



## ROLE OF INDIVIDUAL IN DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY

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# *Volunteering opportunities in higher education*

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## **Abstract**

*In this paper I present the results of empirical research and practical pilot programmes carried out in the frame of an international project. The project was about the promotion of pro bono activities among university students, involving corporate experts and non-profit companies. The conclusions of the research and the pilot programmes implemented over two years, several of which were digitally implemented during the covid period, show that young people are open to volunteering and willing to participate in well-organised and prepared pro bono activities. For higher education institutions, integrating pro bono into the curricular portfolio is an excellent way to increase the practicality of education, strengthen business links and, last but not least, increase young people's social awareness. The particular value of the pro bono activities carried out digitally during the covid period is how the volunteer programme was able to adapt to the challenges*

*of the virus situation and how it was able to successfully implement pro bono programmes in the online space, involving corporate professionals, non-profit grantees and academic experts. The conclusions could be useful for professionals in higher education as well as for non-profit organisations on how to make knowledge-sharing pro bono activities work to the benefit of all stakeholders.*

## **Introduction**

The international volunteering programme “Boosting Employability and Empowering Social Engagement in High Education through Pro Bono”, which is presented in the context of the study, is all about engaging students in higher education in volunteering.

This is a tripartite partnership between university, NGO and for-profit companies.

There were several reasons for the institution to join the programme: firstly, to motivate students to volunteer and to promote social responsibility.

At the same time, the university had human policy and employer branding reasons for participating in the programme: we place a strong emphasis on people-centred education in our institution. It is important for us that our students are sensitive and responsible people who are aware of social and environmental issues.

In the service of this objective, we have joined the international programme, which has given us the opportunity to involve students in CSR activities, thus strengthening their social awareness.

The programme has enabled us to open up the university’s contacts with NGOs and to promote the educational institution among the players in the egg market.

Pro bono is a voluntary activity based on the sharing of professional knowledge. The students who joined the programme put the knowledge they had acquired at the university to good use by receiving professional guidance from their teachers and business professionals.

The programme has been beneficial for the students: it has allowed them to put their theoretical knowledge into practice while serving a socially beneficial purpose. It also helped to promote pro bono activities and the pro bono spirit among young people. Thus strengthening their social awareness.

The programme has also benefited the university by expanding its network of corporate and non-profit professional contacts. It has contributed to social values, strengthening its reputation and the commitment of its students to the university.

Other beneficiaries of the activity were the NGOs supported, as they received free professional support such as market research, website development and marketing communication campaigns.

The companies that provided the professional supervisors were also able to use their participation in the programme to enhance their reputation. In addition, all corporate partners confirmed that such pro bono, CSR activities play a huge role in increasing the loyalty of their employees. So from an HR point of view, the programme is also very beneficial for them. Last but not least, they also had an excellent opportunity to recruit by getting to know the work of the students involved in the programme. Selecting the most motivated and talented students.

## Literature review

In modern societies, volunteering is a form of civic activity. It can be considered effective when volunteering is organically linked to a local community or a wider area association and is widely represented by a range of organisations. (Mirsafian - Mohamedinejad, 2012). The International Labour Organization (ILO) has attempted to summarise the benefits of volunteering in a lengthy study. The ILO mentions that it can not only have economic effects, but can also bring significant benefits to society or to the volunteers themselves. It can provide access to the workforce and a framework for employment. Volunteering can contribute to development goals. It can also result in services in the form of employment that a paid worker would not be able to provide. It also enhances social solidarity, social capital, political legitimacy and quality of life in society. Volunteering can help to promote social inclusion and integration (ILO, 2011). In addition to the above, volunteering can also bring other benefits. According to a study by Owen and Celik (2018), activities such as volunteering can contribute to our mental health, thus strengthening the development of a healthy society (Owen - Celik, 2018). Mundle and co-authors echo the previous idea. Volunteering has been associated with positive health and well-being outcomes for those who undertake it (Mundle et al, 2012). Several other studies have demonstrated that many of those who volunteered experienced lower depression, higher mental wellbeing and satisfaction (Same et al, 2020). According to Morrow and co-authors (2003), older people who volunteer or are still working may have better mental health characteristics, demonstrating that volunteering has a positive impact on mental health (Morrow - Howell, 2003; Morrow - Howell, 2010). Stukas et al. argue that volunteering, social contribution and voluntary physical assistance improve quality of life. They argue that basic activities in people's lives would be disrupted if they were not volunteers.

And volunteering means giving pleasure not only to others, but also to oneself, as the volunteer derives satisfaction and pleasure from their work (Willems et al., 2020). Individuals can also volunteer in public or other roles to enhance their



role in society. Juknevičius-Savicka (2003) also links volunteering to our role in society. It is an activity that we do for our environment without remuneration, but in return we receive moral recognition and appreciation (Wilson, 2000). The latter can motivate us to undertake such tasks (Paine et al., 2010).

Volunteering requires a certain level of human, cultural and social capital from the individual. (Wilson -Musick, 1997). According to this formulation, volunteering is indeed a measure of the state of society. Where there is no social capital, the level of volunteering cannot be high. However, it does not matter whether we look at the individual or the organisational level (Czike - Kuti, 2006; Perpák, 2017). Organisations tend to turn to volunteering more often, especially in their CSR projects. Steven Howlett mentions that businesses are also consciously turning towards volunteering. Organisations want to know which aspects of their work can be affected by volunteering (Howlett, 2004). More widely, organisations and companies are expected to do something for their immediate environment. Volunteering by individuals is mostly confined to the aforementioned giving. In the so-called World's Most Generous Countries Report published by Gallup, it is reported that although many people in Hungary give to charitable causes, our country still gives below average (Gallup, 2018).

## Methodology

One of the outputs of the BEESe pro bono Erasmus programme was an international survey among students from the universities participating in the KA2 project. We conducted an online survey with a structured questionnaire.

The research investigated the openness of young people to pro bono activities, what they know about this form of volunteering and how and to what extent they can be encouraged to engage in CSR activities.

The recruitment of the subjects in each sampling unit was done by a snowball sampling procedure, which resulted in 840 evaluable questionnaires in Hungary.

The research instrument was the same in all countries participating in the project for future comparability. The standardised questionnaire contained only closed questions, nominal measurement levels - single- and multiple-choice selective questions - and a ranking type of question, and a Likert scale was used to assess the respondents' attitudes and value orientation towards volunteering. Attitudes towards volunteering were analysed in a triple relation: cognitive, affective and conative phases, in order to get a more accurate picture of the homogeneity of the attitude components and of the possible cognitive dissonance. For the scaling questions, a scale from 1 to 7 was used in order to obtain more differentiated results and also because of the international character of the research, as there



were Portuguese, Spanish, French and Bulgarian participants, an internationally accepted scale had to be chosen. (Malhotra - Simon, 2017).

## Results, discussion

The results showed that the majority of subjects do not know what the term pro bono means. However, those who had heard of it showed a clearly positive attitude.

The results of the research showed that young people are absolutely open to pro bono activities, but they still need information, education and, last but not least, a mentor to encourage participation. An instructor or a company expert who can help them in their work and give them direction.

The main motivation for them to take part in pro bon activities is to belong to a community, to fulfil themselves and to develop themselves.

The research also looked at the most effective communication channels to get the message of a knowledge-based volunteering campaign across to young people. The results show that the main sources of information about the conditions for participating in a pro bono volunteering programme are, according to the respondents, recommendations and opinions of friends and family, shares on social media platforms they visit, and social media platforms of non-profit organisations promoting such programmes.

The highest proportion of the sample (42.2%) were those who had not yet participated in a volunteering programme but would like to try it. They were followed by young people (39.9%) who had already volunteered and would be happy to do so again.

The smallest group (17.%) had a negative attitude towards volunteering: they had never participated in a volunteering programme and would not like to join one.

Among those who had volunteered in their lifetime, the most popular were children's programmes (30.4%), programmes helping animals and programmes supporting people in need (homeless) (26%). This was followed in order by programmes targeting local, local problems (16.8%), programmes targeting global problems (8.4%) and others such as volunteering in student organisations and student councils (2%).

Based on the results, it was thought that a strategically well-constructed education campaign and emotional messages that reinforce motivation would be the most effective way to attract young people with immature values. Rather than being socially insensitive or self-centred, their lack of motivation can be explained by a lack of a mature value orientation.

There is a large body of literature suggesting that young people's value orientation is more easily influenced, that they are easily won over by a good reference person, if only because they are characterised by a relatively strong social networking loss and seek out communities to join. And such communities can strongly influence young people's value judgements. (Töröcsik, 2017; Tari, 2011)

## Limitation, Conclusion

As a continuation of the programme, the Eastern Faculty will continue to offer students the opportunity to carry out pro bono activities in the form of project work.

We would like to expand both the programme and the research in cooperation with other universities by involving international students.

We believe that one of the limitations of the research carried out on the Hungarian sample is the sample, as it focused on Hungarian students and Generation Z.

We think that it is worthwhile to extend the research to other generations, younger and older, and to include foreign students studying in our country among the sample. We believe that the perception of CR activities and pro bono activities is also culturally determined.

By broadening the scope of the research and including foreign students in the pro bono programme, we have the opportunity to promote the need and importance of social responsibility as widely as possible. We believe that it is important to orient students towards ethical behaviour and values and to strengthen their sense of community. In my experience, this kind of activity is a major contribution to graduates taking this ethos forward as employees and possibly as managers.

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*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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# *Body image and self-esteem in teenagers*

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## **Abstract**

*The image of the body is the dynamic perception of the body as it looks, feels, and moves. It is formed by perception, emotions, and physical sensations and is not static, but can change in terms of mood and physical ways. In terms of self-esteem, which is a positive and negative orientation towards itself, a general assessment of values or qualities. His study is analyzing the relationship between self-esteem levels in relation to perceptions adolescents have of body image. The study was conducted as a champion of 120 students in Maminas high school. The selection of the champion was in a casual way. The ages of the students ranged from the age 13 to the age 18. The measuring instruments used for this study are 2 questionnaires. The body image avoidance questionnaire [Body Image Avoidance Questionnaire (BIAQ)], consists of 19 questions about image avoidance for the body. The second questionnaire is that of self-esteem (SES, Rosenberg, 1965), which was used to measure the degree of self-esteem. In line with the study's objectives, results showed that there is an important link between the image of the body and the level of self-worth in adolescents and that there are significant gender differences in the image of the body in adolescents. Four were hypotheses raised in this study, whereof these hypotheses, 3 were proven and only one of the hypotheses collapsed. The results achieved were supported by similar field studies.*

**Key words:** *Body image, evaluation, adolescent, study, differences.*

## Literature review

Interest in psychology and sociology of image for the body came in Paul Schilder's work in the 1920s. He was the first researcher to look at the body's experience within the psychological and sociological framework. Prior to Schilder's work, body image research was limited to studying deformed perceptions of the body caused by brain damage. Schilder developed this work to examine the broader psychological and sociological framework within which perceptions and experiences of body image developed. In the *Image and Presentation of the Human Body* (1950), he argues that body image is not only a cognitive concept but also a reflection of attitudes and interactions with others. He was interested in the 'elasticity' of body image, reasons for fluctuations in perceived body size, feelings of sensitivity, gravity, and the effects of body image on interactions with others. The appearance of the body that forms in the person's own mind, that is, the way in which the body appears in itself. (Schilder, 1950: 11) Since 1950, researchers have taken 'body image' to understand many different things, including the perception of body attractiveness, body size, perception of body boundaries, and accuracy of perception of bodily sensations (Fisher, 1990). The definition of body image to be taken on the subject is a person's perceptions, thoughts, and feelings about his or her body. This definition includes all elements of body image initially identified by Schilder: body size assessment (perceptions), body assessment, attractiveness (thoughts), and emotions related to body shape and size (feelings); and is adapted from a definition produced by Thomas Puzinsky and Thomas Cash (1990). Body discontent is defined as negative thoughts and feelings that a person has about his or her body. Paul Schilder (1950), defined the image of the body as "the view of our body that we form in our minds, i.e. The way in which the body appears in itself." This definition was later criticized and researchers have argued that body image construction is more multiplied than can be distinguished in this early definition (Pruzinsky & Cash, 2002). Today, a common way to think of body image is to divide it into two components: a perceptual one, which refers to assessing a person's size and appearance, and another attitude related to feelings and attitudes towards one's body (Gardner, 2011). Both of these components are included in Grogan's definition (1999), referring to body image as "a person's perceptions, thoughts, and feelings about his body". A person's image can be positive or negative. Body image can vary depending on contexts and over the course of life, although it seems to be quite stable during adolescents and adult life (Tiggemann, 2004; Wertheim - Paxton, 2012). Body image concerns can

be manifested in many ways, ranging from a mild preference for other body characteristics to pathological body image disorders such as eating disorders or muscle morphology (pathological preoccupation with muscularity, Pope et al., 2005). In addition, body image concerns may be related to the appearance of the general body (p.sh., shape, muscle, weight, or size) or, otherwise, specific characteristics or body parts (p.sh., facial characteristics, hair, gym and strength, Wertheim & Paxton, 2018). A common way to measure a person's body image is to measure his body level, which can be understood as body-related self-esteem. Mendelson and White (2001) have suggested that honoring a person's body includes three areas: feelings about weight, feelings about appearance, and beliefs about how others view one's body and appearance. The idea is that individuals can be placed somewhere in the count between low body assessment (or body dissatisfaction) and high body assessment (or body satisfaction) in the three dimensions of body value.

In studies conducted within this thesis, we used the concept of body evaluation as a measure of adolescent body image. While a person with high body appreciation may be considered to have a positive body image, there is reason to believe that the concept of the body cannot capture the whole essence of a positive body image. Although it is clearly the negative component of body image that is usually the focus of attention in body image research (Tylka, 2011), positive body image research has taken some initial steps. With the growth of this field of research, the concept of body evaluation has been introduced, a term that includes the evaluation, acceptance, respect, and protection of the body (Avalos et al.2005). As discussed in the section about adolescent positive body image, there may be positive body image characteristics that include aspects other than body weight and appearance as defined in the concept of self-esteem. The concept of self-esteem includes a variety of interconnected concepts. According to Rogers and Mondrea (2006), self-worth is "our image for who we are, what we want to be and what we should be" (p.89). "Another way declares that there are three images: how we see ourselves, how others see us, and how we want others to see us. Chelcea (2006) explains that self-confidence is the result of all people's positive and negative assessments of themselves. According to Andre and Lelord (1999), the components of self-esteem are love, the concept itself, and self-confidence. Love itself stems from the quality and sustainability of emotional support offered by parents. It benefits emotional stability and resistance to criticism and rejection. As a result, there may be doubts about the ability to be evaluated by others. Strickland apud Scarneci (2009) defines self-worth as a product of self-confidence (positive assessment of the effectiveness of duty) and self-respect (the individual's sense of value). Self-confidence is the product of accumulated judgments (coming from us or others) to be good or bad, valid or not. It emphasizes an educational result, a possible job, good relations with

friends or partners, or a way of life that is consistent with our values and personal interests. Social comparison has a final goal: to assess ourselves properly.

If the people we compare to are far from a psychological point of view (we do not know them personally, we have different social status or any other ethnic position), success does not affect our self-esteem. When someone close to us has higher performance compared to our achievements in a respective dimension to ourselves (a close friend, relative), we pay more attention and this poses a threat to us. 2001). Erickson's (1968) psychosexual theory says that self-identity is formed by passing a developmental crisis of adolescence and that it contains two boundaries: identity and confusion of the role. When there is a supportive environment that will develop the potential of the teenager, according to his desires and intentions, the identity of the role is formed. If the association (family, friends) does not provide a supportive measure according to adolescent expectations, confusion about the role arises. Two concepts of yourself that accompany self-esteem, are the complex of inferiority and superiority. The inferiority complex is a savage deformity of a self and occurs because of the dissertation. This happens in childhood when the subject becomes aware of his weakness. Sometimes it is formed around a language disorder, physical ugliness, or personal characteristics that are considered indecent, and unpleasant. Attitudes such as depression, exaggeration, and desire to be in the spotlight can lead to symptoms of the inferiority complex (Larousse, 1999). The superiority complex is a group of traits and behaviors based on the person's conviction, more or less true, that there are positive traits before colleagues and friends. It is characterized by: arrogance, tyranny, tendencies of depreciation, vanity, eccentricity, close relations with important people, and manipulation of weak ones (Larousse, 1999). Both complexes are based on a miseducation created by protective parents, who can lead to a fictitious vision of reality in the spoiled child (Adler, 1995). Researchers show that young people rely on friendly references and feelings for aesthetic plans and social and relational plans. Studies also show that self-esteem is associated with young girls with body image more than in boys. One explanation may be for girls to evaluate physically much faster than boys. Girls who drink faster are more likely to consume alcohol, and drugs, start sex life first, or have problems at school in relation to a group of friends. Also, people who know them have higher expectations due to physical maturity and appearance, not psychological, which can be very stressful for them (Silbereisen & Adams, 2009). There may be derogatory thoughts regarding weight (small or large); height (long or short); Pimples in the face or body, large nose, elongated ears, small or very large genders in oil, excessive fatigue in different parts of the body, lack of breast in boys and other characteristics that in their eyes turn into deficiencies. Self-esteem is a part of our personality and to regulate or elevate it we must have a sense of personal value that comes from those vital challenges that demonstrate our success.

Self-esteem has consciousness as the main element. It includes the individual's perceptions of their strengths and weaknesses, abilities, attitudes, and values. Its development begins from birth and is constantly developing under the influence of experience. During different periods of human age, the child realizes one or the other side of himself. The child becomes aware of their practical skills first - motor skills, artistic skills, and performing skills. Children begin to know about their personal traits at a significant later stage in life. The process begins when all moral and social standards for evaluation are gained. This can be explained by the complexity and ambiguity of the results from the manifestation of personal qualities. Children are aware of their particularities and personal traits in the process of communicating with adults and peers. This process of consciousness is the most active in adolescence. Adolescence is an important period, critical in the development of the individual, a period of transition between childhood and adulthood in a particular cultural environment. Self-esteem plays a very important role in development during this period. In the wide range of critical factors that determine self-esteem is physical appearance considered one of the most important factors during adolescence. High self-esteem has been shown by many studies conducted to be a factor that protects from bodily dissatisfaction (e.g., Tiggemann & Eilliamson, 2000) and eating disorders (e.g, Geller, Zaitsoff, & Srikamesaran, 2002). Feeling good about yourself is very important, because it gives you a sense of control over life, helps you feel satisfied in taking moons with others, and gives you confidence and strength over the actions and behaviors performed. Self-esteem can affect how a teenager will create relationships with others. An important pillar in creating self-esteem is the body image we have of ourselves. Body image for ourselves is mainly about how we see ourselves in relation to others, in terms of external physical appearance. For many individuals, especially those in their early teens, the image of the body is closely related to self-esteem. This is because children, turn into teenagers and care more about how others see them. Many teenagers "struggle" with their self-esteem and when they start puberty because their bodies go through many changes. These changes, combined with a desire to be accepted by others, are often associated with comparisons of themselves with people around them or with well-known actors or singers they see in magazines, films, etc. But is impossible to measure oneself against others because the changes that come with the age of maturity are different for all.

Some may have a rapid and earlier physical development, while some may have a later development. During adolescence, the concept of oneself is formed by the reactions and responses they receive from their parents, from the society where they perform, who help them increase self-esteem when offering care to be unconditional and serve, regardless of the behavior they display. Various studies on self-esteem and body image indicate that self-esteem correlates with body



image. Many researchers have directed various factors of concern for body image, p.sh. gender, current body weight, puberty, and age (Kastanki & Gullone, 1998). In all studies involving gender, female teenagers have been found to have more body image concerns than male teenagers. Frost & Mc Kelvie (2005) describe bodily pleasure as having two separate components: body image and pleasure with weight. Body image is about how close or far the current image of persuasion is to the ideal they can have for themselves. Weight satisfaction is about how much their current weight approaches that ideal, someone's body image or bodily pleasure is not always high. There are different theories that describe possible reasons why someone's body image may be low. Heinberg (1996) suggests that there are two classes of theories for corporal image: perceptual and subjective. Perceptual theories are based on a person's perceptual clarity about themselves. In this theory, it is said that overestimation of mass occurs because the perception of body mass does not change with the same ratio as the current weight. Subjective theories are based on the pleasure that an individual has with a specific part of the body. Self-esteem can be defined as a general extension of oneself (Frost & McKelvie, 2005) or as an emotional attitude towards himself (Robin, Tracy & Trzesnieqski, 2001). Research involving both body image and self-esteem is quite limited with all studies that have been conducted, which give evidence of a complex behavior or connection between two variables (Kastanski & Gulone, 1998). Self-esteem and bodily dissatisfaction are strongly corrected, in fact, more than one study has found that the more dissatisfaction with body image increases, the lower the self-esteem, especially in females (Kostanski & Gullone, 1998; Thomson - Altabe, 1991). Frost & McKelvie (2005) also found correlation levels between self-esteem and body image.

## Metodologija

The study is conceived as a quantitative analytical study. The purpose of this study was to analyze the relationship of self-esteem levels in relation to perceptions adolescents have of body image and self-esteem.

### *Hypotheses*

**Hypothesis 1:** There is an important relationship between body image and the level of self-esteem in adolescents.

**Hypothesis 2:** There are differences between gender for body imaging teenagers.

**Hypothesis 3:** There are differences between gender and self-worth in adolescents.



**Hypothesis 4:** There is an important link between body image and age in adolescents. Kampionimi

The population of interest in the study in question includes students in Maminas Schools. More specifically, the population included in the study will consist of pre-adolescent and adolescent students. For the planned population of 418 students, the minimum number of students participating in the study could be 120. The results derived from the statistical analysis become more reliable when the size of the champion used in the study is estimated in advance so that other analyses can be carried out in aid of the study.

*The instruments used:*

*Body image avoidance questionnaire* [Body Image Avoidance Questionnaire (BIAQ)]. The BIAQ is designed to measure the image avoidance of an individual (Rosen et al., 1991). The second questionnaire used in this study is Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (SES) questionnaire, self-esteem was assessed using Rosenberg’s self-assessment scale (Rosenberg, 1965; ). SES is a 10-point scale that measures global self-esteem with statements related to feelings of self-esteem and self-acceptance (Hillebrand & Burkhart, 2006).

**Analysis and study results**

*Correlational analysis between body image factors and self-esteem*

From the table below we see that there are statistically important links between them ( $p \leq .01$ ,  $p \leq .05$ ). (Look at table 1)

**TAB 1.** Korrelacioni Pearson ndërmjet faktorëve të imazhit të trupit dhe vetëvlerësimit

		Self-esteem
Weight problem	Pearson Correlation	-.259**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004
	N	120
Coverage of the look with clothing	Pearson Correlation	-.222*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015
	N	120



Limiting eating	Pearson Correlation	.058
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.528
	N	120
Avoiding social activity	Pearson Correlation	-.226*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.013
	N	120
Avoiding Body Image	Pearson Correlation	-.237*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006
	N	120

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There is an important negative link between the weight problem to self-esteem ( $r_{(n=120)} = -.259, p \leq .01$ ) wherewith increased weight concern also decreases self-esteem in adolescents. There is an important negative link between the coverage of the look with self-esteem ( $r_{(n=120)} = -.222, p \leq .05$ ) wherewith increased appearance coverage also decreases self-esteem in adolescents. There is an important negative link between Avoiding social activity with self-esteem ( $r_{(n=120)} = -.226, p \leq .05$ ) wherewith increased avoidance of social activity also decreases self-esteem in adolescents. There is an important negative link between Avoiding body image with self-esteem ( $r_{(n=120)} = -.237, p \leq .05$ ) wherewith increased body image avoidance, self-esteem in adolescents also decreases.

### *Analysis on gender differences according to T Test*

**TAB 2.** Test of mean differences between the sexes in terms of body image

	Gender	N	Average	Standard Deviation	t	p
Weight problem	Female	82	3.44	0.98	2.339	.021
	Male	38	2.99	0.99		
Coverage of the look with clothing	Female	82	1.84	0.71	3.573	.001
	Male	38	1.34	0.73		
Limiting eating	Female	82	2.61	1.14	1.014	.313
	Male	38	2.37	1.35		
Avoiding social activity	Female	82	1.03	1.22	-.108	.914
	Male	38	1.05	1.11		

Avoiding Body Image	Female	82	2.04	0.56	2.960	.004
	Male	38	1.70	0.64		

The result shows that the weight problem is higher in women with the average (M=3.44, ds=0.98) compared to boys (M=2.99, ds=0.99). Dress coverage is higher in women with an average (M=1.84, ds=0.71) compared to boys (M=1.34, ds=0.73). Body image avoidance is higher in women with an average (M=2.04, ds=0.56) compared to boys (M=1.70, ds=0.64).

### *Analysis of gender differences at the level of self-esteem*

**TAB 3.** Crosstabulation Gjinia \* Level of self-esteem

		Level of self-esteem				Total
		low	medium	high		
Gender	Female	n	3	59	20	82
		%	3.7%	72.0%	24.4%	100.0%
	Male	n	1	28	9	38
		%	2.6%	73.7%	23.7%	100.0%
Total		n	4	87	29	120
%		3.3%	72.5%	24.2%	100.0%	

To see if we have significant differences between gender in terms of adolescents in evaluation, we have used the T-test. Self-esteem is shown in both men and women.

**TABLE 4.** Test T of differences in average between gender in terms of self-esteem\

	Gjinia	N	Average	Devijimi Standard	t	p
Self-esteem	Femër	82	22.01	4.259	-.049	.961
	Mashkull	38	22.05	4.040		

### *Correlational analysis between age and self-esteem*

To see if there are important links between self-esteem and age in adolescents, we have used Pearson correlation. From the table below we see that there is no statistically important link between them as p is greater than 0.05.

**TABLE 5.** Pearson correlation between age and self-esteem

		Age	Vetëvlerësimi
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	-.001
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.994
	N	120	120
Self-esteem	Pearson Correlation	-.001	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.994	
	N	120	120

To see if there are important links between body image and age in adolescents, we have used Pearson correlation. From the table below we see that there are statistically important links between them ( $p \leq .01$ ).

		Age
Weight problem	Pearson Correlation	.157
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.088
	N	120
Coverage of the look with clothing	Pearson Correlation	.100
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.276
	N	120
Limiting eating	Pearson Correlation	.084
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.359
	N	120
Avoiding social activity	Pearson Correlation	.201*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.028
	N	120
Avoiding Body Image	Pearson Correlation	.208*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022
	N	120

\*. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

There is an important positive link between Avoiding social activity with age ( $r_{(n=120)} = .201, p \leq .05$ ) whereas the age increases, the avoidance of social activity in adolescents increases. It also has an important positive link of avoiding body image with age ( $r_{(n=120)} = .208, p \leq .05$ ) whereas age increases, avoidance of body image in adolescents increases.

## Conclusions

The image of the body is the dynamic perception of the body as it looks, feels, and moves. It is formed by perception, emotions, and physical sensations. It is not static but can change in mood and physical ways. In terms of self-esteem, which is a positive and negative orientation towards itself, a general assessment of values or qualities. Gender differences are well-established in body image research, with females generally experiencing more body image concerns than boys. Although appearance culture tries to focus more on the female body, the social focus on male appearance has intensified. Body image concerns can be manifested in many ways, ranging from a mild preference for other body characteristics, to pathological body image disorders such as eating disorders or muscle morphology. In addition, body image concerns may be related to the appearance of the general body (shape, muscle, weight or size) or, otherwise, specific characteristics or body parts (facial characteristics, hair, gym and strength). A common way to measure a person's body image is to measure his body level, which can be understood as body-related self-esteem. Biological changes that occur during adolescence include body changes related to puberty. These changes consist of dramatic internal and external transformations of the adolescent body, including developmental changes in physical appearance and the development of the ability to conceive children. Physical changes include body growth, discarding stature, hair growth, and acne appearance. Boys experience increased testicles, penises, and facial hairs, as well as a deepening voice, while girls grow breasts and have their first menstruation. One of the most visible biological changes is the extent of height and rapid increase in body weight resulting from an increase in both, muscles and fat. However, girls gain more fat typifies than boys, and on a faster scale. Consequently, girls end the age of maturity with a muscle-fat ratio of about 5 to 4 and boys with a ratio of about 3 to 1. An important pillar in creating self-esteem is the body image we have of ourselves. Body image for ourselves is mainly about how we see ourselves in relation to others, in terms of external physical appearance. For many individuals, especially those in their early teens, the image of the body is closely related to self-esteem. Many teenagers "struggle" with their self-esteem when they start puberty because their bodies go through many changes. These changes, combined with a desire to be accepted by others, are often associated with comparisons of themselves with people around them or with well-known actors or singers they see in magazines, films, etc. But it is impossible to measure oneself against others because the changes that come with the age of maturity are



different for all. Some may have a rapid and earlier physical development, while some may have a later development. During adolescence, the concept of oneself is formed by the reactions and responses they receive from their parents, from the society where they perform, who help them increase self-esteem when they offer unconditional care and serve them, regardless of the behavior they display. Dissatisfaction with the body figure is more important than the current weight in predicting depressive symptoms. The link between depressive symptoms and body image is similar in overweight and non-overweight teenagers, but the association is stronger in overweight teenagers.

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# *Education on Early Parent-Child Relationship and Substance Use Disorder in Adulthood*

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## **Abstract**

*Over the years studies have shown that early experiences have a significant impact on a child's subsequent cognitive, emotional, and social development, affecting individual health in adulthood. In addition, it is believed that there is a link between early parent-child relationship and the externalization of maladaptive behaviours later. This might be manifested in high-risk behaviours in adolescence and adulthood including drug addiction.*

*This study was conducted to better understand the early parent-child relationships among heroin addicts. To explore this, 30 subjects (4 females and 26 males) that are receiving methadone maintenance treatment at the Action Plus Center in Tirana were selected. Qualitative research was conducted through personal interviews and self-report questionnaires.*

*Findings shows that early child-parent relationship in heroin addicts is mostly characterized by a negligent father and a closer relationship with the mother. Results*



*indicate that mother figure often appears to be the abusive and critical parent and there is a lack of father figure in child's life. Other interesting findings in this study suggest that heroin addicts may use drugs to fulfil or stay in balance with unmet needs related lack of parental love and warmth, emotional and psychological support, emotional stability, lack of open communication, low self-esteem, and self-confidence. These findings are relevant cause there is a practical application in substance use disorders treatment.*

**Keywords:** *early childhood experiences, early parent-child relationship, heroin addiction, substance use disorder, enmeshment, parent enmeshment*

## **Introduction**

Addiction as a behaviour but also addiction to narcotic substances, is a very complex phenomenon that involves physiological processes, psychological mechanisms, and individual-environmental experience. For many decades, researchers have focused on triggering and common causes of drug experimentation and drug abuse. The data show that 80-90% of heroin addicts relapse (NIDA, 2018). Addiction is a chronic disease which is characterized by compulsive behaviour, constant loss of control and constant use of the substance, despite the negative consequences (Coombs, 1997; Smith & Seymour, 2001). Furthermore, studies that show that after many years of successful bariatric surgery (weight loss), doctors report that patients are substituting compulsive overeating with a new acquired disorder such gambling or alcoholism (Blum, 2013) or heroin addicts replace heroin with alcohol (Anglin, Almog, Fisher & Peters, 1989; Hser, Anglin & Powers, 1990). This can raise other questions about the roots of this disorder. In fact, previous studies focused on understanding genetic, personality, environmental factors such as trauma, childhood abuse, social / peer pressure or culture, family conflicts, health problems, attachment, and parenting styles, but there is gap in the literature concerning enmeshment. Since many studies emphasize the importance of early experiences in people who develop addiction disorders in the future, this research framework is designed to explore the early relationships in the family of origin and heroin addiction.

## **Purpose of the study**

This study aims to explore the early parent-child relationship and enmeshment in heroin-addicts to better understand its impact on later adulthood. For this

purpose, a sample of 30 subjects who are on Methadone Maintenance Treatment in Action Plus Tirana center was chosen to participate in this study.

### *Objectives of the study*

1. To understand how parental enmeshment in heroin addicts looks like.
2. To investigate the causes and reasons for experimenting with heroin.
3. To describe the origin of addiction from the addict's perception.
4. To explore the interaction between unmet needs, drug/heroin use and enmeshment.

### **Hypotheses and research questions**

Hypothesis: People with parental enmeshment tend to become addicted to heroin and have more difficulty than others of overcoming addiction. This study will attempt to address the following research questions:

1. How does enmeshment in heroin addicts look like?
2. What are the reasons for experimenting with heroin?
3. What is the perception that heroin addicts have about drug addiction problem origin?
4. If enmeshment is closely related to addiction, what does the drug compensate in heroin addicts related to unmet needs?

### **Relevance of the study**

This clinical population is one of the less studied populations in our country. It was decided to conduct a qualitative study on heroin addiction and early parental-child relationship. The problem with heroin addiction can be the tip of the iceberg itself and a maladaptive behavior that comes because of untreated problems early on.

### **Lliterature review**

#### *Characteristics of opioid abuse and heroin addiction*

Heroin is 2-3 times stronger than morphine, it's an opioid drug categorized as depressants a drug that creates addiction faster than any other type of substance.

Substance use in women tends to develop into addiction faster than in men. (NIDA. 2021). Long-term heroin abuse can affect decision-making, control behaviour, the ability to cope with stressful situations (Liu, Qin, Yuan, Li, Wang, Lii & Tian, 2011 Cicero, Ellis, Surratt & Kurtz, 2014). High doses increase social interaction but decreases it during abstinence (García Pardo, Roger Sánchez, De la Rubia, & Aguilar Calpe, 2017) and long-term heroin abuse can also lead to mental disorders such as depression and antisocial personality disorder (NIDA, 2021).

### *Biological perspective (Genetic vulnerability to drug addiction)*

According to many studies, drug addiction is attributed to genetic factors at the rate of 50% to 60% of the tendency to become addicted and ability to quit (Heath, Bucholz, Madden, Dinwiddie, Slutske, Bierut, Statham, Dunne, Whitfield & Martin, 1997; Tsuang, Lyons, Meyer, Doyle, Eisen, Goldberg, True, Lin, Toomey & Eaves, 1998; Kendler, Prescott, Myers & Neale, 2003). It is believed that environmental factors play an important role in drug experimentation, while genetic factors play a greater role in the transition from regular use, abuse and developing addiction (Vink, Willemsen & Boomsma, 2005). Biological theory explains that repeated long-time exposure to drugs can cause chemical imbalance changing brain structure (Nestler, 2013).

### *General theory of opioid addiction*

This theory arose as a need to find an explanation for addiction that could be generalized to all those who use opioid drugs, regardless of whether user is a physicist, a homeless, a patient, etc. The general theory of opioid use emphasizes the dominant and fundamental characteristics of addiction and the cause-and-effect process that results from opioid use. The drug produces such a powerful effect in anyone who assumes it, giving craving for more and creating so physical dependence. The person is going to use drug again, to avoid withdrawal symptoms (Lindesmith, 1968).

### *The ego / self-theory of substance dependence*

A contemporary psychoanalytic approach explain addiction based on interaction between person's ego, sense of self and drug effect. According to ego / self-theory, drug users are individuals with ego function deficits. Consequently, the choice of narcotic substance is not something random, but responds to specific psychological protective needs and ego compensation. Substance selection is determined by the

interaction between disturbing affective states, individual experiences, and efforts to alleviate this condition through drug pharmacological effect. (Khantzian, 1978).

### *Theory of Cognitive-Affective-Pharmacogenic Control*

The Cognitive-Affective-Pharmacogenetic Control theory underline the interaction of cognitive-affective-pharmacogenic effects of substance taking (Coghlan, Gold, Dohrenwend & Zimmerman, 1973) suggesting that drug abuse starts with an inner conflict which is the influencing factor. People who have difficulty fulfilling demands and expectations placed upon them by society or by themselves, may experience internal conflict. That cause stress, anxiety, and a sense of powerlessness to react, where the level of anxiety is different in each person, depending on the personal experience and perception. This theory explains that it is not the experience of anxiety itself, but the belief that the person is unable to change or control a certain situation and feeling helplessness to cope with stress. This could lower self-esteem, which is very common among drug users and abusers (Krystal & Raskin 1970).

### *Early maladaptive schemes and opioid abuse*

Maladaptive schemes refer to long-term patterns of emotional and cognitive self defense that develop during the first years of life. The individual filters and processes information through these cognitive structures and this process guides the individual's behaviour. The more dysfunctional the scheme used to interpret reality, the more dysfunctional is the person's behaviour. It is thought that these maladaptive schemes formed in childhood, may lead to psychological distress directly or indirectly in the future such as anxiety, depression, eating disorders, etc. (Nicol, Mark & Murray, 2020). Additionally, maladaptive schemes develop when essential universal psychological needs such as (secure attachment, autonomy, and freedom to express needs and emotions, setting boundaries on reality) are not met (ibid). These unmet needs usually act subconsciously by making the person psychologically vulnerable to depression, anxiety, dysfunctional relationships, psychosomatic disorders, or addiction (Young, 1999).

### *Parenting style and substance use disorder*

Some research findings show that there is a link between parenting style and adolescent high-risk behaviors based on children's perception of parenting style (Schweitzer, & Lawton, 1989) Additionally, a study among heroin users in prison, participants reported their parents as very tolerant, very permissive, lack of father

figure and over-protective moms (Kokkevi & Stefanis, 1988). Overprotective parenting is highly associated with heroin addiction and is considered a high-risk factor (Durjava, 2018).

Other studies showed that adolescents whose parents had a negligent or authoritarian parenting style had a higher risk of smoking and / or drug use (Radziszewska, Richardson, Dent & Flay, 1996; Myers, Newcomb, Richardson & Alvy, 1997; Stephenson, Quick, Atkinson & Tschida, 2005; Patock-Peckham & Morgan-Lopez, 2006). Moreover, a study on heroin-dependent individuals receiving methadone maintenance therapy and a group of healthy subjects, the results regarding participant's parents, showed that there was a high prevalence of emotionally cold fathers and over-protective mothers (Anderson & Eisemann, 2003). Also, heroin-dependent individuals reported higher levels of maternal and paternal protection when compared to the control group and alcohol dependence group (Bernardi, Jones, & Tennant, 1989). Indifferent and coldness or interfering in child's life trying to control it, there is a high for their kids to develop addiction (Schweitzer et al., 1989). Additionally, there is a correlation between drug-addicts mother's, emotional attachments, and overprotectiveness (Baron, AbolMagd, & El Rakhawy, 2010). Additionally, study conducted last year in heroin addicts, showed that most of them had overprotective mothers and absent father-child relationship during childhood age. According to this study, heroin addicts were characterized by ego damage, a narcissistic mother, lack of father figure, family dissatisfaction and communication problems (Hoxha, 2020).

### *Enmeshment*

Enmeshment is concept introduced by Salvador Minuchin in 1974, to describe lack of bounders between family members interrupting so personality development and slowing down maturation process. It is a model model that leads to psychological and emotional fusion between family members. It is suggested a moderate level of closeness and a moderate level of separation from family members, allows the child in adulthood to feel both free to leave the family without feeling guilty or excessive responsible to the parent, as well returning to the family to provide and receive support. This level of closeness allows the individual to develop his own personality. In enmeshment, the child's personality is "swallowed" by the parent's personality and the end-result of this process. is a child who develops fear of experimentation, fear of failure and fear of success (Barber and Buehler, 1996).



## Methodology

Choosing a Qualitative Research Approach is very useful to study this clinical population, allowing to obtain complete information and providing a better understand and explain the research problem. Closed and open-ended questions were used to obtain descriptive but also explanatory information. which is very necessary to understand how drug users perceive themselves and surrounding environment, making so possible the interpreted of their behaviour. Qualitative research facilitates this process, enabling researchers to understand addiction from the perspectives of participants (Neale, Allen, & Coombes, 2005).

### *Participants*

Sampling this clinical population was intentional and criteria for the selecting sample are (1) Having a history of heroin addiction (2). Being on methadone maintenance treatment therapy, (3) Having not less than three months in methadone therapy. These criteria were determined in accordance with the research purpose. Regarding the third criterion, it was established to maximize as much as possible validity and reliability of the research, since 3 months is relatively enough time to be physically, psychologically, and emotionally stable. Thirty participants attended the study (26 males and 4 females) from 20 years to 57 years old. A sample of 30 subjects was selected because the 15-30 interval is considered an appropriate number to reach thematic saturation in qualitative data analysis (Creswell, 1998; Safman & Sobal, 2004). From 30 participants 3 of them (2 female and 1 male) were selected for extended interviews. The selection was made based on parent enmeshment checklist results. First participant was highly enmeshed with the mother, the second one was highly enmeshed with his father, and the third subject was not enmeshment with any parent. This selection was made to provide an overview of the three-enmeshment pattern emerged from this study, to further explore the interaction of this phenomenon with drug addiction and better understanding similarities and differences between them.

### *Instruments*

There were used 3 instruments to collect data in this study. The Parent Enmeshment Checklist and The Addiction Questionnaire designed by the researcher himself was used to answer research questions 1, 2 and 3. Both above-mentioned questionnaires were applied to the whole sample, while to answer

research question 4, The Life Course Perspective on Drug Use was used. The instruments were piloted first, and the relevant adjustments were made before the data collection.

The Drug Addiction Questionnaire designed by the researcher contains questions about the early experiences in childhood, adolescence, drug experimentation, perception on the origin of the problem of dependence from the interviewee's perspective, etc. The Parent Enmeshment Checklist which is a non-standardized instrument which is used to obtain qualitative data about parental enmeshment. It is a checklist, completed from a historical perspective, to see how the individual felt during childhood. This questionnaire includes three sections: a) Indication of an Overly Close Parent-Child Bond which includes 15 statements; b) Indication of Unmet Adult Needs which consists of 10 statements and c) Indication of Parental Neglect or Abuse which consists of 10 statements. The subject must respond from a historical perspective and put a checkmark one of the words (mother, father, stepmother, stepfather, nanny carer) and add an additional comment.

The third instrument is the format of the Assessment Interview on Heroin Addiction, starting from the perspective of the course of life, consists of two parts: a) demographic questions b) life course and questions about addiction. The second part of the interview considers: family of origin, school experience, relationship with other family members, first exposure to drugs, experiences that the individual considers as important to the development of addiction and the treatment process, giving thus a complete overview of the phenomenon and its contexts (Connidis, 2011)

### *Procedure*

Data collection was divided in two parts and lasted 1 month. First part was conducted through questionnaires with the entire sample, after that the data entered to excel was done by diving into categories. The second part includes extended semi-structured interviews was conducted with 3 subjects selected from this sample and thematic analysis was used to analyse the data obtained from the interview.

### *Ethical consideration*

For the realization of the questionnaires, the anonymity of the participants was strictly guaranteed and the oral informed approval. During the study, given that we are dealing with individuals particularly vulnerable and data information can affect many sensitive issues were considered ethical issues for the participants as follows: It has been explained every step of the procedure, anonymity was



guaranteed, it has been explained them the right to refuse answering and sharing as much as they feel to, and participants have been informed that they can access the results of the study. Before starting data collection, the verbal informed consent has been obtained. During the process, interviewer tried to maintain an encouraging attitude during the interview.

## Results

This study investigated enmeshment and heroin dependence in adulthood where the focus was early parental relationships in the family of origin. Regarding to enmeshment in heroin addicts, results showed that 23 of the participants in this study have enmeshment at least one parent and 7 others do not have enmeshment (fig.1). It was noticed that enmeshment with the mother, is expressed not only as a closer relationship, but mother figure appears to be also the critical and abusive parent (fig.2), while the father mostly appears to be the negligent parent and not present figure in child's life (fig.3).

Concerning the experimentation reason with heroin, results are as follows: 19 participants said it was curiosity, 4 to fit into society, 3 said family problems, 1 social problems, 1 to escape from reality, 1 to relieve physical pain, 1 monotony, 2 to calm down from cocaine and 1 many reasons together.

Additionally, nearly half of the participants think that childhood has sufficiently or greatly influenced the development of heroin addiction. The rest associate the problem of addiction with adolescence and only a small part associates this problem with adulthood by giving contradictory or inconsistent answers. Most of them fail to identify the origin of the problem, which was expected, considering the complexity of drug addiction cycle, and overlapping maladaptive behaviours.

Regarding the results of the three extended interviews, subject 1 (K.A) and 3 (D.M) that are enmeshed with one parent showed low self-confidence and self-esteem, not being able to communicate their thoughts and feelings to the parents, and they reported that they didn't feel loved.

### *Some retrieved statements from interviews regarding unmet needs*

*"He never knew how to express his love...I guess he thinks that this is for weak people"*

*"I just wanted to leave home forever..."*

*"...my father's behaviour ... he was very violent and full of anger."*

*"My mother and I could never say how we felt in my father presence"*

*"I often acted accordingly, just to ... avoid his irony and criticism"*



*“He (the father) uses to hurt my feelings since forever...never said a sweet word to me”*

*“I almost always asked for his approval before doing something... and I was afraid of his disapproval and criticism...”*

*“Nothing I use to do ok for my father, I was never good enough.”*

*“I do not know but I never open up myself to him because of the wall raised between us.”*

*I have never heard my mom saying that she loves me ...never...”*

*“My father use to be very strict and we could never do jokes or freely talk when he was home...”*

*“My mother use to be very critical to me, yelling and offending...I guess she was just tired taking care of us and working so much, my father was never home”*

*“My mother use to be afraid of my father reaction...”*

*“My parents use to fight each-other all the time, I could' wait to leave...”*

Regarding subject 2, ( A.L) he is not enmeshed with any parent, and did not show or report any of these problems, on the contrary, he reported a very happy family environment, almost perfect. Although, all interviewed reported that using heroin make them feel free from worries, like they could do or achieve everything they want, by seeing world as a better place and feeling inner peace.

## **Discussion**

These results are consistent with other studies suggesting that there is a link between drug addicts in strong emotional attachments to the mother and maternal overprotectiveness (Bernard et al. 1989; Baron et al. 2010; Hoxha,2020). Also, the predominance of father figure negligence resulted in this study is in a similar line of argument with other studies with heroin addicts (Kokkevi et al. 1988; Hoxha,2020). Although, this might be explained Albanian culture context and the difficult economic situation, when the father is mostly working or emigrating to provide the economic security to the family and mother must deal with children education, and this might lead her to criticism and overprotection in parent-child relationship.

Although the results cannot be generalized, findings can suggest that when parent enmeshment is present, the unmet needs of the child are present more than in cases where parent enmeshment does not exist, and the risk of becoming addicted to narcotics may increase when these conditions coexist. This can be explained by the fact that enmeshment can lead to communication breakdown, hindering the self-differentiation process. Additionally, the child represses his needs, desires, and

aspirations, trying to satisfy the parent, and the parent unconsciously tries to fulfil his unmet needs through the child. The parent thinks that he is helping the child making the right choices, by not letting him / her to freely explore and interact with the surrounding environment. The more the parent intervenes in this process, the more the self-differentiation and maturation of the child's personality is hindered.

It can be speculated that this can later lead to unmet childhood needs which in some cases, can be externalized into maladaptive behaviours in adulthood, such as substance use disorders. Literature also suggests, unmet needs subconsciously act by making the person psychologically vulnerable to anxiety, dysfunctional relationships, depression, psychosomatic disorders, or addiction (Young, 1999). Moreover, parental enmeshment and the unmet needs of the individual do not facilitate overcoming addiction, because the child may continue to operate in adult age, with the same maladaptive schema that was consolidated during early parent-child relationship.

Besides, addiction is a very complex phenomena, and someone does not become addicted randomly (Khantzian, 1978). From the data obtained from the interviews, the individual-environment maladaptive schema, is obvious, and under certain assumptions, this can be construed as persons who develop a strong ego can be well-adapted to the environment while those who have ego disturbance using non-flexible schemes. If referring to parental love and warmth and parental encouragement of self-confidence and self-esteem to his child, it should be noted that these factors play a key role in strengthening the ego of the child. Drug use in these individuals (as the ego/ self-theory of substance abuse explains) responds to specific psychic defences and ego compensation needs: Instead of being able to identify their unmet needs, they repress them, and this makes them even more vulnerable.

Furthermore, heroin effect gives an exaggerated sense of power and boosts of self-confidence. The individual thinks that he can do everything he could not do before, replacing the feeling of helplessness with the feeling of euphoria. This is also noticed by the reports of the interviewees follow the same line of argument of Cognitive-Affective-Pharmacogenic control theory, which explains that the substance relieves anxiety and makes them feel good about themselves by giving the user the feeling that he already has the power and competence to control the surrounding environment (Krystal et al.1970).

The coexistence of enmeshment-unmet needs - drug use - maladaptive behaviour, needs further exploration in future studies, to better understand whether these individuals tend to develop drug addiction and have more difficulty to overcome addict the cycle of dependence rather than individuals who do not have parental enmeshment.

## Limitation

Dealing with a target group that is often stigmatized and marginalized might lead to incomplete or manipulative responses and in some cases, idealization of family of origin was noticed. Also, some of them might be using other drugs or may have comorbid conditions. Another limit to consider are the non-standardized instruments and one of them is designed by the researcher himself and not by a group of experts. Also, in qualitative method, subjectivity of the researcher might be considered as well. Another limit of this study is that results cannot be generalized in this clinical population and cause of the gap in literature, it is not possible to compare this study with the data of other studies.

## Conclusion

This study aims to explore the early parent-child relationship and enmeshment in heroin-addicts to better understand its impact on later adulthood. The hypothesis of this study was: People with parental enmeshment tend to become addicted to heroin and have more difficulty than others to rehab.

The findings of this study showed that: 23 heroin-dependent individuals who participated in this study results having enmeshment with at least one parent, while 7 of them did not have parental enmeshment. Depth semi-structured interviews results, suggest that they use drugs to compensate for some unmet needs, which include psychological and emotional support, parental love and warmth, emotional stability, open communication, and encouragement. self-confidence and self-esteem of the child by the parent.

Additionally, most of the heroin-dependent individuals surveyed are unaware of the origin of the problem attributing to other factors and overlapping problems that come as result of the individual – drug – environment interaction.

The findings of this study have practical application in substance use disorders treatment. Focusing on the early parent-child relationship, enmeshment and bringing to attention unmet needs, is of particular importance for the treatment of individuals surveyed. Since these individuals might be unaware of their needs, might develop rigid defence mechanisms that allow them to stay in psychological balance with their inner needs and addiction. By bringing these needs into conscious awareness and exploring parental enmeshment in drug / heroin addicts, is important in the process of psychotherapeutic treatment and drug rehabilitation. This research can be helpful to participants, to the drug rehab center where it was



conducted, to people struggling with heroin addiction and their families, as well as addiction experts.

### *Suggestions*

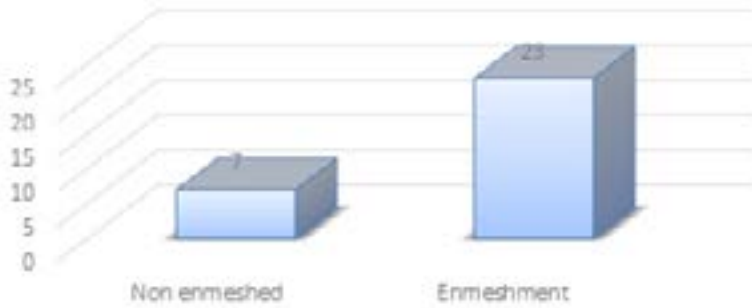
Regarding parents, It is recommended that patient and parents get well- informed and educated on enmeshment and its consequences it may have on the child's personality. It also very important to maintain a consistent family environment concerning psycho-emotional needs of the child and emotional stability.

It is recommended that therapist help the patient exploring and identifying unmet needs and understanding the origin of the problem by repairing ego damage, developing effective defense mechanisms and using adaptive schemas. Furthermore, family involvement in therapy, is recommended, because parental enmeshment occurs in certain context which is the family environment and individual therapy, and family therapy is needed. It is important to include the parent with whom the child has enmeshment, to gradually define individual personal boundaries of the person suffering from addiction and create gradual separation from the family of origin while maintaining proper psycho-emotional closeness to him. Psychodynamic therapy approach might be used in enmeshment cases and behavioural cognitive may be appropriate in cases with no enmeshment but mostly maladaptation.

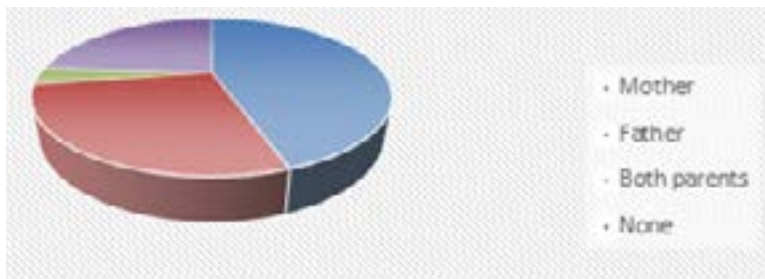
Regarding drug rehab systems and services, Increase the number of drug rehabilitation centers, both public and private and when it is possible to build up residential community drug centers that enable the treatment of drug addiction even for people who cannot afford other rehabilitation programs. Additionally, increase the number of well-trained psychotherapists and including community psychologist in academic profiles It is also very important to organize mini parent training for free by the state (since not everyone can afford to pay for trainings) to better inform and educate parents on this phenomenon. Inserting drug addiction profile in academic curriculum program

Suggestions for Future Research; Quantitative studies can be conducted to further explore drug addiction, enmeshment, and unmet childhood needs. Also, qualitative, or quantitative studies can be designed to better understand enmeshment and other addictive behaviours. It is also important to consider the opposite of enmeshment phenomena called disengagement, can be further explored, and studied since this phenomenon is just as problematic (perhaps even more) than enmeshment.

**FIGURE 1.** General enmeshment overview

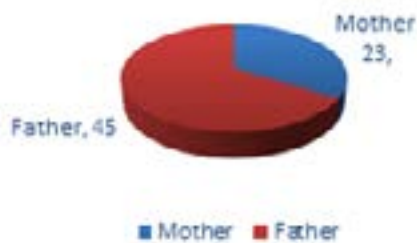


**FIGURE 2.** Critical and abusive parent



**FIGURE 3.** Parental negligence

### Reported parental negligence expressed in frequency values



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# Rise of the Acrobat Teacher

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## Abstract

*It is usually thought that most Albanian youth do not read at all. And yet, Albanian youth today read much more than yesterday, today's youth is an animal lectorem, an animal that reads. This relationship with reading is also manifested in the education system, where it is deeply influenced by the principles of modernity, where the degree has a relative and conditional value. In these conditions, when on the one hand the differentiation produced by the education system does not absolutely guarantee the career of the young person in the labour market and when on the other hand young people massively prefer informative reading to the meaningful one, the teacher is under tremendous pressure to become "acrobat". This is a metaphor that conveys the reality of today's teacher in postmodernism, which we must use to compensate the lack of due reflection and conceptualisation on this phenomenon. But how and why did we get to this point when teachers are asked to be acrobats?*

*Keywords: meaning / information /modernity /postmodernism /integration*

## Do our young people read?

The idea has been created that most Albanian youth do not read at all. In fact, it is common not to find any books in Albanian homes. It is just as common to see that libraries are empty. And yet, Albanian youth read much more today than

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yesterday. The usual look of today's teenager is that of a man haunted on his cellphone or computer, reading endless statuses, comments, news, articles and blogs. If we add to these the TV subtitles that catch the attention of Albanians during the 24 hours, we must necessarily come to the conclusion that today's young man is an *animal lectorem*, an animal that reads.

But this young reader is no cause for rejoicing. Rather, it reveals a tragedy of our existence. This tragedy is outlined as soon as we ask questions about the character of the writings that are read mostly by Albanians. And these are informative writings, not meaningful ones. The order behind informative writings cannot be explained only by their simplicity, by the fact that even a person uncultured or untrained in abstract things manages to read them without difficulty. Of course, as a rule man seems to prefer the easy over the difficult. But the preference for informative writing and the rejection of meaningful writing has reasons deeply rooted in human psychic structures.

Information and meaning are not just different things - they are opposite things. Information is a selection between the alternatives contained in reality (Luhmann 1995). In this way information reduces the complexity of reality, eliminating all other alternatives. For example, being informed about the weather means getting the message that "tomorrow will be sunny weather". This information has eliminated other alternatives, which are just as real: rain, snow, wind, eclipses, etc.

Meaning, in spite of information, preserves all alternatives to reality. Meaning expresses not only what happens, but also what could have happened. Thus, reading meaningful writing means reading about something that happened in the context of other alternatives that did not happen but could have happened. Therefore a meaningful writing about the weather would mention the sun, and the rain, and the snow, and the wind, and the eclipses.

The difference between information and meaning clearly exposes the Albanian reader to the informative writings. Information, by reducing the alternatives of reality to only one, at the same time reduces man's uncertainty about the reality where he is. Reality becomes clear, simple and predictable. The young Albanian appears as the man who wants clarity, simplicity and predictability.

But with them come some negative elements, which characterize the tragic situation of the Albanian youth. The point is, clarity, simplicity, and predictability come at a high cost - they pay for themselves by sacrificing freedom and activity. Informative writing creates the idea that there is no alternative: what happened could not have happened otherwise, what happened could only happen to that kind of person, but not us. For example, as we learn about the purchase of a castle by a VIP from the world of spectacle, we conclude that this is another world, "Martian", with no connection to people like us today or the weather. We may be upset or

irritated by the injustice of fate, but it only makes us feel powerless to change the situation and pushes us towards deterministic thoughts.

The resulting apathy is the phenomenon fueled by passivity and deterministic conception of the world. But the reality is complex (Qvortrup 2003) - it carries far more alternatives than what we have chosen, it has within itself much more life than what we live. The trap of informative writing is to blind us so that we do not see alternatives. Today's young man, the one who does not read meaningful writings, is the passive and fatalistic man, the man willing to sacrifice freedom of decision-making according to the motto "after all, things do not change!"

## **How much is a university degree worth?**

This relationship with reading is also manifested in the education system, where it is deeply influenced by the principles of modernity, where the degree has a relative and conditional value. The German theorist Niklas Luhmann says that for man, to live in modern society, means to participate in it only through the roles he plays, that is, using only a part of his physical and intellectual capacity, only that part which helps perform the role (Luhmann 1982). And this means that in modern society precious things like money, power and prestige of man are determined by the roles he plays in the systems of society. The systems of modern society are politics, economics, justice, religion, art, science, education, health, mass media, family, sports, and intimacy. In each of them, a person can play a role, important or not, that brings him money or not, that increases his prestige or reduces it.

For graduates, this means that the prestige given to them by university degrees in the education system translates into money in the economic system, ie in a well-paid job. But why does this not always happen and, in some countries, such as Albania, it rarely happens? Should we go back to the idea that a university degree has no value at all? This issue is related to the integration of modern society. Luhmann tells us that this society is characterized by low positive integration and high negative integration (Luhmann 2004). So, in modern society, having an important role in one of its systems does not necessarily mean that you will have an important role in other systems. This is what low positive integration of society says: having a university degree (important role in education, academic merit) does not necessarily lead to a good job (important role in the economy, economic well-being). The opposite is said by the high negative integration of society: not having brings not having. Not having a university degree almost necessarily means that you will not have a well-paid job, you will not have power and you will not have prestige.



There are times, however, when not having brings brings. There are times when people who are not educated enough, or with poor academic results, manage to have power, money and prestige. In these cases, the shore of non-possession and the shore of possession are joined by the bridge of corruption, and other times the bridge of crime. Only through corruption and crime does the low positive integration of society become high. This is frustrating for graduates who do not have these tools, as they have to compete in an unfair environment and see their chances diminish. However, the value of a university degree is not zero. It lies in the distinction between positive and negative integration of society. Having a university degree does not necessarily ensure a good living in economic and social terms; but it gives you the chance to have it. On the other hand, not having a university degree (and not even having corrupt and criminal means) guarantees a poor economic and social life and gives you no chance to improve it.

## **The acrobat teacher**

In these conditions, when on the one hand the differentiation produced by the education system does not absolutely guarantee the career of the young person in the labor market and when on the other hand young people massively prefer informative reading to the meaningful one, the teacher is under tremendous pressure to become “acrobats”. The term ‘acrobat’ has come to Albanian and other European languages from ancient Greek. *Acrobatos* means to walk on tiptoe and climb up. The teacher (and pedagogue) today stands for hours teaching, but not because he fails to get inspired when he is sitting; in fact, it does so to capture the attention of pupils and students and to maintain order in the classroom. Teachers today are required to use interactive methods, Powerpoint, movies, metaphors, anecdotes, humor and illustrations as much as possible. In other words it is required to please the audience of pupils and students, just as acrobats delight their audience by walking on a rope at their fingertips. The assumption is that the satisfied audience manages to extract more. But in fact, as happened to me when I explained the concept of the essential self in the subject of Philosophy and used the metaphor of the onion, to show that the self has no essence, when I asked the students in the exam about the concept of the essential self, they only gave me the answer the metaphor used and no definition or analysis. Quite satisfied and not at all learning.

But how and why did we get to this point when teachers are asked to be acrobats? Of course, acrobatics as a solution comes from the way the problem is formulated. Thus, the French philosopher Finkielkraut, in his book *The Undoing of Thought* (Finkielkraut 1988), formulates the problem of pedagogy by contrasting

school with student. According to him, the school is a modern institution, while the student is post-modern. In other words, the school does the homework, says 'should', while the student is driven by desire, says 'I want.' Formulated as a conflict, the pedagogical problem of passing on knowledge from one generation to another has only two potential solutions: either the school will become extremely authoritarian, strict and violent to teach the student what it needs, or the school will become acrobatic by submitting to the latter's wishes. Both solutions are used, but the latter is much more widespread.

The point is, both of these solutions are dysfunctional. The first violates, but does not teach, while the second pleases, but it also does not teach. Violence makes triumph a school without students and acrobatics make triumph students without school. This problem is unsolvable if it continues to be formulated as proposed by Finkelkraut. Among other things, the thesis that the school is modern and the student is postmodern, does not even stand by its terms. Thus, has not the school always been modern, has it not always tended to teach the task, what should be taught? And on the other hand, has not the student always been post-modern, inclined to place desire over the task? This conflict, then, is not today, but has always been and will continue to be. The fact that in the past this conflict was successfully resolved should make us think about where we are going wrong. Maybe we should reformulate the problem of pedagogy, no longer as a conflict between the school and the student, but as a problem related to the concept we have of the teacher and teaching?

The German philosopher Heidegger says that teaching is a giving, a offering (Heidegger 1995). But what is offered in teaching is not the thing to be learned, as the student is simply instructed to learn what he already has. In case the student gets something that is offered to him, he does not learn. He learns only when he experiences what he takes as something that he has within himself. Therefore, teaching means nothing more than letting others learn, bringing each other to learning. Teaching, says Heidegger, is more difficult than learning. This is because only he who can truly learn - and as long as he can do so - is the only one capable of teaching. The real teacher differs from the student only in the fact that the teacher can learn better and wants to learn more sincerely. When teaching, it is the teacher who learns the most.

Today we are far from Heidegger's concept. The teacher is seen as omniscient and so sees himself. The arrogance of the omniscient is then conveyed in communication with pupils and students, who are treated as tabula rasa, like plasticine that passively waits to be shaped according to interest, agenda and objectives. Of course, this does not go unnoticed by students and the consequence is known: they refuse to learn. And in these conditions, when he does not let others learn, acrobatics is not a solution either. It resembles that story that tells of Socrates, the eminent Greek



philosopher, who one day meets a sophist. The Sophist asks, 'Are you still standing there on the street, saying the same thing about the same thing?' Socrates replies, 'Yes, this I'm doing. And you, who are so smart, how is it possible that you never say the same thing about the same thing? '

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# *The Albanian Film Industry After the Fall of the Communist System and the Challenges it Faces in the International Market*

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*Dr. Ermir NIKA*

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## **Abstract**

*With the major paradigm shift of Albanian society at the debut of 90-ies, the film makers were undoubtedly the first to seriously think and invest in changing the system of the operation of the cinematographic activity and culture in Albania. “Convinced that even some of the major relying principles of the operation of this activity have fallen short, both as an instrument and institution in assisting the political education of the masses, they started the switch to the new system and philosophy, whereby the individual, competition of values, the market of ideas and products, European integration and the product commercialization constituted its mainstays”<sup>1</sup>.*

“Thus, in 1993, the process of drafting the Law “ On the Cinematography” started, which was adopted in the Parliament and was decreed by the President of the Republic by mid – 1996. This Law prescribed the political, economic and commercial reform of the structure and functions of cinematographic activity, which has been realized through the former Kinostudio “ Shqiperia e Re “( Albfim Studio )”<sup>2</sup>. Regarded and admitted by all that the reform provided in this

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<sup>1</sup> Ermir Nika: The Transition of Albanian Art and Culture Facing the Future Challenges, Polis / No. 18, 2019.f. 142.

<sup>2</sup> Ermir Nika: The Transition of Albanian Art and Culture Facing the Future Challenges, Polis / No. 18, 2019.f. 142.

<sup>\*</sup> Ministry of Culture: National Strategy for Art and Culture 2007 - 2013.

Law and the actions for its enforcement present the best pattern for the restructure of cultural activities and institutions at home, albeit the high enthusiasm and dynamics of its implementation, it turned out to be a fragmented and ununified process, both in terms of time and its process.

Based on the data available to the National Center of Cinematography and the Statistics Sector in the Ministry of Culture, it results that, hence, April 1997 marks the founding of the National Cinematographic Center ( NCC), as the institution responsible for the administration of public policies and funding, supportive of the independent cinematographic production, completed in 2005 even with the function of administering the cinematographic production prior to 90ies.

The NCC has scored admirable results in recycling the new cinematographic production in the reformed system, not only in maintaining the continuity of the film culture, not only in international promotion of the artistic product, but also with the growth of the total budget allocated to domestic films, thanks to steadily getting foreign co-producers, whose participation on one hand helped to recover the weak state budget, but on the other hand, it introduced a qualitative gigantic stride forward, in terms of the technical services and an unprecedented dimension of the international product distribution.

Apart from innumerable direct participations by our film makers and their movies to the international film festivals and the numerous prizes awarded even in Cannes, Venice, Thessaloniki, Cairo, and elsewhere, only in 2007, the NCC has also conducted several state promotion events of Albanian movies abroad, as in Prague, London, Athens, Paris and Rome.

Although the most recent accomplishments of Albanian cinema are strengthening the film making culture in Albania, still the Albanian film is suffering from fixed artistic forms and schematism, on the account of an alleged modernization of expressive means. The producers attach little attention to scripts and its cultivation.

Whereas in USA, the production cost for the script accounts for 10 % of the film budget and in Europe 2 %, in Albania this amounts only to almost 0,5 %.

While most of the budgets allocated to the overall NCC activity for the season 2006 - 2007 amounted only to 142.000.000 leke, the approved budget for project financing in 2007 is only 72.000.000 leke. The opposite has occurred in regard to long films with an amount of around 3.5 million Euro being allocated to this sort of film making in 2007. Let us underscore that this relationship, whereby for each financial unit from Albanian public funding there are about two units allocated by foreign funding sources indicates on one hand the success of the integration of our own producers into the international co-production market, placing Albania first in the region, but on the other hand, it marks a much higher effectiveness in terms of public funding use.



The above overview clearly indicates that while the number of ready made projects and those in process, the capitals ensured by alternative sources of financing are considerable and successful, the NCC budget available to their support is extremely low, endangering in this way not only their fulfillment, but also the loss of developing pace of Albanian cinematography, the loss of co-producers and large financial amounts already ensured through the foreign financial sources.

Meanwhile, due to the inaccurate prediction of developments, the terms of the said law, but also due to the lack of attention and interest on the part of responsible institutions, not only are we far away from having the same pace, but the distribution structure and the network of auditoriums for film projection is being seriously damaged, reducing drastically the number and quality of cinema services at home. This is the reason that Albania is still among the few European countries not still member of one of the most power centers of supporting the cinematographic activity, i.e. “Euroimazh.”

The appearance in the projection market of the network of Millennium cinemas marks undoubtedly a momentum of enthusiasm; however, it is not sufficient and almost monopolistic. Distortion in favor of other economically profit-making events from inherited halls, lack of facilitation fiscal policies in this field have produced the rapid collapse of some other private and alternative enterprises, at some major country's cities.

On the other hand, the boom of televizive operators into the market, product trading for family consumption formats, the unlimited piracy of domestic and foreign movie production and the major electronic consumption of film works have struck sharply the culture of movie - viewing at large cinema screen; it has equally demotivated the world of free enterprise in this area. Besides, there is no initiative in the field of public cultural education over the necessity of a selective knowledge and consumption of the cinematographic product.

The newly- signed Memorandum between the NCC and the National Council of Radio&Television and the setting up of the Albanian Copyright Office are only the first steps towards disciplining and gradual eliminating this badly enrooted phenomenon. Linking this initiative with other interested entities is expected to produce the proper spirit and network for a better organization and results.

“While the said law does not provide for any significant change or reform concerning the functions of the *National Film Archives (NFA)*, the period in – between was not associated with substantial changes of this institution, apart from the continued funding, conservation and maintenance. Even some initiatives on fund digitalization or involvement of Archives into commercial operations now are either blocked, solid or frozen, pending the drafting and adoption of sub-legal and administrative acts. The low investment level for the NFA, the non-permission of utilisation of the revenues for technological renewal and enrichment of archive funds have overshadowed considerably the activity and factorization of this



Archive into the country's cinematographic activity"<sup>3</sup>.

The stored distribution fund of domestic movies and those imported prior to 1997 is in almost an obsolete state. Recycling this fund, even in electronic format has no economic viability, it does not guarantee any quality of the recycled product on the account of the fund's physical state, it cannot be distributed on the same ground and it would sound absurd, at least for the domestic production as long as there are found valid and well-preserved copies in the Archives. Following the amendments of the year 2005 to the Law "On the Cinematography", the NCC is ordered to administer this fund, while the disciplined access to the commercial copy of the fund turns out to be confusing, full of obstacles and improbabilities, chiefly on the part of Archives.

Under the said Law, the former Film Studio "Shqipëria e Re" (Alba Film Studio), the physical capital and its cinematographic services would be transformed into a joint stock company, whereby the state would control originally 51 % of the shares and under the 2005 amendments, 100 % of the package. While NCC had already dynamized its own activity for the period 1996 -2005, no other by-law or other initiative was unveiled for transforming the administration form of this capital and its revitalization. Meanwhile, in an unlawful and abusive way, the state political authorities started the process of fragmenting the physical capital in parts, changing the administrators of these parts, the transformation of the constructions, services and the physical inventory, architecture and their functions in favour of private entities, as TV operators, schools, manufacturing and trading companies, permitting in this way the total amortization and afterwards the disappearance of cinematographic means and services to the extent that today it maybe openly said that this institution, this public capital, apart from the inherited name has not any other sign of its cinematographic affiliation.

On the other hand, due to the major amortization, to the high costs involved for the renewal of the technology of cinematographic services, the limited dimension of domestic cinematographic production and market, there is and there can be found no motif or investor, both private and state – owned to restore the remaining capital to its original state and functions.

Cinematographic education has left no heritage, structure or sustainable programs. Apart from a limited number of movie – makers trained in some schools of the former eastern countries and some of them in western schools, we can mention for the past only some provisional and short-term postuniversity courses. The establishment of the Public Film School attached to the Academy of Fine Arts and the Private School "Marubi" attached to "Alba Film Studio", although praiseworthy initiatives have not as yet put into the market of cinematographic production the first contingents of their graduates; the latter would on one hand

<sup>3</sup> Ermir Nika: The Transition of Albanian Art and Culture Facing the Future Challenges, Polis / No. 18, 2019.f. 144.

redimension the relationship among ages, experiences and new aesthetic flows in the Albanian movie and on the other hand this would be a direct reference to the success and development of these schools in the future. There is evidence on a considerable number of Albanian students already privately trained or underway at foreign cinematographic schools. Depending on these developments, NCC has adopted administrative policies and structures and specific programs designed to attract, test and promote the aspiring film producers.

Currently, we have a fragmentation, a lack of legal and structural synchronization of private and public cinematographic institutions and entities.

Thus, while *Alba Film Studio*, a joint stock company under the administration of a board composed of the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Culture conducts the function of administering the lease of parts of the building of the former Film Studio and self – financed by a small part of these revenues, it does not have legal, financial, or human capacities to make even the maintenance and conservation of the situation at hand.

It employs a total number of 10 persons.

Being properly defined by law and already in full legal, sub - legal and structural capacity and function, the *National Center of Cinematography (NCC)*, a budgetary institution responsible to the Minister and not to the Ministry of Culture receives its budget by the Assembly of Albania, it is administered by the Chairman and appointed by the Prime Minister; the major decision – maker is the Council of Approval of the projects, elected by the film -producing associations. NCC drafts and executes the state policies in the cinematographic area, including the education, production, integration, promotion and the distribution of the new products and the cinematographic activity as a whole; it distributes and handles the public support funding for their activities by private entities, it oversees and licenses the domestic and foreign film production and distribution entities all over the country's territory; it ensures the archiving of the new cinematographic products, as part of cultural heritage; further, it administers the state – owned cinematographic production prior to 90ies. Hence, it may be clearly seen that NCC remains the only single house for today's and future film makers. Despite achievements, NCC has not still succeeded in accomplishing its own functions. While it needs a re-accomodation of relationships, relations with the entities, partners, clients, financing, revenues and others concerned, it has to provide even its own residence, which is yet undefined. Currently, it is located and sheltered in a part of *Alba Film Studio*. Although it is also taskew by law, among others, to administer the cinematographic production prior to the 90ies, it does not possess and it cannot obtain them from the Central State Film Archive, the only source of getting this capital; while it is the legal caretaker for the depositing of the new production in favour of cultural heritage, it cannot practically control it, since it is the Archive that makes such a depositing.

NCC is a well-performed example of political commitment of the current government for a small and inexpensive administration, while performing simple but qualitative services. The relationship between the administrative expenditures with those of the direct financing of the production projects is 5 to 95 per cent, the overall number of employees 10, with 5 Board members.

Therefore, NCC is practically and legally the most important political institution of this area, legally defined and publically financed, it is the most significant gate opened to the interest on the part of film entities and individuals, it is the most successful of its kind.

There is no doubt that the institution expressing at best the philosophy of the time and being the key to the partial reform success in cinematography is the individual, its own initiative, classification of values through competition, motivation through the mechanism of property and ownership, promotion and economic advantage and others, in what is already defined and embodied as the producer and distributor.

While it is the juridical persons or those who assume the juridical and economic accountability for the production, promotion and distribution of the film works that enjoy the right to gain, in compliance with the pre-described rules, a partial financial support by public funding; while they contribute to maintaining and promoting the domestic cinematographic culture and its integration to Europe, they obtain a considerable part of revenues from the product turn – over; while they deposit a copy of first quality in favour of the national cinematographic heritage to the Central State Film Archives, they have the economic ownership over the work. Their recent years records, exceeding at times even the most enthusiastic predictions, have equally brought to evidence the problems to be rectified. Distribution is not still able to finance production, whereas the banks consider film financing as a risky investment. The Strategy pursues the following goals:

1. Focusing not in gaining sponsorship for film production but on building up the basic infrastructure.
2. Stimulating the producing institution and the private distribution, which remain the exemplary model and achievement, the underlying foundation for the reform intensification in the cinematographic field.

The Central State Film Archive faces the market pressure for a profit-making commercial fund utilisation; this pressure has not seldom and abusively victimized this fund; therefore, the Archive continues to have and perform only the function of maintaining and conserving the fund.

3. Reconception of Archive's functions, or the reconception of the fund utilisation under the new conditions would be the focus of its own reform.

The film-making associations, their copyright protection fora, the National Council of Radio-Television, the State Office of the Copyright and the tax authorities, albeit the considerable legal space available, they should reformulate their policies, not only and merely in the spirit of trade unionism or bureaucracy, but also with direct contributions, expertise and policy – making into the relevant field. The full support for the network coordination of interested institutions and entities and a larger dynamism on the part of the Copyright State Office, accompanying its activity also with legal and sub -legal additions by other subjects and institutions of this field would provide the required spirit, in a unified system and philosophy, without affecting but stimulating the creative and productive individual's initiatives, in the conditions of a society based on free market principles development and the public subsidies for values, as classified through their competition.

4. The piracy of imported domestic and foreign film products remains the major cause for the damages inflicted in the said domain and the combat for its eradication, and the priority challenge for the society and state.

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# The EU as a state builder in international affairs: the case of Kosovo; A book by Labinot Greicevci<sup>1</sup> —

———— Associate Professor Dr. Belina BUDINI —————

The topic of the international state building in general and the case of Kosovo specifically has generated quite an number of scholarly articles and studies from different fields related to foreign policy, but also in other contexts such as human rights, global security, legal studies, political economy, post-conflict and peace studies, even media studies and so on and so forth. Few of them are focused on the EU role as an international global player related to the case of Kosovo. The book by Labinot Greicevci “The EU as a state builder in international; affairs: the case of Kosovo” is one of them. He endeavours to assess the results of the state-building mission of the EU in the case of Kosovo and by doing so sets out to evaluate the importance of Kosovo’s intervention as a crucial point in international affairs and state-building missions.

There is now in place quite a new global disorder with the Russia-Ukraine war developing as we speak, that might constitute another turning point in international affairs. However, in the case of Kosovo we already have a practice that is carried out by the EU, the United Nations, United States and its allies, with a certain success, one would argue. Indeed, in the past 25 years, the EU has increasingly become involved in international state building operations especially in the Western Balkans like in Kosovo, but also in BH, North Macedonia or elsewhere in the world... The reactions towards such interventions have been mixed to put it mildly, with many contesting those international missions for lack of efficiency or fragmentation and lack of coherence, calling the liberal state building framework overall a policy blip

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<sup>1</sup> This article is a book discussion at St Antony’s College European Studies Centre, SEESOX series seminars, 2022.

that was always destined to fail and based on more of a naïve idealism rather than realist prospects.

Despite the criticism, the state building paradigm continues to evolve and seems to have been gone through development of a new pragmatist consensus seeking to increasingly situate itself as part of domestic and local processes, taking therefore a more human face in terms of sustainability and local legitimacy rather than an externally-led transformation.

The author of the book under discussion today evaluates the EU state-building project in the case of Kosovo rather favourably. He maps out the tangible and normative impacts of the international mission and calls it cautiously successful overall. His perspective is supported by evidence and is based on adequate scholarly literature, namely the Liberal peace approach and the normative approach, combined. I broadly agree with his findings and his arguments, as the role of the EU has proved to be essential for the emergence of the state of Kosovo and its state-building process in international affairs. The international intervention approach from within the neo-liberalism paradigm as a state project might have many flaws and has not always proven the most effective, due to many factors, but the case of Kosovo and arguably that of other countries of the region of the Balkans, have the prospects of a rather successful story.

Furthermore and in response to few critical voices, I would like to argue that in the case of Kosovo, there has been a previous basis for statehood and working institutional frameworks in place, so it is not quite fair to deem Kosovo or other Western Balkan countries as failed states despite their problems. Historically speaking, Kosovo has always had a social basis for governing legitimacy, so one cannot call it a failed state from within as scathing critics often relate the so-called statehood failures to some intrinsic characteristics of those states, apart from international inadequate intervention. I would argue that this does not hold true in the case of Kosovo that has covered by itself a wide range of institutional capacity-building measures encompassing everything from the legal and political system to education, health, and welfare.

I would like also to mention that a strong element of national identity paired with a liberal spirit of its people and a western affiliation in terms of cultural, social but also democratic values and sentiments, might have helped. One should mention, for example, the fact that with Kosovo we have in the region of the Western Balkans a country that has already set a tradition of free and fair elections, where the results are not contested as elsewhere in the region. We can also name a set of other achievements in terms of democratic values expressed both internally and in their foreign policies and international relations.

Regarding the use of interviews collected during field work that apparently inform the book content, and referred by the author in terms of methodology of

the study it can be said in a critical stance, that the fact that they remain anonymous might be considered a limitation whereas transcripts of those interviews would have helped to openly grasp the views of those interviewed for the book.

Therefore, as a point of conclusion, I would like to emphasize that despite the fact that the role of the EU as a state-builder in the case of Kosovo has been subject to weaknesses of its fragmentation from within the alliance, it has however been crucial for the emergence of the state of Kosovo and later in terms of institution-building, but also in terms of immediate economic reconstruction and free market economy, as well as ethnic accommodation and overall results, in accordance with the findings of the author of this book.