiencing deep inner tension (Shelyag, 1995).

To describe a social worker, one can choose the language of abilities as a projection of certain personality traits that meet the requirements of social activity and determine its success, perhaps as the following: the ability to listen to others; understand them; independence and creative way of thinking; quick and accurate orientation, organizational skills, moral qualities, etc (Nikitin, 2002; Pavlenok, 1999).

According to domestic researchers Kudryavtsev T.V. and Sukharev A.V. representatives of professions such as "man-to-man" are formulated the optimal set of personal qualities necessary for a social worker, such as responsibility, adherence to principles, observation, sociability, correctness (tact), intuition, personal adequacy in self-esteem and evaluation of others, the ability to self-education, optimism, mobility, flexibility, humanistic orientation of the personality, sympathy for the problems of other people, tolerance (Filippova, 2000; Firsov & Studenova, 2001).

In the same way, psychological "contraindications" to social work were revealed. These include: lack of interest in other people (selfishness), irascibility, harsh judgments, categoricalness, lack of concentration, inability to conduct a dialogue with an opponent, conflict, aggressiveness, inability to perceive someone else's point of view on an object, anxiety. It is necessary to pay special attention to these personal characteristics in connection with the fact that in social work they can be regarded as a personal deformation (Lotova, 1999; Polekhin, 2001).

The cause of professional deformation is not bad intentions or a conscious desire to harm the client, but unconscious and uncontrolled discrimination of the client, destroying optimal psychological contact (Markova, 1996).

Psychologists have identified six groups of the most important professional qualities of social workers

1. Professional competence: a high level of education and culture, competence in a wide range of significant issues.

2. Benevolent attitude towards people: kindness, love for people, sensitivity, a sense of compassion, a desire to help, sympathy for others.

An emotionally positive attitude towards people largely depends on the specific experience of this person, on the history of her relationships with people. The positive or negative experience of these relations unambiguously forms their corresponding system. Many psychologists believe that it is inappropriate for people with a strong distrust and hostility towards others to work in the social field.

3. Organizational and communication skills: high sociability, the ability to manage people, influence their positions and beliefs, the ability to inspire confidence and support them in difficult times.

Among the reasons for their professional fatigue, social workers themselves mention the inability to communicate, the rudeness of people, the inability to "close", i.e. defend, lack of understanding.

4. Neuropsychic endurance: efficiency, energy, initiative, perseverance in achieving goals.

The importance of neuropsychic stability in the work of a social worker is enormous, because they have to deal with a wide variety of people, sometimes not the best. It was neuropsychic overstrain that took first place in a survey of social workers about the causes of their fatigue.

5. Attitude towards oneself: the adequacy of ideas about one's personality, the ability to solve one's own problems, self-confidence, self-respect (self-esteem, self-criticism, identification, etc.). Studies show that often insecure people have a lot of their own problems, whose solution requires a lot of effort and a lot of time and therefore they are hardly psychologically capable and ready to solve other people's problems.

6. High moral and ethical level: disinterestedness, honesty, decency, responsibility, high morality.

The goal of any social work is to help the client find their own solution to a problem. A social worker enables a person to speak out, relieve tension, restore self-confidence and establish normal relationships with others; deal with pension issues; helps to connect with special consultants who will advise what kind of work he can do better, find such a job and so on.

Keywords: Social worker, personality psychology, professional qualities, professional deformation.

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ORGANIZATION OF SOCIAL WORK WITH YOUTH SUFFERING FROM ALCOHOL ADDICTION

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The scientific article deals with the issues of organizing social work with young people suffering from alcohol addiction. Alcoholism is excessive alcohol consumption, which has a detrimental effect on the health, well-being of people in society, accompanied by pathological dependence on mental, somatic and neurological diseases, as well as violations of various social functions of the patient. The article substantiates the sequence of preventive measures in the course of social work with persons suffering from alcohol addiction. Prevention of alcoholism among adolescents involves the formation of teetotal relationships. One of the ways to form a teetotal attitude among adolescents is the educational system against the upbringing of alcohol at school.

Alcoholism today is not only a medical or moral problem of individuals, it affects the health, well-being and safety of the population, its national development. Alcoholism is a tragedy not only of one family, but of society as a whole, which must be dealt with by joint efforts. Alcoholism now stands on a par with such common diseases as cardiovascular and oncological, and even surpasses them in economic and social damage.

Alcoholism is excessive alcohol consumption, which has a detrimental effect on the health, well-being of people in society, accompanied by pathological dependence on mental, somatic and neurological diseases, as well as violations of various social functions of the patient. Alcoholism is manifested in the fact that weak alcoholic beverages in most cases contain beer, dry wine, etc.it is alcohol addiction that develops with its use. As a result, alcoholism identifies symptoms: increased tolerance, hangover syndrome, loss of control over the amount drunk, decreased control over the situation, alcohol memory loss (Amnesia), The presence of drinking situations, impaired appetite, sleep disturbance, the emergence of anxiety and fear; decreased tolerance; personality degradation etc. The socio-cultural and material standard of living, biological and psychological factors play a decisive role in the formation of alcohol addiction:

Preventive measures in the course of social work with persons suffering from alcohol addiction include:

1) timely measures should be taken when organizing social work with persons suffering from alcohol aisilik. Such measures include, as far as possible, the Prevention of physical, psychological

or sociocultural conflicts between individuals and risk groups, taking care of maintaining a normal standard of living and health of people, closely assisting them in achieving their goals and revealing their inner potential.

Prevention of alcoholism among adolescents involves the formation of teetotal relationships. One of the ways to form a teetotal attitude among adolescents is the educational system against the upbringing of alcohol at school.

It is akin to psychological education and social work on alcohol education and upbringing at school: it should be aimed at the formation of an intolerant attitude towards them in the minds of adolescents and young people during the organization of social work in the field of psychological education as a whole system against alcohol education. Along with them, the disclosure of the negative impact of alcohol on the health of a person and the life of society as a whole, taking into account the age and individual psychological characteristics of young people, is carried out by teachers in schools by specialists against alcoholism (doctors, lawyers, sociologists etc.) invite to lectures; educating parents of students about alcohol education is among the main tasks of social workers.

Economic conditions, drinking customs, improper upbringing, the desire to imitate the elders, bad examples, anatomical and physiological features of the child and youth organism were all conditions determining the development of alcoholism at a young age. The main role in this, according to the majority of the authors, belonged to the false opinion deeply embedded in society about the "calming", "nutritious" effect of alcohol-containing products. The problem of drunkenness and alcoholism continues to be one of the most socially significant and relevant for our state.

This negative phenomenon causes both society as a whole and individual citizens enormous material and moral damage. The study of this issue has shown that not only drunkenness and alcoholism, but also beer alcoholism by the scale of its spread, the magnitude of economic, environmental, demographic and moral losses pose a serious threat to the stability and development of society, the health and well-being of the nation.

In order to solve this problem and reduce the socio-economic consequences of this phenomenon for the country, a State program of national actions for the prevention and overcoming of drunkenness and alcoholism for 2006-2010 has been developed.

The work of a psychologist on alcohol prevention among adolescents is complex and includes the following areas: individual study of adolescents, their social environment; identification of causes, prevention of alcoholism, organization of free time of adolescents, anti-alcohol education and education of adolescents, parents, school teachers. The forms and methods used in preventive work are questionnaires, surveys, conversations, lectures, trainings, games, etc.

Preventive measures are more effective if they include interaction with psychologists, medical professionals, law enforcement agencies, parents of teenagers, public organizations.

The comprehensive and targeted program for the prevention of alcoholism of adolescents in a comprehensive school is comprehensive, moving from informational methods to educational ones. This program shows: what specific social causes cause alcoholism, how individuals suffer from it and what steps can be taken to eliminate these causes; that both the person himself and the society in which he lives are almost equally responsible for the problems of individual health, and at the same time both the person and the society can take concrete steps towards changes that will serve to improve health.

The final results of the comprehensive target program "Say NO to alcohol" for the prevention of alcoholism are: the formation of self-awareness, the ability of a teenager to make the right choice for a healthy lifestyle; the formation of the ability to say "no", stand up for yourself; the formation of a negative attitude to alcohol in most adolescents; reducing the possibility of alcohol-containing substances, that is, it will be possible to keep some adolescents from addiction to alcohol; increased coverage of school students with sports clubs; improving the spiritual, moral, intellectual, creative potential of students; introducing traditions that promote and promote a healthy lifestyle of younger adolescents.

Alcoholism is a chronic disease characterized by a person's pathological need for alcohol. Alcohol is not only dangerous, but also an insidious enemy of man. Once in the body, he is in no hurry to leave it either on the day of drinking or in the following. Slowly, but surely, the green snake is accumulating its strength, as if waiting for a convenient moment to openly manifest itself. He does not hit immediately, but most often for sure. Children pay heavily for the abuse of alcohol by their parents.

The history of the fight against alcoholism also knew attempts to introduce a "dry law" on the territory of the country. All of them did not achieve their goal, because the presence of alcohol is not the only and not the main reason for the existence of alcoholism. The problem of overcoming drunkenness and alcoholism is the most complex, it includes economic, social, cultural, psychological, demographic, legal and medical aspects. Only taking into account all these aspects is its successful solution possible.

Various forms and directions of social work imply the involvement of alcoholism patients in voluntary treatment, patronage work among alcoholism patients, employment assistance, organization of cultural events, joint holding of various celebrations, maintaining business relationships with administrative departments of internal affairs and local commissions to combat

drunkenness and alcoholism, anti-alcohol propaganda and campaigning for a sober image life among the local population.

Keywords: Alcoholism, alcohol addiction, degradation, hangover syndrome, psychological awareness.

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SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTIONS FOR CHILD AND ADOLESCENT BEHAVIORAL ISSUES: A PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF EFFECTIVENESS

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This paper examines the effectiveness of social work interventions targeted at resolving behavioral disorders in children and adolescents from a psychological standpoint. Aggression, defiance, scholastic difficulties, and emotional disorders are all examples of behavioral problems in children and adolescents. Social workers have an important role in offering assistance and treatments to address these challenges and promote healthy development. This study investigates the psychological mechanisms underpinning social work treatments and their impact on the behavioral well-being of children and adolescents using a comprehensive evaluation of the literature. Understanding the psychological underpinnings of these therapies allows social workers to improve their tactics for facilitating positive strategies and improving long-term psychological well-being.

Introduction

Children and adolescents frequently face behavioral issues that have an impact on their general well-being and development. Social workers play an important role in implementing interventions to address these challenges and promote good behavioral change. The purpose of this paper is to present a psychological examination of the effectiveness of social work interventions for children and adolescents with behavioral difficulties.

Conduct disorder

Conduct disorder is a mental condition defined by hostile and aggressive behavior against people and other living things, a harmful attitude toward the possessions of other persons, and a consistent violation of social norms and regulations (APA 2013). The DSM-5 categorizes conduct disorder into two types based on the age of onset. Symptoms of childhood-onset conduct disorder appear before the age of ten, and physical violence and difficulty in peer relationships predominate. Other mental illnesses, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), are usually associated with the problem in this form. Conduct disturbances

do not manifest before the age of ten in adolescent-onset conduct disorder, and violence or impaired peer interactions are present to a lower level (Odgers *et al*., 2007).

The prevalence of conduct disorder is 2-10%, with a median frequency of 4% (APA 2013). While boys are more commonly diagnosed with childhood-onset CD, the gender gap appears to be closing in adolescent-onset conduct disorder (Tracy *et al*., 2009).

In the genesis of adolescentonset conduct disorder, sociocultural elements such as poverty and peer groups are more significant, and an adolescent's individual characteristics as well as her/his environmental concerns play critical roles in the disorder's development. Environmental risk factors for adolescent-onset conduct disorder include adolescent role models, availability to substances or gangs, aspects of the setting in which the adolescent lives, peer pressure, and parental depression (Silberg *et al*., 2015).

Psychological Foundations of Interventions

Social work interventions for behavioral difficulties in children and adolescents relies on a variety of psychological ideas and theories. These are some examples:

1. Behavioral Therapy: Using operant training and reinforcement principles to mould desired behaviors and eliminate maladaptive ones.

2. Cognitive-Behavioral Approaches: Concentrate on recognizing and changing negative thought patterns and cognitive distortions that contribute to behavioral issues.

3. Attachment Theory: Addressing behavioral difficulties via an attachment lens, emphasizing the importance of stable connections in producing healthy behaviors.

4. Social Learning Theory: Understanding the impact of social modeling and observational learning on behavior acquisition and maintenance.

Effectiveness of Social Work Interventions

Empirical evidence shows that social work interventions have a favorable impact on child and adolescent behavioral issues:

1. Reduction in Problem Behaviors: Interventions have been proven to significantly reduce a variety of problem behaviors, including aggression, conduct disorders, and substance misuse.

2. Improved Coping Skills: Many therapies aim to provide young people with good coping skills for dealing with stressors and triggers.

3. Increased Academic Performance: Interventions addressing behavioral difficulties frequently result in increased school involvement and academic success.

4. Long-Term Well-Being: Effective therapies not only address immediate behavioral difficulties, but also contribute to children's and adolescents' long-term psychological well-being.

Conclusion

Social work interventions for behavioral difficulties in children and adolescents are based on psychological theories and principles. Understanding the psychological principles underlying these interventions allows social workers to customize their approaches to effectively address behavioral difficulties, promote positive change, and contribute to young people's psychological well-being. The area of social work can continue to refine and develop interventions that make a real difference in the lives of children and adolescents through continuing study and practice.

Keywords: Child behavior, adolescent behavior, psychological analysis, social work interventions.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG HIGHER EDUCATED MIGRANT YOUTH IN KOLKATA CITY: A GENDERED PERSPECTIVE

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Background

Recent trends suggest that university graduates seeking jobs are more susceptible to common mental disorders, such as depression, anxiety, or stress. However, the mental health issues among unemployed graduate youth has not been explored in India, especially in Kolkata City yet.

Aims

This study aims to assess for the first time the prevalence and associated risk factors of depression, anxiety, and stress among the graduate job seekers. Four hundred graduate youth (21-35 years) who were preparing for various competitive exams were surveyed for the study.

Methods

Measures included socio-demographics, field of study and the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS-21). Chi-square test and binary logistic regression with "depression," "anxiety," and "stress" as the dependent variables were carried out to identify the factors associated with these.

Results

This study found that the number of participants having ever watched pornography 64.3 % (254) out of the total 400 participants. This study found that the number of participants search online pornography were 87.4% (222). During the last 30 days, the proportion of students who reported watching pornography daily, weekly and monthly basis were 8.7% (22), 37.01% (94) and 35.04% (89) respectively. Unemployed youth significantly watched more pornography on daily 11.03% (15), weekly 43.4% (59) basis than the employed youth daily 5.9% (7) and weekly 29.7(35). This study also showed significant association between the frequency of watching pornography and gender, age group and marital status etc. Male are more likely to watch porn in daily (11.25% vs 4.2%) and weekly basis (46.9% vs 20.21%) but in the case of monthly basis it was found that women watch more porn than the male (33.1% vs 38.3%). Younger age group 21-25 and 26-30 were more likely to watch pornography in daily, weekly and monthly basis than the 31-35 age groups. In compared to married participants, never married, in a relationship and engaged participants were more likely to watch porn in a daily and weekly basis. Among the migration characteristics, migration accompany and frequency of watching pornography was

significantly associated (X2=67.6, p=.000). Those migrated alone and migrated with friends were more likely to watch pornography on daily and weekly basis than the other groups. The overall prevalence of depression, anxiety and stress among the participants was 54.4%, 61.7% and 47.8% respectively. Unemployed youth are more likely to report the symptoms of depression and anxiety compared to employed with reaching statistical significance (66.1% vs 33.3%; X2= 39.3, p=.000), (69.7% vs 47.5%; X2=18.9, p=.000) respectively but the symptoms of stress are more among employed than the unemployed youth without statistical significance (45.3% vs 52.5%; X2=1.89, p=0.17). Women are more likely to report the symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress compared to men, albeit without reaching statistical significance except anxiety [(53% vs 56.4%; X2=0.453, p=0.501) (55.1% vs 71.2%; X2=10.37, p=0.001) (45.69% vs 50.9%; X2=1.05, p=0.306), respectively]. Participants from different age group are significantly associated the symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress and the prevalence is more among the age group of 26-30 years. The odds ratio represents the odds of having the condition (depression, anxiety, or stress) in one group compared to the odds in another group (the reference category). Unemployed individuals have significantly higher odds of experiencing depression (OR = 3.72) and anxiety (OR = 3.01) compared to employed individuals. The odds of stress are not significantly different between unemployed and employed individuals (OR = 1.04). Females have significantly higher odds of experiencing anxiety (OR = 2.95) compared to males. Post-graduate individuals have significantly higher odds of experiencing depression (OR = 2.1) compared to those with graduation as their educational status. The age group "26-30" has significantly higher odds of experiencing stress (OR = 2.05) compared to the age group "21-25". Individuals who are "Never married/Single" have significantly higher odds of negative symptoms of depression (OR = 3.33) compared to married individuals. Among the long-term unemployed, an older age was the risk factor for development of depression.

Conclusion

The findings showed poorer psychological health among higher educated unemployed migrant youth. Covid-19 triggers the degree of psychological health negatively. The relatively high rates of depression, anxiety, and stress among graduate job seekers should prompt implementation of market force initiatives that incorporate interventions related to the major risk factors uncovered herein.

Keywords: Depression, anxiety, stress, unemployed, pornography, higher educated, migrant youth.

THE OVERLAPPING IMPACTS OF CLIMATE HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH

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How interlinked are climate change and mental health? Very much so. An increasing body of research suggests, prompting questions about how we can tackle the relationship of two of the greatest crises of our times. Mental health is a global crisis; in 2020, almost a billion people were reported as living with a mental health condition. Climate change is only exacerbating this critical issue. Eco-grief refers to the anguish and despair we feel when the places we live in and love deteriorate, along with these places' ability to provide us with solace (Spencer-Jolliffe, 2023).

It is widely recognized that social workers are informed by the person-in-environment perspective. It is recent that social work has re-embraced its focus on social, economic and political environment with the natural environment. Clinical social workers are beginning to see increased emotional distress about the impacts of climate change.

Along with clinical social workers, those involved in human rights and social justice work have also been concerned and involved in these related mental health issues as they fight for climate justice. Globally, mental health advocacy needs to pay attention to the voices being missed. Social workers have a unique and powerful role in influencing individuals and communities, the public and policymakers on mental health and climate change. Leadership, education, awareness, communication and advocacy are key components in motivating engagement and action on solutions.

Climate change is already having negative effects on both the health and mental health of vulnerable populations across the globe and social workers are increasingly responding to the call. Clinical social workers in particular are beginning to see increased emotional distress about the impacts of climate change. Google searches of "eco-anxiety" have increased a record 4.290% (Magruder, 2023).

Eco-anxiety is a growing concern, particularly among younger people. In a recent global survey of more than 10,000 young people, 84% of respondents aged 16-25 were at least moderately worried about climate change (Clayton & Karazsia, 2020). A Yale study found that 43% of Americans are either "alarmed" or "concerned" about climate change, while another report indicated two-thirds of the U.S population are at least "somewhat worried" about it (Leiserowitz *et al*., 2018).

This is not only an U.S. phenomenon. Distress about the global environmental crisis has been documented internationally, including in Canada, Europe, Australia, Asia and the Pacific Islands (Michelin, 2020; Wolf, 2008; Durkalec, 2015; Australia Institute, 2020; Gibson, 2019; Hao, 2020; Magruder & McMillin, 2023).

This presentation will explore the prevalence and treatment of climate related mental health issues. It will define and compare such terms as eco-grief, eco-anxiety and solastalgia, "a longing for a home community that has been shifted by climate change to go back to the way it was before" (Magruder, 2023). These new terms speak to the impact of our broken relationship with the planet on humans' mental health.

Learning Objectives

Participants will:

- Understand how climate change and mental health are interlinked;
- Explore the current risks and impacts of climate change on mental health;
- Learn about examples to treat and mitigate long term effects add trauma;
- Recognize the need for socially just advocacy for policies to equitably address ental health and climate change.

Keywords: Eco-grief, climate anxiety, climate change.

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MORE THAN A GAME: ASSESSING THE PERVASIVENESS OF GAMING AND GAMBLING AT AN HBCU IN RURAL NORTHEASTERN NORTH CAROLINA[2]

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Learning Objectives:

As a result of attending this presentation, participants will be able:

- To define gaming and gambling issues/addiction.

- To understand the impact of gaming and gambling on students at a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) located in a rural community.

- To recognize the financial implications of gaming and gambling.

Key Topics:

- Definition and DSM 5-TR criteria of problem gaming and gambling.

- Symptoms associated with problem gaming and gambling.

- Financial impact regarding gaming and gambling.

- Research on problem gambling at an HBCU in Rural Northeastern North Carolina.

- Implications for Social Work practice.

This presentation will provide an overview of the impact of gaming and gambling on a college campus. Specifically, data will be reviewed from three years of research where 449 students completed surveys about the prevalence of gaming and gambling at a small Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in rural Northeastern North Carolina. "Problem gambling and/or addiction includes all gambling behavior patterns that compromise, disrupt or damage personal, family or vocational pursuits". From the onset of modern civilization, gambling has long been a part of society. Gambling activities have been subject to corruption, regulation and prohibition. In recent years, there has been much debate about the morality of gambling. Fast forward to 2023, gambling and gaming has become a billion-dollar industry with legalized gambling in most states. As well, during COVID-19, there was an increase in gaming and gambling

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via the internet. In addition, "2 million U.S. adults (1%) are estimated to meet the criteria for severe gambling problems in a given year and another 4-6 million (2-3%) would be considered to have mild or moderate gambling problems".

Gambling is a common activity where an individual risks money (or something of value) with the hope of winning more money or something of value (Caldeira *et al*., 2017). All gambling activities, by nature, involve some level of risk. However, most outcomes result in losses. Entering college presents unique challenges and stressors that can lead to high-risk behaviors. Rinker, Rodriguez, Krieger, Tackett and Neighbors (2015) stated there is a significant prevalence of gambling among college students. It was estimated that approximately 75% of students had gambled within the previous year and pathological gambling was more widespread in this population. Arnett (2000) coined the term "emerging adults" to describe the period in development from around ages 18 to 25. During this time, college students develop a sense of identity, have higher levels of impulsivity and often engage in high-risk behaviors in the process (Sussman & Arnett, 2014).

Gambling Disorder (F63.0)

Preoccupation; Withdrawal; Tolerance over time; Loss of Control; Chasing; Lying; Gambles to escape; Risked significant relationships; Bailouts 4 of the 9 criteria; Can not be better explained by a manic episode.

Gaming Disorder (6C51.0/ 6C51.1)

Preoccupation; Withdrawal; Tolerance over time; Unsuccessful reduction of gaming; Loss of other interests; Continued use despite consequences; Deception with gaming; Games to escape; Jeopardizes relationships for gaming 5 of the 9 criteria; Must cause clinically significant impairment in social, occupational and other psychosocial functioning; Can not be better explained by other disorder World Health Organization (WHO) 11th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11).

Warning signs for problem gambling are similar to the criteria listed in the DSM-5 TR. However, younger college-age students might demonstrate different warning signs. These can include sudden absences from class, grades dropping, inability to complete assignments, bragging about gambling winnings, stealing money and using gambling language. Problem gambling can develop into a gambling disorder. Both gambling disorder and problem gambling are patterns of behavior that can bring harmful consequences.

North Carolina began providing prevention and treatment services relating to the area of problem gambling as a legislative mandate when the North Carolina Education Lottery was created in 2005. Since the inception of the Problem Gambling Program, thousands of problem gambling

calls have been made to the helpline. As well, thousands of teens and young adults have participated in prevention programs in middle and high schools and college campuses across the state with the intent to build awareness for what has been identified as a hidden addiction. North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper officially legalized sports betting in North Carolina when he signed HB 347 into law on June 14, 2023. The North Carolina sports betting bill paved the way for 8 retail sportsbooks and up to 12 online sportsbooks to launch.

Financial Hardships:

People who experience problem gambling and gambling addiction are highly susceptible to financial dysfunction. "Problem gamblers are more likely than the general population to commit crimes such as theft, embezzlement, writing bad checks, or prostitution to pay for their habit". Additionally, persons who gamble and are financially vulnerable are more likely to perpetuate the cycle of poverty. According to research, due to the financial hardship, many gamblers also experience personal health problems, depression, familial discord, and suicide. "The rate of attempted suicides among gamblers is the highest of all psychological disorders. Some problem gamblers have viewed completing suicide as a means to provide a life insurance payout to assist their financially struggling family".

Implications for Social Work Practice:

Social workers must become knowledgeable about the pathway for the development of a gaming and gambling disorder. These addictive cycles evolve from harmless recreation to risk-taking and problematic behavior and finally to a disorder. Social workers must understand the dynamics associated with recruiting and grooming children to engage in gaming activities. Education for parents and children is paramount as many parents play video games with their children and may not be aware of the possible long-term effects.

Keywords: Problem gambling, HBCU, college campus, pervasiveness.

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ADDRESSING A NOVEL CHALLENGE IN SOCIAL WORK: INTERVENTION WITH MEN COPING WITH MUSCLE DYSMORPHIA, FRAMED THROUGH THE PRISM OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADDICTION AND SELF-ESTEEM

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Background and purpose

In the field of social work, engaging with men in the context of mental health intervention presents a nuanced array of challenges, primarily rooted in their adherence to traditional gender role ideologies that often impede seeking professional help and support (Karaffa & Koch, 2016; Shepherd *et al*., 2023). This challenge gains heightened significance when we consider the prevalence of mental health disorders that affect mainly men, necessitating skilled and targeted interventions to address their unique needs. An illustration of such a disorder is Muscle Dysmorphia Disorder (MDD), a condition characterized by an obsessive preoccupation with body size and musculature, resulting in the adoption of pervasive behaviours, including excessive exercise and strict dietary regime, anabolic steroids use and an avoidance of social interactions and activities due to body-related shame and dissatisfaction (Cafri *et al*., 2008; Martenstyn, 2022; Rossell *et al.*, 2020).

The ramifications of MDD extend beyond the limits of individual struggles, encompassing adverse health behaviours, detrimental medical conditions, and a diminished overall quality of life (Mitchell *et al*., 2017; Ortiz *et al*., 2021). Yet, amidst its substantial impact, our understanding of MDD remains hindered by a dearth of empirically validated theoretical frameworks and an incomplete grasp of risk factors involved (Tod *et al*., 2016). Addressing these critical gaps, the present research aims to identify prospective risk factors that contribute to the emergence of MDD symptoms. Specifically, this study seeks to unravel the multifaceted effect of select demographic factors (age, education, socio-economic status and income), alongside the effects of social media addiction and self-esteem on the manifestation of MDD symptoms among adult men.

Methods

The current study presents preliminary research findings obtained from a sample of 204 Israeli men aged between 18 and 67 who completed a set of structured questionnaires. The mean

age of men in the study was 29.13 (SD=11.27) and the mean of formal education was 13.36 years (SD=2.19).

Findings

To examine the effects of demographic factors, social media addiction, and self-esteem on the manifestation of MDD symptoms among adult men, a hierarchical regression analysis was performed. In the initial step of the regression analysis, demographic factors were introduced as control variables. Subsequently, in the second step, social media addiction and self-esteem were added to investigate their contributions to the manifestation of MDD symptoms beyond the effect of demographic factors (Adj. R^2=.156, p < .001). The results indicate that none of the demographic factors examined were significant predictors of the occurrence of MDD (p > .05). However, the study did find a significant positive correlation between addiction to social media and MDD (Beta = .200, p = .004). Additionally, self-esteem was identified as a significant negative predictor of MDD (Beta = -.278, p < .001). Specifically, the findings suggest that among men, higher levels of social media addiction and lower self-esteem were associated with a greater prevalence of MDD symptoms.

Conclusions and implications

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the intricatee factors explaining the prevalence of MDD symptoms among men, and consequently, hold crucial implications for social work. While the examined demographic factors did not emerge as significant predictors of MDD occurrence, the study uncovered noteworthy relationships between addiction to social media and self-esteem, and the prevalence of MDD.

The significant positive correlation observed between addiction to social media and MDD underscores the need for heightened awareness and proactive intervention in the realm of technology and mental health. Social workers working with men with MDD should be equipped to address and mitigate the gradually increasing social media use, helping clients cultivate healthier online habits to counteract potential exacerbation of their condition. Incorporating educational and behavioural strategies to manage and regulate social media consumption could play a crucial role in reducing the risk of MDD development.

Furthermore, the significant negative correlation between self-esteem and MDD highlights the critical role of self-perception in mental health outcomes. Social workers must recognize the significance of self-esteem in the context of MDD and employ evidence-based interventions aimed at fostering positive self-worth and self-image. This could involve cognitive-behavioural approaches that challenge negative self-perceptions and promote healthier self-concepts. Considering these findings, a holistic approach to social work practice is imperative. Incorporating

interventions that address both social media addiction and self-esteem can be instrumental in effectively mitigating MDD's impact.

In conclusion, with the overarching objective of enhancing the efficacy of social work intervention, this study endeavours to illuminate the prospective risk factors associated with the development of MDD symptoms in adult men. The insights gleaned from this research hold the potential to inform and tailor interventions that effectively mitigate the impact of MDD. By identifying these factors, social workers and mental health practitioners can foster early identification, appropriate intervention, and comprehensive support for men navigating the complexities of this disorder. This research not only contributes to the deeper comprehension of MDD's origins but also underscores the important role of social workers in bridging the gap between men and mental health services, thereby fostering a holistic and gender-sensitive approach to care.

Keywords: Muscle dysmorphia, social media addiction, self-esteem, social work.

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EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERNET ADDICTION AND PARENT ATTITUDES (Elaziğ example)

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The rapid increase in technological developments presents many products that simplify daily life to people. In addition to the benefits these products bring to simplify life, it is also known that they cause some problems due to excessive and unhelpful use of technology. These problems can cause people to experience both physical and mental reactions. The internet network, which enables the use of technological tools and its prevalence, is another problem area. In particular, the prevalence of the Internet and the prevalence of technological tools to access the Internet increase the use of the Internet. Some of these problems can be listed as the decrease in the age of internet use, inappropriate use, asociality, game addiction and disruption of children's sleep patterns. Parents need to act consciously in order to cope with these problematic behavior patterns. It is essential that they are especially conscious about media-literacy. They should closely follow the development of the Internet and technological tools. They should be informed about current developments. The attitude of the parent and the place of the family are very important at this point. Although the family is a universal phenomenon in all world societies, its structure does not allow for a universal definition. Cultural differences between societies create different family types, so different family types and definitions emerge in each society. Sociologist Kingley Devis family; defines it as "a group of people who are related and related by blood" (Erdentuğ, 1990). The family, consisting of mother, father and children, constitutes the future of society. The child starts the first socialization in the family. What kind of people children will be in the future is shaped by the behaviors they see from their parents from an early age. The family environment, where there is unconditional love, accurate information is given, we feel most secure, full of trust, unity, togetherness, respect and love and at the same time exhibiting good behaviors such as harmony, understanding and tolerance, undoubtedly allows children to be stronger and healthier. However, different parental attitudes increase the effect on children's internet addiction. Children who become addicted become closed to the outside world and begin to live their own world in the virtual world. This situation leads to breaks in communication between parent and child. This situation, which progresses in the form of children losing their control over their internet and computer use and starting to use them excessively, is a very serious problem that should be

considered for the healthy development of the child and may require psychological treatment. One of the biggest factors in the emergence of this problem is the wrong attitudes of parents. A child who does not bother her parents by being locked onto the screen of a technological device is attractive to many parents. However, it should not be forgotten that a child who does not disturb her parents is a child who has closed herself in development and seeks the attention of parents elsewhere. This and similar situations will lead to the examination of the relationships between internet addiction and parental attitudes.

The most important working areas of social work are children and families. Data obtained from studies in this field; It will make the family-child relationship healthier. At the same time, the media addiction theory will be discussed in detail and the effect of internet addiction on children and families will be learned and as a result, it will allow individuals to maintain their lives better with methods that will reduce the level of addiction.

The aim of this study is to reveal the relationship between internet use and parental attitudes in adolescents. At the same time, it was aimed to reveal the socio-demographic characteristics of their families, to investigate parental attitudes, to determine their internet usage levels, and to examine the effects of internet use levels on children's physical, social and academic lives. When the studies conducted in this area in the last ten years are examined, it has been observed that there are not enough studies examining the relationship between internet addiction and parental attitudes of students aged 13-18. This makes our study unique. Quantitative research method has been deemed appropriate in order to achieve the current objectives. The sample of this study consists of 402 students between the ages of 13-18, who are studying in official high schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education in the province of Elazig, which will be selected by proportional sampling method. Internet Addiction Scale, Parental Attitude Scale and the Questionnaire Form prepared by the researchers were applied to these students in order to reach the aim of the research. In this context, necessary permissions were obtained from the experts who developed the scales. After the data were collected, they were analyzed through the SPSS Package Program and the findings were interpreted. According to the results of the research; when the results of the descriptive analysis conducted to examine the internet addiction levels of students between the ages of 13-18 are examined, it is seen that 29% of the researchers are in the risk-free user group, 60% are in the risky user group and 11% are in the addicted internet user group. When the group average is taken in general, it can be said that the students are in the risky user group.

If we look at the relationship between family structures and addiction levels: if we look at the family structure of addicted internet users, 90.90% are families whose parents live together and 9.09% are families whose parents are divorced. If we look at the family structure of risk-free internet users, the rate of those whose parents live together is 100%. If we look at the family

structure of risky internet users, the rate of those whose parents live together is 78% and the rate of those whose parents are divorced is 17%. In addition, the rate of those whose father is alive and whose mother is dead is 5%.

In conclusion, in order to reduce the addiction level of children, face-to-face communication should be encouraged for children, individual and group work on strengthening social support networks, communication seminars for parents to increase effective communication skills between children and parents, seminars on internet addiction for families and children, communication of parents with children It is recommended that information seminars be held for parents, as their style, behavior and attitudes may cause risky internet users.

Smartphone/tablet etc. technological devices such as children should not be used to console children, to spend their free time and to silence them. By creating weekly charts, a technological tool usage plan should be created accordingly. Children at the computer should not be served during meal and tea hours and should be encouraged to join the table. A home arrangement based on technological devices such as television or internet should not be established. Technological tools should be in the common use area.

Keywords: Internet, internet addiction, child, parental attitudes.

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PROBLEMS OF PARENTS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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The family, the smallest unit of society is a social group in which individuals are born and raised as the first socialization environment and spend a large part of their lives. In its broadest definition, it is composed of individuals who have a kinship relationship through family, blood, marriage and other legal means and mostly live in the same house, where the sexual, psychological, social, cultural and economic needs of the members are met relations are established within the framework of certain rules, the continuity of the generation is protected. It is a basic social institution in which harmony and participation are ensured and regulated (Genç & Seyyar, 2010; Nazlı, 2016; Zeybekoğlu, 2016; Günindi & Giren, 2011; Ozankaya, 1979).

The family is not just a simple system in which individuals come together for biological relationships. It is a social structure in which each member has certain responsibilities and influences each other (Gökçe, 1978). The establishment, protection, peace and functioning of the family are closely related to the special situations of the family members. For example, having a child with special needs is one of the specific situations that change responsibilities and functioning in the family. During the care, upbringing and education of their children, these families undertake some additional obligations as well as the routine obligations of being a family.

According to the World Health Organization (2002), special needs are explained with the concept of disability, where physical functionality cannot be fulfilled, activity limitations and participation restrictions are seen. In Article 4 of the Special Education Services Regulation (2018), individuals who differ significantly from their peers in terms of individual and developmental characteristics and educational qualifications are defined as individuals with special education needs. Individuals with special needs may have one or more loss of functionality, including limited mental capacity, behavioral disorders, mental health problems, physical and orthopedic disabilities (Gorter *et al*., 2014). Therefore, individuals with special needs due to the loss of physical, mental and mental functions for any reason need care or support (Mitra *et al*., 2017,). It is usually mothers who undertake the burden of care for their children with special needs and mothers face many problems and difficulties (Lebni *et al*., 2020). Therefore, during the care

process, mothers; they are affected physically, economically, psychologically and socially (Mukherjee & Shignapure, 2016). Families of individuals with special needs need support due to their children's increasing demand for care, decreasing resources and other accompanying problems (Lima-Rodríguez *et al*., 2018). These negativities make it necessary for families to receive support and the need for social services.

There are many studies in the literature about the problems experienced by individuals with special education needs or their families. In this study, based on the assumption that families with children with special educational needs have to deal with multiple problems, these problems were investigated. The aim is to reveal the economic, psychological and social problems experienced by the parents of individuals with special education needs.

Qualitative research design was found suitable for the research and a seven-question interview form created by the researchers based on the literature was used as a data collection tool. In qualitative research, qualitative data collection methods such as observation, interview and document analysis are used and a process is followed to reveal perceptions and events in a realistic and holistic way in the natural environment (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2016). The sample of the study consists of the mothers of individuals living in Hendek district of Sakarya province and receiving education from a private education institution. In this context, face-to-face interviews were conducted with 13 mothers who have children with special educational needs. At the beginning, the purpose of the research was explained to the participants and their consent was obtained. With the permission of the participants, audio recordings were made during the interviews. The data were analyzed by deciphering the audio recordings.

According to the data obtained from the interviews, it was learned that children need special education due to problems such as autism, severe physical disability, mild mental retardation, speech difficulties, attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder. The parents participating in the study are 13 mothers between the ages of 31-58. One parent is single due to the death of his spouse, while the other 12 parents are married. Three of the participating mothers are members of the extended family, nine of the nuclear family and one of the broken family. Most of the parents (Gorter *et al*., 2014) are primary school graduates. When asked about their economic status, two mothers stated that their economic status was good, eight mothers moderate and three mothers poor.

When the problems of the parents in this process were evaluated, it was seen that they were economically inadequate, psychologically worn out and needed professional support, and their functionality decreased socially due to the responsibilities brought by the burden of care.

Table. General (Demographic) Characteristics of Participants

Variables	Number (n)	Variables	Number (n)
Age of Parent		**Education Status**	
31-35	4	Literate	1
36-40	1	Primary school graduate	9
41-45	3	Secondary school graduate	2
46-50	3	High school dropout	1
50+	2		
Marital status		**Economic Situation**	
Married	12	Good	2
Single	1	Middle	8
		Bad	3
Family Type			
Extended family	3	**Toplam**	**13**
Nuclear family	9		
Fragmented Family	1		
Total	**13**		

Mothers who have children with special education needs need economic support from time to time, even if their general economic situation is moderate or good, and they apply to social assistance and social services during these periods. As an example to this;

E4: "I needed financial support from time to time during my child's treatment process. Although my wife's family was supportive, there were times when we felt inadequate. I requested financial support from the Social Service Center and Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation, but my wife was an insured employee. My request was denied."

When mothers were asked about their psychological status and support needs; almost all of them are not well, that this struggle with their children wears them out and in the process stated that they were struggling. It has been observed that there is a lack of information about where and how they can get support in this regard. As an example to this;

E3: "My wife passed away while I was pregnant with my son. While I was trying to struggle with that situation, I realized that my child has autism. All these processes have worn me out psychologically, but I did not receive psychological support. Actually, I need professional psychological support. I noticed it at the seminar on burnout for parents." (Mother of a disabled male with a diagnosis of Atypical Autism).

It has been determined that mothers with children with special needs cannot allocate enough time for their social relations and cannot receive the support they need from their social circles because the burden of care requires extra time and effort. As an example to this;

E12: "It was very tiring for me to take care of both my disabled child and my other 4 children. Even though most people in my neighborhood were relatives, no one supported me. They did not even come to my house with the thought that the child would be infected. However, most of the time I needed someone's support so much that I could at least talk and talk. to someone who understands me. Only one of my neighbors supported me during this process." (Mother of disabled male with Down Syndrome).

As a result, it has been observed that the responsibilities of families with children with special needs have increased and in accordance with the literature, the mother mostly takes care of the child in the family (Genç, 2016). During this period, parents experience economic inadequacy and need psychological and social support. Işıkhan (2005) also stated in his study that families with disabled children have additional expenses such as tools and equipment and special education, so these families should be supported economically and benefit from social assistance and social services. In line with the conclusion that families with disabled children may experience psychological problems such as fear, anxiety, depression and burnout, they need psychological support and this support service should be provided in a planned manner (Dereli & Okur, 2008) In the process, it was seen that they were psychologically worn out and that they needed to be supported by professionals. In line with the study of Altuğ Özsoy *et al*. (2006), families with children with special needs cannot receive sufficient support from their social circles. It is known that the mother, who undertakes the burden of care and takes care of her child's special education and rehabilitation, feels socially lonely and affects the physical, mental, social and environmental quality of life negatively (Canarslan & Ahmetoğlu, 2015).

Just as individuals with special education needs are followed by guidance research centers, providing a holistic service and providing the economic, psychological and social support they need will be effective in reducing the problems experienced by families with children with special education needs (especially mothers who undertake the burden of care). All these supports can be systematized through social policy and offered within social services.

Keywords: Individuals with special educational needs, parents, psychosocial problems, economic problems.

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WAYS TO OVERCOME POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER IN VETERANS

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One of the greatest social traumas is undoubtedly wars. Wars are a situation that deeply shakes the country where it takes place and the people living in this country, especially the direct participants in the war, which creates trauma and stress. Although the concept of post-war stress emerged in the 1980s, this phenomenon was called "soldier's heart syndrome" during the US Civil War, "shell shock" during World War I and "military neurosis" during World War II.

After the Battle of Somme, one of the bloodiest battles of the First World War, the psychological trauma called "war shock" has already been investigated by experts. Thus, the Battle of Somme, which took place in France in 1916 and killed more than 1 million people, is one of the bloodiest battles of the First World War. This psychological problem, also called "post-war trauma", was first investigated by the English psychologist Charles Samuel Myers. Sudden mood swings, constant worry that something is going to happen to you, feeling like you're going to die at any moment, insomnia, hallucinations, loss of ability to think, impaired vision and hearing, hysterical shocks and blank stares, senseless facial expressions traumatized by war are the main symptoms seen in humans. These symptoms were the soldiers' reaction to the stress of war and the soldiers who experienced this problem physiologically experienced convulsions, severe pain and tremors.

Being exposed to heavy artillery fire on the front inevitably affected the soldiers and the tension created by the fear of losing their lives at that moment sometimes left an indelible mark on them for life. Soldiers lost friends in battle, experienced tension, stress, shock and lived in constant fear of death. At that time, the doctors did not know why the soldiers were in this condition, so they sent the soldiers back from the front as unfit. Soldiers who experienced war shock were isolated, considered cowards, tried and sometimes even given the death penalty.

According to a study after the end of the First World War, about 80,000 soldiers in England suffered from this mental problem. Years later, the British government recognized the disease and apologized to the families of the ill-treated, war-shocked soldiers who died. Post-war stress disorder was also found at high rates in the Vietnam and Korean wars. It is reported that the shock waves caused serious consequences, especially after the explosions in the war. The soldiers, who

felt the shock wave with their whole body, feel the same shock in their body again when they remember that moment years later.

Clinical symptoms of PTSD in veterans include:

• Re-experiencing a traumatic event;

• Unwanted persistent memories of the event;

• Vivid impressions that make the events seem like they are happening in reality;

• Scary, nightmarish dreams;

• Strong emotional or physical reactions to objects or situations that remind of the event (negative reactions that occur when remembering the event, emotional such as sadness; physical reactions such as sweating, tachycardia);

• Avoiding people, places, activities, objects, situations that remind you of the traumatic event or avoiding remembering, talking about or thinking about the traumatic event;

• Mental and emotional changes, including inability to remember important aspects of the traumatic event; negative thoughts and feelings about oneself or others (for example, "I'm bad", "Nobody can be trusted"), feelings of anger, guilt or shame; loss of interest in previous activities and feeling isolated or withdrawn from others;

• Changes in arousal and reactivity, including easily irritated, angry outbursts; acting in a reckless or self-destructive manner, hypervigilance, excessive fear, difficulty concentrating, difficulty sleeping.

The reliving symptom is the most important feature of post-war stress. These symptoms include unwanted thoughts, dreams (phantasies) and frightening, nightmarish dreams about the war. It also includes the war participant's loss of familiarity with the environment and immersion in memories of the event that occurred entirely. These memories are so vivid that it seems to the war participant that he is reliving the battle, the war.

The mechanism of recording war data into memory is significantly different from ordinary events. In this case, important violations occur in the normal scheme of processing information received by the brain. As a result, in the future, an irritant that even remotely resembles a traumatic event automatically causes an immediate defensive reaction of the whole organism at the level of a conditioned reflex, sometimes without realizing what is happening. At this time, the revival of the traumatic memory is perceived as a real threat that occurs "here and now" and not in the past.

The psychological trauma experienced by war participants is different from other traumas. So, they subconsciously fight in war with the thought of being ready to die at any moment and this thought manifests itself at the level of consciousness later in normal life when any tension or stress factor arises and for this reason, war participants sometimes turn to suicide.

Psycho-social intervention should be adopted in the short, medium and long term for veterans who have experienced war trauma and the society should provide an understanding approach to these people. The participants in the war should use their natural fighting ability to the maximum. For example, social support is important in reducing depressive symptoms, which are more common in war veterans.

It is necessary to stay away from useless "help" under the name of psycho-social intervention. Post-traumatic shock veterans should be taught that continuing psychosocial support programs have a resolution-oriented role. It should be taken into account that a large part of the veterans who took part in the war show a high level of psychological endurance. At first, during the acute period of post-traumatic stress, it is necessary to allow the expression of emotions, but to keep it within a tolerable framework, to remove thoughts from the closed circle and to give appropriate opportunities for expression for any reactions. Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) and cognitive-behavioral therapy stand out among trauma-focused psychotherapies. If necessary, drug treatment can also be applied.

The first reaction is usually increased anxiety, tension, sleep disturbances, difficulty in performing activities and in some cases, overly aggressive behavior. Through the media, the essence of the problem and ways to overcome it, and at the same time, the duties of society in general, should be widely analyzed and this information should be disseminated. The messages of fear and panic in the media cause the problem to deepen. Attention should be paid to the fact that many examples (for example, suicides) spread in the media are likely to become role models. However, there is a continuing need for scientific research based on new evidence to identify the most appropriate interventions for the current situation.

Just as people react differently to the same traumatic events, the treatment of war trauma must be individualized. Many people may experience post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms such as fear, anxiety, tension, nervousness, depression, and guilt in the early stages after experiencing a traumatic event. All of these symptoms are normal human responses to trauma. However, most people who experience trauma do not experience long-term post-traumatic stress disorder.

Getting psycho-social help for this problem in time can prevent normal stress reactions from becoming serious problems and post-traumatic stress disorder. First of all, relationships with family members and friends and loved ones who can listen to the person and make him feel comfortable are important.

Post-war trauma treatment aims to help veterans regain a sense of control over their lives. The main method of treatment is psychotherapy. It is also possible to benefit from drug therapy to support this. Combining these therapies allows the individual to develop the ability to cope with

symptoms, think better about self, others, the future and the world, learn ways to deal with recurring symptoms, and cope with other trauma-related issues.

A professional therapist should focus on developing stress management skills that will help post-war trauma veterans recover from stressful situations and overcome the trauma they experienced. All of these approaches can help an individual manage the fear and tension that occurs after a traumatic event. Individual therapy, group therapy is an effective treatment method. Group therapy is an effective way to connect with people who have similar experiences and overcome trauma more effectively. It can be comforting to benefit from the experiences of others in similar situations.

Keywords: Post-war stress, veterans, symptoms of war trauma, ways to overcome war trauma.

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CORRECTION OF THE EMOTIONAL AND VOLITIONAL SPHERE OF ADOLESCENTS DEPRIVED OF PARENTAL CARE

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The scientific article reveals the essence of the emotional and volitional sphere of adolescents deprived of parental care, shows ways to correct it. The relevance of the study is determined by the need to find the most effective methods and directions of correction of the emotional-volitional sphere in adolescents. The article reveals the characteristic of the emotional-volitional sphere of adolescents. In the course of theoretical analysis, we came to the conclusion that purposeful correction of the emotional-volitional sphere is possible in the process of implementing a correctional psychological and pedagogical program. The conducted research makes it possible to identify the prospects for further work on solving the problem of correction of the emotional-volitional sphere.

We define the emotional-volitional sphere as a psychoemotional state of a person, which is a regulator of human activity. The issue of the problem of correction of the emotional-volitional sphere of younger schoolchildren is relevant, since in the absence of purposeful formation of the emotional-volitional sphere of personality in the conditions of spontaneous development, schoolchildren are unable to self-regulate educational activities.

Speaking about the need to study the features of the emotional volitional sphere in primary school students, it should also be taken into account that there are types of emotional state that have a significant impact on the course of the educational process. These include: mood, anxiety and tension. The presence of internal psycho-emotional tension at this age is due to a number of features.

Since the volitional sphere is inextricably linked with the motivational sphere of personality, cognitive and emotional processes, it is also an important component of the adolescent psyche. The following conditions are important for the development of the will:

• accessibility of goals; to do this, you need to limit the amount of work so that teenagers can see all the way to the goal;

• in order for the student to believe in himself at the beginning of his work, the tasks should have the character of optimal complexity, which makes the goal accessible and activates further actions;

• methodically thought-out activity of the child on the part of the teacher, as a result of which he will believe in his own strength. We relied on revealing adolescence as crucial for the formation of motivational, emotional and volitional spheres of personality.

The emotional-volitional sphere, as defined by M.V.Chumakov is a psychoemotional state of a person, which is a regulator of human activity. However, various researchers of this problem emphasize different sides of this sphere. The emotional-volitional sphere characterizes the content, quality and dynamics of emotions, feelings and volitional characteristics of a person. When considering the structure of the emotional-volitional sphere, emotions, feelings and will are distinguished.

In children with an undeveloped emotional and volitional sphere, instability and weak purposefulness of activity, increased distractibility, impulsivity are observed. That is why timely correctional work plays an important role in the development of the emotional and volitional sphere in younger schoolchildren, the main directions of which are.

• mitigation of emotional discomfort in children;

• increased activity and independence;

• elimination of personal reactions that are caused by emotional disorders, such as anxiety, aggression, increased excitability;

• formation of emotional stability and self-regulation, correction of the level of self-esteem, self-awareness.

The relevance of the study is determined by the need to find the most effective methods and directions of correction of the emotional-volitional sphere in adolescents. The main characteristics of the features of the emotional-volitional sphere of adolescents include: the ability to be aware of one's own emotional state; the ability to express one's emotional state in accordance with social norms; the ability to identify and interpret emotional states; the ability to reduce psycho-emotional stress; the ability to exercise self-control of the emotional state; the ability to cope with stress, which allows you to cope with negative emotions.

In modern psychology, there are several main approaches to the correction of the emotional-volitional sphere of a child: a psychodynamic approach and a behavioral approach.

Effective methods of developing the emotional and volitional sphere of adolescents deprived of parental care are: game therapy, art therapy, psychohymnastics and the greatest effectiveness of

the group form of work can be observed when a certain structure of the lesson is maintained, where exercises alternate with each other for the most effective perception.

The emotional and volitional spheres of adolescents deprived of parental care are: we have identified the following characteristics: rapid reaction to individual and offensive phenomena, great restraint in expressing their emotions, the development of expressiveness of emotions, the growth of understanding of other people's feelings and the ability to empathize with the emotional states of peers and adults, impressionability, emotional responsiveness to everything bright, large, colorful, intensively forming moral feelings: a sense of camaraderie, responsibility for the class, sympathy for the grief of others, indignation at injustice, etc.

In the course of theoretical analysis, we came to the conclusion that purposeful correction of the emotional-volitional sphere is possible in the process of implementing a correctional psychological and pedagogical program. At the ascertaining stage of the empirical study, we used a number of diagnostic techniques to identify students with high overt and school anxiety and a low level of volitional self-regulation. At the formative stage of experimental activity, taking into account the results of primary diagnostics, it was necessary to develop and test a correctional program for the development of the emotional-volitional sphere in younger schoolchildren. At the control stage, repeated diagnostics was carried out using the same diagnostic tools to assess the effectiveness of the developed program. The program of correction of the emotional-volitional sphere developed and tested by us in younger schoolchildren is effective and effective, since after its implementation, the results in the experimental group changed, acquiring a positive trend.

The results obtained indicate an increase in the indicators of the abilities of adolescent children to be able to effectively regulate their behavior at all stages of activity, to possess self-control skills in communicating with peers and adults, to reduce the level of anxiety associated with various aspects of school life, to be able to adequately treat mistakes and failures The conducted research makes it possible to identify the prospects for further work on solving the problem of correction of the emotional-volitional sphere.

Keywords: Emotional-volitional sphere, impulsiveness, emotional disturbances, discomfort, excitability.

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PREDICTORS OF THE SELF-REPORTED LIKELIHOOD OF SEEKING SOCIAL WORKER HELP AMONG PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

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The current study assesses the association between demographic factors, attitudes toward social workers, the stigma attached to seeking social worker help, perceived social support and psychological distress and the self-reported likelihood of seeking social worker help, among people with physical disabilities in Israel. Data collection utilized structured questionnaires, administered to a sample of 435 people with physical disabilities. The findings suggest that women, older respondents, people with more positive attitudes toward social workers, with higher levels of psychological distress and of social support and with a lower level of stigma, reported a greater likelihood of seeking social workers help. The study's conclusion is that there are certain avoidance factors among people with physical disabilities that might discourage them from seeking social workers' help. Therefore, it is important that social workers identify these factors and develop interventions aimed at encouraging people with physical disabilities to seek social workers help in case of need and also develop practices adjusted to the unique needs of people with physical disabilities.

Keywords: People with physical disabilities, attitudes toward social workers, stigma, perceived social support, psychological distress, seeking SW help.

THE IMPACT OF THE INTERNET USE ON SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING AMONG THE YOUTH IN MAINLAND CHINA

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Introduction

Since the beginning of the 21st century, China has experienced rapid development in economy and great transformation in society. The Third Technological Revolution, whose key features are featured with digitalization, has had a huge impact on people's everyday work and life. The rapid development in information technology, especially the Internet, has brought notable convenience and more opportunities to people across the country. Subjective well-being (SWB) has also become an important field of research in Positive Psychology since the 21st century. Literature on positive mentality, such as happiness and satisfaction, has received increasing attention from both the academia and the public. In recent years, scholars have put attention and effort into the impact of Internet use and have already gained prominent achievements about how Internet use affect people's subjective well-being. On the one hand, some studies have shown that Internet helps improve people's well-being. For example, based on a survey for 110 elderly aged 60 and above in the United States, Canada etc., Opalinski (2001) points out that Internet can not only enhance the level of family support and social support, but also help them establish new social relationships. As a result, Internet helps reduce the sense of loneliness and therefore improve people's subjective well-being. On the other hand, however, some researchers find out that Internet may reduce the level of subjective well-being. A study conducted by Kraut *et al*. (1998) has collected and analyzed data from 169 respondents from 73 households who used the Internet. The results show that an increase in Internet use has led to a decrease in communication within the family, a reduction in social scale and an increase in depression and loneliness. The mechanism may be that Internet use has replaced some social activities in real life, which ultimately leads to negative emotions. Therefore, using the latest data from 2021 Chinese General Society Survey (CGSS), this study is intended to test whether Internet use still has an impact on people's subjective well-being and whether the impact is positive or negative and explore through what mechanism Internet use affects the subjective well-being of the youth in China.

Research Design

The empirical data used in this study is from the latest 2021 China General Social Survey (CGSS). CGSS is the representative of China's continuous cross-sectional social survey, describing Chinese society from various aspects including economy, culture, attitudes etc. CGSS 2021, which contains 8,148 observations in total, is the latest, nation-wide data of high quality. To better serve the research, the study retains 1,841 valid observations after setting age restrictions to 18-44 and dealing with missing values.

The dependent variable of the study is subjective well-being, obtaining from the question of CGSS 2021, "In general, do you think you live a happy life?" The values of this variable ranges from 1 to 5, respectively representing very low subjective well-being to very high subjective well-being. The explanatory variable is the frequency of Internet use, which is also assigned values from 1 to 5, respectively presenting "Never", "A few times in a year or less", "A few times in a month", "A few times in a week" and "Every day". Based on previous literature, the study also selects some control variables to improve the model. These variables include demographic features (age, gender, health status, education), family features (marriage, whether having children, family SES) and regional features (whether living in city, whether living in East China).

Considering subjective well-being is a typical ordinal variable, this study uses the ordered logit model to explore whether Internet use has an effect on the well-being of the youth in China.

In addition, to exclude the impact of omitted variables and control selection biases, the study also adopts propensity score matching (PSM) to test the robustness of the research findings.

Main findings and argument

The descriptive analysis turn outs that the overall status of subjective well-being of the youth in China is relatively high, with an average of 4.00. In terms of the frequency in Internet use, the majority (88.02%) uses the Internet every day.

The results of ordered logit estimation show that, even after controlling all other variables, the frequency of Internet use has a significantly negative impact on subjective well-being. That is, the higher frequency of Internet use, the higher chance of having a relatively lower level of well-being. Furthermore, the results of PSM also prove that previous result's robustness, that Internet use does have a negative effect on the subjective well-being of the youth in China. The mechanism may be that during COVID-19 people received more negative information on the Internet increasing negative emotions such as anxiety and depression, leading to a reduction in subjective well-being. But whether this mechanism is true still needs further validation from empirical data.

Conclusions

This study uses the latest data from 2021 China General Social Survey to investigate the impact of the frequency of Internet use on subjective well-being of the youth (aged 18-44) in China. The ordered logit estimation shows that the frequency of Internet use has a significantly negative effect on subjective well-being and the results also pass the robustness test by using PSM. The mechanism may be people receiving more negative information through the Internet, which eventually leads to a decrease in subjective well-being.

Keywords: Internet use, subjective well-being, youth, China.

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THE CLIMATE CRISIS – BURSTING BUBBLES

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A psychoanalytical approach to the climate crisis in terms of the individual psychological background as object relations determine the relationship to nature as holding female representations and group dynamics at work in the reaction or lack thereof. A further exploration into the ability to sustain frustration as a key element to personal and societal development allowing to shed primitive libidinal patterns whereas certain psychological structures are hindered from this ability. As a result, the dysfunctional narcissism feeds relationships of dominance and power completing a self destructive pattern where only adaptation and symbolization processes could counter the traumatic effects of sudden change to our modern lifestyles.

While cognitive knowledge of the climate crisis that we are currently facing seems to be widely spread in our modern societies, there is a disavowal of the impact it will have on our daily lives and habits which inhibits the necessary individual and societal changes. The article "Bursting Bubbles" is an attempt at understanding the phenomena based on clinical experience and research.

What comes to light in the patients' discourse is twofold : first, a significative inability to tolerate the needed sacrifices or to sustain frustration sufficiently in order to create change in behaviour. In other words, the comfort of our current lifestyles has rendered this society intolerant to such frustration which could be described as a weak Ego deprived of the necessary mechanisms to "negociate" with the imposing desires that tend towards immediate reward or satisfaction. The second important observation is the absence of the archetypal "feminine" in the Jungian sense or Anima. Though Jung always opposes Anima to Animus, it is the notion of feminine as a non genderized description of what could be summed up as : creativity, empathy, altruism, wisdom and further, more complex emotions, that are only accessible to an individual once traversed the early stages of psycho sexual development. These early stages are dominated by power, envy, greed and jealousy amongst others, where the drives are directed towards self pleasuring. Keeping this in mind, it becomes evident that the relationship humanity has entertained with Nature in its largest sense, is one of power and domination.

Throughout the industrial revolution and now the technological breakthroughs, Nature has remained ignored at best and perceived as an enemy to pillage and dominate at worst. If technology is the result of our imagination made reality, it is painfully clear that there is no Anima in that imagination. It is from this desolating revelation that the author investigates throughout clinical

encounters in order to come to an understanding of how the lack of feminine manifests in the speach, in the behaviour, in thought patterns and how it impacts relationships to others, to the Self and to the world that surrounds us. What are the consequences of this in terms of how one might perceive oneself within this environment and in turn, how do these interactions feed or on the contrary, inhibit the Ego? The case study briefly presented in the article begins to interpret these "power" symbols which become sources of pleasure and narcissistic nourishment. The patient describes a sense of loss, displeasure and lack of legitimacy without these symbols of power and domination. She is unable to exist as a whole but rather identifies with only partial objects that staisfy her fantasies. Without the sensation of being "greater than", "stronger than", "prettier than", "wealthier than"... the list is endless; she would not be able to sustain the frustration of her condition which is that of a human amongst many other humans within a world, an environment that she depends on and which she cannot dominate or control.

Accepting the loss, accepting our lack of power or control is what allows one to access a higher level of awareness which reveals itself in the feminine where there is a unity, a deep rooting of our existence within the living, intertwined and interconnected, where each one has a place, a role, a sense and purpose. The utter disregard and ignorance of Nature and the environment is only another symptom of the ignorance of the feminine, manifested in so many different ways and at so many different levels in our societies and within our individual psyches. Unfortunately, the climate crisis is very real and imminent and we are not psychologically prepared to be suddenly confronted with the inability to maintain our current illusions. However, it has also been observed through psychoanalytic practice, that most individuals are able to free themselves from these archaic (childhood) representations and evolve towards the feminine, towards a balance of Animus/Anima. According to Jung: "The whole nature of man presupposes woman, both physically and spiritually. His system is tuned into woman from the start, just as it is prepared for a quite definite world where there is water, light, air, salt, carbohydrates etc"..

From this quote, Jung establishes the relationship between the "presupposed feminine" and Nature. Our current development as individuals and as societies has not integrated the feminine and only knows of it in an intellectual aspect rather that having introjected, symbolized, experienced the feminine.

Keywords: Climate crisis, psychoanalysis, group dynamics, trauma, narcissism, female representations, trauma, adaptation.

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THE EFFECT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON AESTHETIC TREATMENTS

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Over the years, people have attributed different dimensions to the body, related to the way people perceived themselves and were perceived by others. Hence, ceremonies, habits and treatments have affected the body, beautifying, adorning, changing it or hiding body parts. The development of medicine generally and aesthetic medicine particularly, has made beauty more accessible. In modern society, with the increased reference to the body as "project and process", this has become long-term investment, attributing prestige, respect and advantages. Researchers have explored the relationship between people's socio-personal status and external appearance. They indicate that, actually, these factors are strongly connected. Furthermore, the outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis worldwide has increased the use of online meetings scheduling applications, e.g., Zoom, Skype, etc. This increase has resulted in the "Zoom effect", a concept associated with people's higher awareness of their appearance, evoking stronger interest in aesthetic surgery. Studies underscore the positive impact of aesthetic procedures for improving states of depression and moods, as well as their repeated occurrences. This paper discusses the impact of individuals' external appearance on their social status, socially-motivated actions people wish to take for transforming their look and the way theories and social sciences paradigms account for this impact.

Keywords: Sociology of the body, aesthetic medicine, body technique, lifestyle, esthetics treatments.

AN ART-BASED PSYCHOSOCIAL FAMILY-LEVEL APPROACH WITH PUERTO RICANS POST HURRICANE MARIA

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This study examines the unique circumstances of a natural disaster, Hurricane Maria, as a dramatic shock to the Puerto Rican family unit and its demands on resilience strategies to recover. To date, Hurricane Maria was the deadliest storm of the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season and the worst natural disaster for Puerto Rico. Hurricane Maria devastated the island of Puerto Rico and its inhabitants leading to dramatic migration to the United States and leaving those on the island with an unknown and precarious future, while creating new adaptation pressures for migrating families. This study seeks to address the questions: How and why do some Puerto Rican families flourish and resist the devastation of this traumatic event? How can social and health interventions improve to increase resiliency among trauma-impacted families?

This study offers three unique opportunities to meet a gap in knowledge:

1. Using the family as the unit of analysis. This work engages cultural values as well as a critique of individualism (Walsh, 2003; Lerner, 2006) by situating the family unit at the center of the study of resilience.

2. Employing an arts-based methodology for data collection. Extending beyond traditional individual models such as single-user photography in Photovoice, we employ family unit art processes (art-inquiry) to elicit data from multi-family focus groups.

3. This study includes a consideration of transnational identities as a factor of resilience by examining the effects of the growing Puerto Rican diaspora in Orlando, Florida on those that stayed behind in Puerto Rico.

The Long-Term Goal of this project is to develop culturally grounded prevention and treatment services that integrates the socio-cultural lived realities of Puerto Rican and Latino families that enhance resiliency models with special attention to traumatic/disaster events. The Central Hypothesis is that by using integrated ecological models to demonstrate how Puerto Rican families (as the unit of analysis) bounce back after traumatic events despite the multiplicative effects of health disparities and social inequalities; stronger interventions incorporating socio-cultural and biomedical aspects will lead to long-term sustainable improved health.

We used an arts-based methodology as our main inquiry, which is adapted to improve the participation and action-oriented research for addressing social and health disparities for

vulnerable populations (Finley, 2008). The method is originally inspired by photo inquiry (Photovoice) and conceptually integrated with collage inquiry (Butler-Kisber, 2018). The work will be facilitated through initial art-making activities on the themes of home, mutual support and resilience. Participants within each family will be asked to partner with one another to create a work of art, inside a trifold canvas, evoking hopes for their future in the context of their lived experiences since the hurricane. Art supplies included paper, colored pencils and pens, glue and a range of everyday objects, including buttons, ribbons and small toys. As a prompt, each family group will be asked to depict, within their trifold canvas, sources of strength that have sustained the family over time. Family members could choose to draw or otherwise evoke members of the family, absent or present, and depict articles of furniture, beloved recipes, gardens, heirlooms or other family keepsakes, as well as more intangible sources of strength, such as faith, love and kindness.

These family art trifolds were displayed during the workshop and helped serve as prompts for meaningful conversation about family bonds and sources of resilience during the hurricane and through the recovery period (multi-family focus groups). Families were encouraged to look at and comment upon one another's trifold canvas to encourage spoken reflection upon the many different ways that families have provided aid and succour to their members during challenging times. We thematically analyzed the recorded guided conversations in combination with the visual display interpretations.

Qualitative and quantitative data was gathered. For this conference proposal, only the qualitative portion is included. We worked with three families per day, all day, with the morning being the art project and the afternoon using the art as a focus point of the multi-family focus groups (n=9 families). Quantitative surveys based on the family resilience model were distributed by our on-site partners (n=50). Families who currently live in Puerto Rico during and after the hurricane disasters in 2017 compose the population of our study. Family is the sampling unit. We defined a family as the people who live in a same household and have biological relationships with each other. In practice, we will sample families through households because it is more tangible than family. We surveyed families in Puerto Rico at one of the most affected rural mountain areas: Bayamón/Comerio.

Results show that participants related to the art-making as a family and found it culturally impactful to tell stories about their family's experience through and after the hurricane. Families expressed deep scars around the difficult circumstances that the natural disaster brought to them and their loved ones. Further, there was a common theme of unity and sacrifice to keep safe within precarious situations and low resources. Participants also shared they used their community ties to

each other in service of those in the rural mountain region. While the entire island was devastated, those in the rural mountains were vastly disconnected from rescue and restoration resources. Even basic needs, such as water, electricity and medical attention, were extremely difficult to get. Nonetheless, the community created a network of shared resources to ensure everyone was stable.

Within families, participants reported different strategies to cope with the strain of living without electricity and water. Participant families oscillated support roles between children, siblings and parents. Families reported children took turns to do chores and parents supported children with schoolwork and maintaining a sense of normalcy through learning as well as play. Siblings supported each other through creative activities and checking in about each other's emotional health. All participant families expressed a deep sense of commitment to rebuild and regain a sense of safety through the collective effort of the family.

Through the art trifolds, families told stories about the natural landscapes as a metaphor for resilience. Art pieces showed nature as majestic and wonderous. Families shared that even when the hurricane was an act of nature, they did not feel animosity against it. Rather, participant families were in awe of how quickly nature recovered and offered colors, renewal and rebirth for them to follow in their own lives. Further, art trifolds showed that families' hopes were rooted in opportunities to create new shared vision of living spaces and stronger family relationships.

Natural disasters, such as Hurricanes, can bring about powerful forces. Beyond wind, rain and floods Hurricanes can also bring disruption and displacement to social and family bonds. Conversely, natural disasters represent renewal and rebirth of natural landscapes. Similarly, social and family bonds can be renewed and realigned in the aftermath of natural disasters. Working together on art pieces as a family unit, participants constructed images of difficult transitions and walking a relational tightrope to manage decision-making when their context became unstable and unrecognizable due to the Hurricane damages. They also displayed strong resilient narratives of hope, mutual support, and renewal. Results from this study can lead to future development of family assessments after displacement from a natural disaster as well as interventions to better understand how to foster resilience. For example, developing cultural representations of home through visual arts may lead to a healing process for displaced families. Future research should focus on detangling further key factors of the place detachment and reattachment processes.

Keywords: Hurricane, puerto rico, resilience, art, rural, family, community, mountains.

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THE MAIN CONCEPTUAL MODELS OF THE BEHAVIOR OF ADDICTION VICTIMS AND THE STAGES OF ITS FORMATION

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The problem of drug addiction is acute and urgent due to the complexity of its spread and elimination. In short, we can say that addiction is the desire for satisfaction or adaptation of someone or something. The psychological mechanism of addiction acts as an attempt to escape from real life by artificially altering the mental state by using psychoactive substances to maintain strong emotions or engage in a certain type of activity. In general, the negative nature of addictions cannot be absolute. Man's natural nature makes him dependent on food, water, air and other people. This class of addictions consists of physiological needs and needs for belonging, love and esteem.

However, excessive dependence is destructive and leads to addictive behavior. The main motive of the addicted person is to change the unsatisfactory mental state perceived by the person as "boring", "monotonous", "indifferent". Each of us has experienced a state of dissatisfaction and indifference at some point and we had a desire to change it. To accomplish this, a normal healthy person avoids the formation of addictions and uses constructive behavioral strategies.

Addictions are more likely to occur when the motive of wanting to escape from reality prevails over others, subjugates thoughts, desires and behaviors. Addictions come in many forms. Corin Sweet organizes them by source (Mandel, 2012):

- chemical
- non-chemical.

Chemical addiction includes drug addiction, alcoholism, smoking, drug addiction.

So-called emotional non-chemical dependence is expressed in gambling behavior where the impulse to act is as vital and overwhelming as intense hunger or thirst. There are several approaches (models) to explain the essence of addictive behavior (Egorov, 2007):

- spiritual (moral) model;
- disease model;
- symptomatic and psychoanalytic models;
- system-personal model;
- biopsychosocial model.

The moral (spiritual) model is based on religious (Orthodoxy, Protestantism, Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism, Yoga) ideas about addiction as a manifestation of sin. The disease

model treats addictive behavior as a disease that requires treatment. In the symptomatic model, addictive behavior is the result of learning and the effect is directed toward the symptom-habit. The psychoanalytic model considers the disturbance of personality dynamics to be the epicenter of addictions. The focus of the system-personal model of addiction is the disruption of significant relationships between a person and society (interpersonal, industrial, family) (Mekhtikhanov, 2008). Today, the biopsychosocial model of addictive behavior is widespread, taking into account violations in the complex system "organism-personality-society" as the mechanism of its development.

The existence of different models of addiction speaks of their complexity and multidimensionality and also shows the urgent need to combine the efforts of different specialists to solve acute problems of addictive behavior. Like any other negative social situation, dependent (addiction) tendencies do not appear immediately, they are formed gradually, they have different etiologies, dynamics, prognosis and consequences for the human body and its personal development. Understanding the patterns and characteristics of the formation of addiction will help others to see its picture and provide timely help to those who need it (Starshenbaum, 2006).

First stage: YOU DON'T CONTROL IT, it controls YOU (K. Sweet). YOU do whatever THIS requires (K. Sweet). These are the formulas of the first stage of the development of addiction and they can be interpreted as follows: certain actions cause internal elevation, create activity, turn an unfavorable mental state into a positive one. A person perceives these actions as a means of combating boredom, indifference and dissatisfaction and in unpleasant cases, he resorts to them as a means of saving money.

The second stage: This stage falls under the following formulas (K. Sweet). YOU do it more often, trying to get a stronger effect. YOU do THIS when you expect boredom, loneliness and pain on a regular basis. In the second stage of the formation of addictions, the frequency of addiction tendencies increases, in difficult life situations they become a habit and an "addictive rhythm" is formed (Nikolaeva, 2011).

The third stage: YOU feel that you cannot cope with life's problems WITHOUT HER (K. Sweet). This is the third step formula. Addiction becomes the central formation of the personality and subjugates all human behavior, the behavior is not subject to criticism and the addict becomes immune to the positive effects of the environment.

The fourth stage: The formulas that reveal the development of the stage are as follows (K. Sweet) (Nikolaeva, 2011): YOU struggle with IT, often you fail. You are wasting your time, energy and money. Addiction completely conquers a person, interpersonal relationships are broken, the addict lives in his illusory, artificially distorted world.

The fifth stage: You hate YOURSELF, you lose your self-esteem, you are in danger of losing your family, your career, your friends, your health. MANY DIE! (K. Sweet). The stage is irreversible, it ends with illness and often death, only rarely does a person manage to return to a normal life (Nikolaeva, 2011).

Signs of addiction

The literature highlights and describes the characteristics of all drug addicts (Barkova & Vankon, 2013):

1. A person's desire to change his situation.

2. Continuity of the addiction process. The duration of the stages depends on a person's personal characteristics, social environment and the source (object) of addiction.

3. Cyclicity of addictive behavior in the form of certain phases:
   – tension stage and active search for the object of dependence, the state of withdrawal when the need cannot be met;
   – relief and relaxation phase. while receiving the object;
   – phase of relative rest (remission).

4. Personal changes that determine social maladaptation (Barkova & Vankon, 2013):
   – hidden inferiority complex combined with apparent superiority;
   – foreign communication combined with constant fear of emotional contact;
   – desire to lie;
   – desire to blame others knowing that they are not at fault;
   – desire to avoid responsibility when making decisions;
   – stereotypic behavior;
   – dependence and anxiety.

In severe cases of drug and substance abuse, disease develops and death occurs.

It is important to see the complex mechanism of human development, to understand the causes and initial conditions of the observed phenomena in order to determine the predictions of the possible options for adapting to the individual life of each person.

Keywords: Addiction problem, physiological needs, chemical addiction, non-chemical addiction.

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BUILDING PROTECTIVE FACTORS FOR HUMANITARIAN PRACTITIONERS THROUGH COMPASSION RESILIENCE

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With the uptick in worldwide crises, including climate change, public health epidemics, increasing global migration and natural and human-made disasters, local and international humanitarian practitioners, specifically social workers, emergency aid and relief workers, disaster responders and crisis clinicians, are at elevated risk of potentially being exposed to traumatic events and situations of extreme violence as a result of their professions (Jachens, 2019; Lee *et al*., 2018; Lewis-Schroeder *et al*., 2018; Singer *et al*., 2020; Strohmeier *et al*., 2018; Wild *et al*., 2020). As they respond, to disasters and crises, practitioners can experience a range of mental health challenges, including traumatic stress, as a result of their exposure to the narratives of those whom they are trying to serve (Cherepanov, 2022; Stevens *et al*., 2022; Travers *et al*., 2022). Yet approaches to responding to this silent pandemic of traumatic stress continue to be inadequate (Ebren *et al*., 2022; Kim *et al*., 2021).

Efforts to further prepare humanitarian practitioners for the potential risks and hazards accompanying their professional roles and occurring within trauma-inducing environments are essential. The current model of self-care, emphasizing internal regulation and processes to promote positive health, wellbeing and the ability to continue to support others, is insufficient to best equip humanitarian practitioners with protective factors to stave off reactive traumatic responses to their work. In this session, participants will be introduced to some differentiated types of trauma and responses for the humanitarian practitioner, including people working in the global public health sector. The evolution of self-care and the current self-care model, which is centred around providing individuals with tools to help them regulate their responses to trauma and perhaps develop their compassion literacy will be discussed. Finally, participants will be introduced to the proposed model of Compassion Resilience, which offers a comprehensive approach that includes external pathways that reinforce the caring process. Participants will learn innovative and collaborative tools and strategies to restore their equilibrium and return to experiencing the rewards of their work.

Keywords: Humanitarian, post-traumatic growth, protective factors, resilience, secondary traumatic stress, self-care.

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INCLUSIVE DESIGN: CREATING AUTISM-FRIENDLY SPACES AND ENVIRONMENTS

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Inclusive design involves creating spaces, products and environments that accommodate and respect the needs of individuals with diverse abilities, including those on the autism spectrum. Designing autism-friendly spaces is a vital aspect of fostering inclusivity and providing a supportive environment for individuals with autism to thrive.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder marked by impairments in speech, social interaction, and behavior. Individuals with autism frequently have unusual sensory sensitivities, communication difficulties and specific interests. Creating environments that take these factors into account can significantly improve the quality of life for people with autism and their families.

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that often appears in early childhood as impaired social communication and confined, repetitive behaviors. It is classified as mild to severe (American Psychiatric Association, D.S.M.T.F. & American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Some people with ASD are nonverbal or only speak in simple sentences, whereas others are verbally skilled but struggle with social communication and pragmatic language, causing them to respond inappropriately in conversation, misinterpret nonverbal communication or lack age-appropriate competency to form friendships. People with ASD may struggle to adjust to changes in their routine or environment. Their ordinarily keen interests may be constrained. Some exhibit repetitive, stereotyped motor motions or a typical sensory responses.

ASD etiology is not fully understood, however numerous factors are thought to contribute to ASD development (Lyall *et al*., 2017). ASD-related neurologic alterations can occur during pregnancy and early postnatal life and genetic factors (including rare and common variations) contribute to population diversity in ASD-related behaviors (Piven *et al*., 2017), (Grove *et al*., 2019), (Pinto *et al*., 2010).

Principles of Inclusive Design for Autism-Friendly Spaces

1. Sensory Considerations: People with autism may have increased or decreased sensory sensitivity. Designing environments with controlled lighting, acoustics and textures can help make

for a more comfortable and accommodating environment. Soft, neutral colors and natural lighting are frequently favored over harsh fluorescent lighting and loud noises.

2. Predictability and Routine: Autistic people flourish in surroundings that have clear routines and visual clues. Visual schedules, clear signage and designated quiet zones can all assist to establish a predictable and structured environment.

3. Safety and Wayfinding: Safety is paramount in any environment. This includes avoiding potential risks and developing clear channels for navigation for people with autism. Designing places with clear visual clues and avoiding clutter can improve safety.

4. Flexible and Multi-Sensory Spaces: Inclusive design encourages the introduction of flexible spaces that adapt to various sensory preferences. Multi-sensory rooms, calm-down zones and zones for focused activity can be quite beneficial to people with autism.

5. Social Interaction Zones: It is critical to design environments that encourage social contact while respecting personal space. Offering both open and private seating areas can satisfy a wide range of social tastes.

6. Communication Support: Including communication aids such as visual communication boards or technology-assisted communication devices can assist those with communication issues in successfully expressing themselves.

7. Autism-Friendly Facilities: Public facilities such as schools, museums, shopping malls and airports can include autism-friendly elements such as quiet hours, sensory-friendly activities and educated staff who understand the needs of people with autism.

Benefits of Inclusive Design

Inclusive design, also known as universal design, accessible design and barrier free design, is a global concept that seeks to make environments accessible to all people. The use of this concept would eliminate current environmental and societal restrictions faced by some groups of people, such as those with disabilities (Mace, 1985).

Enhanced Quality of Life: Inclusive environments create a more comfortable and less stressful environment for those with autism, resulting in better well-being and overall quality of life.

Greater Community Integration: Autism-friendly places promote social inclusion and involvement by lowering obstacles to participation for people with autism.

Educational Opportunities: By catering to students with autism's sensory needs and learning styles, inclusive educational environments encourage greater learning results.

Autism-friendly places can be created through inclusive design, which is a caring and vital step toward establishing an inclusive society. Designers and architects may help to the building of

environments where everyone, regardless of ability, can thrive by taking into account the special needs and preferences of individuals with autism. Inclusive design principles assist not only people with autism, but the entire community by promoting understanding, acceptance and a more accessible world.

Keywords: Autism spectrum disorder, inclusive design, Autism-friendly spaces.

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COVID-19 & RELIGIOSITY: UNIVERSITY FEMALE SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS (2020-2023)

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Introduction

Social work students, mostly female, tend to experience increased burdens of responsibility in disaster conditions that may be associated with anxiety, stress, emotional exhaustion, depression and substance use (Yehudai *et al*., 2023, 2020). Religiosity has been found to be a possible protective factor contributing to psychological wellbeing (Lucchetti *et al*., 2021).

Studies show alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and other substance use among young adults changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The objective of this study was to assess substance use patterns among secular and religious Israeli female social work students from 2020 to 2023, key years of the pandemic.

Methods

Established in 1996, the Regional Alcohol and Drug Abuse Research (RADAR) Center at the Ben Gurion University of the Negev has received recognition and award from the US National Institute on Drug Abuse for its contributions to scientific diplomacy through efforts in international collaborative research. For this study, the RADAR Center partnered with an Israeli non-profit organization whose primary aim is to collect data and promote the health and well-being of university students throughout the country.

Specifically, data were collected from social work female students about their fear of COVID-19 and concern of COVID-19 related economic conditions associated with their psycho-emotional well-being and substance use. The Qualtrics software platform was used for the survey.

Two scales were used for data collection: the seven-item Fear of COVID-19 Scale (FCV-19S) (Ahorsu *et al*., 2020) with two additional questions and nine-item economic concern scale (ECS) (Isralowitz *et al*., 2022). In addition, students were asked about their religiosity, psycho-emotional well-being and substance use during the COVID-19 years. The survey instruments used were prepared in English and translated into Hebrew; then, back translated to English by a team

of researchers to ensure content and vocabulary were appropriate. The Cronbach reliability scores of the survey instruments used were FCV-19S = 0.833, ECS = 0.849.

Statistical Analysis

All statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS, version 25. The Pearson's chi squared test was applied for qualitative/nonparametric variables, whereas the t test, correlation analysis and one-way ANOVA were used for continuous variables. Binary logistic regression analysis was used to identify possible key substance use predictors associated with the social work students' religiosity, psycho-emotional well-being, COVID-19 fear and economic concern.

Participants

A total of 1,790 Israeli female social work students completed the online survey during four survey periods from May 2020 to April 2022: n=261 (T1), n= 274 (T2), n=404 (T3) and n=851 (T4).

Results

The levels of agreement with FCV-19S and ECS statements were evaluated by a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Higher total scores correspond with more COVID-19 fear and COVID-19 related economic concern. Fear and economic concern levels were divided into three parts (i.e., low. medium and high) for a year-to-year comparison of COVID fear and personal economic impact concern and combined for additional assessment purposes. Chi square test results evidence a significant difference in COVID-19 fear and concern over the T1 to T4 periods: $\chi^2(6)=14.951$; p=.021 (Figure 1).

Chi square test did not evidence a significant difference of COVID-19 fear/concern by religiosity status (i.e., secular or non-secular): $\chi^2(2)=2.549$; p=.280. Regardless of the T1…T4 periods, religious students reported a lower level of substance use than those secular; however, they reported a greater increase of last month substance use associated with COVID-19: $\chi^2(1)=10.487$; p=.001 and $\chi^2(1)=174.388$; p<.001 respectively. Also, regardless of T1…T4 periods, students who reported an increase of substance use and binge drinking had a higher level of COVID-19 fear and concern (p<.001).

Regarding psycho-emotional well-being due to COVID-19, chi square test results show no significant difference among the respondents based on their religiosity: $\chi^2(1)=0.326$; p=.568. However, regardless of T1…T4 periods, students who reported deterioration of last month well-being had a higher level COVID-19 fear and concern: $\chi^2(2)=332.788$; p<.001. Also, respondents who reported deterioration of last month well-being reported more substance use ($\chi^2(1)=25.213$; p<.001) and binge drinking ($\chi^2(1)=10.384$; p<.001).
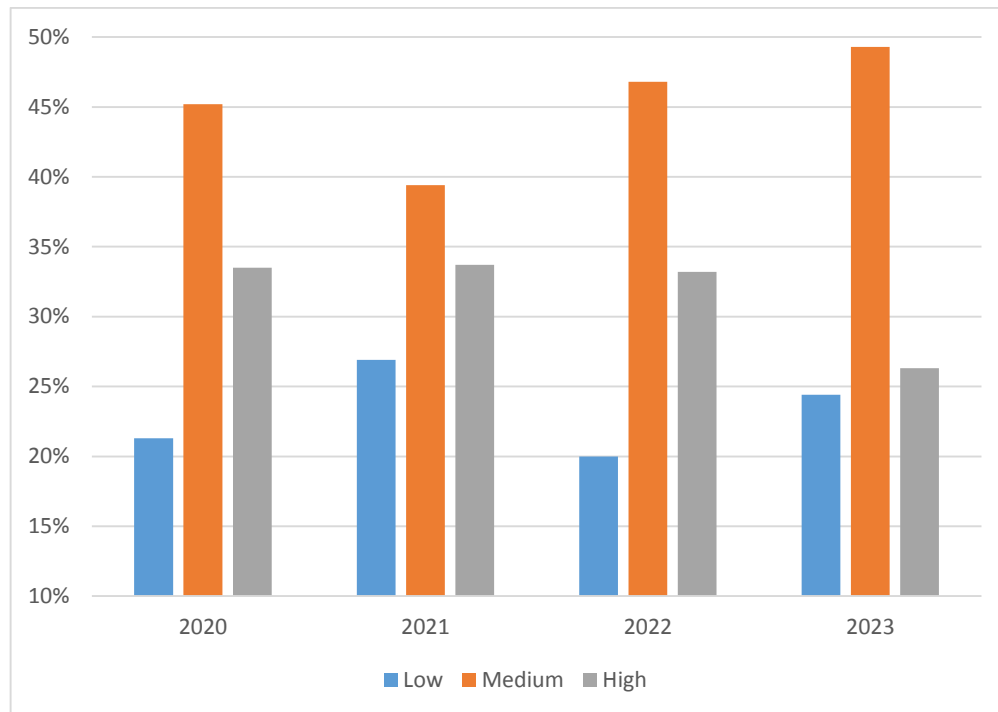
Figure 1. COVID-19 fear and concern by survey year.

Stepwise binary logistic regression analysis shows the following factors associated with substance use during COVID-19 period from 2020 to 2023 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Binary logistic regression predicting last month and last month substance use increase.

	Last month substance use		Increased last month substance use	
	Odds Ratio (OR)	95% CI for OR	Odds Ratio (OR)	95% CI for OR
Religious	5.16	3.95 – 6.73	1.39	1.04 – 1.87
Deterioration psycho-emotional well-being	1.71	1.25 – 2.34	4.61	2.59 – 8.18
High level COVID-19 fear & concern	1.43	1.04 – 1.98	3.67	2.76 – 4.88
T1	2.16	1.41 – 3.32	4.36	3.13 – 6.07
T2	1.56	1.03 – 2.36	-	-
Age	-	-	1.03	1.00 – 1.06
Nagelkerke R^2	.209		.252	

Conclusion

Our findings point to a consistent decline of substance use, after an initial rise, during 4 years of COVID-19 among Israeli social work female secular and religious students. Overall, secular students tend to use more harmful substances than their religious counterparts. Also, we believe the decline of fear and personal economic impact concern associated with the pandemic over time reflects a possible adaptation to COVID-19 conditions resulting in reduced student substance use. These findings may have value for education and prevention purposes.

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SECTION VI

Social Work Education and Research

UNVEILING THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF SOCIAL RESEARCH IN ENHANCING SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

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The practice-oriented academic discipline of social work (Engel & Schutt, 2014) as a science has encompassed and evolved concepts related to social development, reforms, democratic ideologies and a growing need for research in social work practice (Doel, 2012). The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics denotes that social workers advocate for social justice and promote social changes with and on behalf of clients. The Code of Ethics also specifies that this approach applies to all professional endeavors, including research and assessment (National Association of Social Workers, 2021).

Social workers, individuals and society collectively formulate theories and discuss the challenges that clients encounter within the complex landscape of social work practice. Among this practice, social researchers play a crucial role in unveiling the true impact of social services on individuals, groups and families facing vulnerability. Considering economic factors, social work researchers are consistently adapting to changes, evaluating the influence of social determinants on individuals from disadvantaged communities, thereby elucidating statistical insights that extend beyond the surface issues.

Social work research plays a vital role in enabling social workers to evaluate the requirements of their clients, the community and the organization they are part of. Additionally, it facilitates a deeper comprehension of the advantages and disadvantages of the social services provided to the respective populations. Moreover, research assists in identifying clients' specific needs, which in turn aids in resource allocation and advocating for their interests. Furthermore, social research elucidates the effects of policies and regulations on social welfare, clients and communities, while also serving as a means of educating about the practices within the field of

social work. Rubin & Babbie (2008) emphasized the significance of utilizing research-derived facts to guide both practical applications and endeavors for social reform. They underlined the role of research in shaping contributions that can advance both knowledge and the practical implementation of social work. Despite this, there is a prevalent tendency among social workers to undervalue the potential impact of research contributions within the sphere of social work practice (Rubin & Babbie, 2008).

The process of social work research shares similarities with traditional research but includes additional steps tailored to social work objectives. It begins with problem identification, followed by client problem assessment and goal setting. Subsequently, pre-intervention measurement is taken, followed by the introduction of a single intervention. The effects of the intervention are evaluated by comparing pre-intervention and intervention measurements, effectively linking research with practice (Engel & Schutt, 2014).

Teater (2017) states that social work research informs professional practice by achieving various objectives: understanding the needs and resources of people in their surroundings, illustrating the comparative advantages and disadvantages of social work services, advancing professional education in response to changing practice scenarios, and comprehending the effects of legislation and social policy on the well-being of the clients and communities that social work serves.

Incorporating research into social work practice is both a strategic approach and an ethical necessity, enabling social workers to drive positive change through informed interventions and contribute to an adaptable and compassionate professional environment focused on improving lives. Social work applies research methods to address challenges faced by clients and social workers, encompassing the principles, theories and relationships within social work practice. By linking research and practice and empowering social workers with evidence-based knowledge, social research employs extra levels to measure the precise impact of social work intervention. Social research strives to achieve humanistic goals in the field, empowering practitioners to make informed differences and be more effective in their roles (Engel & Schutt, 2014).

Keywords: Social work, social research, social workers, development.

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IMPACT OF SOCIAL INNOVATIONS ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Development is the arrangements made with the aim of ensuring the well-being of all people in the economic, social, political and environmental fields. Due to the fact that the social work profession and development efforts are directly related by considering one of the main goals of the social work profession is to ensure the well-being of vulnerable, disadvantaged groups in particular. In recent years, it is obvious that achieving sustainability, focusing on the best interests of the disadvantaged groups and individuals in society, and trying to be more effective, especially on social service interventions, innovative efforts are getting high importance. At this stage, there is an increasing need to discuss the relationship between the social development dimension of sustainability, and social work and social innovation. In the framework of The International Federation of Social Work's (IFSW) the Social Work Agenda for Social Development it is describing the relationship between Social Work education and Social Innovation includes a limited number of field types (IFSW, 2021); although studies in this context are scarce in Azerbaijan.

In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development Report published the concept of sustainable development; "the current needs of the people, and the amount of resources that can meet the needs of future generations to meet without affecting the shape is defined as" (Brundtland, 1987). Development is sustainable if it does not reduce the average quality of life. In this sense, sustainability requires intergenerational Decency. The concept of sustainable development is based on the concepts of intragenerational and intergenerational solidarity and justice. According to Holmberg and Sandbrook (1992), social development is a socially sustainable system, social justice, accessibility to services, health and education, gender equality, participation is a process that allows to develop an adequate level of social services. Sustainable development aims to increase the economic and social well-being of individuals within the framework of social justice and rights by providing a holistic perspective on the problems and obstacles faced by individuals. Hautekeur (2005) stated that development contributes to sustainable social life based on mutual respect and social justice; opposes power structures that prevent people's participation from all sides; and contributes to the socio-cultural development of

people. Additionally, social development efforts include developing individuals, prioritizing the anti-exclusion struggle, investigating the structural reasons that cause individuals to become disadvantaged, and looking for ways to influence policies. Besides all these efforts, the main goal in development is to create a change in the direction of development and to help people cope with this transformation process (Hautekeur, 2005). At this juncture, the development process and the goals of the social welfare state coincide. The purpose of the social welfare state is to ensure that all individuals in society are equal and free in the functioning of political, economic and social life, as well as before the law. Furthermore, ensuring equality of opportunity and the right to social security are among the goals of the social welfare state (Aktan, Özkıvrak, 2003). In the process of the development of the social welfare state and the implementation of social policies, the discipline and profession of social work have been recognized as an important tool. In other words, in order to achieve the goals set in the development process, social work fulfills its roles and responsibilities as a change agent/agent in accordance with the goals of the social welfare state. Undoubtedly, it is evident that the social work profession is actively engaged in providing social welfare services and contributing to sustainable development initiative. The focus of the social work profession is to increase the functionality of the individual within the environment and society by emphasizing the interaction between the individual and his environment. As attested by Kut (1988), the reform approach focusing on the social environment assumes that when individuals have appropriate living conditions, their functionality will also increase and improve.

Looking at recent history, social work and non-governmental organizations that take actions in this context have made significant efforts for social innovation. The great wave of industrialization and urbanization in the XIX century, has led to a wide increase in social innovation and initiative: the company provided to investors for opening low amount loans, investments for the formation of societies, trade unions are some of these initiatives. During the 19th and 20th centuries, non-governmental organizations in the UK were instrumental in pioneering innovative models in childcare, housing, social development, and social care, among other areas. Thus, significant progress have been made in the adoption of the understanding of social innovation in social work practices: For example, in the following years after 1945, governments made progress towards becoming a welfare state; some innovative models were developed in areas such as education and health (Mulgan, 2006). Over the last few years, facing demographic changes, increasing inequality between rich and poor, and decimated resources allocated to humanitarian services, humanitarian service organizations have been operating independently and developing cooperation networks in service delivery in modern societies. Such a situation leads to a reconsideration of the knowledge and skills of the social work profession. In

other words, there was a need to reconsider the curriculum in social work schools related to community practice (Brooks *et al*., 2004). Migration, urbanization, education, health, and problems in the judicial system, employment, housing, environmental problems and the physical and psychological effects on individuals that have had all of these problems to the social work profession to the problems of innovative methods in accordance with raises the need to intervene and to generate a solution. At this juncture, it becomes important to shape the social work curriculum to solve emerging social problems. Cox (2001) listed the new social problems affecting social work practices as privatization, the effects of globalization, increasing individualization, adaptation to technological developments, adaptation to multiculturalism (Cox, 2001). Social innovation is defined as the implementation and development of new ideas (services and models) to create new social relationships and meet social needs. This concept is also expressed as the satisfaction of repressed social desires that affect the process of social interaction by innovative methods. The idea of innovation aims to create a good society and to increase the capacity of individuals to take action (European Commission, 2013). Social innovation means innovative activities and services that are disseminated and expanded through institutions whose first goal is 'social' and that are mobilized to meet social needs (Mulgan, 2006). Social innovation is a process that includes new ideas, new strategies and applications. Social innovation in society and solving social problems with the implementation of new and creative ideas to meet the needs of every individual primarily is to make a difference in the lives of individuals and groups; and determining the direction of social change to make the change in a broader sense includes (Özmete, 2013). In recent years, countries have become aware of the importance of innovation in issues such as overcoming the increasingly complex needs of those using public services in the context of limited resources. In the last 10 years in the UK, some government efforts have been witnessed to support innovative behavior in the public sector (Brown, 2010). Initiatives to provide and facilitate innovation, especially in the field of health and education, have led to an increasing number of researches in this field. There was a need to disseminate innovative practices and encourage educational institutions to provide high-quality education and training with October funding (HEFCE, 2002).

The development that has been going on for the last half century has continued to be unfair and to increase the negative environmental impacts. The concept of sustainable development should bring solutions to social inequalities and environmental degradation, while maintaining its basic meaning economically. It is necessary for sustainable development, conservation of natural resources, sustainable economic Decisiveness and intergenerational equality. Social equality, fulfillment of health and education needs and participatory democracy are very important elements of development and are closely related to sustainability. As can be seen, due to the reflections of

these macro-level problems on human life, social work is faced with new social problems day by day. Therefore, the need for innovative solutions in social work applications is also increasing. Social work has a responsibility to create change in the individual by empowering individuals to make their own decisions and manage their lives. In the ecological approach that extends from the individual to society, social work is one of the most important professions that are effective as a "change agent" at every stage of development. Thus, social innovation in a society takes place through the "application area" of the social work profession. The field of application includes the services provided by the social work profession. Innovative methods that can be used in this area will directly affect the quality and scope of the service. In fact, the concept of social innovation is thought to have emerged with the reflections of developments in information technologies on social life in the days we live in the information age. However, the essence of social innovation is based on the first activities that people do to change their lives, up to inventions.

Rapid technological developments have only been effective in increasing the importance and scope of the subject. Social work is a profession that is shaped according to the structure and characteristics of society and one of its main goals is to ensure the well-being of especially disadvantaged individuals. Innovative strategies are very important for the social work profession, which plays an active role in sustainable development efforts, to continuously improve and make more competent interventions. The idea of innovation aims to create a "good" society. One of the necessary elements for this to happen is the coordinated work of social workers, non-governmental organizations, local communities and the public. Changes in the social structure also bring to the agenda the existence of some unmet needs. Social workers should first identify these needs; they should be able to create innovative solutions outside of traditional models to meet these needs and evaluate the effectiveness of these new solutions.

Keywords: Social work, social innovation, sustainable development goals, social work education.

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THE IMPACT OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TECHNOLOGIES ON SOCIAL WORK: REALITY AND PROSPECTS

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Artificial intelligence is becoming a transformative technology of our time, through which serious social changes are taking place. Social sector institutions are actively using artificial intelligence, big data analysis, biometrics and other innovations, which makes it possible to increase the automation of the provision of social services and their active use by different segments of the population. Every year new opportunities appear effective approaches to solving user problems are being developed to improve the level of social services.

As with most changes in life, there will be positive and negative impacts on society as artificial intelligence continues to transform the world we live in. The use of new generation Aİ technologies- Generative Artificial Intelligence, as one of its latest forms and a new generation of chat bots in all regions of the world and the use of their capabilities for various purposes can lead to very serious social consequences, disruption of political and international stability, the emergence of new migration waves, the spread of extremist ideologies, the growth of international terrorism and organized crime.

One of the areas where artificial intelligence can be applied and influenced the most is social work.

Social work is a field that is dedicated to improving the well-being and quality of life of individuals, families and communities. It is focused on helping people overcome social problems and challenges such as poverty, homelessness, addiction and mental health issues. With the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in recent years, there has been a growing interest in how technology can be used to address social challenges. In this article, we will explore the role of AI in social work and its potential to make a positive impact on society.

One of the primary applications of AI in social work is in the area of data analysis. Social workers collect large amounts of data of their beneficiaries, such as their demographics, economic conditions and social support systems. By using AI, this data can be analyzed more efficiently and accurately, leading to more effective interventions and better outcomes for the beneficiaries. AI-powered tools can also help social workers identify patterns and trends in the data that would be

difficult to identify manually, enabling them to make more informed decisions about the best course of action for their clients.

So, the impact of artificial intelligence on social work research has become significant. The ability to process vast amounts of data and identify patterns makes artificial intelligence a powerful tool for revolutionizing social work research and solving some of the challenges faced by researchers in the field.

One of the key challenges in social work is the sheer volume of data that needs to be analyzed. Traditional data analysis methods can be time-consuming and labor-intensive, often leading to delays in research projects. However, artificial intelligence algorithms can quickly sift through large data sets, extract relevant information and identify patterns that are not always obvious to human researchers. This not only saves time, but also allows for a more comprehensive and in-depth analysis.

Generally, artificial intelligence has the potential to address several challenges faced by social work researchers. From analyzing large amounts of data to identifying research gaps and disseminating findings, artificial intelligence has the potential to revolutionize social work research. However, it is important to approach the use of artificial intelligence in social work with caution, ensuring ethical considerations are taken into account. By combining the power of artificial intelligence and adhering to ethical standards, social work researchers can make significant advances in advancing the field and improving the lives of individuals and communities.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, social work, communities.

EVALUATION ON PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION IN TURKEY

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Social problems such as unemployment, migration and poverty that emerged with the Industrial Revolution in the world have revealed the need for intervention in societies towards these problems. In order to solve these problems in European countries, activities were carried out with the support of philanthropic individuals, institutions and organizations, initially on a voluntary basis. However, these activities carried out with religious feelings were unprofessional and insufficient to solve the problems. For this reason, the need to carry out activities professionally and as a profession has emerged. In this context, training was first given through courses and conferences related to the social work profession, and then schools were opened. The school that can be described as the first social work school (Institute for Social Work Training) was opened in Amsterdam, Netherlands and over time, the number of these schools increased in European countries and social work began to be structured as a profession. The work initiated by United Nations Social Welfare Counselor Miss Hersey, who came to Turkey in 1957, can be mentioned as an indicator of the close attention the United Nations shows to the organization of social services in various countries and to the problems of social work education in Turkey. It has been decided to "reorganize social services in Turkey with a scientific and professional approach". As a result of these studies, the "Law on the Establishment of the Social Services Institute" was enacted, which can be considered an important turning point in terms of social work education (Koşar & Tufan, 1999). Social work education in our country first started in 1960 under the name of "Social Work Academy" with a four-year education after high school. In 1982, it was affiliated with Hacettepe University and named the School of Social Services. This department continued its existence as the only department in the field of social work until 2003. By the 2000s, an environment was created that would enable the opening of new social service departments in Turkey. Three departments were opened together in 2006, and the number of departments continued to increase exponentially every year (Uysal, 2019). This rapid increase has led to the emergence of many problems in social work education. The focus of this study is to examine the current situation of social work education in Turkey through research in the literature and to offer suggestions.

Keywords: Social work, education, social worker, social work academicians

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MEASURING THE LEVELS OF VIOLENCE BIAS, EXTREME OR RADICALISM AND ILLEGAL BEHAVIOR OF SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

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The center of the social work profession is people. Interpersonal relations are important because it is one of the values of the social profession and the expectations of individuals in its environment. Human relations have a complex structure. Conflicts that arise in this complex structure can lead to the emergence of violence. Violence has always existed in historical processes. Evidence of the phenomenon of violence dates back 3000 years, its emergence as old as human history. In one study, archaeologists found fractures in the bones of male and female mummies, while the proportion of mummies was higher. When the individual is blocked, pressured, unable to express himself, not being able to control his behavior and showing coercion, etc. Behavior also encourages violence. As a result of violence, it can harm itself as well as the other person. Domestic violence causes children to grow up with violence in the social learning environment, reproductive and unhealthy people. While the advanced dimension of violence was seen as a positive concept as the beginning of the reform movement in the 19th century in the history of radicalism, which is also identified with extremism, the soldiers, especially September 11, terrorist incidents in the USA and religious radicalism, which emerged in Iraq as the executive, have evolved and caused the concept to have a negative meaning. The economic reasons of individuals who have increased behaviors with radicalism, It can happen for reasons such as being accepted in the environment of friends, the desire to prove oneself, a means of showing power, and attracting attention. The fact that illegal behavior has legal and social sanctions is mostly done in secret. In the face of all these concepts, social work has taken on important duties and responsibilities to protect people's security, social welfare and human rights. Social work, which is a profession and discipline born as a result of the needs of people, strives for a more peaceful and livable world that increases the well-being of the individual, group and society. It performs interrelated micro, mezzo and macro interventions. The problem of the research; It will be inevitable for social worker candidates who will be in contact with the client group in the future to reflect their own cognitive, social and cultural structures in their profession. However, they have to do their own self-control in the light of social work profession values and ethical responsibilities.

A planned intervention process should be carried out with a generalist social work perspective, in accordance with the principle of the uniqueness of the individual's value and dignity, which is one of the values of social work, and the principle that no distinction can be made between the clients. In this context, the social worker has roles such as mediator in interpersonal relations, advocacy against oppression, acting as a catalyst, being a change agent in social events, being a case manager, being a leader and a guide. In order to achieve all these, they receive training on various subjects in undergraduate education. In addition to the perspective of these trainings, it is inevitable to take part in the profession with individual feelings, thoughts and attitudes. Our individual feelings, thoughts and attitudes must match the requirements of the profession. Otherwise, the individual will not be able to get satisfaction from his profession, so he will not be able to benefit the vulnerable groups he works with. Social levels are of great importance for effective service delivery in professional life. Behavior levels apply to human relationships in their individual lives. In this research, it is claimed that the level of violence, extremism or radicalism and illegal behavior is an important criterion for the professional life of social workers. In this context, the sample of the research consists of social work students at Fırat University. For the purpose of the research, the independent variables affecting violence, extremism or radicalism and illegal behavior were taken into consideration. Within the scope of the research, the extremism scale and the violence and illegal behavior scale related to the extremism scale will be applied to the social work students (participants) within the scope of quantitative research. Depending on the results obtained, the relationship between violence, extremism or radicalism and illegal behavior will be determined. It is thought that the results will contribute to both the literature and the development of new knowledge and perspectives in social work education on the development of violence, extremism or radicalism and illegal behavior Violence is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as "the situation where, as a result of physical force or the application of the government to another person in the form of a limited threat or reality, it causes or has the possibility of causing injury, death and psychological damage to the exposed person" (World Health Organization, 2002)

The most victims of violence are children, women and the elderly, who are at the forefront of the client groups in the social work profession. Social workers have roles such as advocacy, mediator, case manager, catalyst. It can be said that violence affects not only the victim or perpetrator, but also their environment, so a large part of the society is affected (WHO, 2002).

The fact that violence is continuous and effective can cause it to legitimize it over time, that is, the individual can also cause feelings of extremism and radicalism. Both extremism and radicalization have been the focus of extensive research across the social sciences in recent years. A quick Google search in January 2020 shows that the term 'extremism', which is the English word

for extremism, has 282,000 references, and the term 'radicalization', which is the English equivalent of radicalization, has more than 84,000 references. It may therefore be helpful to clarify the meaning of radicalization and extremism to gain an idea of what these concepts encompass. First and foremost, most research on terrorism and political violence points to radicalization as a process, while extremism is theorized as a psychological and ideological condition (Kruglanski *et al*., 2019). Therefore, the difference between the two terms is related to their reference to dynamic or static events. Also, the second emphasis is on the causal relationships between the two terms. While extremism refers to the extent of an individual's beliefs regarding political and ideological issues (including religiosity), radicalization relates to mechanisms that generate or originate from extremist beliefs. (Van den Bos, 2018).

In this study, it was aimed to examine whether the levels of violence, extremism or radicalism and illegal behavior of Fırat University Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences Social Work students differ according to independent variables and the relationship between violence, extremism or radicalism and illegal behavior. Since it was desired to obtain generalizable findings with the deductive scientific method by using numerical descriptions and scales in the research, it was deemed appropriate to use the quantitative research design and the relational screening model. "Informed Consent Form" "Individual Information Form" "Extremism Scale" and "Extremism Related Violence and Illegal Behaviors Scale" were used to collect the research data**.**

Keywords: Violence, social work, extremism or radicalism, illegal behavior, young adulthood.

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INTEGRATING COMPUTATIONAL THINKING INTO A DATA ANALYSIS COURSE FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

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Currently, the interest in data science has led to the popularity of data-driven research. As machine learning and interpretation techniques have become an integral parts of many research fields, knowing about and applying these methods expands the toolbox of research in the psychological and social science (Ruijer *et al*., 2023). Computational thinking reflects abstracted skill that can be used to solve any open-ended problem. It means that computational thinking can be introduced to students outside of a programming curriculum. The relationship between computational thinking and computers science is well expressed in the report of the Royal Society (2012), Computational thinking is the process of recognising aspects of computation in the world that surrounds us, and applying tools and techniques from computer science to understand and reason about both natural and artificial systems and processes.

Computational thinking can be easily introduced in any course where students are required to design their own experimental paradigms to answer open-ended research questions (Nelimarkka, 2022). In academic year 2022-2023 for the first time, we delivered the course "Data Analysis with Machine Learning" for psychologists and sociologist. Students studied two semesters of the basics of the Python programming language, elements of machine learning. At the end of this course, students did projects related to the processing and analysis of data from the field of professional activity using machine learning methods. For example, the topics of the projects were: "Unemployment and mental illness survey", "Female Employment vs Socioeconimic Factors", "Predicting Divorce" and others. Here the students used the free dataset from the kaggle site. In one project, students conducted an online survey and made their own dataset. They studied the self-esteem of young people. This is an open-ended problem, and the goal for the students is to design a solution to the problem (i.e., design the experiment). This can be accomplished by following the steps of computational thinking: decomposition, pattern recognition, pattern abstraction, algorithm design.

Keywords: Teaching students, data analysis, computational thinking, Python.

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THE INNOVATIVE INITIATIVE OF THE EDUCATOR-TEACHER AND HIS OWN ABILITY TO USE INNOVATIONS IN DAILY ACTIVITIES

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Various laws are enacted to ensure that children learn in the most favorable conditions, which are constantly updated and progressing in the field of education. The methods and programs we consider correct and effective are replaced with new ones. All of these changes are driven by the rapidly evolving society, science and technology. Since the demands of the world are constantly changing and evolving, various innovations and innovations are used to guide the younger generation. In this endeavor, teachers have an undeniable and significant role. If we consider that the educational process begins with a preschool institution, it would be more appropriate to analyze the processes in this direction. Firstly, it is very important for an educator-teacher to have a broad worldview, to closely follow what is happening in the world in the field of education, to constantly seek innovations, and to learn new innovations and apply them. The work here is not limited to learning various new methods, techniques and programs. The main issue is the real professionalism of the educator-teacher, precisely their ability to use these innovations and new methods in the teaching process, to adapt children to these processes, and to create a synthesis of subject and content during the teaching process.

Currently, we frequently encounter interactive methods, active teaching methods and new teaching technology concepts. In the current educational environment, there is a preference for active and interactive teaching methods. The adoption of new styles, methods, tools and approaches not only fosters creativity and independence but should also contribute to the development of one's personality, their relationships with others, nature, society, their spiritual world and so on, enriching them.

When we talk about "innovation" (borrowed from the English word "innovation," meaning "novelty"), it is understood in a broad sense as the implementation of innovations in the pedagogical system with the goal of improving the process and results of education, creating a conducive and effective learning environment. Innovations are ideas, processes, tools and results introduced into the pedagogical system with a focus on improving quality. Learning from the global experience is considered a key factor in the successful application of innovations in education. Innovations in pedagogy are those innovations that, when applied, lead to increased

efficiency and higher quality in the teaching and educational process. To address such issues, educators and teachers must adopt a creative approach, engage in continuous self-study, conduct research and learn and apply innovations based on the experiences of advanced countries. For this purpose, various seminars, courses and training sessions are organized to enhance the knowledge and skills of educators in the field of education. Educators should show interest in such areas, embrace new pedagogical ideas, engage in innovative activities, learn from their peers' experiences and also share their own experiences, useful knowledge and methods with others.

But how did it happen that interactive learning methods and new innovations began to be considered useful and were implemented on a large scale? It is evident that they didn't suddenly think that these methods and approaches were effective. For years, we have witnessed and participated in the use of traditional methods in the field of education. In fact, we do not advocate dismissing training methods as useless or ineffective. Because through these methods, children have acquired various information and gained a sufficient amount of knowledge. If we take into account that today, the individuals researching new methods in the field of education and implementing them are themselves products of the traditional method. Therefore, the traditional method should not be considered entirely ineffective. However, the limitation of the traditional method was that the teaching process continued with the tutor-teacher's speech, explanation and conversation and the children's role was that of passive listeners and observers. Certainly, children could learn through this method, but the question remained as to what and to what extent the child had learned. Moreover, the child's speech was rarely, if ever, utilized, hindering the development of the child's language, communication and interpersonal skills.

In terms of the cognitive development stages of preschool children and their influence on the methods employed in the educational process, three groups of methods are identified:
– Visual;
– Practical;
– Oral.

All three groups of methods serve as fundamental approaches to cater to varying cognitive styles during preschool age. Each group of methods is chosen to facilitate engagement with different aspects of the learning process (visual representation of examples, physical movement techniques, questioning, explanations and game-based techniques involving voice, movement, etc.)".

The primary goal of the modern education system is to treat students as active participants, fostering their engagement in the learning process, preparing them for high-quality school education and cultivating adaptable and proactive habits. The student-to-student relationship is one of the primary actions in this endeavor.

So, what are the advantages of active learning and how does it differ from traditional learning? When discussing traditional education, it was observed that the educator-teacher's speech takes precedence, while the child's speech remains passive. However, active learning takes a different approach, emphasizing the child's active participation in discussions. This does not imply that the educator-teacher's speech is disregarded. In active learning, the educator-teacher orchestrates lessons by introducing topics and asking questions, leading to discussions based on the answers provided. Through these discussions, the educator-teacher corrects any misconceptions and imparts more comprehensive knowledge. It's evident that the child is actively engaged in the learning process. The primary objective of active learning is to inspire children to take initiative.

Innovation and the application of innovations should not be limited to the teaching process but should also extend to the educational process. Given that education, training and up bringing are continuously interconnected, one of the primary functions of an innovative learning environment is education. When discussing innovation and new technologies, education can not be separated from this context. This is particularly relevant because a significant portion of a child's formative years is spent in preschool.

It is quite captivating for children when teachers utilize presentations in the teaching process. It showcases the teacher's proficiency in using ICT technologies for education. The educator-teacher prepares presentations and uses them to convey essential information during lessons. These presentations can include various images, pictures, video materials, and even fragments from cartoons. Since the attention span of preschool children tends to be involuntary, one effective method to captivate their interest in lessons is by incorporating resources with engaging images and video materials. When developing such resources, the educator-teacher should focus on making the images and video frames colorful and vibrant, using attention-grabbing colors.

The predominant trend of the 21st century is the unprecedented rapid development of technological tools, their widespread application across all fields, the integration of scientific achievements into everyday life and the dissemination of information to society. In contemporary society, information technology plays an immensely significant role, being employed in nearly every domain, enhancing efficiency and quality of work. Furthermore, it holds a crucial position in the advancement of education and culture. The utilization of technology in education necessitates careful selection and the delivery of high-quality outcomes. The active incorporation of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) into the educational sector should aim to elevate the level and quality of the learning process.

Presently, society faces the challenge of correctly integrating computers and technological tools into the education system. Proper integration signifies the safe and effective utilization of technological tools, contributing to the learning process. One of the primary concerns in this regard is the educator-teacher's proficiency in using these technologies. This, once again, underscores the importance of continuous self-development for educator-teachers and staying abreast of innovations.

Keywords: Educator-teacher, innovative initiative, teaching methodology, educational technology, active learning, pedagogical innovation.

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USING SIMULATION TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE (IPV) AND TRAUMA SOCIAL WORK PLACEMENTS

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Track: Development of Social Work Education

Social work students play a key role in intimate partner violence (IPV) organizations, providing support for survivors of IPV while completing their social work field practicum placement (Conroy *et al*., 2022; Fisher *et al*., 2021). Many social workers students do not have adequate IPV and trauma training and require additional opportunities to prepare them for the complexities of IPV practice (Sutton *et al*., 2021). Simulation-based pedagogy is one way to teach social work students the practice skills needed for working with individuals and families who have experienced violence (Kourgiantakis *et al*., 2020; Lee *et al*., 2019). This qualitative study used simulation-based research methods to gain a better understanding of how to help prepare social work students for their practicum placements working with survivors of IPV and trauma. Eighteen IPV service providers were recruited for the study and shared best practices for trauma-informed practice. Each participant engaged in a 30-minute simulated session with a live standardized patient (SP) who portrayed a survivor of IPV experiencing sequelae of trauma. Following each simulation, participants engaged in a 30-45 minute reflective dialogue on their experience implementing trauma-informed care and the use of simulation. Reflections were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim and data was analyzed using a reflective thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Patterns identified in the data include: 1) The role of on-site trauma-informed supervision; 2) the importance of classroom training; 3) expanding an awareness of IPV and trauma; 4) the utility of simulation for training.

Findings show the significance of trauma-informed supervision and the importance of accessible and engaged supervisors. It is also recommended that social work students receive additional training from their coursework in MSW programs to further enhance their skills. Social work students also benefit from a broader understanding of experiences of IPV and the impact of trauma on survivors. The use of simulation for the teaching and training of social work students is also beneficial.

This paper presents research from an intimate partner violence (IPV) and trauma simulation research study. Findings highlight the need for supervision, training and opportunities for students interested in trauma work. Pedagogical implications for social work education and practicum placements will be provided.

Keywords: Social work education, field education, simulation, intimate partner violence (IPV), trauma.

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THE SOCIAL ESSENCE OF AZERBAIJAN'S EDUCATION POLICY IN THE GLOBALIZING WORLD

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Today, globalization and modernization of the world economic space are considered the main features of the development of modern society. The progress of these processes directly depends on the education sector, especially higher education. It is no secret that globalization can have both positive and negative consequences. Unfortunately, no matter how any society perceives it, this process cannot be stopped, and therefore one should try as much as possible to acquire only the positive aspects. Higher education institutions, which are transmitters of education, also act as subjects of global trends all over the world. The place of education in the life of society is mainly determined by the role played by people's knowledge, experience, skills, opportunities to develop their professional and personal qualities in social development.

In the work "Democracy and Education" published in 1916, John Dewey, an American public figure and philosopher, who is considered the founder of the philosophy of education, wrote that education in the broadest sense is a means of social continuation of life. According to C. Dewey, "the inevitability of the birth and death of each member of the social group" makes education necessary, because despite this biological periodicity, "the life of the group must continue" (Dewey, 1997).

The legal definition of education is given in the preamble of the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan "On Education", where it is understood as a goal-oriented education and training process that serves the interests of the individual, society and the state, and is accompanied by the expression of the achievements of the citizen. "Education is a single purposeful process of training and education, as well as the process of acquiring systematized knowledge, skills and habits and its result". (AR "Law on Education", 2009) In the broadest sense of the word, education is the process or product of shaping the mind, character and physical abilities of individuals. In a technical sense, education is the process by which society purposefully transmits its cultural heritage - accumulated knowledge, values and skills - from generation to generation through schools, colleges, universities and other institutions (Kneller, 1971).

The main content of education is obtained from the results of culture and science, as well as increased through human life and experience. That is, education is a socio-cultural phenomenon

and performs socio-cultural functions. Therefore, education becomes a necessary and important factor in the development of both individual fields (economy, politics, culture) and the whole society.

In general, issues related to the impact of education on long-term development should be constantly monitored during the formation, management and adaptation of education policy to changing conditions. Such issues, that is, the respective effects of different types and levels of education on important socio-economic areas, cover the following directions:

- The net value of education for the individual and the economy (expected results - minus costs);

- Income norms of investments in primary, secondary, higher and non-formal education (human capital);

- The impact of education on labor force productivity, especially on the employment of women;

- The relationship between education and economic growth, including the connection of aspects of economic development that are not directly related to physical capital or labor factors to education;

- Education and political behavior (for example, does education dealing not only with intellectual competences, but also with the formation of personality create fertile conditions for the development of civic culture, social entrepreneurship, intercultural tolerance, political knowledge and views, human rights and freedoms and other modern socio-political values?);

- Education and social development: The private and social dividends of education are intragenerational and intergenerational non-economic benefits. Such benefits are measured by indicators such as life expectancy, family planning, nutritional status, fertility rate, maternal and child health, attitude to the environment (environmental literacy);

- Education and equity (unequal, limited access to education for girls, ethnic minorities, rural poor families, the disabled and other vulnerable groups that will hinder long-term development) (Levinger, 1996).

As you can see, education is not only an ordinary process, but the important point here is the conditions under which it takes place and the result. So there should be no gap between the content of life and the content of what we learn. Because the information and knowledge we receive during the educational process should be used in real life.

When studying the social nature of the stages of the educational process of personality, the science of pedagogy offers a scheme in the following way: literacy (general and functional) - education - professional skills - culture - mentality. Of course, all these stages are interconnected. This allows us to conclude that the education system is whole and unified. When using the

expression "education system", it is necessary to pay attention to the interaction of all stages and areas of education. According to the science of pedagogy, the field of education and the environment have mutual influence. Education is also affected by the dominant means of production, which is the evolutionary criterion of society. One of the different approaches to the concept of education is related to the fact that we live in an information society, where the qualitative breakthrough in the development of new technologies has led to a sharp increase in the need for people with non-standard thinking abilities and the full disclosure of skills and talents that are important for the society as a whole.

As for the right to education, it is one of the natural inalienable basic rights and freedoms of a person. The right to education guarantees the harmonious spiritual development of the individual and helps him to become a useful and productive participant in social, political, spiritual and cultural progress. In the system of human and civil rights and freedoms, everyone's right to education prevails. Considering the special importance of education, the Republic of Azerbaijan has defined the field of education as a priority field in its state policy for the development of the intellectual, cultural and economic potential of the country.

According to Article 42 of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the state guarantees to provide everyone with free preschool, basic general and secondary education. In addition, basic general education is compulsory. (Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 1995) The provisions established in the mentioned article of the Constitution and the Law "On Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan" fully meet the international standards accepted in the field of education.

The right to education is currently enshrined in a large number of national and international legal acts. Among them are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, where the right to education is identified as one of the most important human rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948 states: "Everyone has the right to education. Education should be free at least at primary and general levels. Primary education should be compulsory. All should have access to technical and vocational education, and all should have equal access to higher education based on each person's ability. Education should be aimed at the full development of the human personality and increasing respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Education should promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all peoples, racial and religious groups and should

contribute to the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations" (Universal declaration of human rights, 1948).

The main provisions of the "Education for All" (EFA) strategy, an initiative of UNESCO, were put forward in 1990 at the "Education for All - World Conference" held in Jomtien, Thailand. The World Declaration on Education for All, adopted at the conference, emphasizes that "education is a fundamental right of all, women and men everywhere in the world, regardless of age".. Education should lay the groundwork for a safer, healthier, more prosperous and environmentally friendly world and at the same time pave the way for social, economic and cultural progress, tolerance and international cooperation... Education is a necessary condition for personal and societal development" (http://www.unesco.org/education/wef/econf/Jomtien %20Declaration%20eng).

Today, education (learning and teaching) occupies an important place in the state policy of every nation. As we mentioned above, education is one of the main factors shaping a person's personality. Therefore, in order for a person to become a good person for society, one of the main conditions is to receive proper education. It is not for nothing that with the help of education, Western countries were able to achieve the highest achievements in science, economy, health and other fields.

The priority principle of education for the leading countries of the West has remained unchanged for decades. A number of examples can be cited to show the importance attached to education in foreign countries. For example, US President D. Eisenhower emphasized in his address to the American people on October 4, 1957, on the occasion of the launch of the first artificial Earth satellite into orbit in the Soviet Union: "Our schools are now more important to us than our radar stations; schools have more power than nuclear energy". In his first State of the Union address in January 1961, President John F. Kennedy stated the following: "We aim to increase the economic growth significantly. However, according to recent studies, investments in education bring the greatest return, reaching 40 percent of national income growth. Improving the state of education in the age of science and space is one of the main conditions of our national strength. Thus, education becomes the most important issue. When we look at history, we see that all subsequent presidents of the United States saw education as the basis of the economic, political and military power of the state and pursued a corresponding educational policy. Similarly, European countries, China, Korea, etc. countries pay special attention to education policy and allocate large amounts of funds to scientific research".

Education is one of the priority directions of state policy in our republic. There is no doubt that Azerbaijan has tried to form its own education policy in all periods. Both during the Soviet Union and after gaining independence, the state education policy was implemented intensively.

The return to power of the great leader Heydar Aliyev was the beginning of a new era in the educational policy of independent Azerbaijan. Even in the years of independence, the great leader Heydar Aliyev took serious measures to eliminate existing problems, implement the education strategy in Azerbaijan in accordance with the experience of developed countries of the world, and signed important historical decrees and orders. In 1998, on the initiative of the National Leader, a State Commission was established to prepare the reform program in the field of education. In a short time, by the Decree of the Great Leader dated June 15, 1999, the "Program of educational reforms of the Republic of Azerbaijan" was prepared and approved.. The program defined the strategy for the future development of education in the structure, management, content, material and technical base of the education system. Fundamental reforms in the economy, personnel training and personnel provision were envisaged. The World Bank participated in the implementation of the program.

The policy of science and education in Azerbaijan is being successfully continued by President Ilham Aliyev and positive results are obvious. Decisions, instructions and orders play an important role in the continuous development of our education and in achieving the educational level of developed countries. One of such documents is the "State Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan", approved by the order of President Ilham Aliyev dated October 24, 2013. This document determined further prospects for the development of education.

In addition, "State Program on Informatization of the Education System", "State Program for the Development of Creative Potential of Children (Youths) with Special Talents (2006-2010 Years)", "The concept of general education (National Curriculum)", "Preschool Education Modernization Program (2007-2010 years)", "State Program for the Development of Technical Vocational Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan (2007-2012 Years)", "State Program for the Education of Azerbaijani Youth in Foreign Countries in 2007-2015", "State Program on reforms in the higher education system of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2009-2013" once again shows how important the political, economic and social essence of the state policy implemented in accordance with the "State Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan".

Thus, education is one of the forms of socialization of the individual and the state must provide conditions for the successful entry of the individual into educational processes and realities. From this point of view, social policy in the field of science and education is successfully implemented when all the requirements are met and it is possible to predict further results of educational reforms. While guarantees are provided by the state itself, guarantees at the local level must be provided by institutions responsible for planning and implementing educational and

cultural functions and governance at all levels of government. Finally, it should be noted that in the current globalizing world, especially at a time when the entire education system is undergoing modernization, the future of our country depends mainly on the effectiveness of the education system management.

Keywords: higher education, socialization, Azerbaijan.

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EXPLORING THE BARRIERS FACED BY SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS AT ASIAN UNIVERSITIES IN UTILIZING ChatGPT WITH CLIENTS DURING FIELD PLACEMENT: LESSONS FROM THE SULTANATE OF OMAN

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Field placement has always played a crucial role in preparing social work students in Asian universities. When students receive exceptional, efficient and high-quality field training, it positively impacts their own competence and consequently, their professional practice when engaging in professional interventions with clients after graduation. Undoubtedly, field placement training is considered one of the most important elements in social work education due to the opportunities it provides for students to apply theoretical knowledge, develop practical skills, adopt required professional values, and gain relevant experience in working with individuals, families, groups and communities under the supervision of experienced professionals during the field training process.

With the significant advancements in artificial intelligence tools, particularly large language models, ChatGPT has emerged as a major technological development that can be utilized in the process of teaching and learning social work and the role these technologies have played in enhancing students' knowledge during the practical application of social work .Based on this premise, the current study aimed to explore the barriers faced by a sample of 40 social work students at Sultan Qaboos University when using ChatGPT in dealing with individual cases during field placement for social work. The study found five obstacles encountered by students when using ChatGPT, namely technological challenges and usability concerns, communication challenges, ethical challenges, time management challenges and professional identity challenges. The study recommended the integration of ChatGPT technologies in both theoretical and field-based courses to address the needs of clients, emphasizing the importance of universities incorporating ChatGPT techniques into their curriculum.

Keywords: Asian Universities, social work, ChatGPT, AI-field placemen.

DIGITALIZATION AND ICT IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION: A SCOPING REVIEW

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Digital technologies in education are an essential tool for the enhancement of learning outcomes. These technologies can be harnessed by social work educators for greater engagement with students, foster critical thinking and prepare social workers to harness the power of technology in social work practice. However, the social work field has been slow to integrate technology into education, outside of making courses available online. Furthermore, where social work education and practice have adopted technological innovation in pedagogy and learning content, it has often been without conscious decision or critical reflection (Mishna *et al.,* 2014; 2012; Pascoe, 2023). As the possibilities created by information and communication technologies continue to expand, social work educators need to be able to utilize digital technologies and implement digital change in classrooms. The technological landscape needs to be acknowledged by social work educators who can facilitate the removal of barriers in the classroom and the inclusion of all students through the integration of specific digital technologies into the social work profession (Cosner Berzin *et al.,* 2015).

Background

The term information and communication technologies (ICT) emerged in the 1970s as an extension of information technology centering on unified technologies, which week to optimize business functionality and user productivity, computerization, enterprise software data enhancements and telecommunications (Colombo *et al.,* 2021; Duff, 1999; May, 2000; Overby & Audestad, 2021). The integration of these various technologies to transmit communication has experienced a rapid evolution across modern history across the electronic age, the information age, the digital era, the digital world and more recently, the cyber age (Overby & Audestad, 2021; Ozdamli & Hasan, 2015). Digital technologies refer to the utilization of digital computing tools, systems, logic capabilities and data processes enabled through microprocessors programmed to perform various functions that can store, generate or process data (Acs *et al.,* 2021; Johnston *et al.,* 2022). Digital technologies can include computers, tablets, digital cameras, mobile phones, software and apps, Bluetooth, video technology, digitized media, augmented and virtual reality,

the Internet and adaptive artificial intelligence (AI) and superintelligence (Johnston *et al*., 2022; Vargo *et al*., 2020). Since their onset, ICT and digital technologies have been widely adapted in education to promote accessibility and enhance learning through the interconnection of global information and broader knowledge interactions (Singh, 2021).

Current Study

This scoping review will review the key factors and major approaches related to digital and information technologies and their combined influence on social work education globally. We are guided by the question: What does the literature say about ICT and digital technologies in Social Work Education globally?

Methods

To provide a comprehensive and current understanding of ICT and digital technologies in social work education, the research team utilized a scoping review method. Arksey and O'Malley (2005) offer a five-stage framework for conducting scoping reviews: 1) identifying the research question; 2) identifying relevant studies; 3) study selection; 4) charting the data and
5) collating, summarizing and reporting the results. Following the method advanced by Arksey and O'Malley (2005), the research team conducted a scoping review using peer-reviewed literature. Search terms included "ICT" OR "Information and communications technology" OR "IT" OR "information technology" OR "communications technology" AND "social work education" AND "digitalization OR digital."

Results

We will collect descriptive information about where and how ICT and digital technology are being used in social work education globally. First, we analyze selected articles in order to identify the most prevalent ICT and digital technologies in social work education. Second, we synthesize key facilitators and challenges of ICT and digital technology practice in social work education. The results of our scoping review will illustrate the benefits and gaps in the utilization of digital and information technology interventions in social work education which will provide directions for future studies. In addition, future research could explore the pros and cons of using digital and information technologies in social work education with an attempt to highlight students' experiences to ensure successful digital transformation in social work education.

Discussion

While a major bulk of human services work is carried out through the use of digital technologies, social work as a profession lacks in training students on the use of ICT as well as

potential of ICT to empower social work practice (Parrott & Madoc-Jones, 2008). Therefore, a shift is needed from traditional modes of education to promoting the use of digital technologies in classrooms and in practice aligned with the NASW Code of Ethics that state that "the proper application of technology will strengthen ethical social work practice" (Reamer, 2015). Identifying ways that students can interact and share their voices is increasingly leaning toward digital domains.

Digital media affords creative expression and counter narratives that promote students' making meaning of the world through arts-based and socially engaged artistic connected tools such as digital storytelling that center on relational aesthetics. At the same time, digital technologies such as social media have the potential to offer students spaces for collaborative learning and foster support-seeking through digital platforms. Digital and information technologies also have the potential to transform social work practice. As a profession that embarks on radical social changes, digital technologies can provide future solutions to large-scale macro social work issues as humans experience fundamental changes in the mediums in which they communicate, thereby creating opportunities to enhance social work education and practice. ICT and Artificial Intelligence are catalysts for macro and mezzo-level societal change by providing individual-level services that are highly accurate and flexible (Cosner Berzin *et al.*, 2015).

Keywords: Digital technologies, information communication technologies, learning outcomes, social work education, digital platforms.

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SUSTAINABILITY ETHICS IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION: NURTURING ETHICAL LEADERS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

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The aim of education for sustainable development is to promote the attitudes, ways of living and values that are necessary to address the world's economic, social and environmental problems. It places a high value on social work and social work education, and social work also places a high value on topics like poverty reduction, health and well-being. UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). Rebro University in Sweden, for instance, has a long history of working with service user organizations, such as through hosting workshops on ethical challenges. According to Drolet *et al*. (2015), social work and social work education are crucial to sustainable development.

According to the United Kingdom (UK), sustainable development aims to provide justice, a healthy and good environment, and economic and social well-being for both present and future generations. The IASSW (2014) and IFSW-CSWE (2018) Global Concept of the Social Work Profession emphasizes the value of "principles of human rights, solidarity, social equity and respect for diversity", which is in line with the objectives of sustainable development. Social workers can make a variety of contributions to the growth and transformation of society towards a more sustainable one by working with disadvantaged groups (Drolet, 2015). Social professionals must consider complicated, connected and systemic issues as part of their work (Drolet *et al.,* 2015). It is crucial to develop social work education in a way that gives students the skills they need to handle these challenging situations (Collén, 2019).

Sustainability is supposed to be a very complicated topic. People from different backgrounds and opinions should work together to get answers for major problems. To help address challenges regarding sustainability, there is one method to make sure that all of these voices, specifically those that are tricky to consider such as plants, animals and future generation are perceived to use ethics. Ethics can probably be utilized to make sure that no perception is ignored within the three essential elements of sustainability that are social, environmental and economic. When it comes to directly tying ethics to sustainability, a logical mentality and the application of system thinking are most cooperative methods to make sure that a shared effort will take into account with everyone's requirements. The modest way to define ethics is as an individual's morals and sense of being right and wrong. It proposes an optical prism by which society can measure its moral scope and direct

its decision-making. The common topics of sustainability involve interconnection of the world and decision making in one location can have an impact on communities around the world. Sustainability purposes to support present and future societies while upholding the environment on which we depend, by taking an ethical attitude assistance for all participants. Previously, ethics were not taken into account while taking decisions for sustainable development. It is often observed in situations such as tight budgets and underrepresentation of specific groups.

Sustainable development is reliant on ethics in sustainability. Thinking about how should people live although taking into account their associations with other people, the environment, and forthcoming generations is one of the purposes of ethical sustainability. Deprived of taking these factors into account, some groups feel that they treated unfairly or being excluded. Even though a substantial portion of ethics is concerned about how we treat other people, that we should also talk about how we should respect nature. Preserving the current natural zones that we have and safeguarding future natural areas are fundamental to the idea of ensuring a brighter future for future generations. This has to do with the welfare of non-human nature, which contains a lot of things that enable existence. These variables span from biodiversity and species health to clean water and air, and if they would not take into account during sustainable development, it might have severe unfavourable effects. It is infrequently essential to choose the less attractive or more challenging path in order to achieve changes that are beneficial to everyone who is involved. Even though it can take more time or money to advance changes that follow moral standards, they will have a more favourable effect and contribute to the greater good in the long run. Furthermore, there are three pillars that are frequently used to describe sustainability: economic growth, environmental protection and social inclusion.

All three sustainability pillars can be applied to ethics that should be considered during, collaborative decision-making procedures. It is vital to take sustainability ethics into account through these measures even though examining all potential stakeholders that are in a problem. Moreover, it is important to keep ethical principles in mind and weigh the ideas of all parties involved in light of any potential obstacles or consequences while developing a solution. According to Kibert *et al.* (2012) the presence of ethics in sustainable decision making can create a more varied development in that, as it bonds the boundaries between stakeholders who would not otherwise communicate with each other. This probably need some social, political or even cultural detriments, nevertheless it is ultimately valuable in the outstanding scheme of things. As mentioned above these goals cover the three dimensions of sustainable development which are economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection.

The core of leadership in these three areas is ethics (Johnson, 2012). When someone upsurges to the leadership position, they begin to disrespect the ethical responsibilities that go along with it. This argument is well-defined from an organizational standpoint. Conventionally, increasing organizational success has been the primary objective of the organizational leaders. The leaders' dishonest and uncaring actions can harm an organization's reputation and public trust. As an outcome, this culture might perform worse in terms of social and environmental accountability overall, which is a warning sign for long-term business growth (Wesarat & Yazam, 2017). In order to create a sustainable environment for the institution and achieve long-term success, ethical leadership is crucial in this regard. A collection of ideas and concepts known as "ethical leadership" serve as a roadmap for people to choose morally righteous and socially responsible course of action. It emphasizes the value of honesty, justice and accountability and goes beyond merely following rules and regulations. A culture of trust, openness, and respect is fostered by ethical leaders inside their organizations and communities in addition to prioritizing their own ethical behavior (Tushar, 2017).

In order to develop moral leaders for a sustainable future and to ascertain leaders' views toward social work education, the purpose of this study was to analyze sustainability ethics in social work education. In order to establish the principles of responsibility that are appropriate and applicable to action in daily life, ethical theories obviously make an effort to provide unambiguous and consistent descriptions of what our ethical obligations are or what we are required to do. This paper followed utilitarianism in this setting to assess how well it might help people grasp moral difficulties and make moral decisions in certain situations.

Utilitarianism theory was first proposed by David Hume (1711–1776) and later crystallized in the works of English philosophers Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806–1873). It is one of the most often taught ethical theories, in addition to being a significant and influential moral theory (Kanu & Ndubisi, 2023). It has two main subtypes which are, rule utilitarianism and act utilitarianism. The first one is about a certain course of action that is morally appropriate if it can result in the greatest amount of benefit for the greatest number of people in a particular circumstance. For the benefit of the populace, it enables the highest standards of moral behavior. Mainly the act utilitarianism serves as an example of the idea that the ends justify the means since it places more emphasis on the good deeds themselves than on the ways by which they are accomplished. According to rule utilitarianism, the correct actions are those that must be taken in order to uphold the greater good for the greatest number of people. Whereas, act utilitarianism places emphasis on actions that are not unavoidably related to any rules, whereas rule utilitarianism talks about actions that are not just any kind of action but ones that must be taken in order to comply with the rule.

The cconceptual framework of the study was drawn up with the help of utilitarianism theory of ethics and elements of sustainability in context of future leaders to achieve the objectives of the study.

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┌─────────────────────────┐          ┌──────────┐
│ Utilitarianism  Theory  │          │  Action  │
│ Bentham, J. (1861)      │  ═══▶    └──────────┘
│                         │                      ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ (Kanu & Ndubisi, 2023). │          ┌──────────┐│   Leaders' Sustainability │
└─────────────────────────┘          │   Rule   │└──────────────────────────┘
                                     └──────────┘
                                                  ┌──────────────────────────┐
                                                  │  • Economic Growth        │
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                                                  │    Protection             │
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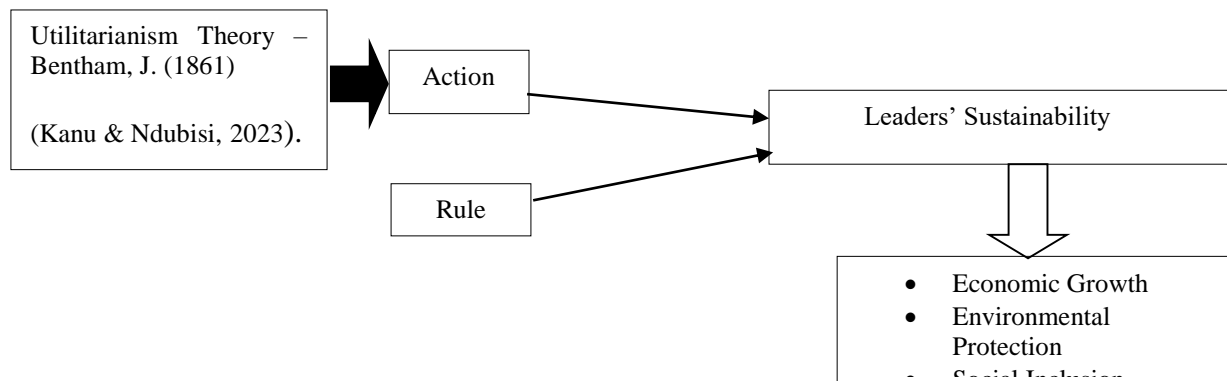
The study follows a mixed method approach, by highlighting philosophical underpinning, post-positivist which gives comprehensive reality, practical implementation of subjectivity. The population of the study was all Secondary Schools that are working under Federal Directorate of Education, which are located in Urban areas of Islamabad. More specifically, only Urban-II sector was chosen where there are 17 secondary schools, among which 10 secondary schools are of girls and 07 secondary schools are of boys.

In regard to the current study, it requires the purposive sampling techniques to select sample size of the study. Purposive sampling techniques, also known as nonprobability sampling, intentional sampling or "qualitative sampling", are necessary for the current investigation since they allow the sample size to be determined. According to Tashakkori & Teddlie (2003), purposeful sampling strategies entail choosing particular units or cases "based on a specific purpose rather than randomly". There are primarily four forms of purposive sampling, but the author of this study has opted for sequential sampling. The gradual selection concept is present in each of these methods. Four other sequential sampling methods include the following:

a) Theoretical sampling,
b) Confirming and disconfirming cases,
c) Opportunistic sampling (also known as emergent sampling),
d) Snowball sampling (also known as chain sampling).

This study was most related to the theoretical sampling, Theoretical sampling, which allows the researcher to look at specific cases of the phenomena of interest in order to describe and expound on its numerous manifestations is an example from this vast category. Wherever the

theory directs the study, the investigator samples individuals, institutions, records, or other areas (Teddlie & Yu, 2007).

The researcher has used a self-developed questionnaire (5-point Likert scale) that was applied on Heads of 5 Federal Government Secondary Schools in Islamabad from Urban-II sector of Islamabad. While including a focus group discussion for the SST teachers, was conducted that has given an insight into sustainability ethics with reference to ethical leadership.

Population and Sample size of the study

SN	Population & Sample size	
1	Population Set-I (Head of the Institutes)	
	Population size	Sample size
	05	05
2	Population Set-II (SST Teachers)	-
	Population	Sample size
	115	25

Also, the document analysis was done to get in-depth information about social work education. This study would give an implementable platform to the educational institutes to nurture ethical leaders by promoting social work education.

Keywords: Sustainability ethics, social work education, ethical Leaders, sustainable future, Utilitarianism theory.

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SOCIAL WORK AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE - WHY IS IT IMPORTANT IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION?

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It's critical to understand how social workers might adapt to protect themselves from psychological discomfort because they frequently experience higher degrees of burnout than other healthcare professionals (Bunce *et al.,* 2019). It is essential to the function of social workers to be able to control their own emotional responses in complex care environments. However, there is evidence to suggest that social work students and particularly, recently graduated professionals, frequently find their assignments to be emotionally demanding and difficult (Grant *et al.,* 2014a).

There are several ways that emotions affect social workers' day-to-day work. The challenging circumstances in which their clients live are a constant source of exposure for social workers (Barlow & Hall, 2007). These circumstances are frequently the result of oppressive mechanisms in our society. Empathy, compassion, identification, discomfort, anxiety and annoyance/indignation are just a few examples of the many emotions that can be challenging to discern and manage at work. However, as they frequently express both conscious and unconscious viewpoints that may influence practice, emotions are important. The claim made here is that awareness of one's own assumptions in relation to accepted cultural understandings can potentially be increased by experiencing emotions. Identification and observation of one's own, occasionally embodied, emotional triggers, such as anxiety or empathy when working with clients, are required for this type of analytical awareness. Since emotions were formerly thought to be incompatible with rational thought, their relevance and importance to organizational life have only recently been fully acknowledged (Grant *et al.,* 2014b). However, the study of emotions is broad and crosses several academic fields (Ford & Gross, 2019). Even though Biestek (1950), Hollis (1949), Horney (1934) and Rogers and Farson (1957) established the importance of emotions in social work, greater research into emotions is still required.

Being able to inspire oneself and persevere in the face of setbacks; controlling impulse and delaying gratification; managing one's feelings and preventing distress from impairing one's ability to think; empathizing and having hope are all examples of emotional intelligence (EI), according to Goleman (1996). The exponential expansion of academic and popular literature on emotional intelligence (EI) argues that a consideration of the possible relevance of EI to social work is long overdue given the prominence of emotions and power interactions in the social work task.

The capacity to recognize, articulate, comprehend, regulate and make appropriate use of emotions is known as emotional intelligence (EI). Social work often deals with difficult issues like suffering, violence, trauma, suicide, abuse, multiple exposures and vulnerabilities, which can lead to a variety of scenarios that might elicit strong emotions.

Social workers' daily practice is impacted by emotions in a variety of ways. The challenging circumstances of the beneficiaries' life are continually exposed to social workers. It might be challenging to detect and control certain emotions in the job, such as empathy, concern, anxiety and rage. However, emotions are important because they frequently signify both conscious and unconscious thought processes that might affect practice.

In many professions, emotional intelligence is actually valued higher than IQ. Those that are adept at this are better at interacting with others, controlling emotions, and establishing solid connections. Understanding why someone might react in a specific manner and responding to them appropriately are both parts of having emotional intelligence. It's not only about recognizing habits in yourself.

Some individuals may discover that they are better at controlling their own behaviour but struggle to react correctly to other people's behaviour. Depressive disorders, substance misuse, and personality disorders are among the mental conditions that can have a major effect on emotional intelligence.

Students studying social work should be provided plenty of room for emotional intelligence and it should be recognized that it is an important aspect of social work, in addition to theoretical and practical abilities connected to social work. There are five elements of emotional intelligence that prospective social workers should take into account and implant in them: self-awareness, self-regulation, intrinsic motivation, empathy and social skills.

Social work, which is one of the specialties of special importance in our developing and changing world, is also developing in Azerbaijan and making its contribution to society. Along with many other academic and practical skills, it is crucial to stress the value of emotional intelligence to social work students because they will be working with vulnerable populations in the future.

The significance of emotional intelligence during social work education in Azerbaijan and around the world will be highlighted by this study. On the other hand, the article will look at the significance of emotional intelligence during the social work specialty offered in more than ten universities in Azerbaijan in an effort to emphasize the complexity of emotions in social work research and practice, both theoretically and practically.

Keywords: Social work education, social work students, social work skills, emotional intelligence.

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DETERMINING THE VALUE BASE AND THE RELATIONSHIP OF FORGIVENESS IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

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It is accepted that having the behavior of forgiveness is important for all professions and disciplines that provide humanitarian service, especially social work. For this reason, the low level of forgiveness behavior of social work students is seen as an important problem for effective and ethical service delivery. It is emphasized that forgiveness develops benevolence and sociability in the individual. In addition, it is stated that it is effective in resolving negative emotions such as anger, hatred and enmity. These positive situations listed should be found in social worker candidates who will provide humanitarian service to the society in the future.

For this reason, it becomes important to determine the relationship between social work students' forgiveness behaviors and their current value orientations. This research will examine the forgiveness behaviors of social work students who aspire to important tasks in the provision of humanitarian service in the future, through their value orientations and will reveal the value orientations that positively and negatively affect the forgiveness behaviors of these participants. The target population of the research is Social Work students studying in Turkey. The accessible universe consists of Undergraduate Students of the Social Work Department studying at the Social Work Department of the Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences of Elazig Fırat University. The research is a natural, descriptive and quantitative study that collects data based on double measurement. Data were collected by integer. Three different data collection tools were used in the study. The first of these is the "Personal Information Form" prepared by the researcher. The form included questions to obtain the socio-economic and demographic information of the students. The Personal Information Form consists of ten questions in total. The second data collection tool is the Schwartz Values Scale. The Schwartz Values Scale (SDS), developed by Shalom Schwartz, was chosen as the most appropriate tool due to its comprehensive and international acceptance. SDS consists of a total of 57 values in two sections, with 30 values in the first section and 27 values in the second section. The 30 purpose values (terminals) in the first part reflect the purpose of life. The second part, which consists of 27 questions, consists of instrumental values. The third data collection tool is the Heartland Forgiveness Scale. The Heartland Forgiveness scale was developed by Thompson *et al*. (2005) to measure individuals' tendency to

forgive. This scale is a 7-point Likert-type scale consisting of 18 items. The scale has three sub-dimensions: forgiveness of self, others and the situation. The translation and adaptation of the scale for Turkish culture was done by Bugay and Demir (2010).

In the research, it is suggested that the value orientations of the social worker candidates are effective on their forgiveness behaviors. This hypothesis is based on research suggesting that the values individuals have are an important factor in explaining their behavior. In this direction, with the sample examined within the scope of the research, it will be ensured that all social work students gain awareness about improving the behavior of forgiveness. In addition, it will contribute to the curriculum created for gaining professional values in social work education. In addition, it will contribute to scientific research on the effect of forgiveness in human service delivery. This situation also reflects the originality and importance of the research.

Keywords: Social work, forgiveness behavior, value orientation, Schwartz Values Scale, heartland forgiveness scale.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL WORKERS THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

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The SPARK[1] Series, a leadership programme designed in Singapore to cultivate the leadership potential of emerging social service professionals, empowering them to drive positive change within the social service sector. This programme provides participants with a platform for growth through workshops and lectures led by influential leaders across diverse fields. Based on the evaluation conducted on the programme, this presentation highlights the transformative impact of the SPARK Series on social workers' ability to assume greater responsibility for societal betterment.

The SPARK Series is guided by four key objectives. The first objective is to develop key leadership attributes. Participants are encouraged to adopt a person-centered approach, fostering insights into the real needs of individuals and society. They are equipped to innovate and create pioneering solutions that add value to individuals and society. Additionally, participants learn to influence and inspire others to take meaningful action. The second objective is critical adaptation of learning. The programme encourages social workers to critically adapt successful practices from both local and international organisations. This adaptability is aimed at effecting positive changes within their own organisations and the broader social service sector. The third objective is to internalise the attributes of the organisation. Participants are empowered to internalise attributes of organisational excellence, incorporating new strategies for cost-effectiveness, innovation, strategic planning, asset building and resource optimisation within their respective organisations. The final objective is proliferation of learning to maximum social impact. Participants are urged to share their newfound knowledge and leadership skills with others, amplifying their influence and contributing to maximum social impact.

The SPARK Series is based on the concept of experiential learning. In accordance with Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984), the acquisition of knowledge is substantially rooted in the exposure of learners to tangible, real-life experiences. By engaging in a sequence of reflective observation and abstract conceptualization, learners can subsequently cultivate a comprehensive comprehension of the experiences they encounter or reevaluate their existing

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[1]Strategic Planning and Rooted Knowledge (SPARK)

understanding of them. This acquired understanding can then be actively applied to forthcoming situations. This holistic learning process facilitates the development of critical thinking skills and self-awareness, as highlighted by Cleary (2001).

Thirty-one participants from various social service agencies participated in SPARK 2020/21. All participants applied to join the Series. Not all of them were trained in social work. Some held varied positions in the social service sector like operation managers or psychologist. Some of them were emergent supervisors while others were already in leadership positions for a period of time. Some of them decided to enrol in the Series based on the positive feedback from past participants and a few of them were nominated by their reporting officers. Of the 31 participants, 28 successfully completed the programme and 25 participants participated in the focus group discussions that took place in April 2021.

Data was collected from the participants at two points. First, at the end of each workshop or talk, the participants were required to complete a reflection sheet. Second, at the end of the Series where consented participants attended a focus group discussion. Twenty-five participants participated in the focus group discussions which were conducted online. Their consents to participate in the focus group discussions were garnered via emails at the beginning of the programme. The focus group discussions were conducted to gain deeper understanding on the participants' perspective of the Series. The discussions allowed the researcher to assess the participants' feelings and thoughts upon completion of the Series as well as to assess their ability to retain some of the learning points illustrated in the reflection sheets. The discussions also allowed participants to share in greater details the impact and applications of these learning in their personal and work settings.

From the sharing and disclosure of participants through the reflection statements and focus group discussions, the objectives of the SPARK Series 2020/21 have been met. There was growth in critical leadership areas of insight, innovation and influence as well as adaptation of learning to effect change in their organisations and personal lives. Efforts were made to adapt new strategies in their leadership journey and proliferating their learning to others around them.

The outcome of the programme revealed that the participation in the SPARK Series has led to profound changes in participants' perspectives and actions. Notable outcomes include enhanced critical thinking abilities and a more effective alignment of values with actions. Moreover, leadership insights garnered from the programme have been successfully integrated into participants' organisations, facilitating positive changes in areas such as organisational excellence, communications and innovation. Furthermore, participants leveraged on their acquired knowledge and skills to influence their stakeholders, thereby contributing significantly to social betterment.

This study demonstrates that the SPARK Series played a pivotal role in empowering social workers to take on greater responsibilities toward social betterment, equipping them with the leadership attributes and strategies necessary to drive transformative change within the social service sector.

Keywords: Leadership, social work, empowerment, values, experiential learning.

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BETWEEN DESPAIR AND HOPE: ISRAELI SOCIAL WORKERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE PROFESSION AND OF STUDENT SUPERVISION

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This study examines Israeli social workers' perceptions and images of social work and student supervision. We examined the meaning social workers ascribe to supervision and to the profession. Supervision of social work students is crucial for the development of social workers (Steens *et al*., 2017). Often perceived as a bridge between academic training and field practice (Runcan & Calauz, 2011), student's fieldwork education comprises professional and emotional elements demanding technical and clerical expertise and personal and emotional investment (Cartney, 2017; Runcan *et al*., 2012; Todd *et al*., 2019).

The present study expands theoretical and practical knowledge of supervision and helps in understanding the experience of training students. Social work supervision is considered to be a core feature in the development of social workers' professional identity (Hafford-Letchfield & Engelbrecht, 2018). Understanding the experiences and perceptions of supervisors of social work students is important because the supervisors educate the next generation of social workers and are likely to transfer their outlook on the profession to the future social workers.

Social workers' views regarding the profession and students' supervision have not received sufficient research attention. The few existing studies have dealt primarily with the experiences and perceptions of the general public and of social work clients regarding the role of social workers (Boehm, 2012; Kagan, 2015; Krumer-Nevo *et al*., 2006). To the best of our knowledge, few studies have focused on the supervisors' point of view and experience (Shulman, 2010).

The present article is part of a larger qualitative and quantitative study of social work supervisors conducted in 2018. In the quantitative part, which is not the focus of this article, we used closed questionnaires to examine various variables, including career identification, values and motivation. The qualitative part, which is the focus of this article, was conducted in the phenomenological tradition (Creswell, 2003; Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007) to understand what the profession and student supervision mean to the participants. The qualitative part of the study included open-ended items aimed at eliciting the participants' opinions about the profession and supervision and the metaphors related to them. These issues were not addressed in the quantitative part of the study.

Research population

Study participants were 403 social workers of whom 311 (77%) were active supervisors and 92 (23%) had been supervisors in the past. Their average age was 43.2 (SD=9.14); 362 (89%) were women, 37 (9%) were single, 312 (77%) were married, 31 (7.7%) were divorced, and 4 (1%) were widowed.

Of the supervisors, 274 (61%) supervised individual students face-to face, 131 (31%) worked in a group framework (e.g., community centres) and 27 (7%) in supervisory frameworks dealing with social work policy.

Data collection

Invitations to participate in the study and a link to the questionnaires were distributed by e-mail to all members of the Israel Association of Social Workers and through the schools and departments of social work at Israeli institutions of higher education and to their past and present supervisors. The convenience sample consisted of those who responded and completed the questionnaire.

The research tool

The questionnaire consisted mainly of open-ended items but also requested data concerning studentbsupervision and demographics: age, gender, marital status, area of supervision and seniority in social work and in supervision. Perceptions of the profession and of supervision were explored through open-ended items about the personal meaning of being a social worker and being a student supervisor. The items were worded in a way that would produce metaphors, based on the assumption that metaphors, as noted, are used to describe experiences and phenomena in a person's life.

Findings
Metaphors for the social work profession and student supervision
Metaphors for the profession

The perceptions and images of the profession and supervision were examined through the metaphors used in relation to them. Because the profession is the context in which supervision takes place, the two types of metaphors were analyzed together. Of the participants, 259 provided metaphors for the profession and 277 for supervision.

The themes arising from the data suggest that most of the metaphors indicate a positive image of the career the participants had chosen and what they were training students for, but their

perceptions regarding the nature and aims of the profession varied. A minority expressed an ambivalent view, choosing metaphors that reflect criticism of the image of the profession and of employment conditions. In the 259 metaphors provided in answers to the statement "For me being a social worker is like …, we found the following themes, listed here in order of frequency:

1. Meaning and personal identity (32.71%);
2. Helping, making a difference, influencing the individual (focus on the micro level; 28.5%);
3. Acrobatics and challenging journey (14.56%);
4. Criticism and ambivalence toward the profession (11.96%);
5. Social mission (focus on the macro level; 9.54%).

Metaphors for supervision

Regarding supervision, participants chose mostly metaphors about the functions of the supervisor: education and support (e.g., parenting). A smaller number viewed supervision as a mission, gatekeeping and a social obligation to prepare the next generation of professionals. A minority of participants pointed to the challenges involved in supervision and criticized working conditions. We identified 277 metaphors in response to the statement "For me, being a student supervisor is like …" The themes, in the order of their frequency, were:

1. Teaching and guiding (supervision; 36.5%);
2. Parenting and nurturing (32.34%);
3. Social mission to train the next generation (26.56%);
4. Juggling and creativity (4.97%);
5. Criticism of the conditions of supervision (3.17%).

The connection between metaphors regarding the profession and those regarding supervision

A comparison of the metaphors regarding the profession and those regarding supervision shows that the participants tended to see the profession and supervision as the means of expressing their individual leanings. The participants emphasized the skills and roles associated with the profession and supervision (e.g., education, support and guidance) and the functions of help and support, especially in the metaphors regarding the profession. In the responses regarding the profession, few metaphors were related to the society as a whole (the macro level); more of them were with regard to supervision and these focused on the obligation toward the next generation. The challenges of the profession and criticism of it appeared with greater frequency in metaphors regarding the profession than in those regarding supervision.

Discussion

The metaphors indicated that social workers have mostly positive perceptions of the profession and of supervision. Yet, social workers also used metaphors expressing challenge and difficulty, primarily in relation to the profession, as well as criticism of the employment conditions of the profession and of the low esteem of the public. On the one hand, the metaphors used by social workers indicated that they have mostly positive perceptions of the profession and of supervision; on the other hand, they reflected challenge and difficulty, primarily in relation to the profession, as well as criticism of the employment conditions and the public's low esteem of the profession. Similarly, to studies reporting an ambivalent view held by the public regarding the profession of social work (Kagan, 2015), the present study found that social workers themselves have diverse perceptions of the profession and of supervision. But in contrast to the general public, social workers have a more positive perception of the profession.

Conclusions

We have shown that social workers who participated in the study have mainly positive perceptions of the profession and of the supervision of students. Alongside these positive perceptions, however, some of the metaphors used attested to perceptions of challenge and difficulty, mainly in the recruitment of professionals, as well as criticism of the employment and supervisory conditions.

The present study suggests a reason why social workers continue supervising social work students despite criticism of the supervisory conditions: Because of their sense of mission and commitment to the next generation, supervisors attribute great importance to the professional training of social work students. At the same time, criticism of the poor employment conditions and lack of appreciation may harm this motivation. We recommend that academic institutions take into account the organizational aspects of student training to retain the supervisors over time.

Keywords: Social workers, perceptions of the profession, supervision, social work students, workers, metaphors.

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TEACHING GROUP WORK IN SOCIAL SORK EDUCATION: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF ISRAELI LECTURERS

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Group work is an integral part of Social Work practice and in Israel, a mandatory component of a bachelor's degree in Social Work.

This presentation is based on a qualitative study that focuses on encounters between group work lecturers and the courses they teach. It aims to deepen the understanding of the teaching methods of group facilitation for students of social work, develop insights and conceptualize the processes involved. This research is based on semi-structured interviews (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) with Israeli lecturers of group work courses in social work bachelors at various academic institutes. The objective of this study was to examine the teaching and learning processes within graduate social work programs pertaining to group work courses.

The teaching of group methods is structured to impart the fundamental principles of group work as a method for social work intervention. The goal is to equip students with the necessary skills to effectively guide and facilitate groups.

Despite the growing utilization of group work in the social work field, research indicates a diminishing emphasis on this method within educational institutions, leading to a scarcity of social workers with appropriate group work training (Giacomucci, 2021). The significance of group experiences and reflective practices as integral components of the group method curriculum for social work students has been documented (Corradini *et al*., 2020).

Meanwhile, social workers and group facilitators emphasize the relevance of group-based studies in their education, albeit diverging on the impact of experiential group learning (Skolnik, 2019).

In-depth interviews with expert group facilitators revealed the critical elements deemed essential for training group facilitators: experiential training, self-care, didactic courses, participation in professional conferences and genuine enthusiasm for group work (Hahn *et al*., 2022). Other scholars have underscored the need for skills-oriented teaching in alignment with established standards (Macgowan & Vakharia, 2012). Moreover, the importance of observing group guidance by experienced professionals as part of student training has been highlighted

(Weiss & Rutan, 2016) alongside the call for improved coordination between classroom instruction and practical training (Knight, 2017).

Challenges in integrating group methods within curricula are observed across social work and other helping professions (Goodman *et al*., 2014). Notably, the American Psychological Association recognized group therapy as a distinct branch of psychology only in 2018 (Whittingham *et al*., 2021).

In the Israeli context, the inclusion of group methods in academic programs for social work is standard, although variations exist in terms of study hours and instructional approaches. Despite these differences, students in these courses inevitably engage in group dynamics, which can lead to unstructured processes characterized by ambiguity and uncertainty. Owing to academic constraints, these groups tend to be relatively large, inviting emotional exposure that might evoke difficulties and resistance.

This developmental phase in students' professional identity warrants a critical examination of course objectives and participation methods. Reflective group processes have been recognized as significant in programs outside of social work's bachelor's degree, addressing the intricacies of working with diverse populations and the tensions between group existence and institutional requirements (Ixxon & Ben-David, 2020; Bernstein, 2017; Hazan & Kurz-Keren, 2021). Nonetheless, a comprehensive investigation of group method instruction in Israeli social work programs is lacking.

The discussion focuses on the interview results and their implications. These findings are relevant for educational institutions offering social work programs, educators responsible for teaching group courses and students seeking to relate their experiences to the course of their studies.

Keywords: Social work education, students, group work facilitation, qualitative research, practical training, Israel.

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INTEGRATING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INTO SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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In this age where technological developments are advancing rapidly, the need for change in societies and professions is inevitable. As artificial intelligence continues to reshape professions, social work is a science and profession affected by this change. As Cılga (2004) states regarding the definition of social work as a branch of science that social work is a process that produces knowledge about understanding the dynamics and laws in the change and development processes of people and society and the approach, method and practice of improving people's social effectiveness. In recent years, the use of artificial intelligence for the purpose of social good on social injustices, poverty, discrimination and a number of other social problems, which are at the focal point of social work, has become increasingly widespread. Among the ethical principles published by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) (1996), social change advocacy is one of the most basic ethical principles to serve people in need and to provide social justice. Therefore, social work should be among the most basic decision makers in terms of the use of artificial intelligence for social good. In this context, social work education has to train the next generation of professionals to deal with these complex problems. In addition to the important role of society in seeking solutions to artificial intelligence-based problems, it is inevitable for them to have knowledge about the role of artificial intelligence in their professional practices. As a matter of fact, in the ethical principles updated by NASW (2017), it is stated regarding the competence of social workers that "social workers who use technology in the delivery of social services should be sure that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide such services competently".

Social work education teaches students subjects as human relations, ethical values, social issues and practical skills while training professionals in this field. Along with technological developments, social work education should also improve itself. Mintz *et al*. (2018) reveal to what extent they can take part in the technology developing with artificial intelligence in the scenarios they have established for the future of social work. This technology stands out with its big data analysis, predictive and automatic decision making capabilities. Patton (2020), who conducts artificial intelligence research at Columbia University, notes that social workers play a pivotal role in helping AI developers understand how these technologies can exacerbate or alleviate existing social and structural inequalities. AI can make a huge impact in different areas of social work, such

as identifying risky situations, providing customized services to clients and better understanding social issues through big data analytics. However, when the integration of this technology into social work education is required, questions such as how to handle ethical issues arise. In a study of incorporating ChatGPT, a language processing model, into social work education and practice, Ibrahim *et al.* (2023) also highlight the challenges that may prevent researchers, students and academics from using ChatGPT in social work. In another study that draws attention to the importance of this issue, Singer *et al.* (2023) emphasizes interdisciplinary work to ensure that artificial intelligence is ready to be used for social good, as well as to ensure that it is used in ethical, equitable and socially fair ways. In addition, issues such as how existing training programs will adapt to this new technology and how professionals are prepared for this change are also issues that need to be addressed in this problem situation. Tuncay (2020) states that higher human touches are needed in order not to create a mechanical interaction environment in a high-tech educational environment. The importance of this topic is remarkable both in terms of addressing the complexity of social work problems and preparing future social work professionals for this technological change.

Stating that human life and sustainability are above all kinds of individual and social benefits, Şahin (2011) discusses modernity and states that efforts should be made to take advantage of its opportunities and to take protective measures together against its threats. By addressing this complex problem situation, this review study aims to examine the potential of the integration of artificial intelligence in social work education and the opportunities and challenges that this integration will bring together. It aims to illuminate this important intersection between artificial intelligence and social work through the compilation and analysis of existing information and expert opinions in the literature. It also aims to encourage reflection on future directions and applications of AI integration in the field of social work education.

This review article was carried out on the basis of the compilation and analysis of the available literature. The study first aimed to discuss why the integration of artificial intelligence into social work education is needed and how it can be done effectively through the sources in the literature. Therefore, a descriptive research design was adopted. By examining the articles and other secondary data sources in the literature in terms of the integration of artificial intelligence into social work education, the analysis process aimed to reveal current trends, different application areas and potential challenges.

At the end of the analysis process of the literature, the potential of artificial intelligence integration into social work education has been discussed by examining the examples of the use of artificial intelligence for social good (Cavallo *et al.*, 2018; Frey *et al.*, 2020; Reyes *et al.*, 2016;

Yadav *et al*., 2017) and the studies in higher education institutions (Gillingham, 2017; Fields *et al*., 2021; Rahmattalabi *et al*., 2018; Tambe & Rice, 2018) that use artificial intelligence in social work education.

The results and recommendations synthesized as a result of the findings highlight the potential of the integration of artificial intelligence into social work education and the opportunities that this integration can bring and also point out the steps to be taken for this transformation to take place successfully.

Keywords: Social work, education, artificial intelligence, social good.

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SECTION VII

Inequality, Gender and Social Inclusion

"I HAVE A DREAM AND I WISH IT WOULD COME TRUE" DEAF BEDOUIN WOMEN'S DESIRES FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

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Deaf Bedouin young women in Israel experience marginalization, discrimination, and institutional neglect, which, coupled with the traditions of Bedouin society, pose a complex challenge to social inclusion. A qualitative study of 14 deaf Bedouin young women, using a semi-structured questionnaire, found that instead of providing support, their socio-ethnic affiliation is a source of suffering, whereas their deaf identity and their belonging to the deaf community are sources of strength and self-esteem. The study's contribution is that it presents the unique story of deaf Bedouin young women and reveals how belonging to the deaf community helps them to accept their deafness as uniqueness rather than as a disability and enables them to hold on to their dreams of higher education, obtaining rewarding work, and marrying and raising a family.

Bedouin Society in Israel

Israel's 250,000 Bedouins constitute 12% of the country's Arab population and 18% of its non-Jewish population. They are also an inseparable part of the Muslim world. They live mainly in the Negev, Israel's arid southern region, and define themselves as an Indigenous people, despite the state's opposition to this definition. As semi-nomads they inhabited the Negev before the establishment of the state and have preserved their traditions and culture for many generations. Since the establishment of the state in 1948, a combination of political pressure, land expropriation, and home demolition has imposed a change in their form of settlement, forcing changes in their traditional way of life and weakening their traditions and values. The Bedouin population suffers from abrogation of its rights, disadvantage, and social marginalization (Yiftachel *et al*., 2016) and remains in constant conflict with the state regarding the ownership of lands, the imposed urbanization, and an overall policy that harms, excludes, and discriminates. In recent decades,

marginalization has led to an increase in political and religious activism of Bedouins against the state (Rubin, 2016).

The High Incidence of Sensory Disabilities in the Bedouin Population

Israel's Arab population, of which the Bedouins are a part, has an especially high incidence of children with disabilities. These include deaf children who, in 90% of the cases, are born to hearing parents (Mitchell & Karchmer, 2004). Strosberg et al. (2008) reported that 9.1% of all the country's Arab children have a disability, though this is probably an underestimate of the true incidence because of problems of diagnosis, awareness, and a tendency to hide certain disabilities. The incidence of Bedouin children in Israel with a sensory disability, as in the country's overall Arab population, is much higher than that in the Jewish population (2.2, 2.0, and 0.8, respectively). The very high incidence of deafness in the Bedouin population derives from the combination of a rare genetic mutation and a high incidence of marriage among relatives, primarily cousins (Allassad Alhuzail & Levinger, 2022).

The Triple Oppression: Deaf Bedouin Young Women

Deaf women in Bedouin society contend with triple exclusion and marginalization: as women living in a patriarchal society, as part of the (Arab) minority in Israel (Harel-Shalev *et al*., 2020) and as deaf women (Allassad Alhuzail & Levinger, 2022). The collective code of Bedouin society plays a key role in their exclusion. The women are usually meant to marry to promote the society's interests. To ensure compliance, the women are closely controlled and steered toward a marriage within the extended family (Abu-Rabia-Queder, 2007) and even those who acquire higher education often encounter exclusion within their society because they are women (Abu-Rabia-Queder, 2016; Harel-Shalev *et al*., 2019).

Keywords: Deaf Bedouin young women, deafness, discrimination, marginalization, bedouin society.

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GENDER EQULITY IN EMPLOYMENT IN AZERBAIJAN

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Gender equality in employment is a critical aspect of achieving a fair and inclusive society. Gender equality in employment is a significant issue in Azerbaijan, as it is in many countries around the world. Historically, women have faced challenges in accessing equal opportunities in the workforce due to cultural norms and stereotypes. However, the government of Azerbaijan has made efforts to address these issues and promote gender equality in the workplace.

However, achieving gender equality in employment is an ongoing challenge. Gender-based discrimination, stereotypes and unconscious biases persist in many workplaces, hindering women's progress and opportunities for career advancement. Women often face the "glass ceiling" phenomenon, where they encounter barriers that prevent them from reaching top leadership positions. Some of the measures taken to improve gender equality in employment in Azerbaijan include:

Legislation: Azerbaijan has laws and regulations that aim to protect women's rights in the workplace and prohibit discrimination based on gender.

National Action Plan: The government has developed a National Action Plan to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, which includes initiatives focused on improving women's participation in the labor force and advancing their career opportunities.

Awareness and Advocacy: Various non-governmental organizations and advocacy groups are working to raise awareness about gender equality issues and encourage employers to implement gender-inclusive policies.

Gender Quotas: In some cases, gender quotas have been introduced to increase the representation of women in certain sectors or decision-making roles.

Despite these efforts, challenges remain and gender equality in employment may still be a work in progress. Women may face barriers such as gender-based discrimination, traditional gender roles, and unequal access to education and training opportunities. Additionally, there may be cultural factors that impact women's participation in the workforce.

Promoting gender equality in employment requires a multi-faceted approach that involves not only legal and policy changes but also cultural shifts and societal attitudes. Encouraging equal access to education and training, providing support for work-life balance, and challenging gender

stereotypes are some of the steps that can contribute to achieving greater gender equality in the workplace.

Promoting gender equality in employment is essential for maximizing human potential and driving economic growth. When both men and women have equal access to job opportunities, wages, and career advancement, it results in a more productive and innovative workforce. Gender diversity in the workplace brings different perspectives and skills, leading to better decision-making and organizational performance.

Several strategies have been employed to promote gender equality in employment, including affirmative action, gender quotas, and policies that support work-life balance. These initiatives aim to create a level playing field and foster an inclusive work environment where both men and women can thrive.

The benefits of gender equality in employment are not limited to individuals but extend to society as a whole. Closing the gender gap can lead to increased economic productivity and improved social cohesion. Furthermore, gender equality in employment contributes to reducing income inequality and empowering women economically.

To achieve genuine gender equality in employment, a multi-faceted approach is necessary. It involves comprehensive policies, workplace diversity and inclusion initiatives and efforts to challenge stereotypes and biases. Moreover, promoting gender equality requires engagement from all stakeholders, including governments, employers, employees, and civil society.

In conclusion, gender equality is not only a moral imperative but also a key driver of progress and sustainable development. By dismantling discriminatory practices and creating an enabling environment for all individuals to reach their full potential, societies can harness the power of diversity and inclusivity to build a brighter and more prosperous future for all.

Keywords: Gender, Azerbaijan, employment.

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GENDER CHARACTERISTICS OF EMPLOYMENT IN AZERBAIJAN REPUBLIC

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Studies show that in all countries of the world "on average women spend about 2.5 times more time on unpaid household and family care work than men. This reduces their access to social protection. There are no opportunities to use maternity leave and payments, on retirement they receive a lower pension amount" .According to the results of the survey conducted on "use of the population's time budget in Azerbaijan in 2008" the situation in our country is the same as in the countries of the world. Compared to men, women spend less time on paid work and education (women 1:44, men 4:40 hours/minute), and more time on unpaid work (women 6:06, men 2:08 hours/minute).

Both women and men face the problem of unemployment, but women face more unemployment. It is related that women have the physiological characteristic of giving birth to children and women have responsibilities such as child and family care. Due to these and other social factors, women find it difficult to find work. In this regard, they need attention from the state.

Table. Economically active population in Azerbaijan, thousand people

	2015	2018	2019	2020	2021
Number of economically active population - total	4915,3	5133,1	5190,1	5252,5	5303,9
women	2404,5	2495,7	2526,0	2567,5	2590,2
Number of occupied population - total	4671,6	4879,3	4938,5	4876,6	4988,2
women	2263,4	2349,9	2381,7	2351,5	2408,1
Number of unemployed population - total	243,7	253,8	251,6	375,9	315,7
women	141,1	145,8	144,3	216,0	182,1

Officially women and men have equal rights in our republic. Labor law and safeguards for its implementation is regulated by the Labor Code. The Labor Code provides concessions, privileges and additional guarantees for women. These privileges and concessions is related

additional leave entitlement for women with dependent children, reduced working hours due to pregnancy and childcare and etc.

Last years as a result of the socio-economic policy implemented to increase the employment opportunities of labor resources in Azerbaijan the level of women's participation in the labor market were increasing. According to the analysis of State Statistics Committee data, in the period 2015-2021, the number of women in the country's economically active population increased by 185.7 thousand people, from 2404.5 thousand people to 2590.2 thousand people.

The number of women in the employed population increased by 144.7 thousand people, reaching 2408.1 thousand people from 2263.4 thousand people. In 2021, the share of women in the employed population in the country was 48.8%.

The unemployment rate among women is higher than among men. According to the analysis of statistical data, 57.7% of the unemployed were women, and 42.3% were employed men in 2021.

The number of wage-earning women in economic activities is dominated by the provision of health and social services, education and recreation, entertainment and arts. In other words, in 2021, 78.3% of wage earners in health and social services, 72.7% in education, and 61.2% in recreation, entertainment and arts were women. The reasons for women's predominance in humanitarian fields are: the desire to balance work and family life, the responsibility of household care, taking care of children, etc. is on women, etc.

The sectors where the male workforce is dominant in terms of employment are construction (93%), electricity, gas and steam production (88.8%), mining industry (87.4%), transport and warehousing (83.4%).

The average monthly salary of salaried women in our republic is lower than that of men. In 2021, the average monthly salary of women was 552.2 manats, and that of men was 851.7 manats. The ratio of the average monthly nominal salary of women to the average monthly nominal salary of men was 64.8%. This situation is the same for all types of economic activity. In other words, the average monthly nominal wage of wage-earning women in all types of economic activity is lower than that of men. The largest difference in the average monthly nominal salary of salaried workers by types of economic activity was in the field of professional, scientific and technical activity. The average monthly nominal salary for men in this field is 2 times higher than the average monthly nominal salary for women. The average monthly nominal salary of women working in the field of professional, scientific and technical activity was 770.1 manats, and that of men was 1559.9 manats. The least difference in the indicator was in the trade area. Women 476.1 manats, and men 556.8 manats.

Statistical analyzes show that wages are lower in areas where women are more represented. This shows that women earn less than men. One of the reasons for their low income is the high

share of part-time workers among women. It should be noted that according to the Labor Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the full-time working time is 40 hours. In 2021, the share of women working part-time was 60.2%. This is 20.4 percentage points more than men. The highest level of underemployment was recorded among those working 21-30 hours per week.

As in most countries of the world, one of the main problems related to women's employment in Azerbaijan is the high share of informal employment. In 2021, 675,644 people or 39.5% of women worked in wage jobs. This is 28% of the employed women in the economy (2408.1 thousand people). The remaining 1731.5 thousand people or 72% of women worked in non-salaried jobs. This shows that the share of women working in the informal sector is high in our republic.

It should be noted that efforts are being made to prevent informal employment and this issue is currently a priority of social policy in our republic.

In 2017, the Action Plan for the prevention of informal employment was approved in our republic. In the document implementation of measures is planned «improvement of normative legal acts, improving administration, strengthening control measures to prevent informal employment, establishing a monitoring and evaluation system, organization of information and propaganda against informal employment». By the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 2020, «The procedure for conducting and coordinating control measures in the field of legalization of informal employment» has been approved.

Conditions for increasing employment opportunities for women in our Republic are also created in the self-employment program implemented by the State Employment Agency affiliated with the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population. The program enables low-income families to own their own private farms and increase their income, eliminate their dependence on government assistance and gain access to entrepreneurship. The number of women participating in the program increases every year, they are supported to establish small businesses and included in vocational training. At the beginning of 2022, nearly 2,000 unemployed and job seekers, including approximately 500 women, were provided with assets within the framework of the program. Official website of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population.

It should not be forgotten that the main way to prevent informal employment is to provide employment and open new jobs. It is necessary to create healthy, safe and permanent workplaces, improve working conditions, expand workers' labor rights, raise the living standard of the population, and improve social protection. Increasing access to social protection mechanisms as a result of measures to combat unregistered employment in our Republic will play an important role in ensuring the stability of family incomes and providing reliable social security in old age.

Officially, women and men have equal rights in Azerbaijan. In our republic, there is a legal framework that ensures gender equality in the field of employment. According to the analysis of statistical data, the share of women in employment is low in our republic, as in the whole world. In our country, women work mostly in the field of health and social services, education and recreation, entertainment and art. The average monthly salary of salaried women in our republic is lower than that of men. Wages are lower in areas where women are more represented. One of the main problems related to women's employment high informal employment of women in Azerbaijan. The share of women working part-time is high. It should be noted that in order to increase the employment of women, it is necessary to introduce the expansion of flexible forms of employment (part-time employment), to develop the pre-school education system. It is very important in combating informal employment organization of continuous educational campaigns among women

Keywords: Female employment, labor market, informal employment, part-time work, unemployment rate among women.

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SOCIAL SERVICES PROVIDED TO WOMEN WHO ARE VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN AZERBAIJAN

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In order to ensure the protection of women who have suffered from violence, including domestic violence, and to provide them with a safe environment, almost all countries in the world currently offer comprehensive care and services. Additionally, in the Republic of Azerbaijan, shelters are established to ensure the safety and reintegration into society of women who have suffered harm as a result of domestic violence. Women placed in these shelters not only find temporary refuge but also receive expert support for the restoration of their mental and physical well-being, as well as assistance in carrying out processes such as reintegrating into life and meeting their needs.

The social services provided to victims of domestic violence can be categorized into three main headings:

1. Preventive Services - These are measures taken in advance through policy decisions to ensure that women do not fall victim to violence.

2. Intervention Services - These services are aimed at identifying individuals who have experienced violence, ensuring their safety and physical well-being, providing shelter, and ultimately preventing them from experiencing violence again.

3. Rehabilitation Services - These are measures aimed at eliminating the negative effects of violence on individuals and restoring their well-being.

Upon a woman's arrival at a shelter, the first action is to conduct a medical assessment. This evaluates her present state and discerns the type of violence she has undergone. Medical staff should offer holistic care, establishing a sense of support. Besides physical health, psychological and social aid from psychologists and social workers is crucial for their emotional well-being. Professionals working with survivors must acknowledge their profound trauma and consider this aspect. Those who have endured violence often withdraw due to fear and anxiety, struggling to communicate their feelings due to the trauma they've experienced.

When interacting with victims, it's crucial to engage them in conversation without blame. This encourages them to confide in social workers about their challenges, especially since they

fear their words might reach the perpetrator. Victims receive not only medical and psychological care but also legal awareness to safeguard their rights. Safety in shelters is comprehensive.

Customized plans aid individuals' reintegration, focusing not just on victim recovery, but addressing perpetrator actions. To fully resolve the issue, both victim rehabilitation and perpetrator reform are necessary.

According to Azerbaijan's Domestic Violence Prevention Law, victims receive legal aid, court process explanations, shelter, essential needs, medical and psychological support, and clothing.

The law's Articles 13 and 14 detail measures and legal assistance. Article 15 covers social services like shelter, legal and medical aid, skill development, economic self-sufficiency, document assistance, and more.

Institutions provide safety, education, services tailored to needs, family restoration, prevention, etc., for domestic violence victims.

Temporary shelters for victims emerged in the 1970s, starting in the UK. They expanded globally, including Germany, France, Sweden, Norway, and Switzerland.

Initially, these centers received funding from women's societies or donations. The first shelter in Azerbaijan, established in 2002 by the "Clean World" Women's Support Victims Union, set the precedent.

While shelter names differ, they share a core purpose. Temporary shelters primarily ensure victims' mental and physical well-being. This aids the spiritual growth of women recovering from domestic violence and prevents self-exploitation. The shelter protects victims and deters aggressors.

Shelter models vary globally, managed by state bodies, law enforcement, NGOs, individuals, or religious groups. The aim is to provide a safe environment, prevent trauma recurrence, support empowerment, and independence.

Shelters help victims regain spiritual strength, voice, and decision-making ability. Services within shelters are cost-free, covered by the state or relevant institutions. Privacy is maintained, personalized support plans are created, including medical and psychological assistance. Education continues via the Ministry of Education, and vocational, social, and employment support via the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection.

Shelter duration is 2 months. Implementation is with victim consent or authorized bodies.

Different forms of violence aim to control, induce fear, and cause vulnerability. Those who experience and perpetrate violence are categorized as follows:

1. In various countries, 40-75% of rapes are committed by intimate partners. Addressing youth relationships is crucial.

2. Around 40% of severe violence occurs within families, mostly affecting women.

3. Some women adapt to living with violence.

4. Despite an increase in affected individuals, fewer women seek crisis center help, indicating hidden violence.

5. Expanding social, police, education, and health services reduces violence.

6. Women's sensitivity contributes to increased violence.

7. Lack of belief in help hinders prevention efforts.

Efforts to tackle violence require more than lectures; preventive measures, alternative solutions, and effective action are essential.

State services restore functions, provide medical care, psychological support, and rehabilitation for victims' reintegration. Azerbaijani institutions offer assistance for domestic violence victims, operated by nature, generally known as crisis centers.

Crisis Centers like the "Clean World" Women's Support Public Union and the Hopeful Future Youth Organization protect women affected by crime. Hopeful Future, established in 2011, aids young victims of violence and crime. The Baku Social Rehabilitation Center, run by the Hopeful Future, supports women affected by crime and domestic violence.

In conclusion, generalizing all these ideas, we can come to the conclusion that the main duty of every center is to provide timely care and appropriate services to victims of violence, highlighting the essential value of these centers in the support provided by the state for victims of violence. Thus, these centers can be considered a special step in the process of supporting victims of violence, allowing them to easily leave the violent environment and reintegrate into society as strong individuals.

Keywords: Violence, domestic violence, shelter, rehabilitation, trauma.

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THE IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FACED BY WOMEN ON THEIR WORK PERFORMANCE AND INTEGRATION INTO THE WORK ENVIRONMENT: A STUDY IN BAKU

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Gender-based violence, including domestic violence is a widespread problem that significantly affects individuals and society around the world.

According to the World Health Organization, 30 percent of women in the world are subjected to violence by their partners at some stage of their lives. These experiences of violence can be observed at home, at work, on the street, in relationships, at schools and in many places.

Domestic violence does not only affect the family, it is a process that affects all spheres of society. Its effects on women at work are currently being studied more by researchers. The impact of domestic violence on occupational stress, effectiveness, development, work performance and general well-being of the individual in the workplace has begun to attract more and more attention. This study aims to measure the impact of domestic violence faced by women in Baku city on their integration into the work environment and work performance. To analyze these effects, an ecological model was used, which takes into account the complex interaction of various factors affecting individuals in the environment. This model recognizes that the effects of domestic violence on work productivity are not just individual issues, but are shaped by interpersonal relationships, organizational politics and broader societal norms. In this context, it is thought that domestic violence experienced by women greatly affects their workplace, as well as the well-being of the employee and the organization. At the end, the results of the meetings with women were discussed and recommendations were made for future research and steps to be taken in this field

Keywords: Violence against women, domestic violence, work performance, work environment.

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WAYS TO SOLVE THE UNEMPLOYMENT OF YOUNG WOMEN IN AZERBAIJAN

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The issue of young female unemployment has emerged as a significant concern in the context of contemporary global economies. Despite advancements in women's rights and education, young women continue to face unique challenges in accessing gainful employment opportunities. Drawing from various scholarly sources and statistical data, this thesis examines the multifaceted nature of young female unemployment. In response to the challenges identified, the thesis emphasizes range of policy recommendations and strategies aimed at fostering gender-inclusive economic growth. These strategies include targeted educational initiatives to empower young women with relevant skills, promoting flexible work arrangements, dismantling discriminatory practices and increasing female representation in leadership positions across sectors.

Unemployment is a macroeconomic phenomenon, a socio-economic problem and expresses the part of the economically active population that cannot use its labor force (Caroleo *et al*., 2018). Specially, unemployment appears as a problem among young people worldwide. Youth unemployment is one of the most important social and economic issue in the world, including developed countries, in recent times. The young people are neither in education nor training and unemployed should be emphisized as well. The indicator reflecting this socio-economic problem is called NEET and it has been used in the United Kingdom since 1999. Then NEET indicator has been confirmed by international organizations such as the OECD, ILO and other UN agencies and many governments' statistical agencies as an indicator within the post-2015. The age group of young people included in the NEET category varies in different countries. For example, the age category of young people in Great Britain is 16-24, in Japan it is 15-34, and in Azerbaijan it is in the age range of 14-29.

According to the information of the Statistics Committee of Azerbaijan, the number of young people who were given a job by the local agencies of the State Employment Agency and then given the status of unemployed was 18,874 people in 2010. The same indicator decreased to 13,891 in 2015. In 2020, the State Employment Agency registered this indicator as 23,445 people. As a consequence, the number of young people who received the status of unemployed increased by 24.2% during the decade.

It is clear that young people are not a homogenous age group, and looking at their unemployment from a gender perspective reveals more complex issues. The literacy rate among women is relatively high. According to the latest available data from 2015, the literacy rate for women aged 15 years and older was around 99%. Additionally, women in Azerbaijan have equal access to education at all levels, including primary, secondary, and tertiary education. Female enrollment in primary and secondary education has been consistently high. According to data from 2019, the gross enrollment rate for girls in primary education was 100%, indicating that almost all girls of primary school age were enrolled in school. Women in Azerbaijan have been actively pursuing higher education. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of women enrolling in universities and pursuing degrees in various fields of study. In 2000-2001 academic years, 49859 of the total number of students were women. This gauge reached to 104678 in 2020-2021 academic years. However, when it comes to the number of women working in leadership positions across the country was at 90 in 2016 and the sign rose to 92 after five years. Apparently, there has been no significant change in the number of women in managerial positions during these five years, and the increase is only 2%. It should be noted that the executeves have academic backgrounds, the literacy rate of women across the country has been stable at 99.7% from 2010 to 2020 and at best, each of these women leaders is young. Then it follows that despite the high percentage of women's academic background, the growth rate of women working as CEO is low. Therefore, even educated young women have a problem of advancement in their careers, and this brings up the problem of frictional unemployment of young women as a particular reason. Young female unemployment was 14.8% in 2009 and after a decade it dropped to 14.2%. There is no strong reduction in the percantage change of the indicator. To become more spesific, the share of female youth not in education, employment or training was 11.7% and 12,4% in 2010 and 2011 respectively. Distincly, the unemployment of young women are not related to education, and other social reasons lie behind this socio-economic issue. On this purpose, a number of projects and programs are implemented in Azerbaijan for eliminating the unemployment of young women in Azerbaijan. So, some key aspects based on women's economic activity in Azerbaijan include:

Financial support: Financial support creates specific loan programs, grants and financial resources to provide women with access to capital to start or grow their businesses. "Self-Employed Support - 2023" with the joint organization of the State Employment Agency and the Azerbaijan Banks Association related to the solution of current issues, provides assets to those who have received an unemployed status, as well as young women.

Training and Capacity Building: Entrepreneurship training programs and workshops are organized to enhance women's entrepreneurial skills, business planning, marketing strategies, financial management and other aspects of running a successful business. For example, the

"Training of Trainers" program was implemented by the State Employment Agency in order to further strengthen the personnel potential and improve the managerial skills required for middle and upper management positions.

Networking and Mentoring: Networks and platforms are created not only to connect women entrepreneurs to each other, but also with mentors, industry experts and potential investors. These networks provide opportunities for knowledge sharing, collaboration and support, while mentors offer guidance and advice to female entrepreneurs. The project "Power of Women in Business" was developed with the initiative and organization of the Small and Medium Business Development Agency (KOBIA) and "Rabitabank" OJSC, the National Confederation of Entrepreneurs Organizations of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijan Women's Entrepreneurship Development Association (AQSIA). The purpose here was to increase the business activity of women entrepreneurs, to organize trainings, production experience, and to create "networking" conditions in order to expand access to preferential financial resources. This, in turn, encouraged young women without a special academic background and boosted their economic activity.

Awareness and Advocacy: Efforts are being made to raise awareness of the benefits of female entrepreneurship, challenge societal norms, and promote the achievements of successful female entrepreneurs. In 2019, an International Forum on "Development of Women's Entrepreneurship: Experience, Opportunities and Achievements" was organized at the "Fairmont" hotel in connection with the development of women's entrepreneurship. This Forum evaluated the component of the NEET indicator as the main target group and indirectly aimed at solving the problem of unemployment of young women.

Government Initiatives: The government of Azerbaijan has implemented a number of initiatives to support women entrepreneurs. A number of decrees and programs in Azerbaijan, including the Strategic Road Map and Sustainable Development Goals, mention broad opportunities for people to achieve their goals. Therefore, it is more important to strengthen the vocational education of the population, mainly women and meet modern requirements. For example, the Association of Entrepreneurial Women of Azerbaijan plays an important role in the development of women's entrepreneurship, coordinating this activity and expanding cooperation. Also in 2015, the Women's Entrepreneurship Development Strategy was adopted in Azerbaijan, which aims to increase the economic opportunities of women and increase their participation in business activities. In addition, as a result of the joint cooperation of the World Bank and the State Employment Agency, which covers the years 2020-2025, the Employment Support Project is

being implemented in Azerbaijan. One of the main target groups in this project is unemployed young women. They are involved in the self-employment program and enter the labor market.

Recognition and Awards: Awards and recognition programs have been introduced to recognize and promote women's entrepreneurial success in Azerbaijan. These initiatives celebrate the success stories of female entrepreneurs and inspire others to pursue their entrepreneurial dreams.

It is important to note that although progress has been made, there are still problems of unemployment among young women in Azerbaijan. These challenges include access to finance, cultural norms and gender biases. However, increased attention to women's entrepreneurship and employment and existing supporting initiatives indicate a positive trend towards increased participation of women in the labor market and success in entrepreneurial activity.

Keywords: Azerbaijan, youth unemployment, female, NEET.

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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The social, political, economic and cultural foundations of society are the main conditions for the existence of domestic violence. In societies with different social structures, there is a different system of social relations related to the social status of women and men. Gender roles, which are an important part of an individual's self, are used in family, school, workplace, media, music, movies, etc. is formed through socialization determined by its influence. Traditions, historical and religious characteristics of the people have a significant influence as preconditions for gender-based violence. These characteristics are determined based on the socio-economic development opportunities of the country. Domestic violence occurs in all countries, regardless of the level of development. The economic impact is primarily reflected in statistical indicators

Domestic violence statistics

641 million women around the world experience brutal acts by their intimate partner. According to the studies conducted by the UN, extraordinary situations - pandemic, migration, natural disasters, social accidents, etc. accompanied by an increase in cases of violence against women. It was found that 37% of women subjected to domestic violence live in poor countries. Oceania - 51%, Melanesia and Micronesia - 41%, Polynesia - 39%, South Asia - 35%, Sub-Saharan Africa - 33%, North Africa - 30%, West Asia - 29%, North America - 25%, Australia and New Zealand - 23%, Latin America and the Caribbean - 25%, Northern Europe -23%, Southeast Asia - 21%, Western Europe - 21%, Eastern Asia - 20%, Eastern Europe - 20%, Central Asia - 18%, in Southern Europe - 16% of women are subjected to domestic violence by their intimate partner (Pervasive danger...).

The economic basis of domestic violence

Studies have found that there is a direct and significant correlation between a country's level of economic development and domestic violence. Gender equality and domestic violence rates show that gender inequality is widespread in countries with poor economic development.

In modern times, high statistical indicators of domestic violence are directly observed more in countries with weak economy and traditional society.

It has been found that 98% of abusive or abusive relationships involve economic abuse. 94-99% of victims of domestic violence have experienced some form of economic violence. 60% of them lost their jobs as a result of partner pressure (Moos & Billinop, 1982).

Domestic economic violence stems from the following cultural stereotypes formed in society:

- men earn about 20% more than women;

- women do housework twice as much as young men;

- young fathers rarely take parental leave;

- political activity of women is lower than that of men, the political discourse in society is defined by men;

- men occupy the main positions in the financial sector and media;

- women act as victims and caregivers, while men are usually shown as inventive, strong, intelligent and proactive;

- a man is evaluated according to his mind and ability, and a woman is evaluated primarily according to her appearance;

- boys are often seen as active, aggressive, independent, competitive, while girls are often seen as submissive, kind, gentle, passive and socially positive (Chan *et al*., 2019).

Economic violence is a form of violence in which one partner controls another partner's access to economic resources. Economic violence- deprivation of necessary resources, prohibition of work, control of expenses, financial control and dependence, restriction, refusal to give money, deprivation of means necessary for living, reporting on expenses It manifests itself as mandatory procedures of giving, concealment of income, unfair division of property, seizure of money (from the materials of crisis centers).

Economic violence has been recorded in the following cases:

- the wife has to ask her husband for money (always or occasionally);

- the wife is responsible to her husband (for all or most of the expenses);

- the husband has funds that he can spend only on himself and according to his discretion, while the wife does not have such an opportunity;

- "economic" criticism of the wife (accusations of addiction, belittling the importance of her work);

- bans on studying, working, career advancement, etc.;

- economic threats;

- violent acts (eviction from home) (Gorshkova & Shurygina, 2003);

- using the earned funds for one's own purposes;

- forcing you to sell your personal belongings, sign documents or change your will.

The result

The economic consequences of domestic violence are significant. Restrictions on the work of able-bodied women, as well as statistics on their injuries and deaths due to domestic violence are presented as indicators that directly affect the country's economy. The prevention of domestic violence, which is manifested as a direct result of intra-family conflicts, requires the expansion of educational activities at the level of society and the implementation of special programs at the state level. Treatment of people with alcoholism, drug addiction and other addictions, which are among the main factors of domestic violence, conducting prophylactic work with a violent person, expanding the scope aimed at raising the educational and cultural level of society in general are among the important issues.

Keywords: Domestic violence, socio-economic factors, gender inequality.

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COMPARISON OF TWO SOCIO-CULTURALLY SIMILAR COUNTRIES IN THE CONTEXT OF GENDER INEQUALITY INDEX AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RELATION: AN ASSESSMENT ON AZERBAIJAN AND TURKIYE

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Gender inequality is a phenomenon seen in different dimensions in all societies. The judgments and attitudes that underlie the differences between the socially constructed and predefined roles of men and women are closely tied to the sociocultural fabric of society. The sociocultural structure, which relates to many variables such as family, religion, language, culture, history and art, affects all areas, including the economy, workforce, education and social and political contexts. Considering the relationship between sociocultural structure and gender, the countries with similar sociocultural systems and gender equality performance levels can be expected to be similar.

In this study, the appearance of gender inequality in Azerbaijan and Turkiye, two countries of similar Turkish origin in terms of sociocultural characteristics, was examined. In the evaluation, The Gender Inequality Index (GII) data within the scope of the Human Development Reports published regularly by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) from 1990 to the present day were used. Despite similar sociocultural structures, when the average index values of gender inequality in 1990-2021 are compared. The average value in Turkiye (0.471) was higher than in Azerbaijan (0.348).

Especially in the ten years between 1990 and 2000, Azerbaijan's gender inequality average index value was 0.37, which was about 1.6 times better than Turkiye's (0.59). Considering the economic growth data of Azerbaijan in the relevant period, it is seen that the negative growth rate of GDP, which was -23.1% in 1993, reached 11.1% in 2000. The gender inequality index value in Turkiye, which has been on a significant improvement trend since 2006, was called at the same level as Azerbaijan in 2014. Still, the improvement was not valid in all sub-components of the index. Accordingly, while it was observed that the gap between at least secondary school graduation and gender equality gaps in labor force participation increased in Turkiye, it was found that the difference between women's representation in parliament and health decreased.

In the empirical arena, most studies draw attention to the relationship between economic growth and gender equality performance, apart from sociocultural values. Gender stereotypes are

associated with spiritual matters related to the superstructure, such as religion, ethnicity, morality and culture. Anthropologists refer to the concept of gender to indicate the cultural formation of anatomical differences in individuals (Delaney, 2014). However, structural components associated with infrastructure, such as income status, welfare level and economic development, impact gender judgments (Marshall, 1999). Although numerous studies have examined the relationship between gender inequality and economic growth (Klasen & Lamanna, 2009; Pervaiz *et al*., 2011; Esteve-Volart, 2004), the results are still inconclusive. Some studies describe the positive relationship between gender inequality and economic growth, while others show a negative relationship. For example, Galor and Weil (1996) explain that the gender gap in education and earnings is positively associated with high fertility and low economic growth. Similar results were presented by Lagerlof (1999) within the framework of the same generations. It is accepted that women's education, fertility reduction, and maternal education will positively affect future generations' education, positively impacting economic growth (Hill & King, 1995; Benavout, 1989; King *et al*., 2008). The persistent decline of fertility rates in European countries, and the evidence that this decline begins at significantly different income levels per capita, has led some researchers to look for alternative, or at least complementary, explanations for decreases in gender inequality (Galor, 2012).

Gender inequality lowers the quality of life and contributes to limited productivity, hindering economic efficiency and growth. Azuh *et al*. (2017) state that gender inequality and poor women empowerment impede economic development and lower the quality of life, leading to limited productivity and hindering economic efficiency and growth. Gender inequality continues to be not only evidence of a low social development level in a particular country, a discriminatory indicator of the internal sociocultural environment organization, but also a factor of economic oppression, a kind of inhibitor of the progressive socio-economic transformations inherent in the global economy (Hankivsky, 2005; Kabeer, 2005; Okoń-Horodyńska *et al*., 2015; Wodon & De La Briere, 2018). Therefore, it can be concluded that gender inequality harms economic development and hinders progress.

Research that draws attention to the negative relationship between gender inequality and economic growth as opposed to the positive relationship measures gender inequality in terms of the investment gap between male and female schooling (King & Hill, 1995; Knowles *et al.,* 2002). However, the opposite has been reported in cross-country regressions of some empirical studies where gender inequality in education positively affects economic growth (Barro & Lee, 2001; Barro & Sala-i-Martin, 1995). These conflicting findings were questioned by Dollar and Gatti (1999) because the negative impact of women's schooling on economic growth disappeared when

several variables were included for Latin America and East Asia. It was suggested that this could be due to the combination of low economic growth and high women's education in Latin America and high economic growth and low female schooling in East Asia (Dollar & Gatti, 1999).

When the research in the literature is evaluated as a whole, it is seen that the relationship between economic development and gender inequality can vary positively and negatively according to regional conditions. However, in the current studies, it has been observed that the evaluations are mostly made based on the regional comparison. In this context, when the similarities and relations based on history, language, identity and culture are taken into consideration, it is seen that it is important to include economic development and gender relations in the Turkish States in the literature. In this way, the chains of relations between the gender performances and economic development levels of the Turkic States will be evaluated by comparing the EU, USA and OECD. In this context, the relationship between Gross Domestic Product data and gender inequality index values as an indicator of economic growth in Azerbaijan and Turkiye was examined. According to the results of the correlation analysis, a low level of negative relationship was found between economic growth and gender inequality index values from 1991 to 2021, for which the data set can be accessed, in Turkiye (r:-0.115) and Azerbaijan (r:-0.171). In other words, as economic growth increases in both countries, gender inequality decreases. The reflection of the economic growth in Azerbaijan, which reached from -23.1% to 11.1% in the ten years before 2000, in the direction of improving the gender inequality index value by about 5.8% for the same period, confirms the relevant relationship.

In conclusion, although the sociocultural structure of a country has an impact on gender inequality, the gender equality performances of countries with similar sociocultural systems may differ due to their economic growth levels.

Keywords: Gender inequality, economic growth, sociao-cultural similarity, Azerbaijan, Turkiye, corellation.

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THE WOMEN ROLE IN THE VIOLENT SITUATION IN THE DEEP SOUTH OF THAILAND

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The purpose of the research aimed to 1) to investigate the women role who affected the violent situation in the Deep South 2) Provide the guideline for the government to empower the women role in violent situation in the Deep South. The findings research are summarized. The situation in Thailand's Southern Border Provinces or Patani as some call the region, is one where we are living among violent conflict. It has been about 19 years, if we take the theft of arms from a military base in Narathiwat province on 4 January 2004 as the beginning of the current round of violence but the past 19 years has seen significant change and the women are often perceived generally as victims rather than active agents in violent situation. Because of the violent situation, they became the victim to be the victor for empower and rehabilitate the women and the orphans who affected the violent situation. It has the groups of Civic Society such as We Peace, Luk Riaeng, Civic Women, Klum Duai Jai and etc. for empower the role of women who affected the violent situation. Some opinions suggested the activities to collaborate with the women who affected the violent situation. The Coordination Center for Children and Women in Southern Border Provinces must empower the women and Children who affected the violent situation. Specifically, the government must construct the conciliation and conduct their well-being.

Introduction

In the past nineteen years, the violence situation has spiked in the Deep South Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat provinces and parts of Songkla province Nathawi, Sabayoi, Chana and Thepa districts see Figure 1. The population of Narathiwat, Pattani and Yala provinces is approximately 1.8 million, of whom about 80 per cent are Malay Muslims. Many speak the Patani Malay dialect, known in Thai as Yawi (Kanlaya, 2016).

Since January 2004, the violence situation occurred these provinces; more than 3,000 people have died and more than 5,000 have been injured (Jagan, 2008). There are some violence situation in the Deep South during nine years: bombing, burning and damaging schools, killing teachers and shooting the school bus, which affected the mental health of children who have witness the brutal starting of the people in the community; some children lost their parents and some children are

injured; some of them are afraid to go to school and go outside to play and dare not create relations with anybody Hope Learn Pattani, 2011.
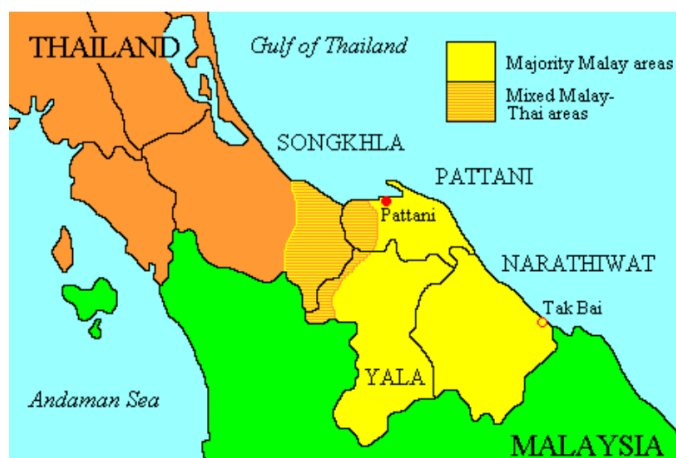

Figure 1. The Map of Violence Situation

In the violent situation occured since 2004- 2022 nineteen years that affected the widows and the orphans. They are increasing including Songkla province. It found 655 women and 6,526 men have died and the child under 18 years old have died 271 people and youth around 18-25 years old have died 906 people (The situation of Children and Women in Deep South, 2021).

The Coordination Center for Children and Women

The Coordination Center for Children and Women in Southern Border Provinces (CCWC-SBP) was established on June 10th 2019 by the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Center (SBPAC) in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and the Public sector. The Objective of the center is to enhance the working mechanism, encouraging participation among children's and women's community as well as the government sector and to reduce employment inquality. Moreover, it focuses on helping solve problem, protecting and developing the quality of life for children and women consecutively under ongoing conflict of Southern Border Thai insurgency.in compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (Adopted in Thailand as Measures and Practices of Promoting Treatment towards Women, Peace and Stability) (The Coordination Center for Children and Women in Southern Border Provinces, 2019).

Role and Duties

The center is a channel to coordinate, to gather, to receive complaints and to address and find solutions on children and women particularly on issues leading to conflict of human rights.

The objective is to promote measures of protection and quality of life development for children and women in the deep south according to the following 7 frameworks:

1. The accessibility to justice and relief;

2. The protection of children and women against violence;

3. The peace and stability of children and women;

4. The well-being of children and women;

5. The accessibility to public services for children and women;

6. Participation to stakeholders in all level of decision making;

7. Tolerance and gender equality.

We Peace

1. Mrs. Jamjuree Soraya, the training for Peace and chairman of the working group from Prince of Songkla University. She views that the rehabilitation is the Peace for reducing the violence in the future and Mrs. Pokkeetaedaoh Pateemah, the Director of woman for Peace or "We Peace". She is also expressed the confidence in the power of rehabilitation. The Rehabilitation Work, for people affected by the violence situation. It must have the power to rise up and fight the problem with themselves. That is the capacity to achieve people in the region and the Civil society is the part of resolving that is occurred. The Echoes of family loss and thus Civil Society groups, such as Civic Women, We Peeace, Luk Riang, Klum Duai Jai etc. are encouraged and empower to talk the people affected by the violence situation and can make them stand with themselves.

2. The Deep South Coordination Center The Deep South Coordination Center has the big role for rehabilitating the people affected the violence in the Deep South. In 2006, the Deep South Watch Coordination Center discovered since the violence starting in 2004, there had been some 310 widows affected by the violence. Because of the psychological and mental illness and economic hardship these women are faced. The center empowers and encourages them and learns to help them sustainable (South Coordination Center, 2012) and the Center has also been working with children who affected by the violence, specifically in Pattani province and in 2008, it provides rehabilitation for children and collaborative with the Mental Health and assist 72 children and Dr. Guning Metta, the Deep South Coordination Center views that. In the past, the Deep South Coordination Center was a recipient of other people's assistance, but now it wishes to focus on helping others.

3. Center Health Care The hospital is the big role for assisting and rehabilitating people affected the violence and Dr. Hasuwannakit Supat, the Director of Chana Hospital Songkla Province indicated that: Over the next five years, we need to create high quality rehabilitation services for those people impacted by the violence" Hospitals have admitted a high number of

patients from the Deep South of Thailand or due to the increase in violence over the past five years. Unfortunately, the hospital workers are faced with addressing the needs of numerous patients, resulting in a reduction in the quality of care hospital patients. Though it is critical that patients receive better care so that they have new opportunities in life, the proper care and treatment required for this to happen is seldom provided. As the present, the hospitals must have the priority treating a large number of patients. While many patients may receive financial compensation for their injuries, very little moral support is provided because of this stress on treating a high number of patients. Over the next five years, it is necessary to improve the quality of treatment for patients, and this should be provided under the supervision of the government. Financial support may be support by the various sectors and government agencies that are involved with improving treatment. Meanwhile, more local psychologists should be employed to offer assistance and support to those undergoing emotional trauma (South Coordination Center, 2012).

The Women Role in Peace Process

They heal the affected victim which have not been counted in government criteria, heal and support the communities located in the Red Zone areas, empower the victims to be the victors, establish the "group" which members can do self- support to each other and educate the victors know how to access the support provided by the government.

Research Objective

To investigate the women role who affected the violent situation in the Deep South Provide the guideline for the government to empower the women role in violent situation in the Deep South.

Methodology

The research is done through qualitative approaches to collect data: through extensive interviews, casual conversation, formal and informal observations. There are in-depth portraits of two religious leaders, three civil society informants and five women leaders from four districts: Tak Bai district in Narathiwat province, Panareh district Muang district in Pattani province and Muang district in Yala province. Those situations are frequently ocurring the violence dramatically would however provide and support much fuller access to their views across arrange of the issues of problem. A total of semi-structure interviews with open-ended questions were conducted for the purpose of study in 2021. All interviewers were audio tape-recorded and informal conservations. In this study, the data were gathered to learn of each case. After that, the data obtained from this case were analyzed.

Result

The civil society viewed that Muslim Association proposed the justice in the Deep South and the women were the big roles to empower the women affected the violent situation and they negotiated with the military and the government to stop the violent situation.

The religious leaders viewed that the women were mothers, they were strong and they looked after the orphans, empower, rehabilitate the orphans, the women affected the violent situation and educate themselves. They had the big role to assist, protect and advocate their children, their family and women affected the violent situation. They were strong, stood on their feet and they must negotiate with the military and the government to stop the violent situation forever.

The women leaders viewed the women affected the violent situation,it must have the power to rise up and fight up the problem with themselves and advocate their Rights and the Women Role are very important to negotiate with the military and propose the problem to the government.

Recommendation

The government must stop the violence situation and construct the reconciliation sustainable.

- It should have the scholarship for students, specifically Muslim Youth.
- The community must construct the surveillance in their community.
- It must have Health Care for the widows and the orphans.
- The role of family and family members must be strengthened because they must empower the widows to stand with themselves and take care the orphans.
- It should construct the activities for rehabilitate the widows.
- It should have Home visit and empower the widows and the orphans frequently.
- It must respect the Human Rights for every target groups.
- It should have media Language for people.
- Give the trust to the women those advocate the children and women in the violent situation.
- Don't arrest the women who advocate themselves, their family and the society.

Keywords: The women role, the violent situation, the deep south.

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A RESEARCH ON THE PROBLEMS FACED BY SYRIAN FEMALE STUDENTS CONTINUING ACADEMIC EDUCATION AT FIRAT UNIVERSITY-THE CASE OF FIRAT UNIVERSITY

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Migration waves occurring worldwide can have serious negative consequences for receiving countries, sending countries and migrants themselves. However, the necessity for migrants to continue their lives despite adverse conditions makes it imperative to establish social, economic and legal regulations regarding migrants.

The focus of this study is Syrian female students who have been forced to migrate to Turkey as a result of the Syrian civil war and Middle East conflicts. The study examines the presence of women who may face disadvantages for various reasons within the realm of education due to their immigrant identity. The research centers on Syrian female students persevering in their academic pursuits at Firat University despite challenges and aims to identify and address the issues they encounter. Within this research, the negative aspects experienced in migration, immigrant concepts, education, language, social, economic and health aspects are examined under cause-and-effect relationships, delving into the detrimental effects of migration on Syrian female students. The study population consists of Syrian female students pursuing academic education at Firat University in Elazig between 2022 and 2023. The sample includes 15 Syrian female students selected purposefully and randomly. This qualitative research employs in-depth interviews as the data collection tool and a semi-structured interview form is used to obtain data.

The inclusion criteria for the research encompass Syrian students who commenced their academic education at Firat University after 2021, identifying as female and actively continuing their education during the 2022-2023 academic year. No restrictions apply regarding faculties, departments or classes. Interviews are conducted with individuals who align with the research objectives and willingly participate. Before data collection, ethical approval will be obtained from Firat University Social and Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee to reach approximately 15 Syrian female students. In order to address potential language barriers with Syrian female students, interviews will be conducted with the assistance of an interpreter proficient in both Arabic and Turkish.

As a result, Syrian female students at Firat University have experienced various challenges, including social exclusion, economic and cultural issues, as well as problems stemming from their gender. However, upon analyzing the interviews, it has been determined that Syrian female students largely refrain from engaging in dialogue with male students, with a substantial 70% avoiding such interactions. Additionally, these Syrian female students tend to avoid communicating with their male peers due to the strong presence of gender discrimination in Syrian society, which has significant social and cultural influences. Furthermore, 10% of the interviewed Syrian female students have had negative experiences related to this matter.

Keywords: Immigrant, Syrian Student, Syrian female student Social harmony, social problems.

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EMPOWERMENT OF MARGINALISED WOMEN IN RURAL INDIA: AN EXPERIMENT WITH A DEVELOPMENTAL MODEL

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Introduction

A Triadic Development Model forms the core theme of this paper, which attempts to deal with the success of the model with respect to women's empowerment and their participation in community development activities. In India, Self-Help Group (SHG), Microfinance (MF) and Microenterprise (ME) together constitute this strategic development model which addresses the empowerment of a large section of marginalised rural women mostly from Backward and Most Backward Castes and Scheduled Castes. This model has been applied to those women to empower them, thereby promoting community development through them. Initially it aims to mitigate the effects of extreme poverty in rural communities and eventually alleviate poverty altogether in a phased manner.

In India, microfinance through women SHGs mainly focuses on collective enterprises for income generation based on their traditional skills. The SHG, which seems to be the nucleus of Ghandhian social philosophy, is rooted in his idea of cooperatives. His approach to cooperatives (1963) still holds good to improve the village economy of some developing countries and make the villagers self-sufficient.

SHG as a Social Capital and a Capability Facilitator

Putnam (2001, 2002) observes that 'social capital' is a 'collective' that refers to relationships among individuals, close social relationship-networks, strong civil organisations and also the norms of reciprocity, solidarity and credibility that crop up from these organisations. Since these features as pointed out by him are reflected in the SHG, it is in a way a social capital, which promotes not only women's empowerment but also facilitates their participation in community development activities.

Amartya Sen's (1993) 'capability approach' is also a probable theory to answer to the inclusion of marginalised groups. The capability refers to freedom of a person to function according to his choice. This approach aims to enhance people's well-being by expanding their capabilities connected to their freedom of choice. It offers a way of thinking and analysing issues in the light of people's capabilities. It mainly emphases two things: freedom to accomplish and

capability to perform. In this context, the SHG would facilitate its members to exercise their freedom in performing collective activities and enhance their capabilities while doing so.

Literature Review

The review of some relevant studies shows t success stories of this model. Leach and Shashikala (2002) report that the microcredit facilities support women in rural India to start small enterprises to accomplish economic empowerment. Chandrasekhara Rao and Galab (2003) disclose that a successful paradigm shift from wage employment to self-employment of SHG women through microfinance has not only helped them reduce their financial dependency on moneylenders but also enabled them to mitigate the intensity of their poverty. Moyle, Dollard and Biswas (2006) observe that the SHG members have achieved status mobility besides gaining self-confidence, self-esteem and ability to express their views. A study by Anitha and Revenkar (2007) find that the SHGs in India have not only improved the economic status of women, but also brought about changes in their social status. Their collective participation in community development activities has given them self-confidence to go out of home to work for their family livelihood. In support of this, Sujata (2010) states that this trend has increased women's aspiration for employment. It has also resisted the oppressions imposed on them by their family members and communities as well. Kavita and Rasmeet (2016) and Rejoice (2018) present that, in India, many women in SHGs have been empowered significantly in socio-economic sphere through microfinance. Karunanthi's study (2013, 2017) deals with the SHG Model for economic and community development in India through collectivities and also provides an answer to the question of transferability of the model to the Roma women in Hungary in order to make them accomplish similar results.

Conclusion

It is evident that all these studies have confirmed the efficacy of the model in empowering the marginalised women in SHGs. Women with their growing economic power now take part in various activities within and outside their households. They are considered as a major force in decision making in the issues ranging from children's education to expenditure to be incurred on household or social functions. It has positive impact upon their self confidence, their abilities to face problems, control over resources, decision making in their families and groups and participation in community development activities. They are able to get community development work done easily through government authorities. They are also able to save and spent more for their children's education and for domestic purposes. The most important change is that they are

independent; they are not depending on their earning family members for money. Consequently they are empowered economically and socially.

This empowerment has enabled women to express their views freely in meetings at group level as well as community level. As a result, their communication skill has been improved remarkably. This has increased their contacts with government officers and social workers of local NGOs while visiting their villages to implement welfare programs. This has boosted their self-confidence and self-esteem and facilitated their participation in community development activities. Their interest in contesting for leadership positions in local government shows their inclination to gain political empowerment. Moreover, the SHG has provided them a common platform to discuss and solve their individual as well as community problems. It is thus understood that this development model has proved to be an effective strategic measure to empower marginalised women in rural India by promoting their entrepreneurial activities.

Keywords: Self-Help Group, microfinance, microenterprise, women empowerment.

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GENDER-DIFFERENTIAL ASSOCIATION BETWEEN CHILD MALTREATMENT AND PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR AMONG CHINESE ADOLESCENTS

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Background

Child maltreatment is the abuse and neglect, any act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker that presents an imminent risk of physical or emotional harm and exploitation of children under 18 years of age (Cicchetti & Carlson, 1989; World Health Organization, 2022). It embodies the parent–child relationship quality and is thus postulated to be an antecedent of children's social development. Although the negative physical and psychological consequences of maltreatment have been widely investigated (Liveri *et al.,* 2023), the effects on positive dimensions-such as meaning in life, resilience and prosocial behaviour-are not fully explored.

Prosocial behavior is part of the positive social development dimensions of human beings, which has been used to designate helping, sharing, comforting and other intentional and voluntary positive behaviors for which the motive is unspecified and unknown (Eisenberg, 1982). Resilience and meaning in life are significant contributors to adolescents' psychological well-being and mental health (Skalski *et al.*, 2022), which constitute a positive feedback spiral with the psycho-social concept of prosocial behavior (Erreygers *et al*., 2018; Hui, 2022). However, considerable research focuses on how meaning in life and resilience are cultivated, but ignores how these fail to develop or are deprived.

Objective

Due to the controversies over the effects of child maltreatment and the gaps in the mechanisms of impact, this study is targeted to examine the relationship between child maltreatment and prosocial behavior with a parallel moderated mediation model that incorporates meaning in life and resilience as hypothesized mediators. In addition, various studies have demonstrated that gender difference is related to the incidence of child maltreatment and prosocial behavior (Gomis-Pomares & Villanueva, 2020), so gender is assumed to moderate the whole model.

Methods

In this study, 659 Chinese adolescents were recruited as a sample in Huai'an, Jiangsu Province of China, using a multi-stage cluster random sampling method. Of the study sample, 46.4% were male adolescents (N=306) and 53.6% were female adolescents (N=353). These adolescents were between 12 and 18 years old (M=15.05, SD=1.576), adopting the anonymous, self-report and validated surveys. In the preliminary analyses, the Pearson correlation coefficient method was used to test the correlation between four main variables. Then, confirmatory factor analysis was adopted to test the measurement model and structural equation modeling (SEM) via Amos 26.0 was utilized to verify the theoretical model.

Results

The findings of this study show that child maltreatment has no direct effect on prosocial behavior while meaning in life and resilience fully mediated the relationship between maltreatment and prosocial behavior.

To be specific, children who suffer from maltreatment are more likely to have a lower level of meaning in life and resilience, and furthermore, have less tendency to behave prosocially than their peers. The negative link between maltreatment and meaning in life is consistent with other empirical studies (Pfund *et al*., 2020; Rose *et al*., 2023), which can be explained by attachment theory, personality developmental theory and the alteration of children's brain functioning. The positive link between meaning in life and prosocial behavior is in line with self-determination theory and previous empirical studies (Law & Shek, 2009) as well.

Child abuse and neglect also decrease resilience, which in turn inhibits prosocial behavior. For one thing, in accordance with the other studies (Boullion *et al*., 2021; Kairyte *et al*., 2023), maltreated children show a low rate of resilience. The possible explanations are that adolescents who experience abuse tend to be exposed to dangerous and risk environments and possess fewer protective factors. For another, resilience is positively related to altruism and helpfulness, which is in accordance to related theories and previous studies (Esparza-Reig *et al*., 2022; Martí-Vilar *et al*., 2022). The metatheory of resilience and resiliency proposed by Richardso (2002) and a perspective from psycho-biological theory can offer the possible explanatory framework.

However, the first hypothesis in the study is surprisingly unsupported, as the results show that child maltreatment has no significant direct effect on prosocial behavior. It is possibly due to the need for potential proximal factors to generate effects, such as empathy, gratitude, and self-compassion (Chen *et al*., 2023; Lim & DeSteno, 2020) that have been demonstrated to mediate such relationship. As discussed earlier, the current study also reveals that meaning in life and resilience are the mediators between maltreatment and prosocial behavior.

Last but not least, the pathways from maltreatment to meaning in life revealed that the moderating effect was stronger for females while that to prosocial behavior showed a mild effect on males but not on females. For one thing, the former finding is consistent with previous findings that their mental health is more sensitive to abuse and neglect relative to males (Tolin & Foa, 2006). For another, the pathway from meaning in life to prosocial behavior shows a mild effect on males but not on females may because women are more likely than men to be concerned about the well-being of others and to be more empathetic and altruistically inclined (Kuhnert *et al.*, 2017). Thus, a reduced sense of meaning in life does not affect the prosociality of females.

Conclusion

Child maltreatment is an important public health issue with far-reaching effects on children's physical, psychological and social development. This study found that among Chinese adolescents, maltreatment reduces resilience and meaning in life and consequently, children have low likelihood to behave prosocially. Thus, the findings provide a more proximal explanation for the effect of maltreatment on prosocial behavior, expanding knowledge of literature in the area of child abuse and neglect. From a practical point of view, findings also provide empirical evidence from mainland China to shift the patterns of interventions from reducing and overcoming undesirable symptoms to enhancing positive factors to facilitate adolescents' social development and health despite early traumas.

Keywords: Child maltreatment, prosocial behavior, meaning in life, resilience.

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