

*Using A Blueprint for Character Development for Evolution (ABCDE) to Build Relationships Through Talk to Mobilise Attachment Theory to Develop Children's Working Mental Models for Good Choices that Regulate Continued Good Lives* \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting Children Through the Four Phases of Attachment Theory and Their Psychomotor Development Required To Self-Regulate and Determine their Homeostasis (continued life) with Good Faculty of Judgement

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## Abstract

This study is a Ground Work Case in Albania which aims to reveal how adults talking with children can build relationships between the adult and the children to support the children's appropriate development through the four phases of Bowlby's attachment theory. If trauma is experienced which is not the fault of the child or the preferred caregiver, the child can become stuck and unable to develop the mental models required to become self-determining and live a good life with the conditions for homeostasis (continued life) with good faculty of judgement. This has implications for adults who may have experience trauma, through no fault of their own, who have not passed through the phases of attachment theory, and are expected to support children through the phases of attachment theory with no working mental model of what that looks like. A groundwork case was conducted in a city in Albania with kindergarten staff and revealed i) the curriculum of kindergarten staff's qualification did include attachment theory, ii) kindergarten staff were unaware of attachment theory. Findings reveal the Covid pandemic 19 has caused trauma that is preventing children from passing through the phases of attachment theory leading to poor working mental models and poor mental health. A Blueprint for Character Development for Evolution (ABCDE) is presented as an incremental model to enable staff, students and parents to evaluate progress through the phases of attachment theory and moving from fear to good faculty of judgement required for self-determining homeostasis.

*Key words: relationship, attachment, kindergarten, ABCDE approach.*

## Introduction

Attachment and relationship give positive impact to outcomes in pupils. It is necessary to make an investigation to know and evidence how and in what ways theories of what works from the past are being practiced in Albania now and how this knowledge informs what needs to be done for future in Covid-19 Recovery. Caring for children has a special focus, especially at an early age. This caring is traditional and general and is based on good connections between parents and caregivers of children underpinning healthy growth to adolescence and children building narratives as discussed by Beutner (2022) in this journal which influenced an imagined self. The imagined self can identify, with the support of adults, the kinds of key performance indicators they need to meet that can be expressed as

Competences or Intended Learning Outcomes. As Beutner (2022) discusses in this journal, we build on the ideas that lower order thinking focusing on learning facts of disciplinary knowledge to pass tests is important, but it is the higher order thinking that requires problem solving skills and good faculty of judgement that is crucial. These higher order thinking skills are reliant on good connections between the self and the other. For children the caring relationships between their care givers is vital. Evidence reveals that since the 1970s, across the globe, developing relationships, networks and higher order thinking skills are not part of education policy (Taysum et al 2021;2014;2017;2020), and not part of institutional education and awareness, and self-reflection (Beutner, 2022; Schön,1983).

In the early years children seek care from a responsive and sensitive adult which Bowlby (1969; 1980) identifies as offering them protection and security. Feeling safe is the bottom rung of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 2017) and feeling safe is the foundation for development of growth with the absence of fear (Taysum et al, 2020). Spruit et al (2019) argue that early attachments, or relationships with caregivers provide the child's grammar of thinking for their expectations about the self, the world and others. Whilst these expectations are generalized, they provide powerful blueprints for the development of the child. As Beutner (2022) in this journal identifies the internal working model as a blueprint can determine their educational achievement and their self-awareness that empowers children to build narratives of their imagined self and their duty bound self, or reduces their narratives to fear and learned helplessness (Taysum, 2020). Spruit et al (2019) continue that the caregiver who offers consistently sensitive responses to the child's proximity seeking behaviour provides a safe foundation from which the child's environment can be explored. At the other end of the continuum, caregivers who are inconsistently sensitive or frighten the child demonstrating no sensitivity puts the child at risk of developing insecure attachment relationships.

Ainsworth et al.1978; Main and Solomon, 1990) identify that children are at great risk if they do not receive consistently sensitive responses. Rajkumar (2020) agrees with this identifying that anxiety and depression are the most common responses to separation from attachment figures which correlate with the most common responses to the lock downs, lifelong learning, school and early years settings closures leading to isolation during Covid-19. Rajkumar (2020) identifies that attachment is not triggered only by separation from attachment figures, but also experienced by children and adults in emergency situations including hunger, exhaustion, pain, illness and angst personally and in the environment that are all associated with Covid 19 and its pragmatic consequences. Attachment anxiety that can be triggered can be related to those seen as 'outsiders' and a threat. Attachment insecurity can cause marginalisation of the outsiders and this distancing of the outsiders has been linked to prejudice. Rajkumar (2020) affirms that attachment

security reduces the negative evaluations of the 'outsiders' (Mikulincer & Shaver 2001, Carnelley & Boag 2019). Attachment security offers authentic foundations on which to build regimes of social inclusion for peace and prosperity for all. Dalal (2006) identifies how crucial attachment security is to building democracies where all can fully and freely participate in the social contract (Taysum, 2020). Kurth (2014) develops this idea and identifies that political ideologies hallmarked by extremist attitudes to outsiders can, at their foundations, be based on insecure attachments. Evidence reveals the Covid-19 pandemic has seen xenophobia and stigmatization rise in the global arena (Marcinko et al. 2020). Rajkumar (2020) identifies this finding of fact makes the importance of attachment security in the development of psychologies of trust within and between communities absolutely critical.

Xiao et al. (2020) found that people with higher levels of trust, and a sense of belonging with high quality relationships, developed from a base of good attachments with others had an absence of fear. The trust enabled them to participate in their community and articulate what their needs were, and they knew how to get their needs met during the horrific challenges Covid 19 presented.

There were a large number of children who lack connections and relationships from an early age. This has consequences for their wellbeing in adolescence as well as negatively impacting their learning outcomes. Identifying knowledge of relationship theory in children's caregivers would help to determine future measures. Having identified how important attachment theory is in education policy we need to describe and deepen understandings of attachment theory.

## **Attachment theory**

Attachment is an emotional bond with another person. Bowlby (1969) believed early years children formed bonds with their caregivers and these have a tremendous impact that continues throughout life. He suggested that attachment also serves to keep the infant close to the mother, thus improving the child's chances of survival. Attachment is characterized by specific behaviours in children, such as seeking proximity to the attachment figure when upset or threatened (Bowlby, 1969). Whilst working with children behaviour difficulties in the 1930s, psychologist John Bowlby noticed that these children had trouble forming close relationships, or attachments with others. He looked into the children's family histories and noticed that many of them had endured disruptions in their home lives at an early age. Bowlby came to the conclusion that the early emotional bond established between a parent and their child is key to healthy development. As a result, challenges to that bond could have consequences that impact a child throughout their lifetime.

Bowlby delved into a number of perspectives to develop his ideas, including psychodynamic theory, cognitive and developmental psychology, and ethology (the science of human and animal behaviour within the context of evolution).

Key work in this area was with Harlow (1965) who put baby monkeys into isolation from birth so they had no contact with other monkeys or each others. Some were kept in this isolation for one year, some for 9 months, some for 6 months and some for 3 months. Harlow observed they behaved bizarrely such as rocking compulsively and clutching their own bodies. He then put the monkeys that experienced isolation with other monkeys and observed the monkeys previously in isolation were scared of other monkeys and then were violent towards them. They were unable to socially interact with the other monkeys and unable to communicate. The other monkeys bullied the previously isolated monkeys. The previously isolated monkeys self harmed, bit and scratched themselves and tore their hair out. Harlow also created fear in female monkeys who became so neurotic that when they had babies of their own they smashed their babies faces on the floor and rubbed them back and forth. Harlow found that monkeys in isolation for three months could recover but monkeys in isolation for one year never recovered. Bowlby called never forming an attachment bond or relationship privation and this privation was focused on emotional needs being met in the affective domain and not because the caregiver fed the baby. This is because Harlow's monkeys were always fed.

Harlow's work informed Bowlby's work on attachment theory and challenged the widely held belief at the time that babies were attached to their caregivers because the caregiver fed them. Bowlby's empirical research moved beyond this ideological behaviourist perspective that was a sweeping generalised statement and identified that human development needed to be described and understood as 'Evolution'. Bowlby's (1969) research revealed babies survived throughout much of human history, from before the time of Plato, by ensuring they stayed in close proximity to adult caregivers. Children's attachment behaviours evolved to make sure the child could successfully remain under the protection of their caregivers and be safe.

Bowlby specified four phases during which children develop attachment to their caretakers.

## **Phase 1: Birth to 3 Months**

At this time Bowlby (1969) identifies babies seek proximity from an adult caregiver. In these first three months Bowlby's evidence suggests that babies cannot distinguish between caregivers, but do respond to human faces, showing a preference for them

along with human voices. A baby will smile at human faces and Bowlby suggested this is social smiling that increases the chances of the caregiver responding sensitively that will promote attachment and positively affirm social smiling and further proximity and further attachment. Behaviours for attachment babies at this age demonstrate is babbling, crying, grasping and sucking that underpin further proximity and promote the caregiver's emotional investment in the baby that further promotes bonding. This sets the foundations for the next phase

## **Phase 2: From 3 to 6 Months**

At this phase babies begin to distinguish between people and demonstrate their behaviours for attachment for their preferred caregivers which are normally two or three people. They are highly likely to just stare at a stranger and normally only their preferred humans/caregivers can comfort them if they cry. Bowlby (1969) considered the preferred caregiver would be the baby's mother but it is the caregiver who responded sensitively and most successfully to the baby that positively affirmed the bond of attachment leading to more positive interactions with the baby.

## **Phase 3: From 6 Months to 3 Years**

The first two phases set the foundations for the third phase of proximity seeking which defines proper attachment (Bowlby, 1969). Bretherton (1985) identifies that the proximity seeking may be about physiological regulation as the infant seeks to maintain homeostasis<sup>3</sup>. Homeostasis is sustaining human life. Hofer (1984) found that in lower animals 'pre-attached organisms' may emerge from the mother providing physiological regulation for life, or homeostasis. From the perspective of the organism involved in the behaviours proximity seeking represents a feeling of security when close to the caregiver. In the very young, "pre-attached" organisms' feelings of security are optimised by the mother providing biological regulation, or homeostasis, or the conditions for sustainable life. Bowlby (1973) suggested that attachment theory saw the close proximity between the infant and the preferred caregiver as both an inner ring of proximity that sustains physiological homeostasis and an 'outer ring' which sustained life systems between the infant and the

<sup>3</sup> Homeostasis is an interesting concept that Taysum (2022) explores in this issue of the Journal of Groundwork Cases and Faculty of Judgement, when theorising relationships between Middle Management and a Senior Management Team in a primary school related to the laws of physics. In the paper Bowlby's attachment theory and humanity's evolution to sustain life in homeostasis within human relationships and in relationship with the environment, or destroy it through rapid degradation of the moral fabric to create 'de-stasis' that liberates the world from homeostasis leading to extinction is examined.

environment. Hofer suggested Bowlby's concept of the inner ring was the outer ring too. Pipp and Harmon (1987) identity at about 6 months, babies' preference for a specific individual becomes more intense, and when that individual leaves the room, the infants will have separation anxiety. When babies start to self-propel through crawling their independence influences their sensorimotor. This is where they sense something with their five senses and respond with action. If a baby senses their preferred caregiver has left the room, they will respond with the act of trying to follow their preferred caregiver to sustain the close proximity with the other. At this time, when reunited, the baby will greet the preferred caregiver with joy. At about seven or eight months old babies will start to fear strangers. In sensorimotor development at this age when a baby senses a stranger they will respond with the act of caution, avoidance or crying. Bowlby (1969) suggests by the time babies are a year old, they will have developed a grammar of thinking, or mental models of their preferred caregiver.

Pipp and Harmon (1987) suggest internal working models are defined as dynamic representations of the relationships between the infant and their caregivers, including their preferred caregiver. Their arguments agree with those of Bowlby (1969;1973; 1980; Bretherton, 1985; Main et al, 1985). The most basic mental model may concern homeostasis regulation and the infant is likely to develop an understanding that the universe does not cause harm and disruptions are calmly corrected. In human crises such as humans experiencing war, or becoming a refugee (Arar, 2020), the primary caregiver may not be able to mitigate for the disruption to the homeostatic regulations that sustains life. The impact of the primary caregiver not being able to mitigate for disruptions to the infant's physiological homeostatic regulation required for life, may cause trauma to both infant and caregiver. This trauma may impact the infant's and indeed the mother's internal working model, or schema, or grammar of thinking for a long time, and possibly for life. Those humans not experiencing trauma out of their control at this critical time of developing proximity attachments, are highly likely to build fully functional attachments with significant caregivers, develop highly evolved mental schemas and be highly successful building relationships that perpetuate trust will be positively affirmed as the senses respond appropriately with acts using sensorimotor systems at a subconscious level and at a conscious level. For those who have damaged physiological inner and environmental outer rings of attachment bonds due to trauma beyond their control and beyond the control of the caregiver, require healing by taking the human back to the time of the trauma through reflection and carefully and slowly exploring the damaged rings of homeostasis and relayering healthy rings of homeostasis. This healing needs to be purposeful and adults who are caregivers of infants need to understand the psychologies of trust regarding attachment theory here presented, so that they can be part of the healing process.



Clearly this will take humility and a deep appreciation that the adult caregiver for the child who has experienced the disruption to their homeostasis regulation by their preferred caregiver, did not experience such trauma. The kinds of compassion and empathy required may not be valued by policy makers, particularly those that seek to create trauma and crises in the rings of physiological and environmental homeostasis regulation, and seek to destroy the building of attachments and trust in organisations. This creation of fear and misery by the elite to prevent their elite status from being threatened by social mobility and democracy is explored in this issue of the Journal of Groundwork Cases and Faculty of Judgement by Taysum (2022) and explored in Taysum (2020).

#### **Phase 4: From 3 Years Until Childhood Ends**

The fourth stage of attachment focuses on the transition from immaturity to maturity and therefore examines the impact of attachment theory on people after childhood. Bowlby (1969) identified that at around 3 years old, children begin to recognise their caregivers have their own agendas and are not present purely to serve their needs. At this stage with healthy proximity bonds of attachment the child will be less concerned when the caregiver leaves for a period of time. Of interest at this fourth phase is the trajectory from being dependent on the primary caregiver for external physiological and environmental homeostasis regulation, to becoming self-determining in making good decision with good faculty of judgement about personal homeostasis regulation. Thus a young person might benefit from having a trajectory of human development that focuses on the stages required to move from fear of something new and new people, to problem solving in solidarity with others. Here making judgements about the self, using psychologies of trust with attachment theory, can be considered in relationship with the other drawing on philosophies of trust and the sensorimotor development that allows an individual to make good decisions about intentions and acts that consider the perspectives of the self and the other that do no harm. Thus beginning to trust the self and develop towards self-determination requires a healthy and appropriate shift from external homeostasis regulation for life, to internal homeostasis regulation for life that considers the needs of the self and the needs of the other using both psychologies of trust and philosophies of trust.

Here we draw on Imam and Taysum's paper in this Journal of Groundwork Cases and Faculty of Judgement that identifies that in systems thinking there must be moral inquiries into the ethical frameworks of the manifestos of those who seek election to represent the body of the whole of the people and to govern them and serve their best interests.



Having an awareness of the psychologies, philosophies and ethics of trust is explored in the handbook for the Horizon European Bid; Education Policy as a Road Map to Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The bid is developed by an international consortium. Members of the Consortium are on the editorial board of this journal and have authored papers in this special edition Journal of Groundwork Cases and Faculty of Judgement. The focus of the bid is 'Democracy in Education' and proposes the application of A Blueprint for Character Development for Evolution (ABCDE) as a progressive incremental model that teachers, students, parents, and communities can use to chart their evolution from fear of the other, to full and free participation in a social contract with good faculty of judgement. ABCDE offers interaction in human development and steers a pathway to achieving the sustainable development goals. On this path, the common people use ABCDE to gain the thinking tools they need to elect manifestos and a governance system responsible for implementing the manifestos in service to the people. The manifestos deliver democratic societies that protect homeostasis regulation by assuring health, economic and social wellbeing for all with a deep understanding of and for our grassroots up need and realisation of psychologies, philosophies and ethics of trust.

Rose and Parker (2014) identify traumas to the attachment bonds and where children do not successfully pass through the phases of attachment theory are demonstrated in the following behaviours of children:

- Unfocussed
- Disruptive
- Controlling
- Withdrawn
- Destructive

These children tend to underachieve in school and are often punished and even excluded. Little that schools do seems to work. As Freud (1955) states:

So long as we trace the development from its final outcome backwards, the chain of events appears continuous, and we feel we have gained an insight which is completely satisfactory or even exhaustive. But if we proceed in the reverse way, if we start from the premises inferred from the analysis and try to follow these up to the final results, then we no longer get the impression of an inevitable sequence of events which could not have otherwise been determined, (p. 167)

It is necessary to examine the predicates for trauma that impact healthy development of internal working models associated with close proximal bonds

of affection between infant and preferred caregiver that provides homeostasis regulation by satisfying the infant's inner physiological and outer environmental rings. Predicates for trauma that will require mitigation/healing include:

- Poverty
- War
- Parental mental health difficulties.
- Exposure to neglect, domestic violence or other forms of abuse.
- Alcohol/drugs taking during pregnancy
- Multiple home and school placements
- Premature birth
- Abandonment
- Family bereavement

Vulnerable groups experiencing these traumas include:

- Children in areas of social and economic deprivation
- Refugees
- Children in care
- Adopted children whose early experiences of trauma continue to affect their lives
- Disabled children
- Children with medical conditions or illness
- Children who have moved home frequently during the early years e.g. forces families
- Refugees/children who have been traumatised by death particularly from the horrors of Covid 19.

As a result, these children may not fulfil their potential as adults, either in employment or in relationships. They may seek instant gratification by using or exploiting people (Bertaux and Bertaux Waime, 1981) to get their basic needs met as adults. Arguably this is because their working mental schemas, or working models have not developed since the trauma and their sensorimotor system is stuck in crisis with a nagging belief that their homeostasis regulation is compromised. This leads to a total break down in trust in others, the environment and even in themselves. Thinking about Harlow's monkeys discussed above, those who experienced long term isolation, when introduced to others were frightened, then aggressive and began to self harm. Preferred caregivers who experienced this kind of trauma, including periods of isolation harmed their babies/infants. The impact of the damage to the two rings of close proximal development due

to trauma is due to damaged bonds of attachment in phases 1, 2 and 3 above. Further, those whose mental models are stuck at the time of the trauma that prevents them passing through the necessary phases of attachment required for becoming self-determining in sustaining their homeostasis regulation do not have the subconscious or conscious sensorimotor development for being caregivers for others. Worse, they may even be elected to govern the body of the common people and will use the people they have been elected to serve, to serve their own needs and have their own needs met because they do not recognise the value of others. Their ego is controlling all their sensorimotor subconscious and conscious behaviours that is stuck in phase 1 of seeking safety from a preferred caregiver. They have not had their own value or self worth affirmed because they did not experience safety and homeostasis regulation by another they were dependent on.

A programme of healing is necessary for people who may not have developed their mental models, or working models that develop because trauma prevented their incremental progress that can be charted through the four phases of Bowlby's (1969) attachment theory. The programme of healing may need to examine the trauma that impacted their personal growth of mental models, or grammar of thinking, with a clear understanding that the trauma was out of their control. The programme of healing needs to empower the traumatised to renew their mental models and move past the blockage caused by the trauma. The programme can support the traumatised to recognise that the world can be a dangerous place that causes intense fear. With successful development of faculty of judgement using a progressive tool to evaluate character development such as A Blueprint for Character Development for Evolution (ABCDE) safe choices and good decisions can be applied and reflected on, leading to good self-regulation of homeostasis in balance with the homeostasis of the body of the common whole in a social contract (Kant, 1785; Taysum, 2020). The programme of healing can help people recognise the beauty in the world and recognise that many are doing their best, but they do not have the psychologies, philosophies and ethics of trust they need to elect manifestos for democracy in education and elect governments who can implement the manifesto. This can be the paradigm shift required to develop the grass roots up Science with and for Society to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and eradicate poverty, war, and suffering. This is particularly important in the Covid-19 recovery.

Drawing on Imam and Taysum's (2022) paper in this issue of the Journal of Groundwork Cases and Faculty of Judgement it is important to understand how the child is feeling connected to Bowlby's theory and the development of the emotional, social functioning, psychomotor development, working models and priority attachment. Thus 'Talk' uses vocabulary to describe and understand thoughts and acts with a view to increasing a person's vocabulary empowers them

to describe and understand the pain of the self and the pain of the other. Using ABCDE allows teachers and students to Imam and Taysum (2022, p.227):

- A: Ask questions about how they are feeling and how this is affecting their relationships with others.
- B: Explore the best that has been thought and said about how feelings impact relationships with others using references and comparing and contrasting these different descriptions and understandings to develop terms of reference for how they might act in similar situations for a good outcome/happy ending.
- C: Develop methods in their contexts to test the new terms of reference they have developed at Stage B and collect data to understand how it develops Psychologies of Trust (Lindberg, 2021) Philosophies of Trust (Kant, 1785; Hobbes, 2010; Plato, 2017) and Ethics of Trust (Von Bertalanffy,1968) to address questions at Stage A.
- D: Use the psychologies of trust (evidence), philosophies of trust (logic) and ethics of trust (ethos) to develop knowledge to action change strategies and gain proof of concept to develop confidence in faculty of judgement attached to management and regulation of emotions for continued good life with happy endings.
- E: Identify principles in these knowledge to action change strategies that can be transferred to other problems and share these with grassroots up 'Science with and for Society' (SwafS) (Horizon Europe, 2020) databases.

Rose and Parker (2014) identify the school cannot replace dysfunctional or insecure attachments, that we have argued are caused by trauma such as bereavement or periods of isolation and so forth. The school can offer a safe environment supported by safeguarding policies and mobilising ABCDE with a focus on how the child/individual is feeling. The adult will need to be critically self reflective of their responses to the child drawing on Figure 1; A Continuum of Adults From Insensitive Responses to Children/Individuals to Sensitive Responses By Mobilising A Blueprint for Character Development For Evolution in Safe Spaces. Thus the adult can focus on the priority of building relationships based on trust with good quality talk hallmarked by what Imam and Taysum (2022, p.) call 'rich vocabulary-emotional life capital'. They can regulate their responses to give what Imam and Taysum (2022) call: 'consistently sensitive responses to children/individuals with healthy attachments provides their safe foundation for incremental progress to good faculty of judgement with A Blueprint for Character Development for Evolution ABCDE'. Thus safe spaces are created that develop psychologies of trust moving using ABCDE that shape the child's/individual's mental working

model. This is particularly important in light of Rose (2015) who identifies children who have experienced relationship trauma early in life have problems regulating inappropriate behaviour, being able to self-reflect which Beutner (2022) identifies is vital for living a good life, and have problems planning ahead and often seek instant gratification rather than delaying gratification. Further Clarke et al (2002) reveal in their research that attachment insecurity is associated with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Rose (2015, pp.) argues evidence reveals ‘an attachment aware’ approach that considers how to describe and understand the delicate nuances of education will benefit all class members. As children develop their mental models they can move through ABCDE to problem solving starting from asking questions.

Adults offering such a programme of healing will need patience, kindness, empathy, compassion and care and a deep understanding of psychologies, philosophies and ethics of trust that Empower Young Societal Innovators for Equity and Renewal in Democracy for Education. Those adults who enjoyed success in school may find those requiring such a programme of healing hard to engage and motivate because they do not share their experiences of trauma. A lack of understanding of the root causes of their students’ pain could be addressed if it was in taught in Initial Teacher Education courses that include a module on the psychology of education and children development with a focus on attachment theory and the other psychologies of trust explored in this issue of the journal.

Such learning can offer pre-service educators the chance to describe and understand their attachment-like relationship with their pupils, particularly with challenging and vulnerable pupils, in order to enhance learning opportunities for all.

In sum, nurturing adult attachments provide children with safe spaces to explore their own grammar of thinking and mental models that enable the child/individual to engage with others who are exploring their own working models. This is important in their classrooms where they are also exploring their environment as they explore their inner and outer rings (Bowlby, 1969; Bowlby 1980). Siegel (2012) identifies that Early care-giving has a long-lasting impact on development, the ability to learn, capacity to regulate emotions and form satisfying relationships. We have discussed above how describing and understanding attachment theory reveals the first phases of attachment may need to be revisited using ABCDE if the child has experienced trauma that has prevented development through each phase of the attachment theory.

The interaction between the teacher, the pupil and the learning task is a fluid dynamic whereby the task is a reflection of the teacher’s awareness and understanding of the pupil as identified by Beutner (2022) in this issue of the Journal of Groundwork Cases and Faculty of Judgement. In turn, the pupil is able

to seek reliable support from the teacher when challenged by the task. Each relates to the other in a way that fosters curiosity and supports the uncertainty that can be created by the challenges of ‘not knowing’ which is at the heart of all learning (Geddes 2005). Attachment relationships play an important role in supporting children developing their character and realising their potential (Colmer, Rutherford, & Murphy, 2011) and their passage through the phases of attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) influences both future physiological and mental wellbeing (McCain et al., 2007).

Taysum and Collins-Ayanlaja (2021) have developed a Model of Participation and Community Empowerment designed to recognise the different kinds of capital in the classroom and in a step by step process map how bridging cultures between the home and the classroom, and between parents, students and staff might be mobilised for levelling up evidenced by smooth transitions to middle class benefits. Considering attachment theory it is possible to identify there are different categories of parents.

1. Parents may be interested in learning about attachment theory, but do not get the chance.
2. Parents may be very interested in helping their children develop their mental models and develop dialogues as discussed by Beutner (2022) and Imam and Taysum (2022) in this issue of Journal of Groundwork Cases and Faculty of Judgement, but they do not know how to, and they are unaware of the impact of attachment theory on the role of talk in supporting children passing through the phases of attachment theory.
3. Parents may come from a legacy of social problems, such as domestic violence, war, migration, ethnic cleansing or marginalization from institutionalised racism, and may have never recovered from the traumas their ancestors suffered. Ancestors traumas prevented them passing through the phases of attachment theory, and unknowingly the ancestors passed on through psychomotor programming their trauma such as slavery, human trafficking and Violence, Uncertainty, Chaos and Ambiguity (VUCA) to their future generations. These generations, through no fault of their own are highly likely to also get stuck at a phase of attachment theory their ancestors got stuck at, even without experiencing the trauma directly of slavery, human trafficking and VUCA. This is because their ancestors’ trauma prevented them and any of their descendants having a mental model or grammar of thinking for what successfully passing through the phases of attachment theory looks like in this space. With no example of passing through phases of attachment theory, the ancestors suffered twice from their exploitation; first from being victims of the crime of human trafficking, being enslaved

and subject to VUCA and second by not being given access to an education that could empower them to tell their stories and reflect on their traumas and gain the powerful knowledge required to liberate themselves from the mental models that are preventing them becoming fully human (Pring, 2021). An education that focuses on the narrow subjects tested by PISA and does not examine the psychologies of trust related to attachment theory will condemn the victims of these traumas to being stuck in cycles that perpetuate social problems, such as domestic violence, war, migration, ethnic cleansing or marginalization from institutionalised racism or paternalism.

From this review of the literature we can see that adults, who have suffered trauma through no fault of their own, are stuck at the phase of attachment theory of a young child in their psychomotor subconscious and conscious mental models. Interesting this aligns to what Plato (2017) some 2000 years ago in *Timaeus* in p. 16376 states: ‘You Hellenes are never anything but children, and there is not an old man among you.’ This may be because the homeostasis regulation is stuck at the fear of others and the environment leading to the ego seeking immediate satiation that is incompatible with the conditions required for a democratic society with a fully participative social contract. The following questions emerge from the literature review to be addressed by the Albanian Groundwork Case:

1. How and in what ways do curriculum qualifications for kindergarten staff working with young children (0-2 years) include Intended Learning Outcomes to describe, understand and apply attachment theory for child development?
2. How and in what ways do kindergarten staff working with young children (0-2 years) describe, understand and apply attachment theory to build relationships through talk to develop children’s working mental models to live good lives?
3. How can the findings be theorised?

## Stage C Methods

The Groundwork case is from Albania and took a mixed methods approach gathering both qualitative and quantitative methods to generate grassroot data. The data included secondary data focusing on the criteria for hiring kindergarten educators and the level of education they required to be hired and their classification of criteria. The data was analysed using documentary analysis.



Online questionnaires were distributed to a population of 46,000 teachers from across Albania. The sample size was 863 and the response rate was 78% the quantitative data focused on participants' understanding of attachment theory.

Qualitative data was collected by focus groups from three kindergartens from a total of thirty kindergartens in the City of Tirana, Albania.

Some research questions are answered by studying the literature and previous experiences of educational institutions.

The data collected through the questionnaires aim to obtain the basic data related to the knowledge that kindergarten and kindergarten educators have as teachers in general about the theory of connection and the practices applied for establishing relationships with children. the questionnaire is developed online with networks of different educators and teachers. The data collected through focus groups are more specific and are realized in the staff of the three kindergartens separately in the City of Tirana. out of 30 kindergartens, three kindergartens are selected by lot in which three focus groups are held separately in each educational institution. This is the base and lower level that applied the knowledge and care for children.

All participants gave informed consent, had the right to withdraw from the research to the point of publication and were assured anonymity and confidentiality (British Educational Research Association, 2018).

## **Stage D Findings and discussion**

Staff and education of nursery and kindergarten educators in Albania.

From the study of the Albanian documentation related to the staff of the educational staff of the nursery that includes children aged 0-3 years, it was found that their qualifications are required to be: with bachelor qualification for preparatory education, with bachelor education for nursing, with bachelor education for social work as well as with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Most of the employees as educators in nursery have secondary education of various types. The preparation of nursery educators for children age 0-2 years, started in the last four years in universities. Their qualification is a two-year program that continues after the completion of high school and is attended mainly by those students who do not meet the threshold criteria to access University Undergraduate degrees. Only general knowledge is required about the upbringing of children for those seeking to work in early years institutions/nurseries. There are no Intended Learning Outcomes of a curriculum that the nursery educator must meet regarding attachment theory, rather the requirement is to have experience in raising children, to enjoy working with children and to implement the requirements of the educational institution.

From the questionnaire developed online with kindergarten teachers and teachers of different school levels, it was found that none had knowledge of attachment theory.

The focus groups revealed there was no formal training in attachment theory and how children in the early years develop through the phases of attachment theory. The focus groups identified this is left to the parents who have had no formal training in attachment theory and may have experienced trauma impacting their own transition through the phases of attachment theory, or they may have transitioned successfully through attachment theory.

There are different categories of parents.

Parents may be interested in learning about attachment theory, but do not get the chance.

Parents may be very interested in helping their children develop their mental models and develop dialogues as discussed by Beutner (2022) and Imam and Taysum (2022) in this issue of Journal of Groundwork Cases and Faculty of Judgement, but they do not know how to, and they are unaware of the impact of attachment theory on the role of talk in supporting children passing through the phases of attachment theory.

Parents may come from a legacy of social problems, such as domestic violence, war, migration, ethnic cleansing or marginalization from institutionalised racism, and may have never recovered from the traumas their ancestors suffered. Their ancestors traumas prevented them passing through the phases of attachment theory, and unknowingly passed on, almost in a psychomotor programming, the trauma to their future generations who will also get stuck at a phase of attachment theory, even without experiencing the trauma. This is because the ancestors' trauma prevents anyone in their family successfully passing through the phases of attachment theory because there is no example of what passing through the phases of attachment theory looks like. So with so many people who have suffered trauma and not passing through the phases of attachment theory, they may be stuck in perpetuating social problems, such as domestic violence, war, migration, ethnic cleansing or marginalization from institutionalised racism. At the same time, education systems are not addressing this issue because evidence reveals kindergarten staff do not know what attachment theory is.

Further, in the Covid 19 recovery there is funding for 'catch up' but this is used for therapeutic nurture groups using strategies such as art lessons that the Intended Learning Outcomes of the mainstream lesson can still be met. This builds the steps towards passing successfully through stages of attachment children need to pass to move from immaturity to maturity. Perspective of psychologist, if behaviourist they remove the notion of spiritual so epistemology of the curriculum and policy needs to be described and understood by teachers.

Respondents identifies that in their contexts in Albania psychological treatment is an effective way of treating problematic children. Therapeutic psychological treatment is a way of treating problematic children and ensuring their improvement. For this purpose, psychological service networks are set up that serve as a service institution at educational institutions. The psychologist in charge of the psychological service withdraws the students from the classroom. Usually in a class of 31 students, about 6 students have access to psychological treatment. For each class, counseling groups are set up in which the psychologist develops therapy for their improvement. The number of groups is equal to the number of classes that the educational institution has. Psychological service networks require a considerable number of psychologists.

Participants also identifies the psychological services are not working properly in the wake of the Covid 19 pandemic. This is due to the financial and economic situation which has caused extreme deterioration. Financial assistance and economic support to educational institutions has deteriorated even more. Under these conditions, the improvement of students with behaviours that indicate they have experienced trauma, and or have not passed through the four attachment phases continues to be a concern for educational institutions and Albanian society. This is negatively impacting their ability to become self-determining problem solvers with developed psychomotor skills and mental models that inform continuation of good life. This in turn impacts on their engage with the labour market which is negatively impacting their sustainable health, economic, social and ecological wellbeing which prevents them from having a home, a family and paying into a pension pot for their continued good life into old age.

## **Stage E Conclusions and emergent prime principles that optimise faculty of judgement**

Attachment theory is a deep and emotional connection between two people. This connection is built from an early age and almost to the end of childhood and greatly influences learning outcomes as well as facing challenges throughout life. Going through these stages makes it possible for children to pass from immaturity to mature with good mental models for self-determining homeostasis. The application of practical measures of attachment theory makes possible a normal development of the child/individual and successful regulation for continued good life hallmarked by resilience when faced with life challenges. Failure to pass through all four phases of attachment theory, causes the child/individual to have problems and difficulties in achieving high results in school, in social adjustment,

in their career and for homeostasis regulation that shapes healthy mental models and psychomotor development.

In this case, the ABCDE instrument helps us, which can be mobilised by the teacher/adults in the classroom through the learning situations. According to the study, in Albania, it was found that the theory of attachments is not known and is not applied. Building children's relationships with educators is done spontaneously without referring to any specific theory or guidelines. In conditions of economic hardship, as well as the Covid Pandemic 19, the difficulty of financial support for the application of attachment theory as well as for the establishment of therapeutic groups is even greater.

## Recommendations

To solve this problem we recommend implementing the ABCDE instrument which should be applied in Albania both in the offer of curricula to students to meet Intended Learning outcomes and for training of current educators and teachers to i) be able to describe, understand and apply attachment theory using ABCDE to optimise learning and wellbeing, ii) to build relationships through talk to mobilise attachment theory to develop children's working mental models for good choices that regulate continued good lives. Critical evaluation of the implementation of ABCDE and the critical evaluation of children/individuals incremental progress through the five stages as Key Performance Indicators, will reveal the impact of supporting children through the four phases of attachment theory on i) their psychomotor development required to self-regulate and move to self-determine their Homeostasis (continued life) with good faculty of Judgement.

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