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TOWARDS RE-TRADITIONALIZING AND REVALORIZING CHIEFTAINCY IN CAMEROON GRASSFIELDS STUDIES: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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Abstract: *Studies on chiefs and the chieftaincy institution in Africa/Cameroon since the colonial period have introduced many deformations and mal-characterizations in the descriptive content and meaning of the indigenous cultural foundations. Quite understandably the prism through which many writers articulated their works reflected the scientific and cultural backgrounds from where they had been brought up. This paper explores the way language related to chiefs and the chieftaincy institution has been used in studies of the Grassfields in Cameroon. Methodologically this study adopts a qualitative approach which consisted of a content analyzing existing primary and secondary literature on chieftaincy institution in Cameroon. The study finds that the cultural mindset of colonial administrators was a major influence in the roles that chiefs were assigned and the duties they were called upon to perform thereby bringing about alterations in the role, status, function, content, and symbolism of the chieftaincy institution. A proper understanding of these changes could be useful for a more appropriate appreciation in the revalorization of any framework in which chiefs might be used especially given the penchant for the avowed preservation and sustenance of the cultural heritage and civilization of the Grassfields, in particular, and of Cameroon, in general.*

Keywords: *Traditionalization; Revalorization; Chieftaincy; Chiefs; Fon,*

1. Introduction

For several decades now the literature on the traditional leadership has continuously and wrongly used the term chiefs/chieftaincy to designate pre-colonial traditional leaders/institutions. The use of the terms “chiefs” or chieftaincy only came into use following colonial intrusion in Africa. In reality, before the advent of colonial rule to Africa and precisely the Cameroon Grassfields the political entity in area was characterized by socio-political entities commonly referred to today as *Fondoms* under the leadership of sovereigns locally and variedly called *fon*, *foyn*, *fua* depending on the community (Kaze 2020: 36).

However, with the advent of colonial rule, these local appellations witnessed a systematic change as they were all referred to *chiefs* designating traditional rulers, *chiefdom* referring to the socio-political entity. The introduction of this new appellation was repeatedly consecrated in colonial and post independent literature and historiography thus changing the original meaning, role, status, function, content, and symbolism of the institution. This change significantly dealt a big blow in the

understanding of traditional leadership and governance. In fact, at independence, the new political elite rather than changing the appellation (chiefs) given to pre-colonial Cameroon Grassfields traditional institutions by colonial authorities went further to consecrate the appellation “chiefs” in the judicial, political, and administrative ecosystem of modern Cameroon. The perpetuation of the colonial appellation for Cameroon pre-colonial traditional institutions only contributed to the deformation of the content and role of traditional authorities in Cameroon.

Anthropological and sociological studies have revealed that no society can sustainably develop without considering the fundamental institutions of its historical past. If the African society and modern state today is confronted with multiple crises today, it is partially linked to the fact that the present “State” in Africa and particularly in Cameroon is an imported whose mode of functioning and actors do not necessarily tally with African local realities. Imagine a government that will have to take an oath in a sacred shrine before taking function; this could dissuade many from indulging into bad practices such as poor governance which only contribute in exacerbate social tension as result of lack of efficient public service delivery to the people. This paper seeks to answer two important questions: Did the change in the appellation of pre-colonial Cameroon Grassfields traditional institution affect its form and content? And what have been the implications of this change on the socio-cultural and traditional heritage of Cameroon?. With reference to the above, the rest of the paper is structured as follows: literature review section, section on the features of Cameroon Grassfields traditional institutions, evolution and impacts of the colonial appellation of Cameroon Grassfields traditional authorities’ section, recommendation and conclusion section.

2. A review of traditional authorities in Cameroon grassfields

There is considerable literature on chieftaincy in Cameroon and Africa as a whole because of the crucial role it plays in politics in times past and present political equations. The vast literature has looked at chieftaincy as an institution that has evolved over the years to remain relevant in post-independence African states. Considerable literature could be found on chieftaincy on pre-colonial, colonial and post independent Cameroon Grassfields. The underlying conclusions of most works on chieftaincy in Cameroon and Africa as a whole is that the chieftaincy institution is robust and dynamic; and continues to re-invent itself to become relevant in the changing political environment.

The term chieftaincy is derived from the word chief and refers to the office and the institution of which the chief is the principal operator and stakeholder (Boakye 2016: 14). Chieftaincy may, thus, comprise among other things the personnel holding offices such as chiefs, queen mothers, notables, counselors and staff; rituals, symbol and other paraphernalia. The *fondom* is first and foremost a political unit created out of a multitude of kin groups all centered on a leader (Eyenga 2015: 8), the chief or the traditional rulers or leader who may be known and called chief or some other variant of the word.

Timothy Earle stresses the fact that the chiefdom is the society associated with the chief's polity. The social forms of chiefdoms can often be quite hierarchical, meaning that competing hierarchies and spheres of action exist, as between a political, religious, and social hierarchy, between the regional polity and constituent communities and kin groups, and between ethnic and gendered divisions (ibid). The

chief is involved in royal things and could be expected to meddle with community and household activities in only quite specific ways that affect the operation of the chieftaincy.

This presupposes that the chieftaindom as a form is highly variable based on conditions of household and community structure, each with their own histories (Feinman and Neitzel 1984: 44). Chieftaindoms thus have little coherence as a type and even further interesting because of the flexible power strategies of chiefs and their chieftaincies. Although often based on principles of kinship and rank, the chieftaincy institution was understood as personalized through patterns of fealty or loyalty somehow comparable to a lesser degree to the early stages of feudalism in Europe during the 8th Century (ibid).

E. Aggrey-Darkoh and Bossman E. Asare (2016: 3) ensued; traditional authorities are the leaders of traditional communities. The term “traditional” refers to historic roots of leadership, which legitimizes the execution of power. There are many existing forms of traditional leadership. In Cameroon as in most of Africa, traditional rule finds expression in forms such as religious leadership, extended family leadership, and chieftaincy. It is interesting to note that chieftaincy is, however, the fullest expression of traditional rule in its institutionalized form (Antwi-Boasiako and Bonna, 2009: 89). It encompasses the critical characteristics of prescribed kingship and lineage succession to office, awe and sacredness of office holders, specific form of contractual relationships between chiefs and their subjects, and institutionalized procedure for decision making and implementation at the local community and community participation and sometimes rallying support for the central government (ibid). In the same vein, Michael Mbapndah Ndobegang (1985) examines the position of chiefs in the Grassfields region of Cameroon in the 19th century. Ndobegang illustrates the way Grassfields chiefs manoeuvred their positions to mobilise their subjects and to protect their own interests. The author ponders on the nature of the relationship that existed between Grassfields chiefs and the elite during the decolonisation period. The author also examines the mechanisms and strategies that Grassfields chiefs used to secure their position and interest in the post-colonial structure of Cameroon.

Kaze Tindo Narcisse Saturnin (2012) argues that, throughout history Grassfields chiefs have been at the centre of the political, socio-economic and cultural life of their respective societies. Although chiefs are referred to by various appellations in the region, the core content and significance of chieftaincy and the functions of chiefs have lots of things in common. Also common among the chiefs of the Grassfields are such matters as the way chiefs come to office and how they exit. Chieftaincy is hereditary in the Grassfields, and chiefs remain on the throne till death. The author however notes that in the past years, there has emerged a very noticeable trend in the way chiefs are removed from office. Whereas chiefs customarily stayed in office till death, there is becoming an increasing trend to remove or expel chiefs from office, using methods that are increasingly violent. One of the main factors for this change of attitude towards chiefs was the important role colonial authorities played in the instrumentalization of traditional authorities who ended up serving colonial interest than their own people.

Examining the impact of colonial presence in the Cameroon Grassfields of Cameroon, Paul Nchoji Nkwi (1987) focused on German penetration and establishment

in the Grassfields region, and the reaction of traditional rulers and their people to this penetration. The author shows how some Grassfields chiefs resisted German penetration while others did not. The author holds that the welcome and reception given to the Germans by the Bali fondom in the Cameroon Grassfields acted as a steppingstone for the transformation of traditional institutions in this area. Furthermore, Paul Nchoji Nkwi and Jean Pierre Warnier (1982) in a co-authored study handles almost all aspects of the Cameroon Grassfields history from the pre-colonial to the post independent era. They lay special emphasis in handling the concept of traditional rulers in the Cameroon Grassfields from the colonial to the post-colonial period. It emerges from their study that traditional rulers lost most of pre-colonial and post-colonial source of power, sacredness because of colonial manipulation and perpetuated by the post independent state.

Michael Tabuwe Aletum (1974) dealing with the conflicts between traditional institutions and modern institutions after independence. The author ponders debate over the value of traditional rulers in Cameroon after independence as they were considered an anachronism. The author rejects the thesis that traditional institutions are not anachronism today arguing that even though colonial serious impacted the modus operandi and vivendi if the latter, the organisation of traditional authority, especially with regards to the control and exercise of power, has so many merits which should boast modern government today.

S.D. Nzefa (1994) argues that chieftaincy as a traditional institution was seriously threatened by new functional equivalences and power sharing equation designed by the post independent state through the social modernist agents to suit their whims and caprices. The author justifies this by arguing that the visible transformation the chieftaincy in Cameroon went through especially on the mode and choice of chieftaincy succession. Within the same framework,

C.N. Mback (2000) argues that traditional rulers in post independent Cameroon are yet to recover from the trauma caused by their first contact with the European colonisers. The post-independent political elite have perpetuated the emasculation of traditional authorities appointed by the colonial administrators by legitimising illegitimate candidates to contested chieftaincy positions.

By devaluing the status of chiefs, traditional rulers were enlisted in single party system giving the chieftaincy institution more of political orientation than traditional one. As such some political elites saw chieftaincy as a means of achieving national recognition. In fact, chieftaincy became a Trojan horse for politicians, and this has led to the emergence of numerous conflicts. In both cases, they have lost an important part of their creditworthiness among their subjects. The latter however sometimes remain devoted despite all. Chieftaincy conflicts became the gateway for non-eligible members to the post of the chief to contend as well. This sufficed to buy off some disgruntled notables whose position has been neglected by the colonial and post-colonial administration yet essential to the smooth functioning of the chieftaincy institution.

3. Methodological approach

This study adopted the historical methodology which comprised of field preparation, data collection and analysis.

3.1. Fieldwork preparation

To carry out this study, initial contacts were established with some traditional authorities, administrative officers and politicians through emails with follow up phone calls. The initial emails and phone calls shall explain the objectives of the study. In this initial correspondence, we ask for permission to conduct the interviews with the representatives of the traditional authorities and local government authorities. We profited from this to enlist their support in having access to other key informants for the interviews.

3.2. Data collection

The research was predominantly a desk study one and therefore entailed the review of the existing literature in the form of books and journal articles around issues of chieftaincy in Cameroon and their resilience throughout the various historical periods in Cameroon while taking into account the change of attitude towards traditional authorities since colonial times to the present. Instances of the dynamic nature of the relationship between the institution, civil society and the state in the context of electoral competition, conflict and violence were also examined. Moreover, the bases on which the institution is a legitimate force to be used in promoting the peace in grassroots communities and achieving local development was explored by consulting historical and modern records.

Besides the review of existing literature, we also made use of face-to-face interviews with traditional authority or their representatives; local government, government authorities, politicians and civil society organizations. 20 in-person interviews were conducted with 06 traditional rulers (1st class, 2nd class and 3rd class traditional authorities), 02 local government officials (mayor and his councilors), 2 government authorities (senior divisional officer and Divisional officers) and 5 civil society personnel (NGOs, and Cultural associations) and 05 politicians.

In these interviews, informants were prompted, through an interview guide, to provide information about such issues as on the motivation for the profound transformation and alteration of the chieftaincy institution. why despite this transformation the chieftaincy institution continue to be resilient. A quantitative data approach was applied to gather and analyze information on the population's attitudes on deformations and mal-characterizations in the descriptive content and meaning of the indigenous cultural foundations.

3.3. Data analysis

All the interviews were transcribed through a content analysis approach and thematically based on the objectives of the study. The interviews were complemented the existing literature on chieftaincy studies in Cameroon.

4. Findings and results

Colonial transformation of Cameroon Grassfields traditional indigenous institutions

The term “traditional” refers to historic roots of leadership, which legitimizes the execution of power. In the Cameroon Grassfields of Cameroon¹, these traditional leaders are generally referred to as *fon* (Fanso 1989: 4). There are many existing forms of traditional leadership. In Europe, the rule of kings and nobles was the dominant governing force for a long time until it was gradually replaced by democratic structures.

Traditional leaders are the monarchs and aristocracies of Africa who have pre-colonial roots and their African language titles are often translated into English as “chiefs”, “traditional leaders”, “traditional authorities”, “traditional rulers”, “kings” and “natural rulers” (Ray and Eizlini 2004: 8). They include those political, socio-political and politico-religious structures that are rooted in the pre-colonial period rather than in the creation of the colonial and post-colonial states, these offices which can be considered to be “neo-traditional” today. Thus, traditional leaders could include kings, other nobility holding offices, heads of extended families, and the office holders of decentralized polities whose offices are rooted in the pre-colonial states and other pre-colonial entities. Traditional leadership is anthropologically defined as including “those political, sociopolitical and politico-religious structures that are rooted in the pre-colonial period (Ibid). In most *fondoms* of the Cameroon Grassfields the traditional leader is addressed using various appellations such as *mfon*, or *fon* or *efo*, *Ifuo* or any similar word depending on the ethnic group (Nkwi and Warnier 1982: 59).

The advent of colonial rule and the implementation of colonial policies in Africa as a whole and precisely in the Cameroon Grassfields of Cameroon had significant impacts on the socio-political institutions that predated their arrival. Before the advent of colonial rule in the Cameroon Grassfields of Cameroon, the area was territorially made up of socio-political polities known locally as *fondoms* under the leadership of a traditional and customary leader generally called in most Cameroon Grassfields *fondoms* as *fon*. The appellation “fon” was the consecrated term to designate that leader whose authority and legitimacy stemmed from the social fabrics of the creation of that *fondom*. This explains why in most Cameroon Grassfields only descendants or closer relatives to the founding fathers of a *fondom* are authorized to access the throne / inherit as *afon*². It is worth noting that each *fondom* was generally named with the dialect spoken by inhabitants of each *fondom*. This was the case with *Kom*, *Nso*, *Bafut*, *Mankon* and *Bali Nyonga* whose *fondoms* names represent at the same time their venacular and the name of their polity territorially.

¹ The term Cameroon Grassfields is used to refer to the former administrative division of Wum, Nkambe and Cameroon. Administratively, the Cameroon Grassfields corresponds roughly to what is known today as the North-West Region of Cameroon with headquarters in Cameroon. In a wider sense, the grassland geography is similar but a microscopic glance at the states and kingdoms forming the regional setting reveal some interesting features which are tacit indications that, there are some minor differences. Dankler, the German explorer, describes it as the “sea of grass which stretches for hundreds of kilometers providing one of the most magnificent panoramas on earth. For details see., Paul Nchoji Nkwi and Jean Pierre Warnier., *Elements for the History of the Western Grassfields*, Yaoundé: Publication of the Sociology Department, University of Yaoundé, 1982.

² The term “*afon*” stands for the plural of “*fon*”

Traditional Rulers (*fon*) in the Cameroon Grassfields

Traditional rulers in the Cameroon Grassfields before colonial intrusion were considered the mystical and religious heads of their various polities (MINAC 1984, 11) and are not regarded as ordinary men. They occupied a special office and symbolised the link between the ancestors and their people. The title by which the *fon* is bound and has meaning only within a given culturally defined group that varies from one ethnic group to another. The largest political unit is the *fondom* or kingdom that is made up of many villages under the command of a *fon*. The *fon* was a singular ruler, and the incarnate of the customs and traditions of the group. He presided over all major rituals of the *fondoms*. The *fon* could confer on his territorial agents (clan, quarter and village heads) titles, powers and privileges of owning associations having corresponding functions at village or sector level. Titles were conferred upon persons either because of their lineage affiliation, social rank or wealth (Nkwi 1986: 39-40).

Change of Appellation and attributes of Cameroon Grassfields traditional leaders

The advent of colonial rule later witnessed a change in the appellation of leaders who ruled kingdoms, empires and *Fondoms* to chiefs and thus the term chieftaincy. Even though this change of appellation did not fundamentally change the core content of kingdoms, empires and *Fondoms*, but its nature was affected to an extent. Thus, the dynamic in chieftaincy is as old as the institution. The colonial powers in Africa, principally Britain and France, after gaining control of African states and peoples through treaties and forceful conquest, took away some of the prestige associated with the position of kingship in the conquered states. Thus, the word 'chief' rather than 'king' became their preferred reference used for African rulers both those who governed strong states and those who were appointed in acephalous groups (Crowder and Ikime 1970b, v).

The coming of Colonial Rule and the need for African intercutors-valables;/the search for and finding of leaders, various types found, cultural carry-overs in perception of African leaders (primitive, uncivilized, needing training) Meaning of chief, why call them chiefs. The attempt to make a difference between chiefs is a colonial creation which has nothing to do with tradition. In pre-colonial times, each society had its own term for the occupant of the royal office or traditional ruler, for instance, *fon*, *nfor* or *mfor* in the Grassfields of Cameroon and *Lamido* or *Sultan* among Fulani of Northern Cameroon just to name a few (Samah 2011: 71). However, the appellation of traditional rulers was later denaturalized from its content and substance following colonial intrusion into African traditional political systems, thus traditional rulers came to be addressed simply as chiefs (ibid).

Why were European monarchs and kings not called addressed as "chiefs" whereas they had almost and in some cases less mystical, religious and socio-political attributes as Cameroon Grassfields traditional rulers. It is worth mentioning that the term chief did not exist in the socio-political lexicon of pre-colonial African societies (ibid). It was coined and used administratively by the European colonizers to designate African indigenous rulers and collaborators. This was consciously done within the perspective of eurocentrism philosophy in a bit to demonstrate that Africa had no civilization before European arrival. Thus, colonialization brought out Africa and its

institution from darkness to light. This perception has been highly debated in the works of Samuel Huntington (1993: 22-49). Upon their arrival in the Cameroon Grassfields of Cameroon, European colonial authorities notably the Germans. Upon their arrival in the area, they found out that the area was a distinct region in all their exploration series. They made this judgment on the basis of the material culture, architecture and political forms they encountered (Fowler and Zeitlyn 1996: 3).

The kind of human groupings that the Germans found included individual Fondoms ranging in size from 200 to 60,000 inhabitants often physically bounded by large-scale earthworks and fixed in dynastic time by lengthy chief-lists (ibid). The Germans encountered chiefs, palaces, elaborate forms of retainerdom and secret male associations with political functions. Nonetheless, these communities varied considerably in the degree of centralization of political powers, which correlated inversely with population density so that the largest and most centralized polity indeed demonstrated the importance of the people manning such societies. This of course contradicts the Eurocentric philosophy or theory on the non-existence of an African civilization that the Cameroon Grassfields and Africa had no civilization before the advent of European colonizers.

Noticing that traditional rulers had a stronghold on their people, the colonial authorities notably the German decided to collaborate with the *afon* by recognizing their authority as a means to subdue the people. Their preference was on those *afon* who could adapt to their laws and could easily be manipulated in order to accomplish their exploitative ambition (Ngale 2001: 67). The denaturalization of the appellation of traditional rulers in the Cameroon Grassfields was in line with European cultural domination which was geared among other reason not to give the same value and significance to African pre-colonial rulers who had the same mystical, religious and socio-political attributes like European monarchs and kings. In so doing, the contributed in influencing the symbol, scope and role of traditional rulers in the Cameroon Grassfields.

New Role Assign to Cameroon Grassfields Traditional Rulers

Colonialism changed the standing of pre-colonial traditional leaders in strong centralized states from kings with some accountability to the king-makers and other elites, to chiefs appointed by the colonial authority with no mechanism of accountability to their subjects (Abwa 1989: 141). This change was perpetuated by the post independent that state that gradually used traditional rulers, now chiefs to consolidate its territorial and administrative presence in the within the new state.

Existing literature on traditional rulers in the Cameroon Grassfields reveals that the change impacted on traditional rulers apart from their new denomination from the pre-colonial appellation (*afon*) to chiefs, their scope and role was altered from a purely traditional to a more modern administration one under the supervision colonial authorities. As a matter of fact, with the advent of colonial authorities in the Cameroon Grassfields, *afon* were forcefully assigned new role such as the collection of taxes, recruitment of labor for plantations. This was the case with the German colonial authorities who were the first colonial authorities to set foot in the Cameroon Grassfields. From the beginning of their colonial mission in Cameroon, the Germans recognized the need to use the local traditional institutions as agencies on which to anchor their rule. As a matter of fact, even before colonial occupation took place,

representatives of German commercial houses and other trading concerns that were present in the territory sought the collaboration of traditional rulers for the purpose of "striking" trade deals and later, to obtain labor for plantations which were being opened up at the coast.

Under the British administration, Cameroon Grassfields traditional rulers were introduced into a new system of tax that had change from tributes to taxes in the pre-colonial Cameroon Grassfields traditional political system no taxes were paid, but tributes were given which often took the form of material payment, like agricultural products or manual labor (Aletum, 1980: 95). The payment of tribute was not a rational affair like the payment of taxes which set fixed amounts to be paid in English currency within a limited period of time. Thus, the tax system under the Germans and British administration became what Chilver and Kaberry termed "From Tribute to Tax" (Chilver and Kaberry 1960: 9). The authors showed how some institutions of traditional political system in the Cameroon Grassfields were converted into tax collecting authorities.

In the Bafut fendom in the Cameroon Grassfields, the system was that, out of every English pound the fon collected, he was paid one shilling. It therefore implied that the *fon's* livelihood depended on the amount of tax he collected. If he did not submit to the local native authorities of his area the sum of money prescribed, he was held responsible. So, *afon* needed helpers and lineage-heads to collaborate in the system of tax collecting. The system also required a territorially based organization census, a regular collection and an efficient method to impose the per capita amount of tax.

In certain cases, some *afon* exploited the situation to their own advantage by not handing over money collected to the Native Council Authorities. This was difficult to trace because no adequate records were kept showing names and numbers of residents in any of the territorial areas (ibid). In areas where traditional rulers did not exist, the colonial authorities did not hesitate to create new one though without any historical and traditional basis. According to Richard Morris (1973: 147) and Goodson, the survival of a nation depended on the total exploitation of the man power available and the material resources therein. The German and British colonial authorities seemed to have exploited this theory so well that the establishment of the German and British administration opened up the area to human and economic exploitation that came to dominate the socio-economic arena.

Peter Geschiere (1996: 2) contends that an important issue in understanding the varying performance of traditional authorities in present Africa is the degree to which their power was rooted in local societies. At first sight this might seem to be a somewhat strange query: the adjective "traditional" seems to imply that such authority has per definition "traditional" roots. However, it is clear that in Africa the "traditionality" of these authorities was highly variable. If one adopts a stringent historical perspective, the appropriateness of the adjective "traditional" becomes in many cases a moot point. Many so-called "customary" or "traditional" chieftaincies were in reality colonial creations, born from the urgent need to 'pacify' and administer large, newly conquered territories (ibid). And by so doing created chieftaincy conflicts at the level of the traditionality of the successor as well as the legitimacy of the acts posed by some traditional rulers. The German colonial administration in Cameroon particularly in the Grassfields created these chiefs in order to solve their urgent

administrative problems. However, appointed chiefs created significant problems and engendered large-scale resentment among some Grassfields people.

The new role of chiefs; that of serving more of the colonial administration than their Fondoms sharply contrasted with their role in pre-colonial period. Instead, the regulatory society and other palace institutions executed his orders. The new role of Cameroon Grassfields *afon* was detrimental to their authority as the instructions they executed more often than not conflicted with some traditional values and aspirations of the people. This weakened the authority of chiefs and created avenues for clashes with chiefs, which in the long run weaken the chief's position in the society. As such, the mystical and sacred value attached to chieftaincy was challenge as some subjects use this weakness to contest the decision and even doubt the legitimacy of chiefs, who according to them had betrayed the people by serving the colonialists.

At independence, traditional rulers in the Cameroon Grassfields, just like in other areas of Cameroon made auxiliaries of the administration which was more or less a continuation of colonial domination. This was because the post independent reserve almost the same threat and, in some instance, worst treatment for the chieftaincy institution. Colonial rule in the Cameroon Grassfields had a significant impact on the socio-political and economic institutions existent in the area. One of such institutions was the chieftaincy institution. Generally, opinions among scholars hold that colonial rule did more harm than good to African traditional system incarnated by chieftaincy, even if others suggest that the colonial administration actually molded the chiefs and the chieftaincy institutions in the colonial image (Van Nieuwaal, 1996: 102). In the period following independence, there were new considerations which came to affect the perceptions of aspirants to chieftaincy, be they deserved or not. Also, there was an intensification of attempts by the urban elite turned politicians to associate themselves and their actions with traditional rulers and chiefs in the Cameroon Grassfields.

In simple terms, the issues which affected the whole process of access to chieftaincy or influenced it undoubtedly underwent noticeable transformations in the period since independence. At independence, the injunction for chiefs in participating in the functioning of the modern state was very brief as a decree³ was signed to regulate its functioning. It can be deduced that the multiplied chieftaincy conflicts faced by the chieftaincy institution some of which had their roots from colonial period actually threatened the State as some of them were marked by violent manifestations. To Van Nieuwaal (1996) dreading the threat chieftaincy could cause the modern state as rival governance and in terms of stability, the African modern states just like colonialist co-opted and marginalize the chiefs within its bureaucratic models as mere auxiliaries as a means to resolve the threat posed by chieftaincy and at the same time use it to consolidate its existence.

Colonial administrators in the Cameroon Grassfields kept *afon* at the forefront of socio-political and economic management of their polities, but with the advent of the post independent state, chieftaincy was not only threatened by the new political elites, it was transformed into a valet institution to the new state. They were later engulfed and aligned as the lowest administrative unit and representative of the state or what was administratively called auxiliaries of the administration. The fact that chieftaincy institution became a valet institution at the mercy of the modern state, capable of

³ Article 16 of Decree No.77/245 of 15th July 1977 to organize Fondoms

making and unmaking a *fon*, a number of troubles increased within the *fonship* institution. It is worth noting that the constitutional reforms of the 1990s were preceded by the legalization of political parties, which paved the way for open competition for elective posts (Gwaibi 2017: 339). This was in stark contrast to what existed during single-party rule, under the dictatorship of Cameroon's first President, Ahmadou Ahidjo. During that era everyone, including traditional chiefs, in principle belonged to the Grand National Party, and any form of dissent was often violently suppressed (Geschiere 2009: 29). The liberation of the political scene in the 1990s gave chiefs the opportunity to bounce back into the political scene with some becoming mayors, and members of parliament.

The main question is that of the implication of *afon* and how the democratic transition in Cameroon came to be considered as a factor in the various efforts to access *fonship* in the Cameroon Grassfields. As Jude Fokwang (2003: 107) indicates, the introduction of democracy in Cameroon in 1990 created conditions for the return of old political actors such as chiefs to the "national political scene", despite the popular demand for "actors" of a new kind. This was because in the days of the single party state, Paul Biya had prohibited chiefs from participating in national politics (Bayart 1979: 34). Nevertheless, pluralism prompted by the demand for "Jacobin democracy", compelled Paul Biya to backtrack from this position as he needed *afon* to consolidate his powers and the dissemination of the party. For example, the *fon* of Mankon was co-opted as the first Vice President of the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM). At the same time, the *afon* of Bali and Bafut became alternate members of the Central Committee.

5. Conclusion

The clash of civilizations between the emergences of modern conceptions of democracy, governance and principles of human rights on the one hand and the entrenched cultural traits in Cameroon on the other hand has left the country at a crossroad in relation to the fundamental alternative forms of governance available to move the nation forward. This could partly be explained by the fact that the colonial legacy seriously undermined the relevance of traditional institutions that hitherto dominated the way of life of communities before the arrival of the colonialists and the modern State. Consequently, the fate of chieftaincy in the Cameroon Grassfields and in Cameroon in general has been put on the edge of peril. The need to re-traditionalize and revalorize the chieftaincy, without being extensive requires; the constitutionalization of the latter, a systematic pedagogy on the institution and their rational implication in modern governance.

There is no doubt that colonial rule contributed significantly in undermining the value of traditional rulers in Africa and specifically in the Cameroon Grassfields of Cameroon. However, the contribution of the post independent states and as well as the historiography on traditional rulers which is essentially inspired from the colonial perspective. Despite the attempt to devalue the *fonship* institution in the Cameroon Grassfields of Cameroon, the latter has continued to attract the reverence and legitimacy of the people. Its capacity of popular mobilization is so strong that most administrative and political elites rely on it for their political sustenance. Traditional institutions and leaders in Cameroon despite their depravities and weaknesses remain a very significant element in society which cannot be ignored. Its capacity to participate

and contribute to nation building is very crucial if only it is reorganized on the basis of the fundamental traditional, historical and cultural principles that regulated the institution before the advent of colonial rule.

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SCHIZOPHRENIA: LIVING WITH OR AGAINST THE ILLNESS. A SMALL CASE EXPLORATORY STUDY¹

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Abstract: Background: For persons with severe mental illness, recovery has been defined as the process of living a satisfying life within the constraints of their mental illness. Schizophrenia is a severe complex mental health disorder characterized by an array of positive and negative symptoms, and the timing of the occurrence along with its chronic course, make it a disabling disorder for many patients and their families. **Method:** This small-scale exploratory study aims at measuring how a sample of 24 patients manages to cope with the diagnosis and evaluate their level of recovery from the illness. RAS-R was used and data was analyzed according to the five dimensions of the scale: personal confidence and hope, willingness to ask for help, goal and success orientation, reliance on others, and autonomy. **Results:** Our sample generally obtained a mean value in the middle range of the scale showing that they manage quite successfully to accept the diagnosis and construct a positive image of the future. Even if we did not get significant differences according to gender, women showed better scores. **Conclusions:** The care model for persons with schizophrenia must be oriented toward a full recovery process. This means moving away from the assumption that care focuses on maintain or stabilizing the patients' mental health, to a more holistic approach that includes values such as hope, social inclusion, goal setting, and patient self-management.

Key-words: schizophrenia; recovery; patients.

1. Introduction

Recovery in mental illness is a continuous process of building and living a satisfying and fulfilling life that is self-defined and irrespective of persisting symptoms and dysfunctions that may be associated with a mental health diagnosis (Davidson et al., 2005). This contrasts with the traditional disease-oriented recovery that emphasizes symptom remission and functional improvement. A patient-oriented recovery focuses on the self-directed pursuit of personally meaningful life in the presence of a disability (Davidson et al., 2005; Silverstein and Bellack, 2008). In the last years, this view of recovery has become increasingly prominent in the field of mental health. Mental health recovery may be seen as living well with illness (Oades, Deane, and Crowe, 2017). Therefore, a series of guiding principles in the development and implementation of mental health services for people in recovery of mental illness have been proposed (Jacobson and Curtis, 2000).

The treatment model for patients with schizophrenia must also be oriented toward rehabilitation, integration, and not just on managing the symptoms. Left

¹ The extended version is Drobotă, I. "Schizofrenia: a trăi cu sau împotriva bolii" (bachelor dissertation), successfully defended on July 2021 at Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj-Napoca

untreated, schizophrenia leads to severe emotional and behavioural problems. These further transfer into all aspects all social life (eg. legal, occupational, relational, financial areas). WHO (2019) acknowledges that schizophrenia is a chronic and severe mental disorder affecting 20 million people worldwide and it is associated with considerable disability and may affect educational and occupational performance. The symptoms generally start on adolescence and young adults and people with schizophrenia are 2-3 times more likely to die early than the general population. However, schizophrenia is treatable and treatment with medicines and psychosocial support is proved to be effective. Also, facilitation of assisted living, supported housing and supported employment are effective management strategies for people with schizophrenia.

Stigma, discrimination and violation of human rights of people with schizophrenia are common and interfere with the success of the recovery program. Generally, portraying persons with schizophrenia as victims of the illness and as offenders, the media takes a more negative stance towards schizophrenia, spreading a distorted image of people with schizophrenia, which might contribute to stigma (Calo and Băban, 2013). Most studies consider that persons with schizophrenia are the most stigmatized category among those with a mental illness. Due to the chronicity and incomplete remission of the symptoms, a significant number of patients continue living in protected houses and/or hospitals and they do not reach the level of independent/autonomous adult who marry, have children and work (Mariş, 2013). The GAMIAN-Europe study (Brohan et al., 2010), carried in 14 countries and aiming at describing the level of self-stigma experienced by mental health service users with a diagnosis of schizophrenia or other psychotic disorders in Europe concluded that almost half (41.7%) reported moderate or high levels of self-stigma, 49.2% moderate or high stigma resistance, 49.7% moderate or high empowerment and 69.4% moderate or high perceived discrimination. These results confirm once more the need to change our attitudes as well and to support patients with mental illness in their recovery process. We believe that the high level of self-stigma is nothing more than a reflection of the stigma from the others. In other words, we may say that the level of stigma interferes with the recovery process because "low compliance or non-compliance in the early stages of the treatment and in the long term care is proportional to the intensity and type of stigma" (Fodoreanu, 2008: 32). Such persons will feel guilty for what is happening, will see himself/herself as unfit to carry certain tasks, will start to neglect himself/herself and will stop carrying about anything. When you stop carrying about yourself, why would you make an effort to recover, to follow your treatment plan? We believe that, in such cases, the stigma impacts the person more than the illness itself.

2. Method

2.1.Aim

The scientific problem of this paper is the high level of stigma associated to the persons with schizophrenia, which, in many cases impedes people to ask for professional help. Starting from this, we wanted to measure how the patients manage to cope to this diagnosis and evaluate their level of recovery from the illness.

2.2. Sample and data collection

Respondents were recruited from two Neuropsychiatric Recovery and Rehabilitation Centers from Suceava County. Questionnaires were filled in in physical format during November-December 2020. The total sample reached 24 persons aged 30-69, equally divided between males and females. The majority (75%) is not married. None of the respondents was employed at the date of data collection, 21 persons having a disability degree certificate and 2 an unemployment benefit.

2.3. Instrumentalization

Recovery Assessment Scale (RAS) is one of the most used tool in both English (see McNaught, et al., 2007; Hancock et al., 2011) and non-English speaking countries (see Chiba, Miyamoto, & Kawakami, 2010; Jorge-Monteiro & Ornelas, 2016; Mak, Chan, and Yau, 2016; Cavelti et al., 2017; Silva et al., 2017; Biringier & Tjoflåt, 2018; Guler & Gurkan, 2019; Boggian et al., 2020) for measuring recovery for people with mental illness (Salzer and Brusilovskiy, 2014; He, Fang, Huang, and Yu, 2021). For this study we used the 24-item revised version (RAS-R: Biringier and Tjoflåt, 2018) which yields five factors: (a) Personal confidence and hope (items 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 21), (b) Willingness to ask for help (items 18, 19 and 20), (c) Goal and success orientation (items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5), (d) Reliance on others (items 6, 22, 23 and 24), and (e) No domination by symptoms (items 15, 16 and 17). For each item, participants rated their agreement on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) with higher scores indicating better outcomes in terms of recovery from mental illness.

Descriptive statistics of the RAS-R item responses, mean sub- and total scale are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive of the RAS-R items and summary scales in the valid sample (n = 24)

| Item | Mean | SD |
|---|------|------|
| Personal confidence and hope ($\alpha = .90$) | | |
| Fear doesn't stop me from living the way I want to | 2.87 | 1.22 |
| I can handle what happens in my life | 3.04 | 1.16 |
| I like myself | 3.79 | 1.06 |
| If people really knew me, they would like me | 3.75 | .84 |
| I have an idea of who I want to become | 3.41 | 1.13 |
| Something good will eventually happen | 3.83 | .96 |
| I'm hopeful about my future | 3.37 | 1.17 |
| I continue to have new interests | 3.37 | 1.13 |
| I can handle stress | 3.54 | 1.17 |
| Willingness to ask for help ($\alpha = .85$) | | |
| I know when to ask for help | 3.95 | .69 |
| I am willing to ask for help | 3.83 | .76 |
| I ask for help when I need it | 3.87 | .74 |
| Goal and success orientation ($\alpha = .93$) | | |
| I have a desire to succeed | 3.91 | .92 |
| I have my own plan for how to stay or become well | 3.58 | 1.24 |

| | | |
|---|------|------|
| I have goals in life that I want to reach | 3.58 | 1.24 |
| I believe that I can meet my current personal goals | 3.54 | 1.25 |
| I have a purpose in life | 3.58 | 1.01 |
| Reliance on others ($\alpha = .81$) | | |
| Even when I don't care about myself, other people do | 3.56 | 1.03 |
| I have people I can count on | 3.56 | 1.03 |
| Even when I don't believe in myself, other people do | 3.47 | .79 |
| It is important to have a variety of friends | 3.43 | 1.19 |
| No domination by symptoms ($\alpha = .77$) | | |
| Coping with my mental illness is no longer the main focus of my life | 3.33 | 1.09 |
| My symptoms interfere less and less with my life | 3.29 | 1.16 |
| My symptoms seem to be a problem for shorter periods of time each time they occur | 3.50 | 1.02 |
| RAS total ($\alpha = .77$) | 3.54 | .77 |

Source: generated by the authors

2.4. Procedure

Giving the location of the study, approval for the study was obtained from the General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection Suceava (DGASPC). Afterwards, the directors of the centers were contacted and the primary researcher explained the aim of the research. Explaining the selection criteria (respondents with a diagnosis of schizophrenia and capable to answer questions), the social worker then recommended and selected the potential respondents. Giving the pandemic situation where the direct access to the institution was not possible, questionnaires were filled in by the respondents with the help of social workers. Completed questionnaires were scanned and send by e-mail to the researcher. In order to assure the confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy of the responses, subjects were told that data will be available only to the research team and a contact number was provided for addressing future concerns. Answers were then checked for consistency and uploaded into SPSS software and used in analysis.

3. Results

Personal confidence and hope

With respect to the first dimension, "personal confidence and hope", the only significant difference is recorded for the item *If people really knew me, they would like me* [$t(22) = -2.72, p = .012$] with females displaying a more positive hope outcome. However, we notice that, compared to males, females in general display higher scores for all the items suggesting that they handle more easily their diagnosis, and they construct their future in a more positive manner.

Table 2. Sample statistics and p value for Personal confidence and hope

| Item | M | SD | t | df | p |
|--|------|------|-------|----|-----|
| Fear doesn't stop me from living the way I want to | | | -1.93 | 22 | .06 |
| Male | 2.41 | 1.16 | | | |
| Female | 3.33 | 1.15 | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-----------|-----|
| I can handle what happens in my life | | | .17 | 22 | .86 |
| Male | 3.08 | 1.31 | | | |
| Female | 3.00 | 1.04 | | | |
| I like myself | | | -1.37 | 22 | .18 |
| Male | 3.50 | 1.16 | | | |
| Female | 4.08 | .90 | | | |
| If people really knew me, they would like me | | | -2.72 | 22 | .01 |
| Male | 3.33 | .88 | | | |
| Female | 4.16 | .57 | | | |
| I have an idea of who I want to become | | | -1.89 | 22 | .07 |
| Male | 3.00 | 1.12 | | | |
| Female | 3.83 | 1.02 | | | |
| Something good will eventually happen | | | -1.77 | 22 | .09 |
| Male | 3.50 | 1.00 | | | |
| Female | 4.16 | .83 | | | |
| I'm hopeful about my future | | | -1.23 | 22 | .23 |
| Male | 3.08 | 1.31 | | | |
| Female | 3.66 | .98 | | | |
| I continue to have new interests | | | -1.68 | 19. 33 | .10 |
| Male | 3.00 | 1.27 | | | |
| Female | 3.75 | .86 | | | |
| I can handle stress | | | -.51 | 22 | .61 |
| Male | 3.41 | 1.31 | | | |
| Female | 3.66 | 1.07 | | | |

Source: generated by the authors

Willingness to ask for help

We know that persons with schizophrenia have difficulties in adapting to new living conditions, are stigmatized, rejected and they need professional help to overcome the obstacles. Even if there were no significant difference noticed in our sample, we notice that females in general tend to acknowledge better their need of help and are more willing to ask for it.

Table 3. Sample statistics and p value for Willingness to ask for help

| Item | M | SD | t | df | p |
|-------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| I know when to ask for help | | | -1.49 | 22 | .14 |
| Male | 3.76 | .59 | | | |
| Female | 4.18 | .75 | | | |
| I am willing to ask for help | | | .08 | 15. 20 | .93 |
| Male | 3.84 | .55 | | | |
| Female | 3.81 | .98 | | | |
| I ask for help when I need it | | | -.20 | 22 | .84 |
| Male | 3.84 | .55 | | | |
| Female | 3.90 | .94 | | | |

Source: generated by the authors

Goal and success orientation

Women are also more confident and willing to do what it takes to have a functional life (see items *I have my own plan for how to stay or become well* and *I believe that I can meet my current personal goals*). Even if the t-test did not yield for significant differences, the mean values allow us to notice the better recovery process for women.

Table 4. Sample statistics and p value for Goal and success orientation

| Item | M | SD | t | df | p |
|---|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| I have a desire to succeed | | | -0.397 | 22 | .69 |
| Male | 3.84 | .68 | | | |
| Female | 4.00 | 1.18 | | | |
| I have my own plan for how to stay or become well | | | -1.54 | 22 | .13 |
| Male | 3.23 | 1.16 | | | |
| Female | 4.00 | 1.26 | | | |
| I have goals in life that I want to reach | | | -.18 | 22 | .85 |
| Male | 3.53 | 1.26 | | | |
| Female | 3.63 | 1.28 | | | |
| I believe that I can meet my current personal goals | | | -1.39 | 20. 93 | .17 |
| Male | 3.23 | 1.42 | | | |
| Female | 3.90 | .94 | | | |
| I have a purpose in life | | | -1.04 | 22 | .30 |
| Male | 3.38 | 1.12 | | | |
| Female | 3.81 | .87 | | | |

Source: generated by the authors

Reliance on others

With respect to the fourth dimension, the only significant difference was recorded for the item *Even when I don't care about myself, other people do* [$t(22) = -3.01$, $p = .007$] suggesting that females have better connection with the outer group. In general thou, we also notice that the mean recorded for females is slightly higher than for males, suggesting that the support group is higher and more accessible to them when needed. We know that support from friends and family is very important in the recovery process and in sustaining the positive outcomes during treatment so we consider that this dimension is an important entry point for targeted interventions. This higher value for reliance on others correlates to the willingness to ask for help and with personal confidence and hope.

Table 5. Sample statistics and p value for Reliance on others

| Item | M | SD | t | df | p |
|--|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Even when I don't care about myself, other people do | | | -3.01 | 21 | .00 7 |
| Male | 3.07 | 1.03 | | | |
| Female | 4.20 | .63 | | | |
| I have people I can count on | | | .18 | 22 | .85 |

| | | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|-----|
| Male | 3.53 | 1.12 | | | |
| Female | 3.45 | 1.03 | | | |
| Even when I don't believe in myself, other people do | | | -1.84 | 21.07 | .06 |
| Male | 3.23 | .72 | | | |
| Female | 3.81 | .75 | | | |
| It is important to have a variety of friends | | | -.67 | 20.93 | .50 |
| Male | 3.30 | 1.10 | | | |
| Female | 3.63 | 1.28 | | | |

Source: generated by the authors

No domination by symptoms

With no significant differences for any of the items, however we noticed again the higher mean is recorded for females, suggesting that they are slightly better managing the symptoms and in controlling their life in spite of the diagnosis.

Table 6. Sample statistics and p value for No domination by symptoms

| Item | M | SD | t | df | p |
|---|------|------|-------|-------|-----|
| Coping with my mental illness is no longer the main focus of my life | | | -1.26 | 22 | .21 |
| Male | 3.07 | 1.11 | | | |
| Female | 3.63 | 1.02 | | | |
| My symptoms interfere less and less with my life | | | -1.81 | 21.51 | .08 |
| Male | 2.92 | 1.25 | | | |
| Female | 3.72 | .90 | | | |
| My symptoms seem to be a problem for shorter periods of time each time they occur | | | -1.03 | 22 | .32 |
| Male | 3.30 | 1.10 | | | |
| Female | 3.72 | .90 | | | |

Source: generated by the authors

Running a t-test for independent samples for all the five dimensions of RAS we concluded that there are no significant differences between males and females for Personal confidence and hope [$t(22) = -1.81, p=0.08$], Willingness to ask for help [$t(22) = -0.62, p=0.54$], Goal and success orientation [$t(22) = -1.17, p=0.25$], Reliance on others [$t(21) = -1.68, p=0.11$], and Autonomy [$t(22) = -1.991, p=0.06$].

4. Conclusions and Discussion

The aim of the current research was to evaluate the degree of acceptance of the illness and diagnosis of schizophrenia. By ‘acceptance’ we did not mean a deterministic and fatalistic view of patients in facing a situation that limits their possibilities, blocks their future initiatives and hope regarding their future, but their level of adaptation to the illness allowing them to live functionally with the diagnosis. The instrument we

used focuses on recovery as a proxy measure for adaptation. Recovery is seen both as a result and as a process (He et al., 2021).

In a study carried on a Romanian sample, compared to men, women with schizophrenia reported a lower degree of disability and a better quality of life. This difference may be due to the later onset of the illness in female patients and their better compliance to the treatment (Roșca et al., 2018). In testing this hypothesis we measured for the differences according to gender regarding personal confidence and hope, willingness to ask for help, goal and success orientation, reliance on others, and autonomy. Even if our results did not show significant differences, women in general obtained higher mean scores for all the dimensions indicating that our results are similar to previous studies. In general, women with a schizophrenia diagnosis display a positive image about their future life and they are also more inclined to ask for help when needed and act more independently. They manage to live with the illness and not against it.

However, there are a series of limitation to consider when looking at these results:

- small sample size and sampling procedure (convenience) employed did not allow us to generalize the findings to the population with a schizophrenia diagnosis;
- research instrument chosen (questionnaires) did not allow for a fully understanding of their experience in living with the illness;
- research procedure constraints that did not allow for direct face-to-face interaction with the respondents limited our control in filling in the measurements.

But, in conclusion, our exploratory objectives were fully met. Concluding that that for the 24 respondents included in the study, patients displayed positive attitudes toward the illness, emphasis the need to look at these persons in a more functional manner and to continue offering support services. These persons proved that they manage to live with the illness.

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CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONAL VALUES OF THE MACEDONIAN COMMUNITIES IN ROMANIA

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Abstract: *The purpose of this article is to highlight certain Macedonian customs but also their influence in Romania. Old Macedonian customs are unchanged in some areas of Romania. The traditions of the Macedonians consist of many ritual activities. Therefore, these practices specific to Macedonians lead to the preservation of their ethnic identity. These customs are preserved from antiquity to the present, sometimes some aspects have been changed, but they still fit with the popular customs and beliefs of their Macedonian, both from the perspective of the time when they celebrate, but also in terms of actions, procedures, and ritual symbolism so that equitation reflect their Macedonian identity, from antiquity until today. In my approach I had as a point of reference a series of objectives: identifying the Macedonian cultural specificity, researching traditions, customs, habits, and social practices, capitalizing on authentic popular creation from the perspective of avoiding distortion and obsolescence, initiating a sociological study on the need for traditions popular as a component of the means of communication of old customs.*

Keywords: *customs; beliefs; Macedonian; rituals; Macedonian traditions.*

1.Introduction

In Romania, there are 20 national minorities: Albanians, Armenians, Bulgarians, Czechs, Croats, Jews, Germans, Greeks, Italians, Macedonians, Hungarians, Poles, Roma, Russian-Slipover, Athenians, Serbs, Slovaks, Tatars, Turks, and Ukrainians which have specific cultural, linguistic and religious traditions.

National minorities on the territory of Romania are identified by some particular characteristics that make a specific identity, that any member of an ethnic group trying to preserve and pass on to future generations. Identity in general and national identity, in particular, is seen as a fact as well as a process.

The group is ethnic "identity is justified in particular by the fact that they have the same origin and language, a cultural heritage shared consciousness of membership identity and a limited membership" (Otovescu, 2013: 77).

Custom, tradition called, is, therefore, usually target one of the most important elements of traditional culture. The study of customs has a special role in understanding the formation of communities and in explaining the national specificity of an ethnic group. By studying the so-called folklore, customs involving research content, their traditions can be outlined certain rules social of a community in its historical evolution (Boboş, 1999: 187). Custom is the oldest formal source

of society, before the existence of laws and rules of the organization, the terms of tradition and tradition were the only ones used in this social field.

Any culture single has specific values, which influence the conduct of members of society. If values are imposed on them as "abstract standards" for what is desirable, right, or good, traditions and norms are indicators of conduct that show what is appropriate or inappropriate in actions aimed at accomplishing individual and social tasks. An important role in social existence is played by traditional norms, which essentially influence the individual and collective conduct of members of society. So very occupied traditions, customs, rules of social life, holidays, rituals, etc.

Tradition is the multitude of habits, customs, beliefs that are transmitted from generation to generation, forming the specific features of a people. Traditions are a system of ideas, laws, norms of conduct, a totality of concepts that have formed over time that do not constitute a complete form spontaneously. Therefore, the structure of the traditional three layers can be delimited:

1. the idea (representation);
2. habit (a certain norm of conduct);
3. ritual (symbolic embodiment of custom). (Capcelea, 1998: 9).

Traditions are part of the social memory of a people that helps us to answer the six "of the sites" involved in self-knowledge: Who am I? Why am I? How are they? What are they for? Where? When?.

In which we are building on their sense, di away from the all other and individuals sem single n complicated with us. Consequently, there are multiple ways of dealing with traditions:

- traditions as a component of social consciousness;
- as a means of transmitting experience it is social;
- certain dealings with the social, etc. (Capcelea, 1998: 221-223).

In ancient Macedonia habits that work their ritual celebrating their religion are closely linked to the territory and the climatic conditions. Many customs and ritual activities of the Macedonians, were unique but some were changed but, still present among the Macedonian people. In the current period, the identity construction of Macedonians is a mixture of ethnic identity, national identity, and European identity, it helps us to observe a new historical, social and cultural situation, recognizing and reaffirming the cultural values of the Macedonian ethnicity. The Macedonian people lived in tribal territories mountainous leading many fights is for a gain certain territories that were covered with grass. Residents Macedonian territory and wanted to have as much land farming and land where he could hunting of and fish (Thomas, 2007: 138).

Ritual their customs and their Macedonian them that them I noticed at certain times of the year were closely linked to climate. Some of the holiday-related customs are centered around four astronomical phenomena:

1. spring equinox;
2. autumn equinox;
3. winter solstice;
4. summer solstice.

Most habits are closely linked to agricultural work season, ie planting and harvesting into other habits were an adjacent circle of life: birth and death.

To date, the Macedonians of Northern Macedonia, but also in Romania kept their fundamental characteristics, language, traditions, customs and origin, and ethnic unity consciousness.

The Macedonian minority located in the territory of Romania is identified by some particular characteristics that make a specific identity, that any member of an ethnic group trying to preserve and pass on to future generations. The Macedonian ethnic group has many customs that play an important role even today in the daily life of Macedonians. Some rituals are practiced by ethnic groups today, others are present only in the memory of older people. All events in the life of Macedonians are accompanied by appropriate traditions that are rules, codes of conduct, springing from experience and habit even though they are not written, is a major ethical feature of any ethnic community. The events that have marked the life of each person are an opportunity to use that happiness to the person at the center of the event. Popular customs played an important role in the self-regulation of nuptials, births, and deaths. The passage is prepared long before, through customs, ritual acts, magical practices (Capcelea, 1998: 9).

The traditions of the Macedonians in Romania preserved over time refer to the belief in ancestral traditions, creating a close connection between ethnic Macedonians.

2. Old Macedonian customs and traditions

The traditions and customs of the Macedonians from Northern Macedonia but also from those from Romania are related to our daily life. The Macedonians have kept certain customs, traditions, passed on to the generations the spiritual values of the Macedonian people through religious traditions, folklore, customs, culinary art, etc.

For the Macedonians, the most common ceremonies are those of initiation, namely those that make the transition from childhood to adulthood. The rituals of transition from childhood to adulthood are performed by boys and involve the transition from an immature child to an adult (Proeva, 2004: 132). Religion plays an important role in the life of the Macedonian community, as does each of its members. Religion was one of the reasons for the emigration of Macedonians to Romania.

Ethnic Macedonians in Romania, as well as those in Northern Macedonia, are Orthodox of the old rite, celebrating most church holidays 13 days after they are celebrated by Romanians. So, for the Macedonians, Christmas is celebrated on January 7, and the New Year on January 14.

The most important holidays for Macedonians are Veligden - Pasha; Bojik - Christmas; Bogorodița - Virgo Maria; Cârstovden - Epiphany; Nova Godina - New Year; Ilinden - Saint Elijah; Spasovden - Ascension; Petrovden - Saint Peter; Saint Dumitru.

In the Republic of Northern Macedonia, a well-known custom that is practiced today is the celebration of Vasilica, the "unbaptized days". These days are twelve in a number being between Christmas which is on the 7th of January in Macedonians and the Epiphany which is on the date of January 19th. In this period time, they take holidays, according to some popular beliefs, spirits them evil enters homes Macedonians making them worse.

So, as to ward off evil Macedonians (Kovacheva and Boceva, 2014: 23) during the holidays day's Christians are processions in which men are asked to remove the spirits that bring misfortune in their lives. Masked men are just bachelors or younger married people (Kovacheva, 2012: 133-134).

The processions were attended by between 30 and 50 Vasilicas people, of whom only four were "maskardzhi" ("men in masks"). But today the number of those participating in processions is declining. The men who take part in the procession have well-defined roles to mark the struggle between good and evil, and where of course good always overcomes evil. This celebration show ritual symbolism of the victory of good over evil, which, according to popular belief brings it healthy house and harvest rich (Kovacheva and Boceva, 2014: 30-31).

The most spectacular "Rusaliis" dances are those that Macedonians perform on the occasion of the feast of Basilica, the "unbaptized days". In the Republic of Macedonia Northern groups of countries called "Rusaliis" consist of 20 or 30 for boys and men between 20 and 40 years and 10 or 30 for girls. Each group has musicians, the most appreciated being the drummer. The dance "Rusaliis" ends the baptismal holiday. Dancers before returning to their homes go first to the church for prayer with some swords which they hold up in the church. For example, if a child is sick and is held in the arms of his mother in the church as prayer takes place, symbolically it is considered that the disease is banished far away (Kovachev, 2012: 131-132).

The feast of Basilica, of the "unbaptized days", which we find in the Macedonians of Northern Macedonia, in those of Romania we find under the name of Pentecost which also takes place between January 7 and 19, starting with the last day of Christmas and ending - on the eve of the Epiphany. These are the so-called days of evil or fairy tales that cripple people and threaten people's lives.

Pentecostal customs are sprinkled with choruses, these chairs are nothing more than ritual dances dating back to pre-Christian times. Originally, this tradition was very different from today.

Before the dances that were made on this occasion had a magical character, which ward off evil spirits which was referred to above, ensuring - human and animal health.

The customs and choruses of Pentecost that we encounter in all the peoples of the Balkans have something in common. What is common is that everywhere we find traces of ancient cultures.

What it is, however, for us and more importantly, that the magical power of these dances is practiced and Călușarii. Romanian given recovery sick "these ancient elements we meet and Macedonians in-far more insignificant" (Obrembski, 2002: 78). Dancers or Pentecostals, as they are called by some and others, rarely allow the introduction of the sick in their midst and just as hard go to the houses where they are sick. At the request of that family, they are willing to go applying some of the rules rites, but without them to do something on their initiative, while at Călușarii Romanian. This element is primarily where dancers have the same role as doctors, priests, and sorcerers (Pouqueville, 1826:172-176).

in Macedonia, a very popular celebration is Saint Tryphon, which is described as a patron of the owners of taverns and protector of Macedonians have gardens. In

the cities of Ohrid, Prilep, and Radovic you can drink for free in taverns (Kovacheva and Boceva, 2014: 328).

In the middle of the Macedonian community from Urzicuța locality from Dolj county, we find a custom kept by Saint Tryphon, which takes place on February 1st in new style and in old-style on February 14th. People who have vine crops go on the plots and sprinkle it with wine, to be fruitful and the wine to be of the best quality. The ritual is attended by the priest who holds a service where all the villagers gather who wish each other much abundance and health. On this holiday the drums play, the trumpets drink a lot of brandy and wine. This ritual is still practiced today by Macedonian ethnics in Romania wine-growing areas of Macedonia.

For Macedonians, the feast of St. George is very important for the family, in the past this holiday was equivalent to the transhumance of the flocks, it was a spectacle, people went out of town to see the sheep of the Macedonians. Men wore weapons and holiday clothes, and women also wore special holiday clothes. At the head of the congregation was a newlywed young woman in a wedding dress. Climbing the mountain was an event full of joy, a joy that Macedonians still experience today by organizing cultural and artistic events. We can say that there are numerous sources that partially provide information about their Macedonian holidays, customs, and rituals, but these are not known (Thomas, 2007: 50).

The traditional songs and dances of the Macedonians are mainly related to their history, dominated by pastoral life, always in motion, which required a good knowledge of places, cycles of nature and its laws, dangers of all kinds.

In Romania, they brought with them all these songs that evoke their troubled and dynamic history, but they also developed specific folklore, recently, influenced by European multiculturalism.

In addition to inspiration from their history and culture, Macedonian folk songs, dances and costumes were influenced by other Balkan peoples, Greeks, Turks, Albanians, and to a greater extent Slavs.

The village choir, the seats (claca), and the various holidays occasioned by calendar customs, family life were opportunities for ethnic Macedonians to learn traditional games and songs. Detached from their hearth, they had to adapt to imposed conditions, the Macedonians managed to keep in the collective memory all those artistic manifestations (ballads, own songs - sayings, customs, rituals, and games) that differentiated them from the other ethnic groups around them.

Among the Macedonians, the old song was monophonic, sung by shepherds with the help of a whistle. Later, after the Ottoman conquest, the violin, the flute, the flute, the drum, the kaval, or the gaida were adopted.

Regarding traditional Macedonian songs and games, they are known, sung, and danced by young people, who know part of the traditional repertoire.

Children know traditional songs and games because they learn them in the family, but also in an organized setting, in the program of celebrations organized on various occasions, customs. They are performed at weddings, baptisms, holidays, parties organized on the occasion of the birthday or name day, on the occasion of visits to relatives and friends.

The popular instruments that Macedonians play most often today are the whistle and the horse that we find in the folklore of other peoples in the Balkans.

He drums an instrument with pinched strings of Arab - Persian origin, from the lute family. It can have from 2 to 12 metal strings, pinched with the help of a plastic plectrum. It is a characteristic vocal accompaniment instrument or instrumental being found- to the popular culture of the countries in the Balkans, this tool can be found under the name of gîdulka, gunilka, Lirik. (Cernea and Coatu, 1986: 13).

The whistle, brought from its native places by ethnic Macedonians, is a whistle with seven openings (six on the front and one on the opposite side of the tube). The whistle is semi-transverse, without a stopper, small in size, the fingers being placed at equal distances, covering the six holes placed on the front of the tube. He still plays this type of whistle.

Following the coexistence in the multi ethnic Balkan space, it was natural to have loans in the traditional culture of various ethnic groups. The Macedonians also adopted the horse. It consists of three tubes, the middle tube having seven openings, three up and four down, plus an opening on the opposite side of the pipe. The third tube, at the bottom, has four other holes, grouped two by two.

The historical conditions allowed contact between the peoples of the Balkan Peninsula, united by the fight against the invaders. These connections have left their mark on their folklore. The outlaw song, a species of the old song, represents in the Macedonian folk creation the class struggle of a people against the oppressors.

The dances or choirs ("hour"-in Macedonian) that Macedonians play at various events, are characterized by rhythms frequently alert with interruptions of rhythm or their identification. The most important Macedonian dances are the men's dances, the warrior dances, in which only men play, with spectacular steps - jumping, kneeling, etc. The symbol specific to Macedonians - the Sun - is also found in dance - Macedonian dancers play with their eyes on the sun and their knees facing the sky.

Their traditional dance, specifically, is the choir in an open circle. Usually, at this choir, the whole community was gathered, women and men, old and young, in a very large circle, usually in a meadow, on the edge of the village. Today in Romania there are no big choirs in the meadows of the villages, but the habit of dancing in the choir is still preserved, either at weddings, parties, or during various Macedonian folk dance festivals. The same open circle is kept in which the person in front leads the dance, having in his free hand a white scarf or a talisman, made of beads. Sometimes they dance in a double circle, consisting of two concentric circles, the men on the outside and the women in the inner circle. But in general, the simple, open circle predominates.

Along with the language, Macedonians also identify with traditions but especially with the spirit of unity in family and community.

The family in Romania still preserves its traditional values, although there has been a process of emancipation, democratization, secularization, and liberalization of family life.

From a sociological perspective, the family is defined as a specific form of human community (Otovescu, 2010: 838).

It represents the "cell" of society, it is the unique element of primitive society and the essential element of modern society, gathering around it the social forces. It is a specific form of human community, uniting people through marriage, filiation, or kinship, constituting a community of life, interests, and mutual aid (Otovescu, 2006: 70).

Just as for Macedonians, the family is holy, it is the most important social institution. In their family, the family is somewhat conservatively united, dominated by a code of honor which, if violated, the individual was completely excluded from both the family and the community.

In addition to their language, they are found in their culture and traditions, especially in music and folk costumes, which they proudly display whenever they have the opportunity to spend time together.

Another symbol that Macedonians identify with is the flag, which represents the sun with its rays, the symbol of the Macedonian royal dynasty from which they claim to have originated, to emphasize their connection with Alexander the Great and thus their antiquity among the European peoples who would it gives the moral and historical right to their recognition as national minorities and the support to preserve their language and traditions (Obrebski, 1977).

Currently, the most important role belongs to the family in which the specific ceremonies and rituals take place, on the occasion of the family and calendar holidays. Thus, baptisms, weddings, and funerals are conducted in Macedonian, traditionally safe adapting them - are conditions of society and progress.

In the case of mixed families, the situation is similar to that in Macedonia, as we will see, in the sense that the cultural heritage takes precedence over the husband. This situation is also encountered, however, in the case of marriages between Macedonians and Romanians.

3. Conclusions

The archives show that Macedonians have respect and devotion to their customs. They are proud of their origin, language, and religion, and preserved habits Macedonian, as evidenced by Quintus C. Rufus: "Macedonians should not forget the language and customs of their ancestors. The uniqueness of their language was one of the ways to distinguish themselves from the citizens of other nations" (Quintus, 2008: 43-44).

To a certain extent, the Macedonian communities also contributed to the opening of the Romanian space to universal culture. The contribution of Macedonian culture to the Romanian spiritual life must also be understood within the historical and political transformations.

The identity of Macedonians in Romania is given by their mother tongue, their culture, and traditions.

Today, the language and culture of the Macedonians is a Slavic one, it does not deny their common belonging to this Romanian cultural space. The identity of Macedonians is given by their mother tongue, which for Macedonians is the only homeland, their identity card, which reflects their conscience and ethnic identity.

We can say that the story of the Macedonians in Romania is a happy one because they remained a united community, well preserved and culturally active, a fact confirmed by the Association of Macedonians in Romania with a cultural character from the numerous public events, folk ensembles.

With the belief that Europe will be a diverse one with space without borders, Macedonians will integrate into the European family, the future will be very good for Macedonians and their language and culture will last.

The Macedonians kept and promoted the identity of the communities they belonged to and managed to find ways to know and understand the "others", but also of the people they worked in the community.

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DIALOGUES, LANGUAGE AND HUMOUR IN A GROUP OF WORKERS

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Abstract: *For three years I studied a group of eight workers with an exclusive night schedule, as a full member of the group, using autoethnography, participant observation and informal interviews as research methods and techniques. The ethnographic research approach offered the opportunity to discover the social micro-universe of a unique social group in the working landscape of Romania. Dialogues between participants are conducted using two types of language, depending on the location of the work place and the activity performed. During so-called empty labour, when participants are engaged in all types of discussions, mostly unrelated to their work, the language they use is day-to-day normal language, but during work processes, when they are subjected to time and noise restrictions, participants resort most of the time to a very simplified form of language, often using a single word to replace a whole sentence. Humour is a constant presence in the group's discussions, often expressed in an aggressive and offensive manner, frequently with misogynistic and homophobic overtones. The participants' humour is even more aggressive when they are inside the larger group of the organization's local structure – the district, most likely having the role of either maintaining or provoking the existing informal hierarchies within the larger group.*

Keywords: *ethnography; participant observation; small group; social interaction; working class.*

1. Introduction

This article is extracted, for the most part, from the author's doctoral thesis, the data being obtained in the course of an ethnographic research spanning almost three years, during which time the author was fully integrated into a small group of workers. It shows elements from inside a group of workers, working exclusively in night shifts, obtaining data that would probably be inaccessible if the research were conducted by a person from outside the group or organization, whether it took place over a shorter period of time or a similar one. The main research methods and techniques are autoethnography, participant observation and informal interviews, with field notes being used abundantly. The article comprises a brief review of the literature, the methodology used, the results obtained and the conclusions.

2. Literature review

Social interactions like discussions, that do not have a well-established purpose and are an end in themselves are part of what Simmel (1949) calls sociability (*Geselligkeit*), i.e. a form of social interaction without a meaningful purpose or having an innocuous social content, a process of pure socialization that represents its own purpose.

Schatzman and Strauss (1955) discovered that there are differences in modes of communication between social classes, in intelligibility, grammar, and vocabulary. Furthermore, Bernstein (1960) argued that there are differences in language between social classes, and those differences can be classified in two types of language use in society: the elaborate code and the restricted code. Although this paper does not

analyze the language strictly from this point of view, we found that the members of the studied team are using two forms of language during their group discussions, which correspond, to some extent, with the categorization made by Bernstein, respectively a form of normal day-to-day language (elaborated) and a simplified (restricted) form of language.

Humour and jokes are ubiquitous in organizations, generally having the role of helping to combat boredom and daily routine (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999). From the point of view of psychology, humour is defined as a process that is initiated by a stimulus, respectively a joke, which results in a response, such as laughter, which indicates pleasure (Godkewitsch, 1976). Humour can play a normative social role, creating ridiculous and embarrassing situations for the individuals involved (Butler, 2015). Humour, something that is amusing, mutually recognized as such by individuals, facilitates friendships, the emergence of trust and intimacy and has a pivotal role in shaping and defining the notions of “us” and “others” (Friedman and Kuipers, 2013).

3. Methodology

In ethnographic research, the main research methods and techniques used are participant observation and informal interview (Agar, 1996: 111), participant observation being considered by some authors as the basis for the design of ethnographic research (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011: 16). Given this, for this research, we chose participant observation because, despite all its limitations, such as the fact that the observer is biased or has access to different information depending on gender, participant observation improves the quality of information collected and promotes the development of new research questions and new hypotheses (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011: 10-16), thus leading to a better understanding of the observed group.

3.1 Participant observation

Participant observation is a process of recording, interpreting and transmitting the information obtained, being influenced by permanent transactions between the observer and the observed individuals, where the role of the observer can be passive or active, involved in the activities of those observed. Given its nature, participant observation is not without problems: the obtained information may be distorted depending on the experience, personality or vigilance of the researcher, and factors such as anxiety or observer’s preconceptions may also contribute to this (Schwartz and Green Schwartz, 1955). However, Becker and Geer (1957: 32) argued that participant observation is superior to formal interviewing because it provides “a rich experiential context which causes him [the researcher] to become aware of incongruous or unexplained facts, makes him sensitive to their possible implications and connections with other observed facts, and thus pushes him continually to revise and adapt his theoretical orientation and specific problems in the direction of greater relevance to the phenomena under study.”

Spradley (1980: 58-61) shows that there are four types of participant observation, depending on the degree of involvement of the researcher, both with the people and in the observed activities, namely: passive, moderate, active and complete. Passive observation is that in which the researcher is not involved at all in activities and does not interact with the observed persons, while in the case of complete

observation, which entails the highest degree of involvement, the researcher is usually already a member of the group.

The choice of participant observation for this research was also influenced by the fact that the author was already a member of the studied group, and only a long-term research of this nature could identify and explain certain aspects which the participating researcher might consider self-evident.

3.2 Autoethnography

The term auto-ethnography is usually thought of as coined by Hayano in 1979 in "Auto-ethnography: Paradigms, problems, and prospects," but Ellis (2004) points out that the term was already used by anthropologist Karl Heider, a few years before the publication of Hayano's article (Prasad, 2019). Autoethnography is defined by Ellis (2004: xix) as an approach to research and writing that seeks to systematically describe and analyze personal experiences, in order to understand ethno-cultural experiences, a method of connecting autobiographical and personal points of view, with the cultural, political and social ones.

Bruner (2004) considers that narratives are an integral part of individuals, that they become "autobiographical narratives," narratives being the way in which individuals transmit information about their lives to others. Laslett (1999: 392) also argued that the intersection of personal and societal perspectives offers a new perspective that can be a unique contribution to the social sciences: "Personal narratives can address several key theoretical debates in contemporary sociology: macro and micro linkages; structure, agency and their intersection; process of structuration, social reproduction; and social change."

Autoethnography also emerged as a result of the crisis of representation in the 1970s and 1980s, when the idea that the researcher could be detached from the research he was undertaking and could render in a neutral manner what he observed was questioned, with some researchers beginning to argue that emotions are an integral part of conducting and understanding social research (Adams, Holman Jones and Ellis, 2014: 9-10).

However, to differentiate autoethnography from autobiographical or personal writings, Holman Jones, Adams and Ellis (2016) propose the following features of autoethnography: it includes intentional commentary on culture and cultural practices, contributes to existing research, includes vulnerability intentionally and creates a reciprocal relationship with the audience to get a response.

Autoethnography was chosen for the possibility to bring some additions to the aspects revealed by the participant observation, and also for the opportunity to present the personal and emotional context of some elements on which the author still has doubts, so that the public can draw their own conclusions.

3.3 Informal interviews

Spradley (1979: 58-59) states that in the case of ethnographic research, a skilled researcher "gathers most of his information through participant observation and several regular, friendly conversations," conducting informal interviews without participants being aware that they are being interviewed, considering that the use of too many elements of ethnographic jargon would discourage informants from participating in further discussions.

In ethnographic research, when the researcher is a person outside the observed group, by entering the group and asking questions, he alters the “natural” state of that group (Frey and Fontana, 1991), which is not the case with this research, where the observer is also a member of the studied group. Frey and Fontana (1991) also claim that the informal group interview is a very good technique for exploratory queries, as well as for interpreting or even validating data previously obtained from a single person.

Given that informal group interviews are spontaneous, take place in a natural setting, in a normal conversation, participants are self-selected and the interviews generally do not contain predetermined questions, the introduction and clarification of ethnographic elements depend on the researcher's skills and experience (Schensul, LeCompte, Natasi et al., 1999).

The choice of the informal interview was determined by the ability of this research technique to bring to light things that escape participant observation or autoethnography, aspects that can be clarified by asking the participants directly, as well as the higher chances of getting an answer through such an unstructured interview, which gives the interviewee the feeling of a friendly discussion, as opposed to a strongly structured interview, with many specialized terms, which can make the interviewee feel intimidated and less inclined to offer an honest answer.

4. Results

Discussions between participants take place in two types of locations: in the team locker room or at the place of specific activities, and hence their different nature, as well as the language used. The first type of discussions would be what Paulsen (2013) calls “empty labour,” with the observation that, in this case, the absence of work is generated by the very order of specific activities, an order that includes two waiting time intervals, the first until the actual work process can be started, and the second after the end of the work process. The second type of discussions take place during the work processes, in a generally noisy environment, and are related to their work activities. Humour is commonly present in both types of discussions.

4.1 Participants' dialogues

The dialogues within the group take place in the context of a topic, whether it comes from outside or is something that concerns the members of the group and they want to discuss it with the others. What matters is not only what is being said, but also who is saying it, and who the others are: the participants who can interact, who can respond or not. When only team members are present, the discussions unfold in a different manner to when one of the hierarchical superiors, from the district or division leadership, is present. In the latter case the atmosphere is different, and the discussions often revolve around work-related issues, much more than usual, this topic generally taking up a small amount of time in the group's discussions, on most days this subject being seldom addressed.

It sometimes happens that one of the participants makes a statement that does not attract any comments, for various reasons: the topic is not interesting to the others, the speaker suddenly changed the topic of discussion, and others do not want to follow this new topic or the statement arouses suspicion among the other participants by sounding untruthful. In general, such statements appear when participants have lost

interest in the current discussion, and one of them tries to keep that dialogue going, which is why the statement is often an artificial, shaky construction. When this happens, when what has been said remains only a statement from which no further discussion results, there is first an embarrassing silence from all participants, after which either the one who made the statement or one of the others tries to resume the dialogue, by attempting to move it in another direction. The one who made the statement from which no further discussion ensued is visibly confused in the following moments, seeing that the others are not reacting at all. He does not always try to continue the dialogue on another path and sometimes just allows the others to resume the conversation, while he retreats temporarily. I called such a statement “something-said” because, most of the time, its purpose is to fill a gap in the almost uninterrupted discussion that takes place between the participants. The speaker is probably aware, to a greater or lesser extent, of this purpose of the statement and is not sure that what has been said will spark the interest of the other participants, but he fulfills his role as a participant in the discussion, who’s implicit duty is not to allow silence to set in, because such moments have proven, over time, unpleasant, almost embarrassing for all participants.

Participants often look for topics when there is an oppressive silence, preferring to discuss something than to have an atmosphere devoid of any interaction. Such moments of innocuous verbal interaction are only intended to maintain a continuous discussion, regardless of its content, as a kind of remedy for the boredom that would arise with silence, representing what Simmel (1949) calls “sociability” - a form of social interaction that doesn’t have a meaningful purpose.

The topic of discussion is often born when there is something present, not so much physically present, but mentioned by the participants; an object that attracts attention, that has a certain history and certain characteristics. The discussion can then lead to the class of objects to which the object in question belongs and to certain specific objects, which also have a history and a series of attributes, or it can start from the specific object, going to the class of objects and then back to the specific objects. For example, from a discussion among the participants extracted from the field notes we notice the following: “V. mentioned something about a TV (the object), recently bought and installed in his daughter's room, and how his wife managed to break the screen, while trying to wipe the dust off the TV, and then L. took the conversation further by saying something about the quality of modern TVs (the class of objects) and about the warranty conditions, which do not cover the breaking of the screen, to which M. mentioned that he had a TV from the year 1997 (the specific object) and which still works, then L. continued the dialogue and specified that he also had a similarly old TV from 1995 (another specific object), which he took to his parents residence in the country. The discussion was punctuated with the rather detailed description of the objects: screen size, brand, price, screen type, etc.” (excerpt from the field notes, March 5, 2018).

Each topic of discussion has an informal leader tacitly recognized by the others, due to his authority in the field. For example, when the topic of discussion is cars and everything related to them, from engines, to spare parts or fuel consumption, the quality of informal leader belongs to A., who previously worked as a car mechanic and still deals with various car repairs in his free time. In such moments, there is a break in the group, with the three people not interested in the topic of cars often forming their

own parallel group, where they discuss other things. Following this separation those participating in the discussion about cars express their opinion with less certainty than in the case of other topics, often asking A. for confirmation of certain technical aspects. His attitude changes accordingly, obviously assuming the role of authority on cars and, consequently, informal leader of the group.

Discussions that take place within the group also have a therapeutic role, filling an otherwise dead time, and most dialogues occur when group members are waiting for something to happen (e.g., the unplugging of the third rail), and are forced to wait together. Of course, if they just sat together and kept silent, just looking awkwardly at each other, the atmosphere might be quite uncomfortable. Often, when there is a longer interruption in the group's dialogue, the mental effort of some of the members of the group to search for a topic to be "thrown" to others becomes almost noticeable. What is important in such instances is the number of individuals in the discussion area, for example, in the locker room; if two or three have gone out to smoke, and at least two of the remaining individuals do not seem interested in a dialogue and instead they prefer to use their mobile phones, then others are less tempted to look for a topic of discussion, preferring to be silent or turn their attention to the TV set, waiting for the dialogue to resume, which usually occurs with the return of the smokers.

There may be times when a member of the group disturbs the discussion, with an unexpected gesture that is no longer related to what is happening. For example, someone may talk on the phone, either in the locker room or outside the room, temporarily withdrawing from interaction with others. The moment brings with it a profound disturbance of the conversation: the others simply stop for a few moments, seemingly undecided whether to continue or not. The resumption of the conversation also depends on who is talking on the phone and to whom they are talking. For example, if the team leader is talking on the phone, whether it is a conversation with the district chief or the coordinating foreman, everybody is being quiet and the attention of some is focused on the TV set. The discussion is not resumed until the telephone conversation is over, and the stimulus for resuming the discussion can come from one of two directions: either from the team leader, if the telephone conversation included information that has to be shared with others, or from another member of the group, who can ask for details about the conversation because he understood certain things by listening to only one half of the conversation, or take the discussion in a new direction, or simply resume the previously interrupted conversation. If the person talking on the phone is not the team leader, the discussion often resumes after a very short break, often with ironies towards the person talking on the phone and, sometimes, with the utterance of jokes or obscenities.

But there are also times when a member of the group leaves the discussion unexpectedly, by suddenly turning his attention to the TV. He takes the remote control and starts changing the channels, completely ignoring the group. This kind of withdrawal from the ongoing discussion makes the others feel awkward, as it conveys to them the fact that their dialogue was boring, since it was abandoned by one of them with such a gesture of obvious rejection. However, after a few initial moments of hostile silence the discussion is resumed.

4.2 Participants' two types of language

The language used in the social interactions between the participants differs depending on the nature of the activity carried out. Thus, in discussions during the actual work process, fewer terms are used to communicate, a single word often replacing an entire sentence. For example, during work processes, the team leader or another participant may say the word "winch," which any participant with seniority within the group will know to mean that the winch needs to be brought and inserted under the rail, with the purpose of lifting the rail from the metal baseplate. Therefore, the need to perform this operation is deduced by the participant from the meaning of that single word, but this implies that the participant previously encountered similar work processes during which he learned the implicit sentences (referring to a sequence of tasks) that are meant to be replaced by that single word. The simplification of the language used between the participants is possible only by repeating the same types of social interactions and arises from the necessity to perform certain tasks in a more effective and timely manner which, given the fact that at any moment during the work processes there is the possibility of encountering a maintenance track motor car, and there is a time limit for the completion of the work processes.

On the other hand, during the dialogues outside of the actual work processes, the language is not affected by such a simplification, the sentences being uttered in their entirety, in order to make sense for the others. In the absence of time constraints there is no need to reduce the number of language terms being used, in order to make dialogues unfold faster. In a way, such a simplification of language would be something unnatural outside of work processes, and a participant who spoke in this way would most likely be seen by others as behaving in an abnormal, bizarre manner. But the decisive element that does not allow the use of simplified language is that dialogues outside the work processes cannot accurately anticipate what is to be said or done, the discussion and possible actions of the participants cannot be established in advance, as is the case with the work processes - these are carried out, most of the time, in a predetermined order, which cannot be modified and, thus, one word is enough for the participants to understand the action, respectively the implicit sentence replaced by it.

In both the simplified language and the normal language used by the participants, there are elements of jargon, derived from their specific activity, unintelligible to outsiders, but also elements of slang, borrowed by some participants from interactions with other people, from outside the group, and introduced over time into the vocabulary used within the group. Also, insults and obscene terms are an important part of the participants' vocabulary. "There is no man who does not swear," a phrase being often uttered by a former member of the group, now retired, was provided as an explanation for his frequent use of profanities, when other participants would reprimand him, jokingly, for speaking in a too "colourful" manner. The group avoids the use of words such as regionalisms, although some members come from rural areas, and this happens due to the fact that when someone uses such a term they generally become the target of irony.

4.3 Offensive humour of the participants

Humour is part of the participants' daily interactions and manifests itself in the form of dialogues that may seem offensive and aggressive to people outside the group, but which fall within the participants' generally accepted definition of the notion of

joke. Humour is also present when the group is joined by members of other teams and districts (when it is more aggressive and offensive), or divisions (in which case its manifestations become less offensive and aggressive, since the humour relies on exchanging remarks with members of another division, i.e. persons with whom the participants do not interact very often). An explanation for the offensive tendency of most of the jokes between participants is provided by Watson (2014), who, synthesizing the three theories of humour (the theory of superiority, relief theory and incongruity theory), says that we find humour in the misfortunes of others, that laughter helps release emotional or psychic tension, thereby producing pleasure, and that absurd situations, inconsistent with one's expectations, that does not conform with one's idea of what that situation should be, produces amusement.

Many of the social interactions between participants are intended to create embarrassing situations for one of them, and humour is a commonly used way to achieve this goal. But sometimes it happens that one of the participants actually intends to insult another participant, and the way he tries to mask that intention is by employing humour. Using humour to mask an insult insures that the reply will also come in the form of a joke, although the target of the joke may be aware of the other's intentions, thus avoiding possible conflicts between participants. Despite all these precautions and assumptions, some participants occasionally exaggerate with the use of this form of offensive humour, which leads to quarrels. This type of aggressive humour can also have the role of either maintaining or provoking the existing informal hierarchies within the group (Porcu, 2005), which is most likely the case of our participants.

In general, it can be argued that participants share the same opinion on what is funny and what is not. Even if there are some participants who do not share the vision of others related to humour, most likely they will not openly acknowledge this, so as not to be excluded from the group by the other members. It has been found that when members of a group do not share the same views on humour, this leads to the impossibility of creating close social relationships. Friedman and Kuipers (2013: 193) consider that shared humour is "a foundational ingredient of friendship, trust and intimacy," with a central role in shaping and defining the notions of "us" and "others," its absence marking an uncrossable social rift. Therefore, even if there are participants who do not like the forms of humour used by the team members, they mimic the fact that they approve of this type of humour and even participate in it, responding with similar jokes.

Wherever the activity of the team takes place, a certain kind of social interaction is regularly present: jokes directed against sexual minorities. Homophobic jokes sometimes include aggressive behaviour, from mimicking sex when someone bends over to pick up some tool or materials from the floor, to inappropriate touching. From the observations made over time, it would seem that this homophobic attitude derives from the participants' shared notion of masculinity: what it means to be a "real man", what a man should or should not do.

This type of behaviour, which includes jokes about sexual minorities, has been studied by several authors in an attempt to elucidate its motives. Among them, Connell (1995) argues that working-class men manifest their hegemonic masculinity through collective behaviour, with practices such as jokes against effeminate men or violence against women and homosexuals. Also, Embrick, Walther and Wickens (2007) showed

that heterosexual white men, who are members of the working class, draw boundaries of masculinity and femininity: for them, a “real” man can only be heterosexual. Therefore, the existence of homophobic jokes could also be explained by the desire of the group members to prevent any manifestation inconsistent with their view of masculinity, thus indicating appropriate behaviour, recommended and accepted within the group, this type of jokes being a part of internal rules and expectations about roles within the group (Kozlowski and Bell, 2003). Participants’ ideas about masculinity are undoubtedly profoundly influenced by the fact that they work in a male-oriented field (Applebaum, 1984), considering that in the five districts working permanent night shifts, there are no women and there has been none in the organization’s history.

In connection with this homophobic behaviour, the question was asked to what extent the participants ever thought about the reasons that lead them to resort to such an attitude. If they haven't given it any thought, then they won't be able to answer if asked why they manifest themselves the way they do. For this reason, attempts to find an answer relied mostly on asking indirect questions or observing certain opinions or beliefs of the participants, which led to the conclusions in the next paragraph.

The role of the male is well defined within the team: he is the main financial provider of the family, he is a husband, father and head of the household. Any behaviour that departs from these internal rules and norms set within the group, raises suspicions, and men who do not adhere to these rules and norms are almost always the target of homophobic jokes. There is also a saying often repeated by the members of the group, in some form or another: “If you have never had a child, you have lived in vain.” The reason for this phrase’s frequent reiteration is the fact that no less than three of the participants have no children, which often makes them the victims of homophobic ironies or jokes. In this context, it is most likely that the periodic repetition of the life creed mentioned above has a double role: firstly, it asserts the need for procreation, to be “like everybody else,” as an exhortation for those without children to follow this advice and to strengthen the position of those who already have children; and secondly, it is a way of harming the feelings of those without children, of lowering their status, as unworthy members of the group and, consequently, of society. This reference to what the world considers to be the best conduct represents the “invocation of the generalized other” (Rock, 2001).

Another important part of the jokes made by the participants consists of misogynistic humour. Unlike in the case of other teams, however, misogynistic humour is not directed against participants’ partners: women who are the victims of jokes are almost always strangers to the participants. The only instances in which group members accept jokes about non-foreign women are cases of ex-partners, but such events are quite rare, participants generally avoiding such humour when it comes to women who have been a part of their lives at some point.

Thus, the humour used by the participants is generally offensive and aggressive, and whether its role is to provoke or maintain existing hierarchies or if it is used to mask a conflict between two participants, it is a constant presence in daily social interactions among the members of the group.

5. Conclusion

As we have seen, members of the group tend to have an almost continuous and aimless discussion, an often erratic social interaction touching on various topics, whose single role is to not let the silence set in and create an awkward moment for the participants.

Furthermore, we observed that dialogues between members of the studied team are conducted using two types of language, between which they choose depending on the location and the activity performed. Although this is a conscious choice, the location and activity are the ones that ultimately dictate the type of language that is used. When the participants are engaged in so-called “empty labour,” where usually there are no time and noise restrictions, their language is normal day-to-day language (elaborated), while during work processes, where normal language is not possible, due to time and noise restrictions, participants are forced, most of the time, to communicate using an extremely simplified (restricted) language, in many instances using a single word to replace one or several sentences.

Inside the group, participants use a type of humour which is generally very aggressive and offensive, often characterized by misogyny and homophobia. When the team is working together with another team or both teams from the local structure, the type of humour is even more aggressive, most likely having the role of maintaining or provoking the existing informal hierarchies within the larger group, as Porcu (2005) has shown. The misogynistic nature of the participants’ humour is most likely also determined by the fact that the members of the group rarely interact socially with women during their working hours, as women are usually employed in other structures than those the studied group belongs to. It is not clear how the presence of one or several women inside the group might change the behaviour and the type of humour of the participants, but if women were ever to join the group in the future this topic would certainly be worth researching.

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TEACHER'S EMOTIONAL DISTRESS AND BURNOUT DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract. *In the context of COVID-19 pandemic that caused a world crisis which disrupted well-being world-wide, education suffered from rapid translations from face-to-face activities to online activities that affected students, families and teachers. A sample of 288 Romanian teachers was assessed with Maslach Burnout Inventory, Emotional Distress Questionnaire and a survey made by the authors, regarding teachers' quality of life during COVID-19 pandemic. The study aims to identify a relation between burnout and emotional distress and differences regarding these two variables based on the provenience of teachers (urban/rural environment) and primary/secondary level of educational system. Findings show a significant correlation between emotional fatigue and distressful emotions of teachers and differences in emotional fatigue based on mentioned grouping variables. The most distressed and exhausted groups were teachers in urban areas and teachers of the gymnasium level. Statistical results and the confirmed hypotheses are discussed in close relationship with self-assessments results from the survey.*

Key words: *emotional distress; burnout; teacher; education; COVID-19 pandemic.*

1. Introduction

World Health Organization (2020) states that the COVID-19 pandemic caused an unprecedented world crisis, disrupting the way of life of millions of people, causing significant loss of lives and undermining well-being world-wide. It is safe to say that COVID-19 was and still is to date, a virus that shut down the world.

In order to prevent the spreading of the virus, governments world-wide have temporarily closed educational institutions, security measure that impacted millions of students. Thus, in March 2020, UNESCO's statistics show that more than 859 million learners were affected, meaning a total of 49.1% of the enrolled learners. Since then, one year later, UNESCO reported almost 145 million affected learners, meaning 8.3% of the total enrolled population¹. A United Nation's Policy Brief from August 2020 states that the COVID-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption of education systems in history, with more than 190 countries on all continents being seriously affected. The UN underlines the necessity of taking urgent actions towards preventing a learning crisis from becoming a generational catastrophe. Other institutions, like the World Bank (2021) emphasize that 2020 marks both a dramatically different childhood experience that today's generations of young people will remember for the rest of their life, as well as a different teaching experience where teachers have to rapidly adapt, be creative and shift roles. In last year learners all over the world faced the fear of losing 2020 academic year, governments had to adjust, innovate and

¹ cf. <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>

implement alternative educational systems and assessment strategies (Pokhrel and Chhetri, 2021).

2. Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on education in Romania

Romania is one of the states that literally overnight ordered institutions to shift from face-to-face contact with students to online teaching and virtual education. The Romanian Ministry of Education and Research (MER) had to deal with unprecedented challenges (common, of course, to other countries as well), regarding the needs of students at different levels and stages, the reassurance and counseling of students and their families, the training of teachers in using virtual e-learning platforms, the changes that needed to be done in curricula, the problems of the online assessment and the finalization of the school year (Daniel, 2020). Efforts were made to ensure useful resources for teachers, parents and learners.

But, in order to better understand Romania's decisions and measures, based on UNESCO's representative's assessment, we will briefly describe the framework of Romanian's educational system. Statistics of 2019 show that 400,000 children don't go to school or don't complete the compulsory education cycle and 44% of the learners that do go to school, the latest OECD PISA results show they cannot properly read or write at age 15 (Bult, 2020). Also, Bult's report shows that the Romanian Government invests every year 38.000 million lei in education, meaning a 3.4% of Romania's total Annual National budget. It is a low amount and recommendations were that our government must at least double the investments.

Particular actions that the UNICEF's representative appoints are: 1) absorbing of all children into early education and provide inclusive schools and classrooms, capacities and services able to deal with diversity; 2) provide national parenting programs and support local school boards to address challenges in access and quality of education; 3) make the necessary changes in the National curriculum, update its contents in relation to the needs in the 21st century; 4) provide teacher training opportunities and life-long learning; 5) ensure technical support, like Internet connection, electricity and digital tools and equipment in all schools, adequate sanitary facilities and access to water in all schools; 6) significantly increase the number of school counselors; 7) address social problems like poverty, exclusion, violence against children.

Another report, published by UNICEF's Representative Norbert Fodor in May 2020, shows that there is a significant number of students that did not maintain an active communication with their teachers during restrictions. Some students were not at all present in online classes and for 54% of the respondents online courses were held several times a week or daily. Many students do not have the necessary skills to use online platforms, fact that obliged parents or other family members to be an active part of the educational process. There are teachers that opted for assigning homework before the lockdown, while others have continued to keep in touch with their classes through various online platforms, or have recorded themselves teaching (Fodor, 2020).

We can acknowledge that although the COVID-19 pandemic raised an educational crisis in our country, it also created an opportunity to reform the educational system. On March 11 2020, MER has suspended the courses in all the schools, and 2.8 million students shifted to online and virtual education (Holotescu,

Grosseck, Andone et al., 2020). Measures and actions that were taken by MER (2020a) in the lockdown period include: 1) digital textbooks and resources; 2) the implementation of the project CRED (Relevant Curriculum and Open Education for All) and of the dedicated e-learning platform; 3) free learning platforms and applications; 4) open access tutorials, 5) TeleSchool – the broadcasting of the courses through a national TV channel; 6) filmed webinars for supporting teachers in improving their digital skills; 7) tutorials uploaded on different official channels like YouTube or Facebook; 8) involvement of local school management and inspectorates in sharing teaching experiences, good practices and resources; 9) open courses for children and open access to educational resources.

Teachers had to adapt to different scenarios in education, based on situations and variables like: access to the Internet, personal digital skills, student's digital skills, adapting the curriculum to virtual education and choosing the appropriate contents that could be adapted to online learning, the existence of the necessary devices for this type of educational process (like tablets, phones, laptops, webcams, microphones, etc.). Volunteers were used in rural or disadvantaged areas where these conditions were not met. They made great efforts to print and leave those materials in certain location from which parents could take them and bring them home (Holotescu, Grosseck, Andone et al., 2020). So, as it can be seen, several challenges had to be overcome in order for MER's actions to be implemented.

Since the beginning of the new school year in September 2020, MER had to face other challenges regarding the procedures and sanitary measures imposed by the pandemic context and by the return of students in educational institutions. Acknowledging the importance of the access to education, learners returned to school based on three scenarios (MER, 2020b). The first scenario refers to physical presence in the classroom of all learners, with the implementation of the necessary sanitary and social distance protection measures. The second scenario implied a split. Preschool and school children, the 8th and 12th graders physically attended classes daily, while all other learners attended school by rotation. The classes were split in two and each group would physically attend school every two weeks, while the other remained in online activity. The third scenario refers to online and virtual education for all students. The type of scenario chosen by authorities was based on the epidemiologic situation in every county/city. The epidemiological criterion based on which the educational units will follow one of the 3 scenarios is the cumulative incidence rate (the total number of new cases in the last 14 days compared to 1,000 inhabitants). Furthermore, MER specified that the decisions regarding the operating scenario during the school year are updated weekly or whenever necessary. This fact started different approaches in every Romanian city/county, with all of different types of arrangements in organizing the educational activity.

The first scenario raised the problem of children's compliance regarding the sanitary measures imposed by the government, such as (MER, 2020b): rigorous hand hygiene; firm cleaning and disinfection measures in the school; wearing a protective mask both by students and by all staff during the entire period when they are inside and outside the school; limiting the contact between students from different classes; ensuring a distance of at least 1 meter or the installation of separators in case the provision of a distance of 1 meter is not possible; keeping the same place for each child in the bench throughout the class; permanent information of staff, students and

parents / legal representatives on SARS-CoV-2 infection protection measures; isolating students at home in case of fever or other specific symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, difficulty breathing, loss of taste and smell) in a student or another family member. The second scenario raised the problem of purchase of UV lamps, masks, disinfectants, good Internet connection in all classrooms, high quality audio-video systems, etc. The third scenario raised the problem of national coverage of all necessary means for online education.

But only implementing these measures does not ensure the quality of the educational process. Studies conducted since March 2020 show on one hand that these measures had benefits mostly for higher education students and institutions (Juárez Santiago, Olivares Ramírez, Rodríguez-Reséndiz et al., 2020), and on the other hand that performance and satisfaction of the beneficiaries is not necessarily positive in some situations, because of several limitations of the virtual education. While faculty students were much more able to adjust to learning through online platforms (Sahu, 2020), other beneficiaries had difficulties in adapting.

Other studies show that students have accepted online learning, even if they find it less attractive than the traditional education system (Ionescu, Paschia, Gudanescu Nicolau et al., 2020). Scientists show that factors such as age, gender, prior knowledge of computer literacy and learning styles of an individual are the vital predictors of technology acceptance by students (Khan, Singh, Nabi et al., 2021; Al Kurdi, Alshurideh and Salloum, 2020). On the other hand, teachers, students and parents all agree that e-learning is an effective sustainable learning solution in current and future conditions, but it requires good collaboration between parents and teachers. Several inequalities between urban and rural areas were reported, teachers having difficulties in supporting education for students from economically weaker sections of society (Jain, Lall and Singh, 2020). Furthermore, virtual education needs to redefine its teaching methods, leadership models and interaction channels (José Sá and Serpa, 2020) and train teachers in online pedagogies. Apart from resources, staff readiness, confidence, student accessibility and motivation play important function in online and remote learning (Wahab, 2020). All these variables that we mentioned are partially included in challenges that teachers need to address while projecting the educational process. So, apart from all the directions within which human resilience was heavily tested (Matei, Ilovan, Sandu et al., 2021), the professional requirements may be more or less sources of stress and anxiety, if we also take into account students perception of a higher workload during the pandemic, boredom, anxiety and frustration (Aristovnik, Keržič, Ravšelj et al., 2020) that they report to experience. At this point we can acknowledge the main framework that allows the instalment of the burnout syndrome.

3. Burnout and emotional distress

In a non-adaptive way, burnout represents an extreme level of work-related stress (Melamed, Shirom, Toker et al., 2006), which appears when an individual cannot properly manage stress anymore (Weber and Jaekel-Reinhard, 2000), influenced by both individual and contextual factors (Leiter and Maslach, 2004). According to Maslach, Jackson and Leiter (1996), burnout is characterized by exhaustion, cynicism and lack of professional efficacy.

Mäkikangas and Kinnunen (2016) state that exhaustion manifests itself as chronic fatigue, tiredness and draining of emotional resources; cynicism means that people put a distance between them and their work, developing negative attitudes toward their duties; reduced professional efficacy is the loss of competence, productivity and a negative assessment made over past or present accomplishments.

In other words, terms like depreciation, wearing out, depression, emotional distress or mental health problems are frequently associated with burnout, mainly because it affects different areas of human activities. Studies show that burnout correlates with specific anatomical and functional brain characteristics (Golkar, Johanson, Kasahara et al., 2014; Jovanovic, Perski, Berglund et al., 2011; Blix, Perski and Berglund et al., 2013), so one of these areas is physiological. The relationship between burnout and depression or anxiety (Koutsimani, Montgomery and Georganta, 2019), acceptance (Noone and Hastings, 2011), psychosomatic disorders (Bauer, Stamm, Virnich et al., 2005), distress (Zou, Shen, Tian et al., 2016) or decisional autonomy (Bourbonnais, Comeau and Vézina et al., 1998), is described in the research regarding the psychological area of burnout's impact. Other studies take into account factors like job involvement, job satisfaction or organizational commitment (Griffin, Hogan, Lambert et al., 2009; Sethi and King, 1999), which argue the organizational area affected by burnout. Burnout seems to affect domains like workload, control, reward, community, fairness and values (Maslach and Leiter, 2016). The impact over the physical area is documented in research regarding overweight and obesity (Li, Li, Lv et al., 2020) or alcohol use (Axisa, Nash, Kelley et al., 2020), while lack of social support (Elman and Dowd, 2011) also correlates with burnout, engaging its effects on the social area of human life. Basically, burnout generates frustration and a way of life that fails in producing human expectancies.

Given all these negative outcomes of burnout and taking into consideration the changes teachers had to do in their profession in order to function adequately during the COVID-19 pandemic, we addressed the question of the quality of life in professionals in education over this year.

4. Research methodology

The main **objectives** of the study are: (1) to identify a correlation between emotional fatigue and distressful emotions of teachers; (2) to identify a difference in emotional fatigue based on the provenience of teachers (urban/rural) and on the primary/secondary level of the educational system that they teach in.

The **hypotheses** of the study are: (1) we presume there is a correlation between emotional fatigue and distressful emotions of teachers; (2) we presume there is a difference between urban and rural environment regarding emotional fatigue; (3) we presume there is a difference regarding emotional fatigue between teachers in primary, gymnasium and high-school educational system.

The **sample** consisted in 288 Romanian teachers, of which 35.76% come from the rural environment and 64.24% from the urban environment. 46.53% of the subjects teach in primary school, 31.25% teach in gymnasium and 22.22% in high-school.

The **instruments** we used are: Emotional Distress Profile (EDP – Cognitrom Assessment System), adapted for Romanian population by Daniel David. This instrument assesses the dysfunctional and functional negative emotions: fear and

sadness/depression. The second instrument is the Maslach Burnout Questionnaire that assesses 3 dimensions: emotional fatigue, depersonalization and cognition of efficiency and professional achievement.

In order to identify the emotional framework of the teachers we also made a survey with questions that aim to identify the changes that occurred in both personal and professional life during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this study, we analysed the following dimensions: self-esteem, life goals and values, profession, learning activities, emotional background.

We used an online assessment that we carried out in February-March 2021. In order to ensure the confidentiality of the respondents, the questionnaires did not ask any personal data and they were voluntarily filled out by the respondents.

5. Results and discussions

Hypothesis 1: We presume there is a correlation between emotional fatigue and distressful emotions of teachers.

We statistically verified the hypotheses, starting with the normality curve of the data we gathered. By analyzing the Shapiro-Wilk coefficient we obtained non-normal distributions and used nonparametric statistical tests. The results are shown in the table below:

Table 1: Correlations between emotional fatigue, dysfunctional sadness and fear

| Spearman's rho | | Emotional fatigue | Dysfunctional sadness | Dysfunctional fear |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Emotional fatigue | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .606** | .633** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .288 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | | 288 | 288 |
| Dysfunctional sadness | Correlation Coefficient | .606** | 1.000 | .875** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .288 | .000 |
| | N | 288 | | 288 |
| Dysfunctional fear | Correlation Coefficient | .633** | .875** | 1.000 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .288 |
| | N | 288 | 288 | |

By analyzing the statistical data we obtained a high positive correlation, significant for $p=.000$, between emotional fatigue of teachers and dysfunctional attitudes manifested through sadness and fear.

Being a teacher is a demanding and sometimes exhausting job, posing by itself a relatively high risk of burnout (Keller, Chang, Becker et al., 2014). Overall, studies show burnout is strongly correlated with increased negative emotions, independent from the field of work: medical (Kash, Holland, Breitbart et al., 2000; West, Halvorsen, Swenson et al., 2013), religious (Büssing, Günther, Baumann et al., 2013), industrial (Hulsegge, van Mechelen, Proper et al., 2020), social work (Sánchez-Moreno, de La Fuente Roldán, Gallardo-Peralta et al., 2014), military (Ballenger-Browning, Schmitz, Rothacker et al., 2011), financial and entrepreneurial (Omrane, Kammoun and Seaman, 2018), political (Jawahar, Stone and Kisamore, 2007), etc. Emotional management is one of burnout predictors (Da-Yee, Changsoo and Sei-Jin, 2018), alongside personality

characteristics that are related to occupational stress, like anxiety or depression (Hodge, Jupp and Taylor, 1994).

Our results show that sadness and fear, as dysfunctional emotions, are strongly related to emotional fatigue. Teachers usually suppress negative or inappropriate emotions during their everyday activity. This causes a draining in their psychological resources (Keller, Chang, Becker et al., 2014) and affects their resilience. Thus, emotional regulation is strongly related to burnout. Most teachers in our sample experienced sadness and anger when confronted with the impossibility of continuing their professional activity in the traditional face-to-face approach. The quantitative analysis of the data gathered from our survey showed that 39.93% of the respondents had difficulties in frustration management, 54.16% had a pessimistic perspective on the current situation, 53.4% reported they felt bored, 68% nostalgic, 57.4% frustrated, 57.3% confused, 45.5% angry, 49.3% unhappy, 47.2% unsatisfied. Furthermore, lack of enthusiasm (70.8%), dissatisfaction (58.7%) and lack of calmness (44.1%), problems in adjusting to the new conditions imposed by the restrictions (57.63%), discomfort (55.20%) and disruptions of the overall well-being (60.06%) are also reported emotional states during COVID-19 pandemic. This framework of negative emotions reported by teachers represents a psychosocial risk that could be aggravated during this emergency situation that our world lives in, which may affect the quality of teaching activities (Prado-Gascó, Gómez-Domínguez, Soto-Rubio et al., 2020).

The shift between the traditional deployment of educational activities to online teaching and learning implied a sudden adjustment that included finding resources and solutions to all of the challenges that online activities raised. The leadership practices of the Romanian Government, County Inspectorates and school's principals set up the foundation for teachers' technical and personal resources and outcomes at work. Understanding and addressing very particular needs of schools and teachers around the country proved to be a great challenge. Professional autonomy was heavily suppressed by the pandemic and thus, teachers had to comply and embrace approaches to education that they never experienced before. The quantitative analysis of the data gathered from our survey showed that 48.61% of respondents felt they were not in control of their own life, 60.76% reported they were affected in their professional performances, while for 37.15% the personal competence was affected to a high extent. 54.86% reported difficulties in achieving their goals, 51.38% confronted lack of motivation, 61.11% reported disruptions in manifesting their independence and autonomy, 55.20% encountered challenges in innovating their activities, and 58.68% had low productivity and efficiency.

Thus, the lack of appropriate digital skills or tools led to a high level of exhaustion. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) suggest that teacher stress usually occurs when teachers feel a gap between their job demands and their abilities to manage these demands. The use and development of skills in new information and communication technologies, as well as the workload related to distance education (Amri, Abidli, Elhamzaoui et al., 2020) proved to be risk factors for teachers' burnout. Studies show that variables such as gender, age or the level of education also influence the symptomatology of the burnout syndrome in teachers (Ozamiz-Etxebarria, Berasategi Santxo, Idoiaga Mondragon et al., 2020).

Research also shows that autonomy-supportive leadership promotes individuals' empowerment (Collie, 2021), while excessive control does not support

self-determination. For more than a year the Romanian educational system confronted with uncertainties in organizing activities, based on educational policies issued by the government, due to the epidemiological situation in every county and city in the country. The same educational scenario could not be implemented nationally, thus a framework for the instalment of anger, fear, anxiety, frustration or confusion was created.

Hypothesis 2: We presume there is a difference between urban and rural environment regarding emotional fatigue.

We obtained a non-normal distribution of the data, as it can be seen in the table below:

Table 2: Data normality based on urban/rural provenience

| Tests of Normality | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|-----|------|
| | Provenience urban/rural | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
| | | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| Emotional fatigue | Urban | .943 | 185 | .000 |
| | Rural | .859 | 103 | .000 |
| a. Lilliefors Significance Correction | | | | |

We used Mann-Whitney U test to compare the 2 independent samples. Results are shown in the table below:

Table 3: Comparative analysis for emotional fatigue

| | Emotional exhaustion |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Mann-Whitney U | 8173.000 |
| Wilcoxon W | 13529.000 |
| Z | -2.002 |
| Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed) | .045 |

By statistically analyzing the data we obtained a significant difference ($p=.045$) in emotional fatigue between teachers from urban and rural environment. For urban environment, the mean we obtained was 19.81, while for rural environment we obtained 18.52. We can explain these results through the fact that teachers in rural areas had most difficulties in accessing the necessary tools for online teaching, from available the Internet connections to laptops, tablets and other devices. Another important factor we feel is the number of children in a class. In rural areas the classroom is composed of fewer children, while in urban environment teachers have between 25 and 40 children in their class. Thus, it appears a supplementary volume of activities in the urban teaching environment, from the preparation of necessary materials for the entire class to the assessment of a much larger number of homework.

The quantitative analysis of the survey reveals further evidence for the differences between the perception of teachers from urban and rural environment that we synthetically present in the table below:

Table 4: Reported differences between urban and rural environment regarding sources of emotional fatigue

| Source of exhaustion | Percentage (urban) | Percentage (rural) |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Use of digital competencies | 44.86 | 41.75 |

| | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| Amount of time spent at the computer | 79.46 | 62.52 |
| Difficulties in time management | 70.26 | 70.88 |
| Growth of the number of professional tasks that need to be resolved in a very short period of time | 72.97 | 63.10 |
| Difficulties in managing the physical space available for the online activities | 60 | 50.34 |
| Challenges regarding the professional development and formation | 64.87 | 57.28 |

Our results are supported by other studies that show that for urban teachers the lack of resources, excessive workload, school-level disorganization, managing behavior problems, and accountability policies as significant sources of stress (Shernoff, Mehta, Atkins et al., 2011), while for rural teachers, poor working conditions is the main predictor of burnout (Abel and Sewell, 1999).

Hypothesis 3: We presume there is a difference regarding emotional fatigue between teachers in primary, gymnasium and high-school educational system. The descriptive statistics of the data are shown in the table below:

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics – Emotional fatigue

| | | Mean | Std. Dev. | Std. Error | 95% Confidence Interval for Mean | | Minimum | Maximum |
|-------------|----|------|-----------|------------|----------------------------------|-------------|---------|---------|
| | | | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound | | |
| Primary | 34 | 8.91 | 8.208 | .709 | 17.51 | 20.31 | | 44 |
| Gymnasium | 0 | 1.49 | 8.267 | .871 | 19.76 | 23.22 | | 45 |
| High-School | 4 | 7.27 | 6.945 | .868 | 15.53 | 19.00 | | 43 |
| Total | 88 | 9.35 | 8.093 | .477 | 18.41 | 20.29 | | 45 |

We conducted multiple comparisons based on emotional fatigue as dependent variable. Results are shown in the table below:

Table 6: Multiple Comparisons – Dependent Variable: Emotional Fatigue (Tukey HSD)

| (I) Teaching Level | (J) Teaching Level | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. | 95% Confidence Interval | |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------|------|-------------------------|-------------|
| | | | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| Primary | Gymnasium | -2.578* | 1.086 | .048 | -5.14 | -.02 |
| | High-School | 1.645 | 1.210 | .364 | -1.21 | 4.50 |
| Gymnasium | Primary | 2.578* | 1.086 | .048 | .02 | 5.14 |
| | High-School | 4.223* | 1.302 | .004 | 1.15 | 7.29 |
| High-School | Primary | -1.645 | 1.210 | .364 | -4.50 | 1.21 |
| | Gymnasium | -4.223* | 1.302 | .004 | -7.29 | -1.15 |

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

We can see that teachers who work at gymnasium level have the highest levels of emotional fatigue. They obtained a mean of 21.49 in emotional fatigue, compared to teachers in primary level (18.91) and high-school teachers (17.27).

We consider that teachers at the gymnasium level experience higher emotional fatigue first of all because this level of educational system has spent the largest period of time in online educational environments, compared to the other two. Furthermore, both children and teachers have to adjust to frequently change channels, teachers or class groups. Studies show that a major source of stress for gymnasium teachers relates to problems in interaction with students, lack of interest, low attainment and handling students that misbehave (Antoniou, Polychroni and Vlachakis, 2006). The curricula is also a lot more difficult at this level, so teachers need to adapt their explanations and to keep students motivated for the class more than the other teachers have to.

Further evidence is shown in other studies that emphasize that lower self-confidence, frequent use of regressive coping strategies, low personality disposition to hardiness, low levels of social support, higher levels of role stress, more custodial student control ideologies (Pierce and Molloy, 1990), school support resources, management of classroom self-efficacy and instructional self-efficacy (Betoret, 2009), student's achievements (Klusmann, Richter and Lüdtkke, 2016) are predictors of burnout at this educational level.

6. Conclusions

Our study aimed to identify a correlation between emotional fatigue and distressful emotions of teachers and a difference in emotional fatigue based on the provenience of teachers (urban/rural) and on the primary/secondary level of the educational system that they teach in. Both objectives have been achieved. We've shown that emotional fatigue significantly correlates with dysfunctional fear and sadness; urban teachers are more exhausted than rural teachers and gymnasium teachers experience burnout more than primary and high-school teachers.

We corroborated the statistical results by a quantitative analysis of the responses gathered through a survey made by the authors. Through this survey we obtained a self-reported framework of the emotional and professional challenges. Overall, teachers reported difficulties in frustration management, pessimistic perspective on the unfolding of current events, boredom, nostalgia, frustration, confusion, anger, lack of happiness and satisfaction, lack of enthusiasm, restlessness, and problems in adjusting to the new conditions imposed by the restrictions, discomfort and disruptions of the overall well-being. The picture of this negative emotional state was completed by reports of lower professional and personal performances, difficulties in achieving goals, lack of motivation, disruptions in manifesting their independence and autonomy, challenges in innovating their activities, and low productivity and efficiency.

Further research has to be conducted regarding the impact of other possibly significant variables for teachers' burnout during pandemic, like gender, age, educational level, personal digital competencies and personality factors.

We consider that these results are alarm signals that need to be addressed by educational policies and teachers should be provided with more social, financial and psychological support. 25.69% of the respondents reported that throughout the

restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic they felt the need of psychological counseling. Thus, teachers should be encouraged to access the psychological resources available and more careful policies regarding mental health in education should be implemented. Although we recognize certain opportunities that the online education raised for the Romanian educational system, we also have to address the large amount of challenges and difficulties that also appeared and are still unfolding.

In the long term, this negative emotional framework and professional dissatisfaction could be the main causes of a poor quality in education, especially if the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to severely disrupt professional activities both nationally and world-wide.

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VOTE BUYING AND RETURN ON INVESTMENT: THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE

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Abstract: *This study investigated the opinions of Nigerians on vote buying and return on investment in Nigeria. The study was conducted using virtual snow ball sampling / chain referral (non-probability sampling). A total of 416 respondents participated in the study in which, an online link was shared through various social media platforms such as WhatsApp, twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and email. The cross-sectional and descriptive study was explained with the social exchange theory. The study concluded that vote buying is a common phenomenon in the elections conducted in Nigeria. It also concluded that vote buying can influence the decision of voters on whom to vote for (84.4%) and can work in favour of those who employ the act (85.1%). In order to curb the problem of vote buying in Nigeria, it was opined that those who are found culpable should be disqualified from the electoral process (68.3%), outrightly banned from taking part in any election again in Nigeria (49.8%) and made to pay monetary fine (22.8%). It was also opined that those who sell of their votes to politicians should be imprisoned (75.2%), made to pay monetary fine (33.4%) and not be dealt with (17.8%) in that order.*

Keywords: *Vote Buying; Electoral Process; Outright ban; Disqualification; Imprisoned.*

1. Introduction

Vote buying is the payment of cash or gifts in exchange for voting (Kitschelt and Wilkinson, 2007). It is an economic transaction that is executed between those who sell their freedom and those who buy them in the hope of regaining their investments when they get into power. Vote buying is entirely an act of election malpractice connected with vested interest since an election can be said to be free and fair when it is devoid of ballot snatching, vote buying, violence, rigging, figure alteration, bribing of electoral officers, intimidation of opponents through the use of security agents and multiple voting.

Vote buying is seldom an isolated act, and it spreads corruption throughout the whole political system. When a political candidate decides to buy the support of the people rather than contest fairly for their votes, there are possibilities that such candidate will show a disregard for democratic rules and a disposition to adopt illegal means becomes inevitable. Vote buying encourages poor governance and weakens citizens' capacity to hold their elected officials accountable for their actions. In addition, vote buying discourages aspiring politicians from running for office since it suggests that money instead of ideas or experience is what wins an election hence

preventing qualified candidates from running for political positions while entrenching corrupt politicians in their position.

Vote buying has been observed in several elections in Nigeria where voters were openly induced with money and other household materials to sell their votes (Onuoha and Ojo, 2018). There are therefore indications that politicians who buy votes or engage in any corrupt practice during election are most likely to have a perspective of embezzling or stealing public funds when eventually elected. This is because, more often than not, vote buying is considered as a political investment with expectations for return on investment when politicians eventually assume office. When voters sell their votes, it implies that they are voting for the wrong candidates. This may likely affect governance by leading to poor governance and undermining of the electoral process (Business Day, 2018).

An attempt to induce voters, manipulate electoral process and the electorate especially during election preparation periods can therefore be described as an act of corrupt practice. This to an extent has a great influence on the decision-making capacity of the electorate who are crossed with the decision whether or not to vote based on the costs and benefits associated with being decisive in an election. Although Brattom (2008) has once argued that most ordinary people resist efforts of political elites to illegally influence voter behaviour but, some individuals especially society's poorest and most vulnerable members have little choice except to comply. Faced with irregular carrots or sticks during the course of an election campaign, their only other viable option is to feign compliance while refusing in practice. It is also obvious that the major reasons for election bribery is largely due to the gains expected after winning the election.

There are also indications that in places where vote buying is prevalent, political candidates are usually confronted with the predicament of wanting to mobilize most of their resources to buy the votes while assuming office with significant debts from election. Even though vote buying is prohibited in Nigeria as stated in article 130 of the Electoral Act 2010, it continues to be prevalent in several elections that has taken place in the country (Onuoha, 2018). This of course comes with the hope of a return on investment. It is against this background that this study investigates the influence of vote buying by political parties on voting decisions in Nigeria.

2. Theoretical Orientation. *Social Exchange Theory*

Social exchange theory is a psychological and sociological theory that explains social behaviours between two parties based on a cost-benefit analysis. Much of the works of social exchange theory is credited to George Homans in 1958 (Tiwari, 2020). The theory holds that people's behaviours are anchored on rational calculations that are designed to maximize their profit. It holds that rewards and costs drive relationship decisions hence, both parties take responsibility for one another and depend on each other. As individuals tries to maximise their wins, rewards received must be proportional to their costs and investments.

Although social exchange theory has been commonly likened to human interactions with the marketplace but, the theory can also be applicable to other social relationships (Cook and Rice, 2006).

The basic assumptions of social exchange theory include the following:

1. There are three or more persons who have the chance to make exchanges with one another. These people have the capacity to make decisions about whether to exchange, who to make exchange with, and under what conditions to make an exchange.

2. Social exchange triggers emotions that are positive to negative.

3. Emotions can be taken as reward or punishment for instance, feeling good has a positive value and feeling bad has a negative value.

4. People endeavor to circumvent negative emotions and to reproduce positive emotions in social exchange.

5. Individuals will attempt to understand the cause of feelings produced by social exchange. In that way, emotions become ascribed to the entity that caused them.

6. Individual's construe and exchange their feelings with regards to social relationships. Positive emotions formed by exchange will increase cohesion in these relationships, while negative emotions will lessen solidarity.

The social exchange theory can be applied to the current study in the sense that the relationship between political parties in Nigeria and the electorate can be likened to that of reward and cost. The relationship between these two parties can be said to be a rational calculation that are designed to maximize their profit hence the relationship between the two parties is driven by rewards and costs drive. As the political parties depend on the electorate to win the election by offering money and other tangible materials to induce them to vote for them, the electorate in return gets a value for their vote by accepting to sell their votes by accepting the offers. In another sense, it is also expected that the political holders would expect a return on their investments when they eventually assume the office by recouping what they have invested from the government coffers.

Social exchange theory has been criticised for reducing human interaction to a purely rational process that arises from economic theory (Miller, 2005).

3. Methodology

The study evaluates the opinion of Nigerians across several demographics about the influence of vote buying on voting decision. The study was conducted using virtual snow ball sampling / chain referral (non-probability sampling). A total of 416 respondents participated in the study. An online link was shared through various social media platforms such as WhatsApp, twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and email by appealing to Nigerians to share their opinion and proffer solutions to the problem of vote buying in Nigeria. Each respondent was also encouraged to share the survey link to other Nigerians in their social media contacts. Primary data received from the field was presented in frequencies and simple percentages.

4. Results

Table 1 below represents the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents in the study. From the table it was noted that, (35.5%) of the respondents in the study fall under the age category of 18-24. This was followed by the age bracket of 25-34 years accounting for (19.2%) of the total respondents in the study. The least number of respondents were found in the age bracket of 65 years and above with (6.0%)

Table1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

| Characteristics | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Age (in years) | | |
| 18-24 | 143 | 34.5 |
| 25-34 | 80 | 19.2 |
| 35-44 | 69 | 16.5 |
| 45-54 | 60 | 14.4 |
| 55-64 | 39 | 9.4 |
| 65 and above | 25 | 6.0 |
| Total | 416 | 100.0 |
| Gender | | |
| Male | 253 | 60.8 |
| Female | 163 | 39.2 |
| Total | 416 | 100.0 |
| Marital Status | | |
| Married | 194 | 46.6 |
| Single | 222 | 53.4 |
| Total | 416 | 100.0 |
| Educational Background | | |
| Primary Education | 21 | 5.0 |
| Secondary Education | 76 | 18.5 |
| Tertiary Education | 319 | 76.5 |
| Total | 416 | 100.0 |
| Religion | | |
| Christianity | 224 | 53.8 |
| Islam | 192 | 46.2 |
| Total | 416 | 100.0 |

Source: Researcher's Survey 2019

On the gender characteristics of the respondents in the study, male was (60.8%) while female was (39.2%). With regards to the marital status of respondents, (46.6%) are married while (53.4%) are single. Furthermore, (5.0%) of the respondents in the study have primary education, (18.5%) had secondary school education while, (76.5%) had tertiary educational background. In addition to this, (53.8%) are Christians while (46.2%) of the respondents in the study belong to the Islam religion.

Table 2 below represents the perception of respondents on vote buying in Nigeria. The table shows that (89.7%) of the respondents in the study know that Nigerian politicians do buy votes. A total of (84.4%) of the respondents think that vote buying can influence the decision of voters on who to vote for. Also, (85.1%) of the respondents in the study admits that vote buying can work in favour of political parties. On the what punitive measures' respondents think should be given to politicians that buy votes from the electorate, (49.8%) were of the opinion that the political party should be outrightly banned while (22.8%) opined that they should be made to pay monetary fines while (68.3%) opined total disqualification from the electoral process. Incidentally, total of (5.8%) of the respondents in the study were of the opinion that nothing should be done to any politician for vote buying. Regards what should be done to people who sell their votes in Nigeria, total of (75.2%) of the

respondents in the study opined that those who sell their votes should be imprisoned while, (33.4%) of the respondents opined that they should pay monetary fine while, (17.8%) of the respondents opined that nothing should be done to them.

Table 2: Questions Relating to Vote Buying among Respondents

| Questions | Frequency | Percentages |
|--|-----------|-------------|
| Is Vote buying common in Elections that hold in Nigeria? | | |
| Yes | 373 | 89.7 |
| No | 43 | 10.3 |
| Total | 416 | 100.0 |
| Do you think that vote buying can influence voters' decisions on their choice of candidate? | | |
| Yes | 351 | 84.4 |
| No | 65 | 15.6 |
| Total | 416 | 100.0 |
| Does vote buying work in favour of political parties in Nigeria? | | |
| Yes | 354 | 85.1 |
| No | 62 | 14.9 |
| Total | 416 | 100.0 |
| What can be done to curb vote buying by political parties? | | |
| Outright Banning of Political party found involved in vote buying | 207 | 49.8 |
| Payment of huge Monetary fine | 95 | 22.8 |
| Disqualification from the electoral Process | 284 | 68.3 |
| Nothing should be done | 24 | 5.8 |
| How can Nigerians be prevented from selling their votes? | | |
| Anyone caught should be Imprisonment | 313 | 75.2 |
| Payment of Monetary Fine | 139 | 33.4 |
| Nothing should be done to them | 74 | 17.8 |

Source: Researchers' Survey (2019)

4. Discussion

The study investigates the opinion of Nigerians on vote buying in Nigeria. Result from the study suggests that almost all the respondents are aware that vote buying is common in Nigeria elections. This finding corroborates the finding of a previous research conducted by Onuoha and Ojo (2018) on the practice and peril of vote buying in recent elections in Nigeria which suggests that vote buying is prevalent in Nigeria despite being the fact that it has been prohibited. Further result from the study also suggest that a whooping number of the respondents opined that vote buying can influence the decision of voters on whom to vote for. This is similar to the views of Olaito (2018) and Balogun (2019) that opined that several voters in Nigeria allow vote

buying to influence their decision on whom to vote for by seeing their voters' cards as a means to an end. On whether vote buying work in favour of political parties in Nigeria, about four fifth of the respondents in the study are of the opinion that vote buying works in favour of political parties in Nigeria. This agrees with the view of Olatunji (2018) which opined that the more money politicians offer to voters, the more votes they get.

As regards what could be done to curb politicians from engaging that engage in vote buying, almost half of the respondents suggested outright banning of any such political party found guilty while about one quarter suggested that anyone found guilty should pay fine and over three fifth of the respondents suggest disqualification from the electoral process. This result is similar to the view of Matenga (2016) who suggested criminalization of vote buying should be effectively implemented in Nigeria in order to curb vote buying in Nigeria. On what could be done to prevent Nigerians from selling their votes, more than three fifth of the respondents suggested that anyone caught should be imprisoned while almost two fifth of the respondents suggested payment of fine and less than one fifth suggested that nothing should be done to them. This however contradicts the views of Shittu (2016) and Ozekhome (2016), who opined political education and eradication of poverty respectively as measures that can be put in place to check Nigerians from selling their votes.

5. Conclusion

The study investigated the perception of Nigerians on vote buying in Nigeria. The study concluded that vote buying is a common phenomenon in the elections conducted in Nigeria. It also concluded that vote buying can influence the decision of voters on whom to vote for and that vote buying can also work in favour of those who employ the act. In order to curb vote buying in Nigeria, it was suggested that those who are found culpable should be disqualified from the electoral process, outrightly banned from the electoral process and made to pay fine in that order. It was also concluded that those who sell of their votes to politicians should be imprisoned, made to pay fine and also not be dealt with in that order.

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SCHOOL BANKRUPTCY AND YOUTH VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS IN CAMEROON

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Abstract: *The school which, in the past, as nowadays has always campaigned for social transformation through education and socialization for the promotion of republican values has for several decades been at the center of the controversy around its success or of his failure in society. Indeed, in a context marked by globalization, the Millennium Development Goal (MDG), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular Goal 4 (Education for Sustainable Development (EDD), the perspective of education in 2030 as well as the end of the colonial agreements with France and the need to achieve emergence by 2035, one wonders if the school is playing or is still in the process. to play its role from time to time. Indeed, a look at current society, in particular on the excesses of young people with regard to the school institution in particular and the regulations in force in general, sufficiently shows that 'beyond a few undeniable positive aspects, the school for Cameroonian youth in general now has a taste of bitterness. This thesis is made legitimate through a certain number of situations of violence which today have started from remote areas school to settle within n our schools. Indeed, if the school is supposed to be the framework of civilization of the deviant behaviors as well as of the ambient delinquency, how to understand that it is also in this same school that we now find the different tendencies of deviance and delinquency which, today have an openness to crimes of various sizes? What did the school of a few decades ago have that today's school has lost? These are some of the avenues on which this article will focus.*

Keywords: *bankruptcy; school; violence; youth; Cameroon.*

1. Introduction

In a socio-political and economic context marked by slogans such as "the great ambitions", "the great achievements", "the emergence by 2035" or even, closer to us that of "living together", we can visibly read, the will of the State to promote social development through the highlighting of certain values such as education, (Yaro, 1995: 7). Work, the cult of effort, productivity to name a few. The operationalization of these values is moreover a fact for Cameroonian youth through the opening each year of recruitment competitions for the public service as well as the provision of several projects in the agricultural field to young people, breeding or education not to be exhaustive. These competitions and job opportunities, often within reach of young people who are truly prepared and trained for the cause, undoubtedly make it possible to systematically reduce the unemployment rate as well as the extreme poverty which is observed in families through a youth who, most of the time is educated and trained but which unfortunately despite the number, because it represents the largest part of the population, does not manage to integrate socially, which obviously undermines the process of social change in general. Indeed, as we can see through the ambient sociological reality in Cameroon, contrary to what can be read in the newspapers or

heard in the media, there is paradoxically and incisively a real, visible and indisputable situation of poverty.

Cameroonians in general and that of his youth in particular. This poverty, with irrefutable well-known causes such as the east wind and the effects that we have observed in terms of layoffs and return to unemployment, not to mention the devaluation of the CFA franc and the fall. drastic payroll in the civil service of the 1980s and 1990s, is increasingly reinforced today by the policy of everything for me and nothing for others, in other words the extremely selfish mentality of a tribalist society which has an openness deep on two diametrically opposed social classes, in particular, the class of those who have all the wealth and that Jean Marc Ela affectionately called the world "above" and those who have nothing, the poor or the endless low. To this reality, we can add the problem of social integration. Indeed, without being detached from the above-mentioned causes, the difficulty of finding a paid job in the public sector as in the private sector is a real headache for the Cameroonian youth, to such an extent that in the imagination as in the facts in some cases, finding a place in a large school or in a company is more part of the policy of strengthening the gaps between the two classes, rich and poor. Indeed, if the economic situation does not already allow the populations in their majority to eat their hunger and to flourish as they wish, let us specify that, access to a paid job without going through "small doors" is a luxury for the young Cameroonian, especially since what seems obvious is the social reproduction of the wealthy class, generally ensured by sponsorship and cooptation (Ela, J.M. (1990:36).

The corollary of all this is that the youth indulge in other activities, school for them no longer represents the way to salvation from time to time, especially in a modern world which offers many other possibilities for survival. This school, it must be said, has taken a serious blow in recent years to such an extent that the thought of Cameroonian youth is no longer only and automatically oriented towards them as a sine qua non of any social success, a necessity. , because the need is elsewhere, in particular in the activities and the practices which allow easy and quick access but not surely to the money, "sinews of war", without having to lose twenty years of its existence on the benches to have nothing at the end. In short, the inability for the school to open a path of salvation to Cameroonian youth has enabled them to create and set up other mechanisms of development which, over time and the obvious solutions that these The mechanisms contributing to the problems of young people have emerged as a real counterweight to school, thus reducing it to second or even third place and sometimes leading to excesses that cause violence in our school environments on the part of young people who still go there. This is also reinforced at the base by the resignation of the major pillar of the socialization of these young people, namely the family. The family has in fact abandoned its role at school which, faced with competition from activities and practices such as gambling, no longer convinces young people as in the past. It is in this arduous and hostile context of a school that no longer fulfills the youth that this reflection will emerge. What is the place of school in the imagination of young Cameroonians today? Isn't the openness of young people to so-called easy practices the consequence of school bankruptcy? How does this school failure open up to violence in our educational institutions?

2. School, a framework that no longer guarantees employment for young people

The role of the school is access to culture and by extension to development in genera (Compaore, 1996: 17). This role is realized primarily through education and training. Indeed, in a context marked by globalization, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the perspective of education in 2030, the end of the colonial agreements with France and need to achieve emergence by 2035, a review of the content of teaching in the two English-speaking and French-speaking sub-systems is needed in order to produce competent Cameroonians through their know-how and their skills. In this regard, school has an important place because on the one hand it is a place of learning for young people and on the other hand it is a place of sociability, exchange and above all access to a better life by opening up to paid employment. This means that in addition to education and training, the value of the school also lies in its ability to offer young people, once training is completed, financial possibilities through employment stable in any area of public or private service, better still by self-employment through the creation of private companies (Entwistle, 1978: 26). It is, moreover, and it must be admitted, this possibility of finding a place socially or of being able to easily set up a business that has always motivated young people for many decades to take an interest in school. We can observe this motivation of young people in school from the 1960s to the 1980s, certainly because of the welfare state which manifested itself during this period by the granting of scholarships to young graduates, but also, these young people had easy access to employment after studies because of the less restrictive demographic factor (Compaore, 1996: 19).

We can also read this motivation of young people in school between the years 1980 to 2000, unfortunately, this period will be less favorable for them because of the economic recession which will affect several families not only by the devaluation of the CFA franc, but also by the dismissal of several workers in the private sector (Yaro, 1995:8). One of the factors favoring the interest of young people in school, and not the least here, also remains the poor popularization of the mass media as well as leisure activities as we have them today. Indeed, the absence or not very easy access to All these advantages of modernization and in this case the internet allowed the youth of this time to have only school as a fundamental center of interest, which obviously did not show the problem of the inefficiency of the school as it is presented today, especially since, as we noted above, the demography favoring, the various policies of insertion of the young people by the state during this period, especially from 1960 to 1980 are more effective. However, from the 2000s onwards, progress in science and technology offered young people more leisure and above all other avenues of access to money, a good for which they have always fought by going to school (Batiana, 2002: 3).

It is in this context that we will see little by little and gradually until the current situation, the devaluation of the school. Indeed, the majority of young people interviewed in the framework of this study were not asked to point the finger at the inability as well as the dropping out of school to fully play its role of facilitator for access to a better life through paid employment after graduation (Entwistle, 1978: 28). According to them, spending more than twenty years of one's existence on the benches should automatically be sanctioned by a paid job which would allow the young person in question to compensate for the physical, intellectual and financial efforts expended

during the apprenticeship (Lange M-F, 1998: 15). However, by noting the increased unemployment of previous generations, most of whom have university degrees, but who despite everything find themselves trying day after day to find a place in the informal sector because they are not taken into account by the school in the sense of a stable job after their long and arduous studies, the youth for the most part prefers to proceed by small shortcuts, avoiding as much as doing this little of wasting time for what they affectionately call the long pencils, for good obviously talking about long studies. In this context, the school loses in the understanding of the young all its value for the benefit of military recruitment, the Normal School of General Education Teachers (ENIEG), nursing and state-certified nurses (IDE) for the most enduring, taximen motorcycles and other informal activities for the less delinquent, easy practices such as bet-football, card games, urban pari-mutuel, the sale of narcotics to name but a few examples, with everything what this has as a corollary for the most delinquent who unfortunately are the most numerous. It is therefore no longer a secret in Cameroon in particular, having a stable and well-paid job thanks to school remains an unattainable dream, especially for educated young people (Batiana, 2002:5). Indeed, according to the results of the surveys carried out, the unemployment rate increases with the level of education, and it is the poorly educated young people who generally have the chance of a stable job because they do not require much in terms of salary and the type of employment. In addition to being mostly those who tend to be self-employed, less educated young people are also opened to accepting lower wages, which is not the case with college graduates (Entwistle, 1978: 49).

For these graduates elsewhere, unemployment is a growing problem, because the supply of skilled labor exceeds the capacity of the modern economy to create the skilled jobs they need. Even in companies, bosses expect high levels of qualification from their recruits, but are still reluctant to hire young graduates citing their lack of technical and professional expertise. School is therefore no longer necessarily a framework where young people can abandon themselves by obtaining their diplomas with the certainty of finding a job commensurate with their intellectual background (Entwistle, 1978: 52). On the contrary, the young today has become an opportunist and no longer dreams of big but reduces his dream to the various competitions or to the opportunity that immediately opens itself to him and which allows him to leave the world of unemployment, and this even if it is an opportunity that only involves his primary school diploma even though he has a baccalaureate for example. It is this inability of the school to play one of its most determining role, namely to give employment to graduates that will create frustrations in young people which will have an impact on two levels: first, a disinterest in the school institution by the young and an openness to easy practices where he accesses money more quickly with all that this has as consequences; finally, delinquent behavior at school vis-à-vis the teacher who wants to try by all means to get him back.

3. The bankruptcy of the school as a cause and consequence of the popularization of easy practices

Let us specify here, and this to avoid any definitional ambiguity that, by practices of facilities, we mean any activity or practice which contributes to the partial or definitive distraction of the young person, pushing him consciously or unconsciously

to abandon the path of learning school in order to access money more or less quickly, the sinews of war (Celis R. G. 1990: 15). Dropping out of school, it should be noted, here consists either of not going or going there but without conviction and therefore neglecting the actual attendance at lessons, or even worse, when he is present, to orchestrate disorder, robbery, fights. Indeed, as we quickly demonstrated in the first analyzes of this article, the social salvation of the majority of young people no longer passes through school. In this context, several other practices, all or most of them aiming at access to money at all costs and at all prices will influence the behavior of the young person, pushing the latter, when it is not taken back in hand, advised and supervised to definitely abandon the way to school. These practices include, among others: sports betting, urban mutual betting, drug breakdown, theft and organized crime (Celis R. G. 1990: 16).

These practices, which unfortunately should not be taken lightly because they have a serious impact on the future of young people in general, deserve a close look to understand them in order to better remedy their consequences. Let us take a particular interest in sports betting to understand how this practice manages to distract young people from school by sometimes causing them to behave violently not only towards their teachers, but also and above all towards society whole. Sports betting is indeed a game based on a risky bet in the field of sport. Indeed, if we can agree on the fact that punters, mostly young, are equally interested in motorcycle, horse and car racing, it remains indisputable that it is betting on football that dominates the universe punters. These bets are generally based on the majority of football matches being played in the various championships around the world (Lange M- F, 1998: 35). It is a question here for the young person, faithful follower of this easy and lazy practice, to choose, on a list of matches which the manager of the kiosk proposes to him according to the various championships, the combinations which seem to him at close range, combinations to which he associates scores for or against, depending on the teams he has chosen. The amount of the matches is staggered according to the different championships, which gives the player time to make his calculations and to bet.

The results obtained at the end of the various matches in the championships concerned will then allow the young person to benefit from his gain if the quota of matches won is reached. What is interesting about this practice, and which undoubtedly contributes to the support of the majority of young people is that it is difficult to invest money in sports betting and lose all the stake. This assurance of not coming back empty-handed pushes young people today to spend more time in kiosks to reflect on the composition of the different combinations of matches that will be entered in their tickets, and of course, the immediate consequence is that these young people, since the majority of them are pupils and students leave classes before the end of the hour when they have gone there or do not even go (Gerard, 1997:11).

From the analyzes made of the data collected, the young people mainly evoke a reason linked to their observation, in particular that the school no longer brings them anything, it is ineffective to justify their withdrawal from this framework (Gerard, 1997:12). Indeed, everything seems to start in families and spread to society. The young people go from an observation which is that in their different families, and here we are talking about three quarters of these young people, several elders who were considered as models because having made long studies and having obtained university degrees, having stayed for long periods in the metropolises, practically all

return in a hat of great unemployment to settle in the parental home. This situation, which initially surprised more than one of them, quickly revealed its *raison d'être*, namely that the school no longer pays as they say. Why then invest in something that is wasting our time with no guarantee of tomorrow? This is the concern that drives young people to get involved outside of school. Easy practices and in this case sports betting, which seems to be the beginning of a solution to this problem, then appears to be a panacea. With the sports bet, the young person redirects his love for school and makes projections on his future, even if most often the latter loses sight of the fact that it is only a risky game that can make people smile so much than to cry because of the lack of guarantee that characterizes it. Add to this openness of young people to football the impact of time. Indeed, the time taken to reflect on the bet of a combination of games is likely to cost a day or even the time necessary for studies for a pupil or a student. The young people who thus engage in this practice of bet-football then find themselves sometimes leaving their houses with a real intention to go to school, but the lack of motivation helping, they find themselves passing all the time during the day or even for hours in gaming kiosks. These moments of abandonment of lessons are more intense during the periods of the UEFA cups, in particular the Champions League where practically all young punters are open to indulge in the game.

Sports betting, in addition to being a powerful factor in removing young people from school, also remains a motivating element in the violence of these young people, first in school but also in society. Indeed, school gives young people an open mind through knowledge, more possibilities to choose their professional path, more culture, therefore more conversation regardless of the person we have in front of us (Assogba .Y. 1984:12). The school also helps us to meet young people from different backgrounds. So, if we can agree that going to school isn't a commitment, not going can close many positive doors to open negative ones like drugs and organized crime. Access to knowledge makes it easy to form a personal opinion of the various problems but also of the difficulties that stand in our existence. In other words, going to school certainly reduces the risks of deviance and social delinquency among young people and, paradoxically, refusing to go is leaving a very important loophole in these social excesses.

Gambling in general and sports betting in particular, as a practice of ease, relative to the ineffectiveness of school today undoubtedly contributes to the social violence orchestrated by the youth. This is all the more true insofar as having taken stock of the unemployment rate and the great difficulty that there is in finding a place in the field of paid employment, whether it is in the public or private sectors, the vast majority of young people have resigned from long and painful studies to engage in what is realistic and obvious to them, namely games of chance. The consequence of this resignation is obvious here because, games of chance and specifically sports betting is played in kiosks, that is to say in confinement frames of ten, thirty or even a hundred of individuals often all young, the majority coming from different horizons and having different cultures. Indeed among these individuals we find cigarette and hemp smokers, drug takers, ex prisoners, assassins, in short, bandits and even highway criminals. Thus, in this catch-all that his game settings for betting-foot, the young student socializes in ways of doing, acting and thinking that were not his daily life, the continuous and extensive interactions with delinquents around him end up transforming him negatively and the consequences are felt and seen very quickly in

family, in society, but especially at school when, the latter, called in these beginnings to deceive the vigilance of his parents and friends is obliged from time to time to go there. Unfortunately, this time is often short for our young student, now delinquent because of the delinquent acts he will quickly commit (Yaro, 1995:11).

4. From facilitating practices to violence in schools

As we noted above, the school remains and remains, alongside the family, associations, and peer groups a popular framework for socialization and education, it is also undoubtedly the most frequented setting and the most active today after the unfortunate observation of an increasingly accentuated resignation of the family in the role of education (Bommier and Shapiro 2001: 22). It transforms minds from early childhood to reflected consciousness through the maturity of our reason. This means that the young person who gets attached to it is supposed to exhibit a behavior and a way of reasoning that differentiates him from the one who has stayed at home without going there. To play this decisive role, the educational institution surrounds itself with a certain number of men and women who constitute what are commonly called actors of the school system. These people, devoted to the cause for the majority, often have only one goal, to make everyone into citizens. We can clearly see that their role is to bring all the young people who come to them to understand why they are there and for what purpose. Unfortunately, and paradoxically, it is this goal and the desire to achieve it at all costs that is the main cause of violence in schools. How to justify this thesis? Indeed, once he begins to undergo counter socialization at school, our young student, because of his frequency in games of chance and his rapprochement with his new delinquent companions as we have noted above, confuses henceforth the two settings, that of the school and that of the game. He wants to behave in the same way in one as in the other (Bommier and Shapiro 2001: 25).

The banditry that has become his new companion tends to manifest itself even in the classroom, and since it offers him financial opportunities to better make his bets, buy his cigarettes and afford his drugs, the classroom becomes the plantation where he performs his harvest by flying. Indeed, in class, his classmates have books, computers, pocket money and many other goods favorable to his cause, so he steals these goods to meet his personal needs (Cherkaoui, 1999:18). This confusion of framework also means that our young delinquent sometimes finds himself taking drugs or smoking within the school grounds and since he sometimes smokes beyond cigarettes, he can sometimes lose his lucidity and to relieve, which henceforth reduces him to an unconscious being and by extension to a violent animal. It is in this situation, it should be specified that we enter the most dangerous phase of this young student's misguidance because, the teacher or any other person, actor of the school system alerted to his condition must avoid rushing him even less brutalize him otherwise we inevitably find ourselves in a situation of violence, because the latter has totally lost his mind. This is to say that violence in schools is caused by the departure of the young person from school for the simple reason that it has become ineffective, then, it is linked to the encounter of several other cultures different from the school, finally it is the fact of the confusion between the school framework and the play environment as manifested by the young people who engage in these hazardous practices (Yaro, 1995: 21).

This work on school bankruptcy and violence against young people in schools is not a thesis per se, but an outline for presenting a social fact in broad outline. It translates, after analysis of several direct and participating observations and at the end of several analyzes of the data collected in a field that is familiar to us, the behavior of a youth who today sinks into complacency and ease under the pretext of his disappointment with the school, which according to her no longer fully plays its role. It explains in an understandable way how upstream, a situation of disinterestedness in school can become downstream and this under our gaze, at the origin of certain violence that we observe and experience in our schools and universities. It even goes beyond the simple presentation to touch on certain cases of violence that regularly appear before our eyes and gives us the necessary weapons to be able to remedy it. By referring to games of chance in general and to sports betting commonly called pari-football in particular, this work finally attempts to lay bare a societal problem which becomes serious as the years pass, that of the desertion by the youth of school and university enclosures for the benefit of easy practices. In this sense, it is a form of questioning the State in general and administrators in particular in order to avoid finding ourselves very soon in a society of delinquency and violence.

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COVID-19 PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN, INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AND FAMILY COHESION IN KANO, NIGERIA

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Abstract: *This study focused on COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, intimate partner violence and family cohesion in Kano, Nigeria. The study objective is to examine the level of cohesion within the family during the nationwide lockdown and to assess the impact of family cohesion on adherence to COVID-19 precautions. Focus group discussion was conducted in selected areas in Kano. Purposive sampling technique was used to draw sample elements. Data generated were transcribed and analyzed using qualitative method. The findings show a high level of cohesion within families in Kano during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. Family cohesion was found to have a great impact on adherence to COVID-19 precautions. However, some cases of violence between intimate partners were reported during COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. The study therefore recommends the need for continuous orientation of people on the importance of family cohesion to engender cordial relationships and emotional bond within the family.*

Keywords: *COVID-19; Pandemic; Intimate partner violence; Precaution; Family cohesion.*

1. Introduction

The importance of family cohesion in socialization and sustenance of family in all spheres cannot be over emphasized. The family is a functional and immanent unit of society (Sooryamoorthy, 2012). A family is a kinship unit that exist as a social reality (UNESCO, 1992) It consist of individuals bewed by marriage, blood, consensual union or adoption, communicating and interacting with one another (Sonawat, 2001). Members of a family believe that they have a unique relationship with one another based on blood ties, affection, shared experience, duty and common interests (Minnet, 2000). It must be noted that most Nigerian families consist of a father, mother and children, and many families; most especially in rural areas include two or more wives, grandparents, uncles, and aunts. Family sizes vary in Nigeria; a family may have between two to six children in an urban area, while a more rural family may have as many as six to ten children. The type of family structure found in the area of study is monogamous and polygamous family. Olson and Defrain (2000) asserted that monogamous family consist of only one spouse. Polygamous family on the other hand is one in which there are more than one spouse. Polygyny is the foundation of polygamous family in Nigeria. The nature and structure of interactions within the family is easily described on the basis of family composition characteristics (Suárez et al., 2015). Different kinds of human experiences are found in the family, these include love, communal sharing, tenderness, honesty, joy, sadness, happiness, poverty, deceit, jealousy, envy, warfare, violence, acceptance and guidance (Action Health, 2003).

All over the world, there are variations in the ways family members cohere or stick together and communicate with one another. These variations sum up the level of emotional bond between family members. Family cohesion refers to passionate relationship and intense bond that members of the same family exhibit towards themselves (Olson, Rusell and Sprenkle, 1982). This is seen in the day-to-day activities and interactions of family members regardless of disagreements or conflicts between them. Family cohesion denotes ways in which members of family are detached or united. Family cohesion according to Olson et al. (1982) is quite different from family adaptability which describes the capability of the family system to modify and adjust in line with prevailing circumstances. Olson et al. (1982) submitted that family cohesion guard against external stressors. This was corroborated by Hovey and King (1996). Cohesion according to Salgado de Snyder (1987) is a guard against external stressors and distress. Evidence from literature linked low level of family cohesion to greater likelihood of psychological distress (Guarnaccia and Martinez, 2005; Cohen and Wills, 1985; Turner, 1981, Dean and Lin, 1977). Similarly, Ugwu, Ugwu, Njemanze, and Nwosu (2019) noted that there is a link between life satisfaction, well-being and higher cohesion in literature (Vandeleur, Perrez, & Schoebi, 2007). Another study showed that lower level of family cohesion is related to increasing relationship problems, poor subjective well-being and poor quality of life (Kager, Lang and Berghofer, 2000). Elements of high cohesion include physical intimacy and consistency, warmth, time together, nurturance which gives emotional security to every member of the family (Green and Werner, 1996).

Fawole, Okedare and Reed (2021) reported that some women experienced violence from intimate partners during the nationwide lockdown orchestrated by Covid-19 in Nigeria as anxiety about shortage of money and food created tension that led to conflict and intimate partner violence. This type of violence negates the ideals of family cohesion. Commonly used synonyms for intimate partner violence include; spousal abuse, and intimate partner abuse among others. Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) denotes violence between spouses who are married or closely related romantically or sexually. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2012) noted that IPV is any behavior during an affectionate relationship that engender sexual, psychological or physical harm to individuals concerned. Intimate partner violence within the family indicates a weak emotional bond. An examination of family cohesion during Covid -19 lockdown is therefore necessary because the emergence of the novel virus known as Covid-19 is one of the external stressors that shook most families vigorously in Nigeria and in other climes.

World Health Organization became aware of Covid-19 in December 2019 after the initial incidence of the infection at the capital of Hubei province in China. Nigeria had her first incidence of Covid-19 on February 27, 2020 (NCDC, 2020). The highly infectious disease otherwise known as corona virus disease is a part of corona viruses known as SARS-CoV-2. Covid -19 emerged in Wuhan city, China (Shigemura, Ursano, Morganstein, et al., 2020). In recent years, corona viruses are found to be the major pathogens of respiratory disease outbreak. Research indicates that birds and mammals are potential carriers of the virus. Human beings are easily exposed to the attack of the virus (Schoeman and Fielding, 2019).

The initial number of persons infected by the virus came from other countries. They ended up infecting people they had contact with on arrival in Nigeria. However,

within some weeks of the first incidence of the virus, community spread of the virus became a matter of urgent concern as individuals who had no travel history or contact with travelers became infested with the virus. WHO Director-General (2020) observed that majority of covid-19 patients showed moderate symptoms while others showed severe and fatal symptoms such as multiple organ failure, shortness of breath among others. Older individuals with underlying chronic diseases are more susceptible to the risk of the virus.

At this juncture, a focus on the family and the level of cohesion in families cannot be overemphasized for individuals belong to one family or another. Family cohesion indicates the right behavior among members of a family (Field and Duchoslav, 2009), it determines the nature of love that members of family exhibit among themselves (Soliday, Kool and Lande, 2001). Studies by Cohen et al. (2004); Hauser et al., (1990) show that families that are more cohesive or have environments that support family cohesion, have higher adherence level and better control of glycemia. Although, these studies were not carried out on a world-wide pandemic, yet the inferences drawn from the studies provides great insights for the current study. A thorough examination of literature suggests that warm and well-structured caring family environments that have high level of cohesion may promote adherence to health and treatment regimen such as better glycemic control and Type 1 Diabetes treatment (Hauser et al., 1990; Anderson, 2004; Cohen et al., 2004; Lewin et al., 2006), it also assists Nigerian employees produce mechanisms to deal with effects of burnout (Ugwu, Ugwu, Njemanze, & Nwosu, 2019). Equally, higher levels of support from family and cohesion among other factors engendered minimal signs of depression among women who are mothers of Type 1 Diabetic children (Blankfeld and Holahan, 1996).

In view of the colossal loss inflicted on families all over the world by Covid- 19, an examination of Covid-19 pandemic lockdown and family cohesion is appropriate and timely.

2. Statement of the Problem

The spread of covid-19 in Nigeria came as a rude shock to most families as they were caught unaware. The means of livelihood and sustenance of family members were turned upside down. This prevented some men from playing the roles of breadwinners to their wives and children as expected. In some situations, the inability of fathers to provide daily needs for members of the family generated conflict and intimate partner violence which can weaken the emotional bond within the family. Families that survive on daily income could barely feed and a lot of salary earners could not access their monies in Banks. The palliative measures provided by government did not get to every family as those palliatives in terms of food items were inadequate and were siphoned by some unscrupulous officials. Some family members were infected with the virus, and they ended up transmitting the same to other family members. Some families lost their breadwinners while more than two persons died in some other families. There was panic across the length and breadth of Nigeria. The level of family cohesion was threatened as every member of the family sees other members as potential carrier of the novel virus. This situation is worrisome at a period where members of the family needed to work together to withstand the scourge of the pandemic. Hence, a study of covid-19 pandemic lockdown, intimate partner violence and family cohesion is apt.

3. Objectives of Study

The objectives of the study include the following:

1. To examine the level of Family cohesion in Kano during Covid-19 pandemic lockdown.
2. To examine family cohesion impact on adherence to Covid-19 precautions
3. To assess the relationship between level of family cohesion and intimate partner violence during Covid- 19 pandemic lockdown.

4. Methodology

Purposive sampling was employed in the selection of elements from the population consisting of individuals from different families in Kano, Nigeria. Kano was selected purposively due to its population concentration and its reputation as the center of commerce in northern Nigeria. Discussants were purposively selected from Naibawa and Sabon-gari areas of Kano metropolis. This is due to the peculiarities of these areas as families across different social classes are readily available in the two locations.

A total of thirty persons participated in the focus group discussion. Discussants were divided into three focus groups for effective discussion. Two focus group discussion sessions with ten participants each, making a total of twenty discussants was held at Sabon –gari due to the high population of the area while one focus group discussion session was held at Naibawa with ten discussants. The age of discussants ranges between thirty to sixty years, so as to give room for matured discussion. A well-trained female research assistant was commissioned to assist and serve as interpreter during discussion sessions. The female research assistant facilitated discussions with women as cultural factors does not allow unlimited interactions between men and women who are neither married to each other nor belong to the same family. Discussions were recorded and later transcribed for easy content analysis. Covid- 19 precautionary measures were strictly adhered to during focus group discussion as social distancing was observed. Also, soap, water and liquid hand sanitizer were provided at the venue of the discussion. Discussants made use of face mask. Face shields were provided free of charge for discussants. Participation in the focus group discussion was voluntary and the identity of discussants were protected.

5. Data Presentation

Table 1: Content Analysis

| Code | Description | Extract from Discussion |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| Level of Family Cohesion | <i>Female, 48 years, Naibawa</i> | The level of cohesion within my family was high during the nationwide lockdown because my husband came home to stay with us from his place of work at Abuja. My children in Boarding school also came home and we really enjoyed the lockdown period. |
| | <i>Male, 35 years Sabon-gari</i> | The level of family cohesion was high during the nationwide lockdown in my street, most especially in my home. We all stayed together in love and |

| | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| | | cooperated with each other so as to prevent ourselves from getting infected. |
| | <i>Male 52 years Sabon-gari</i> | Covid-19 pandemic lockdown did not affect my love for my wives and children. In fact, the lockdown strengthen our bond as I really had enough time to relate with them more than ever. |
| Impact of family cohesion on adherence to Covid-19 precautions | <i>Male, 44 years, Sabon -gari</i> | Family cohesion made family members adhere strictly to precautions recommended for safety purposes in different Homes. |
| | <i>Female, 58 years, Naibawa</i> | I believe family cohesion had great impact on adherence to Covid-19 precautions during the lockdown period. I am saying this because most of the sensitization campaigns on Radio and Television were targeted at making family members look out for other family members and to advise them on the need to adhere to precautionary measures against the virus |
| | <i>Female, 37 years, Sabon-gari</i> | I think there must be some form of emotional bond and strong cohesion among family members before they can listen to each other or follow the advice of one another. Therefore, I would say family cohesion has significant impact on adherence to Covid-19 precautions |
| Intimate Partner Violence and Family cohesion | <i>Female, 41years, Sabon-gari</i> | There is a relationship between level of family cohesion and violence between intimate partners during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. Some breadwinners could not meet the needs of family members. This weakened the emotional bond between spouses, and it resulted in wife battery and other forms of violence |
| | <i>Male, 60 years, Naibawa</i> | I had an opportunity to mediate between a husband and wife that fought during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown, and I can say confidently that the level of cohesion and love within the family is low. There is a relationship between level of family cohesion and violence between intimate partners during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown |
| | <i>Female, 32 years, Sabon-gari</i> | One thing is sure as far as I am concerned, conflict will always arise when emotional bond is not strong. So, I believe there is a relationship between level of family cohesion and intimate partner violence during Covid-19 pandemic lockdown |

Source: Researchers' fieldwork, 2021

6. Discussion of Findings

Analysis of the information elicited during the focus group discussion shows that the level of Family cohesion in Kano during Covid 19 pandemic lockdown was high as emotional bond between family members remains strong irrespective of the Covid -19 pandemic. This supported Minnet (2000) position that members of a family feel that they have a unique relationship with each other based on blood, affection, duty, shared experience, and common interests. However, few discussants observed that the level of family cohesion during the covid-19 pandemic lockdown was low as some families witnessed tension due to unmet needs.

Furthermore, discussants noted that the impact of family cohesion on adherence to covid 19 precautions cannot be overemphasized as the emotional bond within families made some family members who are well educated encourage other members of their families to take necessary precautions against covid 19 virus for the good of family members and the society at large. This lend credence to Hauser et al. (1990); Anderson (2004); Cohen et al. (2004); Lewin et al. (2006) which noted that warm and well-structured caring family environments that have high level of cohesion may promote adherence to health and treatment regimen as seen in the case of covid-19 pandemic.

In addition, discussants assessed the relationship between level of family cohesion and intimate partner violence. They admitted that cases of violence between intimate partners were recorded during this period and one of the discussants played the role of a mediator between two couples during the lockdown. This corroborated Fawole, Okedare and Reed (2021) report on experiences of violence between intimate partners during lockdown in Nigeria. Discussants observed that incidence of intimate partner violence could be linked to low level of family cohesion.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

The findings indicated a high level of cohesion within families in Kano during the covid-19 pandemic lockdown, though there were cases of intimate partner violence within some families which shows a low level of family cohesion. Family cohesion was found to have great impact on adherence to covid-19 precautions. The study recommends the need for continuous orientation of the people on the importance of family cohesion epitomized by cordial relationships and emotional bond within the family. The study equally recommends the need to eschew intimate partner violence.

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MIGRATION POLICY OUTLOOK IN THE PANDEMIC CONTEXT

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Abstract: *The pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus is strongly felt by migrants, radically changing the present and future migration from all points of view. Since the beginning of the pandemic, a large part of migrants have been forced to find themselves in a difficult situation, dictated by measures to limit entry-exit into / from the country, on the one hand, and unemployment in the country of origin. Migrants are excluded from the labor market because undeclared work has increased, where foreign workers will compete with local workers. The issue of return migration is also addressed, emphasizing that return is not very developed, but has a significant impact through the emergence of the solutions they are thinking of. The article mainly refers to what happened in Romania and to what is to be expected in terms of volume, structure and population dynamics in the short, medium and long term, in the context of the challenges brought by the medical emergency caused by COVID19.*

Keywords: *Romania, crisis, pandemic, mobility, return migration.*

1. Introduction

In the evolution of human development, various economic crises appear regularly, but, at the same time, there are spontaneous crises, which destroy all the forecasts of specialists. The current situation, when the pandemic together with the economic crisis, the closure of borders between countries, lower oil prices, drought, the reduction of international trade, a negative impact on global migration processes is identified. The harmful consequences have an effect not only on working migrants, but also on labor markets, both nationally and globally. The purpose of the material is to investigate external migration trends in the context of the pandemic crisis.

In the spring of 2020, most human mobility stopped because they had travel bans, went into emergencies or even a complete blockage due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus. These restrictions have had a dramatic effect on migrant workers around the world (ILO, 2020). While the crisis has led some countries to provide easier access to the labor market for immigrants with skills needed for essential jobs or even to temporarily regularize illegal labor migrants, several countries have decided to create new restrictions on labor immigration. work due to the negative economic effects of the blockade (Abella, 2020). The crisis is expected to have a long-term effect on labor migration (Papademetriou and Hooper, 2020), making the COVID-19 pandemic a potential event of concentration.

The social, economic and political dynamics have known a new scope since the pandemic broke out. From a historical point of view, humanity has experienced several critical periods, in which the consequences have been noted more or less as devastating. History has been told countless times when we mention smallpox, rubella,

cholera, tuberculosis or plague. All produced chaos and fear, the demographic impact of each varied depending on the route of transmission, the degree of contagion, the most affected age group or the previous exposure of the population to a similar pathogen.

2. The pandemic in Romania

At the same time, a number of socio-demographic characteristics played an important role in the spread of pathogens, as well as in the severity of the effects that epidemics had on the population, economy and society, the relationship between population characteristics and effects produced by epidemics. a complex one, of mutual determination. The incidence of epidemics and mortality from these diseases depend on certain demographic and social factors. Epidemiological studies show that both the transmission of certain contagious diseases and the severity of disease depend on the intersection of factors such as the age structure of the population (Jarosz, 2020; Mossong et al., 2008), population density (Rocklöv, Sjödin, 2020), size household (Geard et al, 2015) and its type (multi-generational or multi-family). The role of these factors in the dynamics of epidemics depends to a large extent on their selective nature, for example the large number of multi-generational households can favor the occurrence of serious cases of influenza, due to the coexistence of preschool children who become easily infected at the beginning of the community. and the elderly, who develop severe forms of the disease (Geard et al, 2015). (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/pdfscache/1275.pdf>)

Travel from one place to another has encouraged the transmission of contagious diseases and thus migration and mobility have been considered the main factors in the spread of epidemics. The modern era has brought to the fore new epidemiological challenges, if we analyze the factors that stand out in addition to territorial mobility, in the account of which we place the spread of these diseases we detect the means of transport.

On 27.02.2020, following a contact with a foreign citizen who visited Romania, the first case of SARS-CoV-2 infection was registered. COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new type of coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2). It was first identified in China in December 2019. In December 2019, an epidemic of COVID-19 broke out in the Chinese city of Wuhan, which spread rapidly to other regions of China and the world. In January 2020, isolated cases appeared in some EU Member States. At the end of February 2020, Italy reported a significant increase in COVID-19 cases concentrated in the northern regions of the country. Most other EU Member States have started reporting cases of infected people.

A group of researchers from the University of Bucharest also showed that the virus entered Romania along the corridors of external migration: Italy, followed by other countries of destination of Romanian migrants. For example, the situation of Italy as a source country of the virus has been highly debated, and the Romanian media has often used the socializing pages of Romanian migrants to exemplify the harsh reality of the Peninsula. They initially did not want to return to the country because they did not trust the medical and social system and considered, even if the situation there was worrying, to stay there. Such critical visions and a general lack of trust in Romanian institutions are attitudes often encountered among Romanian migrants not only

regarding the health system. Probably that too weighed a lot in the fact that we do not see more arrivals from Italy. (Europa Liberă, 23 martie 2020)

3. Perspectives of the pandemic

From an *economic* point of view, according to the calculations of the International Monetary Fund, the performance of the global economy will be this year and next year with a total of 12.5 trillion dollars (11 trillion euros) lower. This is the "worst recession" since the global economic crisis of about 90 years ago. (<https://www.dw.com/ro/coronavirusul-va-fi-urmat-de-o-pandemie-a-datoriilor/a-55693505>) All countries will go through this crisis, from an economic point of view. Economic performance will decline this year marked by a worldwide coronavirus pandemic, experts warn in unison. As a consequence of the crisis, the public debt will exceed this year, in terms of economic performance, the maximum level recorded at the end of World War II. On April 16, 2020, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection reported a number of 901,623 suspended employment contracts and 233,798 terminated employment contracts. At the end of February 2020, the unemployment rate was 3.9% in Romania, respectively 352 thousand people (INS, 2020). Compared to the February data, after the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, the number of suspended or terminated contracts increased almost fourfold. At the end of April 2020, the situation reported by MMPS indicates a number of 725,200 suspended employment contracts and 276,459 terminated employment contracts (MMPS, 2020, Press release: Status of individual suspended / terminated employment contracts, as of April 30, 2020). Compared to the situation from April 16, 2020, there is a decrease by 176,423 of the number of suspended employment contracts, but the number of terminated ones increased by 42,661. Compared to the situation on April 1, 2020, the number of terminated contracts increased by 120,784 (MMPS, 2020, press releases on the situation of individual suspended / terminated employment contracts). In the immediate term, it is felt by low-income or registered families job losses due to the closure of some sectors of the economy, families who they have no immediate and adequate social protection alternatives. Loss of benefits or social services that were associated with school participation (attendance at day centers, nutrition programs in schools) means for poor families to take on an additional cost during the crisis. (https://acad.ro/SARS-CoV-2/doc/d14-COVID-19_din_perspectiva_demografica.pdf)

From an *educational* perspective, a pandemic increases the level of stress for everyone, including parents. If you show signs of stress, it is perfectly normal and you are not alone. Many parents may find it stressful to find a balance between work, childcare and housekeeping, especially when they do not have the support they are used to. While isolation can be an opportunity to spend time together and develop a relationship with your children, many parents may face conflicting feelings and priorities, as well as practical challenges. The coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) causes emotions, such as anxiety, stress and uncertainties, felt even more strongly by children of all ages. Although they have their own mechanisms for dealing with these emotions, given that schools are closed, events have been canceled and they need to stay away from friends, children need to feel loved and supported now more than ever. For children of migrants and refugees, access to care and services will become even more difficult due to quarantine and closure of social services, they may even be arrested or detained. Migrant and refugee children may be prevented from accessing

basic services due to legal, linguistic, act and safety barriers. It can be estimated that the number of children at risk of being separated from their families and those in need of alternative care will increase, both in times of crisis, when measures to limit the spread of the epidemic could lead to the separation of children from families and following the long-term socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis on families' ability to care for children.

Romania was among the countries that applied rapid measures to stop the spread of the virus, so on March 11, 2020 it closed its schools. The solution for continuing school in normal conditions was to move to a rapid digitization, on different e-learning platforms, using different packages, OFFICE 365 or G-suite, and for students in final years, grades VIII - XII and XII - to, optionally, return to school on 2 June 2020 for 2 weeks. During this period, special procedures for access to the school were implemented, both among students and among teaching, auxiliary and non-teaching staff. As for the children of migrants, they have been and remain particularly affected when the courses take place online. Parents have, on average, less resources, for example, they do not have a computer, they have less living space and, in the absence of language skills, they cannot help their children with homework. Home-schooling puts migrants' children at a greater disadvantage. Courses in all educational institutions and institutions have been suspended, as of March 11, 2020, as a first step in preventing the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. After the decree of the state of emergency, the suspension of school courses was continued. In the context of the suspension of courses and the limitation of the movement of persons (especially elderly people caring for grandchildren), Law no. 19/2020, which regulated the general framework regarding the granting of days off to parents / guardians / legal relatives in the situation of temporary closure of educational units and Government Emergency Ordinance no. 30/2020 of March 18, 2020, which amends art. 1, para. (1) of the Government Decision no. 217/2020 for the application of the provisions of Law no. 19/2020, which provides for granting days off to parents during the school holidays. According to this law, parents who supervise their children up to the age of 12 at home will benefit from days off, including during school holidays in case of emergency. (<https://www.edu.ro/ministerul-educa%C8%9Biei-%C8%99i-cercet%C4%83rii-face-apel-c%C4%83tre-cadrede-didactice-s%C4%83-contribuie-cu-resurse>)

On 10.03.2020, the Ministry of Education and Research made a public call to teachers in primary and secondary education to contribute open educational resources, which can be accessed on the CRED project page and to make video lessons with the technical support of Television Romanian. (<http://www.red.educred.ro/>)

Ministerial Order no. 4135 / 21.04.2020 approving the Instruction on ensuring the continuity of the learning process at the level of the pre-university education system establishes a series of measures to ensure the development of the online learning process. (https://www.edu.ro/sites/default/files/_fi%C8%99iere/Minister/2020/inv.preuniversitar/ordine%20ministru%20inv.preuniversitar/Ordin%204135_2020.pdf)

From a *social* perspective, the media used various nicknames to personalize the portrait of the Romanian migrant: „society's pariah”, „strawberry”, „black worker”, but omitted the fact that 94ei is a Romanian and must be seen and treated in terms of rights,

duties and obligations that a citizen has. Important to analyze is the legal status, as well as the degree of vulnerability.

The portrait of the Romanian migrant is the mirror of the Romanian society and must be seen as such. It should not be analyzed from an educational point of view - lower or higher power of higher education, distribution of rural-urban environment, etc. In addition to all these aspects, the reduction of social contacts has an impact on maintaining the mental health of older people (especially the elderly) and on how they perceive their quality of life (subjective well-being). The current context has led to the restriction of the activity of some of the social service providers needed by the elderly, such as home care. It is welcome that both the representatives of the central and local public administration, as well as the civil society and the local communities have mobilized to help the elderly, the continuing need of these people involves identifying the necessary human and financial resources. Last but not least, the use of technology both in monitoring these people and in their support (eg paying utility bills) is welcome.

As the phenomenon of Coronavirus has spread significantly globally at an almost uncontrollable rate, social authorities have adopted a series of measures to restrict the spread of this virus among the population as much as possible.

In this context, in order to ensure the safety and health of workers, but also to support employers in carrying out current activities, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection has recommended 3 measures to make labor relations more flexible:

1. establishing individualized work programs, with the consent or at the request of the employee concerned;
2. temporary change of workplace at the employee's home;
3. carrying out the activity through telework. Thus was introduced the phenomenon of teleworking. (Dumitrescu and Căpuș, 2020)

If we discuss from the three temporary perspectives, in the short term there is the return migration, the migrants who have already returned to Romania, it is not known for how long, but they can stay at least during the coming crisis. Certainly, it is not known what the dynamics of this phenomenon are because in agriculture or care, migrants are also identified, not the local population. Hard work is and will be done by migrants. In the medium term it is known that the only thing that can be said is that the European context in general will change. Nobody knows what the effects of migration will be from an economic point of view, but it will be an extremely strong crisis. The economic situation in general has profound effects on all types of migration. In the long run, history is still written today. Migrants sent several billion euros to the country, which will probably not enter or come in less for a while. What is interesting to follow in migrants is not only the diverse effect from an economic point of view, but also from an attitudinal point of view. Many of them will have a vulnerable attitude towards returning migrants and will want to open businesses and think that it would not be bad to maintain relations or property in Romania, even to return at some point.

Studies reported by Unicef reported that crisis situations based on domestic violence have increased in pandemics among couples. Existing statistics worldwide confirm the hypothesis that the COVID19 pandemic has negative effects on the couple's relationship, family life and favors the occurrence of episodes of domestic violence.

4. Conclusions:

There will certainly be fluctuations among families, many migrants have lost their jobs, no sources of income and will consume everything they have collected. Romania is an extremely unequal country and in general we need to look at how migrants return to the country in depopulated areas, but also in developed areas. The perspective is different as in the case of social situations. Efforts to preventively increase the capacity of family-type care and social protection systems are essential to increase family resilience and prevent the use of residential care.

Conclusions on the cross-border mobility of the mobility diaspora and its degree of vulnerability in the context of the COVID pandemic are some aspects without much evidence. Although it is not possible to give a sharp answer regarding the return to the country of the members of the mobility diaspora, as a result of the medical and economic crisis, some ideas related to their situation can be reported. It is difficult to estimate whether the diaspora will decide to return to the country, to migrate or to remain in the current state of residence. This aspect depends on when and how each country of residence will overcome the medical and economic crisis and how attractive Romania could become as an offer for members of the diaspora facing economic and health risks. With regard to prevention measures for the diaspora and seasonal migrants, so far, no state response or public policy response has been formulated as to what regards the Romanians from the mobility diaspora, who returned to the country in the context of the pandemic. What was done in these cases was quarantine or isolation, once entering Romania, measure to prevent the spread of the virus taken in the case of all those who arrived in Romania from certain destinations, regardless of the purpose or duration of their departure from Romania.

As stated in the ICCV 2020 Social Report, through these aspects we begin to understand the immediate social effects of the crisis: changes major issues of human relations, way of life and quality of life their. Globally, an impoverished and more polarized society, but also a visible growth of national self-awareness. The economy contracts: they close businesses and over a million people are sent in various forms of unemployment: unpaid leave, technical unemployment or even actual unemployment, job loss. Western economy, which offered attractive occupational opportunities for Romanians, she also entered restriction. A large part of the Romanians who worked abroad return to country and want to find job opportunities. As I mentioned at the beginning of this article, the opportunities in the West are also reduced for immigrants.

Above all, there are opportunities for seasonal work in agriculture which offers modest incomes and poor working conditions. Statistically, there is no report showing the exact figures of the size of the population that has returned the country and will remain here. An approximation made on incomplete and insufficient data estimates the number of those who returned and who want to find job opportunities at about half a million. The depletion of families' accumulated financial resources is a fact anxious. The level of accumulation of financial resources was low even before the crisis due to low income. They now risk being quickly depleted. The shrinking economy also has an immediate effect on declining incomes. Poverty will inevitably increase: people are already struggling to make ends meet provide the minimum necessary food, a new phenomenon in Romania. Inevitably it happens an accentuation of social inequality, of social polarization. Chronic lack employment severely accentuates the process of social exclusion.

(<http://www.iccv.ro/wpcontent/uploads/2020/04/Raport-social-ICCV-27-aprilie-2020.pdf>)

The end of the pandemic is conditioned by the natural immunization of a sufficiently large number of people so that the virus can no longer find hosts to infect, and as for migrants, the Government must find as a long-term investment their integration so that the danger that through the pandemic and its consequences, the progress made in the field of migration and integration will be partially annihilated.

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IMPACT OF MOBILE DIGITAL DEVICES ON VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL SKILLS ACQUIRED BY A SELECTED GROUP OF TERTIARY INSTITUTION STUDENTS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract: *The impact of mobile digital devices on the vocational and technical skills acquired by a carefully selected group of tertiary institution students in Osun State, Nigeria was examined in this study. A sample of Three hundred and fifty students carefully selected from tertiary institutions in Osun State, Nigeria was employed for this study. A Self developed questionnaire which was validated through pilot testing was administered to the sample for the collection of data. The researcher personally visited respondents to ensure an accurate collection of data. The collected data were tabulated and analyzed using percentage, frequency count and t-test analysis. The major findings of the study were: that there is significant difference in the vocational and technical skills acquired by a carefully selected group of tertiary students in Osun State, Nigeria through the use of mobile digital devices; mobile digital devices have impact on the vocational and technical skills acquired by a carefully selected group of male students than that of their female counterparts. It was also concluded that there is significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on the vocational and technical skills acquired by a carefully selected group of students in Osun State, Nigeria based on specialization. Based on the findings of the study, major recommendations were enumerated as: government and parents should provide mobile digital devices that will be useful for students to learn within their cultures so as to make learning more relevant to the local needs of the people, educators should be sponsored to attend workshops, seminars, and conferences both locally and internationally, educational programmes should be restructured to make it utility oriented and among others.*

Keywords: *Vocational and Technical skills; Tertiary institutions; Information and Communication Technology; Mobile digital devices; Software.*

1. Introduction

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a process of creating, processing, storing, retrieving and disseminating information and data using computers and telecommunications. ICT is being increasingly used for the purpose of meeting the challenges facing humans all over the world. ICT has become one of the fundamental building blocks of education. Globalization has shifted global development agenda, thus many countries now regard the mastering of basic skills and concepts of ICT as an inevitable part of the core of education, which has resulted in the Nigerian government introducing some reforms in our educational system with a view to repositioning it in line with the mission of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). ICTs are computer-based tools used to meet with the Information and Communication needs of individuals and organizations. Oliver (2009) envisioned ICT as the science that investigates the properties and behaviour of information, the

force governing the flow of information and the means of processing information for optimum accessibility and usability. The process includes the origination, collection, storage, retrieval, interpretation, dissemination and use of information. ICT involves the use of hardware, software, networks and media for the collection, storage, processing, transmission and presentation of information (voice, data, text, images) as well as related services (World Bank, 2007). Therefore, ICT can be defined as an electronic device (which includes mobile digital devices) for managing and processing information with the use of soft and hard wares to convert, store, manipulate, protect, transmit, manage, control and retrieve information for the enhancement and productivity of personal and organizational activities.

Ubogu (2011) stated that ICTs comprise computer hardware and software, network and several other mobile and non-mobile digital devices (video, audio, photography, camera and many others) that convert information, images, sound, motion, among others into common digital form. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) are tools employed by students and teachers alike. ICT has the potential of being used to meet the learning needs of individual students. The pervasive influence of ICT has brought about a rapid technological, social, political and economic transformation, which has paved way to network society, organized around ICT.

The field of education has not been unaffected by the penetrating influence of information and communication technology. ICT enhances teaching and learning through its dynamic interactive and engaging content and provides real opportunities for individualization of instruction. Information and communication technology has the potential to accelerate, enrich and deepen skills, motivate and engage students learning, helps to relate school experience to work practice, helps to create economic viability for tomorrow's workers; contributes to the total development of the institution; strengthens teaching and learning and provides opportunities for connection between the institution and the world (Davis, 2009).

Kirschner and Weperies (2013) realized that information and communication technology can make the school more efficient and productive, by organizing a variety of tools (which includes mobile digital devices) to enhance and facilitate teachers' professional activities. Yusuf and Onasanya (2004) opined that ICT provides opportunities for tertiary institution to communicate with one another through e-mail, mailing list, chat room and other facilities. It provides quicker and easier access to more extensive and current information. ICT can also be used to do complex tasks as it provides researchers with a steady avenue for the dissemination of research reports and findings.

Culp, Honey and Mandinach (2003) viewed ICT as a tool for addressing challenges in teaching and learning situation; a change agent; and central force in economic competitiveness. As a tool for addressing challenges in teaching and learning, technology has the capabilities for delivery, management and support of effective teaching and learning. As a change agent, it is capable of changing the content, methods and overall quality and quantity of teaching and learning, thereby reducing teachers' workload and ensuring constructivist inquiry-oriented classroom, part of which can be achieved through the use of which includes mobile digital devices. Moreover, ICT is a central force in economic and social shifts that has technology skill critical to future employment of today's students.

Thierer (2010) pointed out that the role of technology in vocational and technical skills is rapidly becoming one of the most important and widely discussed issues in contemporary education policy. Experts in the fields of education have agreed that, if ICT is properly used, it holds great promise to improve vocational and technical skill to shaping work-force opportunities.

Mooij (2007) mention that differentiated ICT based education can be expected to provide greater reliability, validity, and efficiency of data collection and greater ease of analysis, evaluation, and interpretation at any educational level. While the world is moving rapidly towards digital media, the role of ICT in vocational and technical education has become increasingly important. It has transformed the way knowledge is disseminated today in terms of how teachers interact and communicate with the students and vice-versa, one of the ways by which this has become meaningfully achievable is through the use of mobile digital devices. ICT has tremendously broadened the opportunities for people to acquire information, interact, network, address issues of common concern, generate income and participate in society.

However, information technology revolution associated with the internet has brought about two edge functions: that is on one hand, it has contributed positive values to the world. While on the other hand, it has produced so many maladies that threaten the order of the society and also producing a new wave of crime to the world. The internet online business services, which ordinarily suppose to be a blessing as it exposes one to a lot of opportunities in various field of life is fast becoming a source of discomfort and worry due to the atrocity being perpetrated through it (Foster, 2009). Apart from the ICT improvement on the vocational and technical skills, it also enhanced falsehood, dissemination of harmful information as well as fraudulent activities in the educational system such as internet fraud and examination malpractice (Ramey, 2008).

The term mobile digital device can be used to describe a physical unit of equipment that contains a computer or microcontroller. Mobile digital devices comprise a variety of devices that can be carried along to perform numerous tasks such as cellular phones, IPod, Ipad, Personal Digital Assistance (PDA), laptops, and smart phones. Most mobile devices used nowadays are digital devices. Some of such include smartphone, tablet, smartwatch, micro and minicomputers, ancillary equipment, software, firmware and similar equipment. It is worth mentioning that most technologies used for cellular communication in contemporary world are digital. Mobile digital devices came into being as new instruments for which a wide variety of development is not generally placed in doubt. There is a link between mobile digital devices and development and a positive association exists between both variables. Therefore, investment in mobile digital devices is considered as an important investment (UNESCO 2002).

The use of mobile digital devices affords teachers and students the opportunity to utilize computing power without the barrier of space and time, while the wireless internet technologies inbuilt such devices enable mobile digital devices to interconnect with other numerous computing devices seamlessly, thus providing tertiary institution students with the opportunity to utilize it for learning. Mobile digital devices have impact at different levels of the society especially toward enhancing learning. But the usage of mobile digital devices in schools is grossly abused, without exceptions to tertiary institutions in Nigeria. In most Nigeria tertiary institutions, various form of

fraud is being witnessed through the emergence of ICT ranging from examination malpractices, falsification of admission and internet fraud. A critical look into most of the ICT tools through which these atrocious acts are being perpetrated reveals that mobile digital devices are mostly employed in perpetrating most of the acts mentioned. Thus, this study set out to critically appraise the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution students in Osun state Nigeria, who are mainly from the Polytechnics.

2. Purpose of the Study

The specific purposes of the study were:

1. To examine the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution students in Osun state, Nigeria.
2. To find out if there would be any difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution students in Osun state, Nigeria based on gender.
3. To determine if there is any significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution students in Osun state, Nigeria based on specialization.

3. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were raised in the course of this study:

1. There will be no significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution students in Osun state, Nigeria.
2. There will be no significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution students in Osun state, Nigeria based on gender.
3. There will be no significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution students in Osun state, Nigeria based on specialization.

4. Methodology

This is a survey research design. The population for this study comprises of all Polytechnic students in Osun State Polytechnic Ire and Osun State College of Technology Esa-Oke Polytechnic.

Purposive sampling technique was applied to select 200 students in Osun State Polytechnic Ire and 150 students in Osun State College of Technology Esa-Oke Polytechnic Ijebu-Ijesa. Therefore three hundred and fifty (350) respondents constituted the sample size of this study.

The research instrument for this study is a self constructed questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two (2) sections- (A and B). Section "A" elicited respondents bio-data information; while section "B" contained items measured on a four point Likert scale, ranging from (Excellently to Poor). Efforts were made during the construction of the instrument to ensure that it measure the desired objectives. Therefore, the items were carefully composed and submitted to experts in tests and measurement

evaluation as well as an ICT expert for necessary correction and modification. Also, other experts in the related field were consulted for their input on the instrument. Comments and corrections were attended to in order to establish the face and content validity of the instruments.

The reliability of the instrument was established through a test re-test method. This involved administering the instrument on twenty (20) students in Osun State Polytechnic Ire. This was done twice within an interval of two weeks and the participants were not included in the main study's sample. Cronbach's alpha reliability test was used to establish the reliability coefficient of the instrument. The researcher visited each institution to administer the instrument to the respondents. 350 copies of questionnaire was administered and collected back by the researcher with the help of research assistants.

The responses from the participants were carefully keyed in the computer grid using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software, version 23.0. Thereafter, the data screened to remove any unwanted errors and outliers using descriptive statistics approach on the SPSS. Descriptive statistics via percentage analysis, frequency count and T-test were employed in analyzing data for the research questions.

5. Results

This section presents the results of impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution students in Osun state, Nigeria.

This section focuses on the analysis of the research question using descriptive statistics such as simple frequency counts, percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Table 1: Distribution of Selected Institutions

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|------------------|-------------------|
| Osun State College of Technology, Esa-Oke | 100 | 28.6 |
| Interlink Polytechnic, Ijebu-Ijesa | 100 | 28.6 |
| Federal Polytechnic, Ede | 150 | 42.8 |
| Total | 350 | 100.0 |

Source: Field research data

Table 1 shows that out of 350 respondents that participated, 28.6% of the respondents were selected from Osun State College of Technology, Esa-Oke and interlink Polytechnic, Ijebu-Ijesa respectively while 42.8% were selected from Federal Polytechnic, Ede. Respondents were selected from State, Federal and Private Polytechnic in Osun State.

Table 2: Gender of Respondents

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Male | 203 | 58.0 |
| Female | 147 | 42.0 |
| Total | 350 | 100.0 |

Source: Field research data

Table 2 shows that out of 350 respondents that participated, 58.0% of them are male and 42.0% are female which shows that both sexes are well represented.

Table 3: Course of Specialization of the Respondents

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Computer | 119 | 34.0 |
| Engineering | 98 | 28.0 |
| Management | 133 | 38.0 |
| Total | 350 | 100.0 |

Source: Field research data

Table 3 shows that 34% of the respondents were specialized in computer based, 28% were specialized in engineering courses while 38% were management courses.

Table 4: Age Distribution of the Respondents

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|--------------|
| 15-20 years | 119 | 34.0 |
| 20-25 years | 210 | 60.0 |
| >25 years | 21 | 6.0 |
| Total | 350 | 100.0 |

Source: Field research data

Table 4 shows that 34% of the respondents were between age 15 and 20 years, 60% were between age 20 and 25 years while 6% were more than age of 25 years.

Research Hypothesis 1: The first hypothesis addresses the significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution students in Osun state, Nigeria. Therefore, Table 5 present the significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by students of tertiary institutions (Polytechnics) in Osun State.

Table 5: Summary of t-test Analysis on the significant difference in the impact of ICT on vocational and technical skills acquired by students of Polytechnics in Osun State.

| Variable | N | X | SD | DF | T | Sig. | Remark |
|--|-----|-------|-------|-----|--------|-------|-------------|
| ICT | 350 | 3.580 | 1.495 | 349 | 6.515* | 0.004 | Significant |
| Vocational and Technical skills | 350 | 3.460 | 1.692 | | | | |

Source: Field research data

*Denote significance at P<0.05

Table 5 shows the result of significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by students of Polytechnics in Osun State. The mean and standard deviation of Mobile Digital Devices (M = 3.580, SD = 1.495) and vocational and technical skills (M =3.460, SD = 1.692) with (t=6.515, df = 349, p<0.05). This shows that there is significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by students of tertiary institutions (Polytechnics) in Osun State. It shows polytechnic students' orientation about mobile digital devices has positive impact on their vocational and technical skills acquired. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Research Hypothesis 2: The second hypothesis addresses the significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution students in Osun state, Nigeria based on gender. Therefore, Table 6 present the significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a group of tertiary Institution (Polytechnics) students in Osun State based on gender.

Table 6: Summary of t-test Analysis on the significant difference in the impact of ICT on vocational and technical skills acquired by students of Polytechnics in Osun State based on gender.

| GENDER | N | X | SD | DF | T | Sig. | Remark |
|--------|-----|-------|-------|-----|---------|-------|-------------|
| Male | 203 | 3.003 | 1.499 | 349 | 19.706* | 0.001 | Significant |
| Female | 147 | 2.420 | 1.494 | | | | |

Source: Field research data

*Denote significance at P<0.05

Table 6 shows that there was a significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by tertiary institution (Polytechnic) students in Osun State based on gender. The mean and standard deviation of male (M = 3.003, SD = 1.499) and female (M =2.420, SD = 1.494) with (t=19.706, df = 349, p<0.05) reveals significant difference. This shows that mobile digital devices have impact on vocational and technical skills acquired by male students than that of female counterpart. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 3: The third hypothesis addresses the significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution students in Osun state, Nigeria based on specialization. Therefore, Table 7 presents the significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution students in Osun state, Nigeria based on specialization.

Table 7: Summary of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the impact of ICT on vocational and technical skills acquired by students of Polytechnics in Osun State based on specialization.

| Source: | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. | Remark |
|----------------|----------------|------------|-------------|-------|-------|-------------|
| Between Groups | 19.982 | 2 | 9.991 | 7.238 | 0.001 | Significant |
| Within Groups | 479.978 | 347 | 1.380 | | | |
| Total | 498.960 | 349 | | | | |

Source: Field research data

*Denote significance at P<0.05

Table 7 shows the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution (Polytechnics) students in Osun state, Nigeria based on specialization, and revealed significant (F_(2,349) = 7.238, p<0.05). There is significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution (Polytechnics) students in Osun state, Nigeria based on specialization. Therefore, null hypothesis is rejected.

6. Discussion of the Findings

The result of this study is well documented on the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution (Polytechnics) students in Osun state, Nigeria. Based on the findings, the results show significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution (Polytechnics) students in Osun state, Nigeria. The mean and standard deviation of mobile digital devices ($M = 3.580$, $SD = 1.495$) and vocational and technical skills ($M = 3.460$, $SD = 1.692$) with ($t=6.515$, $df = 349$, $p<0.05$). This shows that there is significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution students in Osun State. It shows polytechnic students' ICT orientation which was expressed through mobile digital devices has positive impact on their vocational and technical skills acquired.

The finding corroborates Adu and Tella (2013) which revealed that ICT provide a positive impact on learning and students performance when it becomes an integrated element in the classroom and teaching. The authors stated that ICT when applied as a tool for teaching the curriculum areas (achievable through the use of mobile digital devices) enables students to become competent, creative, discriminating, and productive users of ICT. Learners are better able to achieve skills and develop the capacity to select and use ICT to enquire, develop new understanding, and also create and communicate with others in order to participate effectively in society.

Another finding of the study revealed that there was a significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by some tertiary institution (Polytechnic) students in Osun State based on gender. The mean and standard deviation of male ($M = 3.003$, $SD = 1.499$) and female ($M = 2.420$, $SD = 1.494$) with ($t=19.706$, $df = 349$, $p<0.05$) reveals significant difference. This shows that mobile digital devices have impact on vocational and technical skills acquired by male students than that of female counterparts. The finding is in disagreement with Mikre (2011) who submitted that ICT makes learning less abstract and more relevant to the life situations of all students irrespective of gender. The author also stated that in contrast to memorization-based or rote learning, that is the feature of traditional pedagogy; ICT-enhanced learning promotes increased learner engagement. Mikre stated that ICT-enhanced learning can also be 'just-intime' learning that the learners choose what to learn when they need not minding their gender.

Furthermore, the findings of the result shows the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by students of tertiary institutions (Polytechnics) in Osun State based on specialization and revealed significant difference ($F_{(2,349)} = 7.238$, $p<0.05$). There is significant difference in the impact of mobile digital devices on vocational and technical skills acquired by a selected group of tertiary institution (Polytechnics) students in Osun State based on specialization. This may be because of the inability and lack of wherewithal on the part of many of them to purchase modern and sophisticated mobile digital devices, or probably they are not very positively disposed to using such devices for the purpose of acquiring vocational and technical education skills when purchased.

7. Conclusions

It was concluded from this study that human capital is the key ingredient for achieving and maintaining competitiveness in world trade. There is also a widespread acceptance among nations that the workforce must be carefully prepared and that employees' skill sets maintained continuously. This need for lifelong learning requires a flexible system of education and training. ICTs provide the flexibility to meet diverse learners' needs anytime, anywhere. A wide variety of ICTs are now available for teaching and learning, ranging from simple printed materials to sophisticated Internet-based learning with the inclusion of mobile digital devices. The penetration of ICTs in education across UNESCO's Member States varies considerably and generally seems to be proportional to economic conditions.

The digital divide between the haves and have-nots is a major issue. In the context of ICT-mediated instruction, the emphasis is placed on self-directed learning rather than teaching, this can be achieved using mobile digital devices. Consequently, the ability to acquire, process, store, retrieve, and use information is becoming a critical element for successful learning, thereby making mobile digital devices more relevant. This condition is responsible for a cognitive divide, which is debilitating for people with limited cognitive skills. Educators have always been early adopters of innovations related to ICT tools, equipment, and system controls. The same is true regarding the use of ICTs for supporting the delivery of technical and vocational skills using mobile digital devices. There is a paucity of information on the extent to which ICT-mediated learning is being integrated in technical and vocational skills. There are many barriers that hinder the integration of ICTs into teaching and learning in Nigeria's tertiary institutions among which are polytechnics. The most significant are infrastructure, availability of suitable materials, job threat, appropriateness of the methods, and credibility of programme content. Although there are some anecdotal records of successful attempts regarding the use of ICTs for teaching affective and practical skills, there is no hard evidence in support of these claims. Particularly as it applies to the use of mobile digital devices.

Developmental testing must be an integral part of the development of all ICT-mediated instruction in order to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the product. Effectiveness can be viewed within a framework encapsulating three elements, namely achievement, study time, and attitude. Research attempting to assess the effectiveness of ICT-mediated learning is flawed and inconclusive. It is still very difficult, if not impossible, to establish the cost-effectiveness of ICT-mediated learning. The use of an information and communication technology tool like mobile digital devices may therefore prove a better and more viable alternative

8. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- Educational programmes should be restructured to make it utility oriented, and work focused so that students and learners may be attracted and retrained.

- Educators should be sponsored to attend workshops, seminars, and conferences both locally and internationally. This will enable them to acquire skills needed in developing and implementing adequate curriculum for acquiring vocational and technical skills.
- The government should endeavour to do a serious reform in the power (electricity) sector to enable them to improve their services. This will go a long way in helping lecturers in polytechnics to make effective use of the gadgets available to them including mobile digital devices.
- Government, stakeholders, and engineers should develop softwares and applications that could be installed on mobile digital devices, that will be applicable to their indigenous cultures so as to make information and communication technology more relevant to the local needs of the people.
- Government and parents should provide mobile digital devices that will be useful for students to learn within their cultures so as to make learning more relevant to the local needs of the people.
- The high ups should make the compliance of ICT facilities including mobile digital devices more relevant to encourage skill acquisition and competence of the students.

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FROM BEATNIKS TO HIPPIES TO US: A BEATIFIC STUDY OF POPULAR CULTURE

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Abstract: *Of the things we notice in popular culture nowadays, few have had such a lasting impact as the archetype of the misunderstood genius, the pursuit of happiness, peace and love, and everyday poetry. We see that in much of the civilized world ideals of individuality, spirituality and anti-establishment find a strong following, and we may feel inclined to ask ourselves what group is responsible for this rippling effect. This inquiry inevitably leads us to two major stages in the cultural and social development of the aforementioned demographic, namely the Beat Generation and the hippies. The present paper not only explores the particularities of the beatniks and the hippies and their respective backgrounds, but also analyses the transition from the Lost Generation to beatniks, hippies and, finally, contemporary society. The study falls under the category of Cultural Anthropology and utilises both approaches of Ethnohistory and Ethnology, as well as literature analysis, in hopes of augmenting our understanding of several crucial pillars of popular culture and the unique ways they continue to shape communities. Several conclusions are drawn, covering the relevance of the two movements as anti-war and anti-establishment vectors and the transition of their values into social and environmental policies.*

Keywords: *The Beat Generation, hippie, popular culture, Kerouac, Ginsberg*

1. Introduction

Surging from the political and social turmoil of the 1950's, a group of close friends spearheaded a movement of lifestyle and art the likes the world had never seen before. Both their close-knit community and the cultural manifesto that they documented and inspired took the name of the Beat Generation.

The term of "Beat Generation" was coined by Jack Kerouac, in 1948, to label an open-minded, anti-conformist youth movement in New York. At first said to depict a state of skepticism and weariness, this notion was quickly refuted by Kerouac, who explained the origin of the name was inspired by concepts such as "upbeat", "beatific", and if one was part of that movement it implied he was "on the beat".

The Beat Generation's riveting features were found in its disposition towards alternative forms of sexuality, extensive consumption of recreational drugs, hostility towards materialism, profound interest in Eastern spirituality and the continuous pursuit of joyful, unbound means of expression and being.

When thinking of prominent examples of Beat literature, Allan Ginsberg's *Howl* (1956), William S. Burroughs' *Naked Lunch* (1959) and Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* (1957) are the first ones that come to mind. As a result of *Howl* and *Naked Lunch* being put on obscenity trials, the vanguard of the Beat Generation became known as a gathering of artists that took on the role of bohemian hedonists, indulging in non-conformity and unconventional creativity. These trials did, however, lead to a liberalization of publishing in the United States (Charters, 2003: 19).

The original Beat Generation nucleus emerged in New York, only to end up reunited, in the 1950's, in San Francisco. There, they became acquainted with and befriended figures associated with the San Francisco Renaissance.

By the 1960's, the movement underwent certain changes and features of the expanding Beat Generation message were incorporated in the hippie counterculture.

By offering a depiction and chronological events of this transition, the current paper's purpose is to explore not only the defining characteristics of the Beat Generation and the hippie movement, but also to bring to attention the main points of transition and to pinpoint the features that dominated both cultures. Particular attention will also be given to their differences, as well as their impact on today's society and popular culture. This analysis will perhaps aid the reader in understanding not only the "beatific" effect of the writings of mavericks the likes of Allen Ginsberg and William S. Burroughs or Jack Kerouac on hippies, but on modern American society as a whole.

2. Methodology

The present study employs qualitative research methods, as quantitative data is not particularly relevant to the topic at hand, nor is it likely to be collected in any form compatible with the scope of the research. Although the sample size can be considered of gargantuan dimension, of roughly three generations, we believe qualitative data, collected with the aid of Cultural Anthropology research tools such as Ethnohistory and Ethnology, is best for the study of a group whose true creed was rooted in individualism.

We began the search for an answer to a question as old as time ("Where did it all go?") by tackling the burden of contemplating a few generations who have transitioned into a different identity. The beatniks and hippies may be de-facto gone in a cultural sense, but their elder, transformed selves in many cases still exist. Just as a historian may ask himself where exactly history ends and the present begins, so did we attempt to pinpoint the bridge between the Lost Generation and the Beat Generation and, finally, the hippie movement and contemporary society. This pursuit was facilitated by employing the ethnohistorical approach, looking up official records, recounts and literature, both by and about the beatniks and hippies. By using their own accounts and external observers, we hope that we have managed to portray a reality as close to their truth as possible.

Ethnology has proved to be a secondary valuable tool in our approach, as the entire point of the paper is to find similarities, differences and popular culture influences of the Beat Generation and the hippie movement. By understanding the transition that the beatniks and hippies underwent, we can appreciate that many similar transformations happen in our day and age as well and it is important to reach a certain level of cultural traceability in order to understand how communities affect each other.

Finally, by scrutinizing the available literature, we can engage in a cross-cultural comparison, as the Beat Generation in particular had a strong literary identity and no tool is better to understand their (anti)social message than linguistic analysis.

3. Understanding the Beat

If one were to pinpoint the riveting stages of the Beat Generation, two frames could serve that purpose, two axes of Jack Kerouac's perception of the moment and

what it stood for. The first is a nefarious time in the history of the movement, namely the unfortunate events of the murder of David Kammerer, the incarceration of daredevils Gregory Corso, Lucien Carr and Neal Cassady, the collision with mental institutions that Allen Ginsberg and others like him underwent and the untimely death of Joan Burroughs (Stephenson, 1990: 3). These troubled waters may have shattered other movements, but beatniks were a resilient lot, and their misery is, as some believe, the very fuel of counterculture. If one needs to understand the spirit of that age, it is enough to take heed of Jack Kerouac's words, who stated that " (...) our battered suitcases were piled on the sidewalk again; we had longer ways to go. But no matter, the road is life." (Kerouac, 2011: part 3, ch.5) reverberating with the solitude of his wanderings. William Burroughs, notorious for his addiction to heavy drugs, declared, on a similar note, that pure desperation was bound to lead to change (Burroughs, 1987), signaling both the plight of the beatniks and the grandeur of what was to come.

Moving on, Kerouac's "beatific" vision materialized in the Beat Generation finally revealing itself to the wider audience, who was swift to internalize and live their message. Not unlike a Phoenix bird rising from its own ashes, the main figures behind the Beat turned their lives around and used their intellectual wanderings for creative purposes, massifying the Beat Generation's social message (Stephenson, 1990:4). A few years later, this vibration would bloom into the very ethos of the Flower Children, as they attempted to perfect a way of living and feeling direct opposite to the horrors of the brooding Vietnam War. As Gregory Corso emerged from the confines of the jailhouse, something in his own spirit was as well liberated, with him observing that "If you believe you're a poet, then you're saved." (Watson, 1995: 123) This would later become Hunter S. Thompson's "crest of a high and beautiful wave" (Thompson, 1990: 153), the alternative lifestyle that drew so many.

"By a generation," wrote F. Scott Fitzgerald, "I mean that reaction against the fathers which seems to occur about three times in a century. It is distinguished by a set of ideas, inherited in moderated form from the madmen and outlaws of the generation before; if it is a real generation it has its own leaders and spokesmen, and it draws into its orbit those born just before it and just after, whose ideas are less clear-cut and defiant." (Stephenson, 1990: 4) Taking F.Scott Fitzgerald's definition further, we can say that the beatniks were not only a movement and a generation, but the very broken heart of a generation. The First World War had ended not long prior to the inception of the movement, and its scars were still carried by those who had served and the ones who were left to suffer growing up through the recession that followed. The young men who had served in the war came back home broken and full of terrors, so much that the society which seemed to go on seamlessly caused them pain (Strauss and Howe, 1991: 247-260). If the U.S. Army mourned its Lost Battalion, the 554 men of the 77th Division who had been surrounded and cut down by German forces (McCullum, 1919: 49), then the U.S. had its Lost Generation – these men may not have died in a literal sense, but something inside of them had surely been slaughtered and had festered in the gloomy trenches of Europe. It is this Lost Generation that morphed into the Beat Generation, with Paul Bowles even describing some of its would-be members as being "the new lost generation". (Stephenson, 1990: 5)

What the Beat Generation took from the Lost Generation was the loss of conventional motivation and ideals, a by-product of the harsh realities of the war. Figures such as Eugene Jolas, Harry Crosby and Hart Crane greatly influenced beatnik

minds with their impactful discourses, and Henry Miller's hopelessness set, among others, the foundation of Beat intellectual aesthetics (if such a thing has ever existed). Struggling with the spiritual void of the soldier, they eventually made baby steps towards the refuge that new values offered, the perspectives of new forms of spirituality and an alternative culture or, better said, a counterculture. Seeing how much destruction the conventional values of their parents and governmental leaders could sow, the Beats drifted away from belligerent discourse specific to the Second World War and the Cold War and avoided tackling the popular, propagandistic values. Instead, their take was deeply personal and, in a sense, metaphysical. Their minds knew not of geographical borders and their social sensibilities went much further than political affiliation or class denominator. Whereas other movements were class-oriented, beatniks came from all walks of life – what united them was a disdain towards traditional culture and blending in with it, against sweeping under the rug cases of racial and gender-based discrimination, gratuitous violence and, finally, against materialism (Dempsey, 2010:211).

A common feature found among soldiers and in general workers of extremely demanding jobs is desensitization, a psychological process by which a response is repeatedly elicited in situations where the action tendency that arises out of the emotion proves to be irrelevant (Raypole: <https://www.healthline.com/health/systematic-desensitization>). Both the Lost Generation and the following Beat Generation engaged in drug and alcohol consumption, frequent vices of those suffering from desensitization, in some cases the last tools capable of illiciting a response from one who is emotionally hardened and drained. These substances and the pursuit of increasingly extreme experiences were the point of contact between the two generations. Though excess remained a driving force behind the Beat movement, oftentimes with tragic consequences (such as the case of Lucien Carr), what eventually outlined the identity of the Beat Generation and separated them from the Lost Generation was their involvement with spirituality, a step one may see as the first in a long line of stages towards a complete healing. This road would be later walked on and taken to an entirely different level by the hippies.

Though the Lost Generation turned to drugs, alcohol, music and daredevil acts, it was the Beat Generation that, in its spiritual awakening process, truly flirted with bohemianism, drawing from the old romantics an inclination towards aesthetic values, an antimaterialistic ethic and a vehement refusal to go back to the regimentation still promoted by their peers. They, as the romantics, saw civilization turn into something wicked and sought release and evolution solely through the power of art, particularly writing and poetry. They proposed not a political upheaval or a carefully-orchestrated revamp of society, but, as Gregory Stephenson (1990, p.6) notes, "a revolt of the soul, a revolution of the spirit".

If one wonders where the hippies got the bulk of their aesthetic and philosophical drive, as well as their resistance to institutionalized discourse, one need look no further than the beatniks, who in turn took inspiration from the surrealists and dadaists, according to the same Gregory Stephenson (1990, p.6). Western values had failed both beatniks and hippies and their response was not to form a divergent political front, as politics were seen as part of the worldly psychosis, but to constitute a different intellectual, philosophical and cultural approach. What the beatniks stood for and the hippies later inherited was a distaste of consumerism, an urge to escape

the apathic confines of everyday life, a need to find a meaning beyond war, numbers and political ideas, and, finally, to escape the hamster wheel of conformity. They disregarded the whole for the self and shunned the tools that threatened to dissolve the individual into a product and blood-crazed society (Oldmeadow, 2004: 260).

When thinking of the Beat Generation, we can say that its uniqueness was born from the unique social, cultural and economic climate of a country ravaged by seemingly neverending warfare and internal conflict. The Lost Generation passed onto them their divergence from conventional values, bohemianism, surrealism and dadaism, and provided the much-needed escape. They, the Beat Generation, would filter these, overindulge in them and process them up to the point that they would become the pillars of a movement popular culture has yet to forget – the hippies.

4. From Beatniks to Hippies

Towards the beginning of the 1960's, many of the Beat Generation souls made the transition into a new type of counterculture, shifting from "beatific" to "hip", giving birth to the movement henceforth known as the hippies. The exact moment of the transition is blurry, as many of the beatniks remained beatniks and flirted only partially with the new movement, but if such a moment is to be named, it is in all probability the schism that occurred between Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac, the latter blaming Ginsberg for using the 1960s politically radical movements as nothing but an outlet to be "spiteful" (Vidal, 1995: 256)

As the Beat movement transitioned into the hippie counterculture, some of its features took on a grand, oftentimes eerie turn. The hippie movement was born in campuses across the United States and made its way to other major English-speaking countries, such as Canada and Britain and is etymologically linked to two of the original Beats, Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac, who were declared to be "hip" or, in other words, attuned to the changes and the spirit of the society they were living in, if not directly responsible for them (Dudley, 2000: 193-194). As the Beats of the 1950's became increasingly exposed to the brewing storm which would be the Vietnam War, their attitude, already anti-establishment, grew into a full-fledged dissent, thus outlining their transition into the hippie movement, chiefly associated with resistance and disapproval regarding U.S. operations in Vietnam (Oldmeadow, 2004: 264). It should be noted that the hippie movement was, for the most part, apolitical, unlike a demographic they are frequently confused with, the yippies. The yippies, with representatives such as Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman, were political activists banded under the banner of the Youth International Party (Krassner, 1994:156).

From the get-go, the hippie movement did not see themselves as part of the typical American middle-class, but rather a counter-culture that abhorred the concept of material possessions and holier-than-thou judgement. They were drifters, free spirits with a lifestyle that preferred its roots to be mostly spiritual. Their ideology was reflected in their aspect, where long hair and loose clothing, some of Oriental inspiration, were trademarks of the community. Men usually kept their faces unshaven and opted for clothes traditional American society viewed as effeminate – both hippie men and women chose bright or pastel colours and unisex accessories (Katz, 1988: 125). Here we can observe a major shift from beatnik aesthetics, who preferred a more simple, subdued look. Moving on, the hippie way of life was not limited to foregoing material possessions and choosing dreamy aesthetics – they also applied their original

views on living conditions and personal relationships, where they not only shared their beds and living spaces, but also their partners (Alexander: <https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna19053382>). Those of the Beat movement planted the seeds of this pursuit of personal freedom, but the hippies took it to a whole different level. Their lifestyle was simple, and their desire to return to the origins took an almost druidic turn, with most of them relishing vegan diets and alternative medicine. This ethos was materialised in the form of *The Whole Earth Catalog*, a 1968 guidebook for the would-be hippie (Kirk, 2007:48). As it is to be expected, this lifestyle did not sit well with corporate America and workplace policies, therefore most members of the hippie community were jobless or doing odd jobs, not engaged in higher education and small-time peddlers. The few ones that were, to some extent, economically successful, were the ones who specialised in delivering products to other hippies.

The hippie movement was vehemently opposed to violence and a firm believer in open, free, unconditional love. Its stance against U.S. participation in the Vietnam War survives to this day in the popular catchphrase “Make love, not war” and the many pictures of young, beauteous women placing flowers in American soldiers’ rifles, a gesture fitting of the nickname the hippies carried – Flower Children. The hippies made it their mission to disarm not through overwhelming strength, but overwhelming love, complete acceptance and non-discrimination. It was due to their adoration of love and freedom that many Oriental religions and spiritual views entrenched themselves in American society, most notably beliefs such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Taoism. The hippies themselves mostly practiced these at a superficial and aesthetic level, frequently mixing them, but they did popularise them enough in order to peak the interest of the middle-class. Most often these spiritual practices were enhanced through the consumption of recreational and psychoactive drugs, mainly cannabis and LSD, trips which were meant to provide a means for “consciousness expansion” (Yablonsky, 1968: 298).

Other than their social and spiritual views, the trait that perhaps shaped the hippie culture the most was music. Artists such as Bob Dylan spoke of ways to fight the stark reality of the 60’s, while Joan Baez reflected on the pointlessness of chasing material possessions. Jefferson Airplane, frequently cited as a quintessential element of the hippie movement by Hunter S. Thompson, and Rolling Stones made the movement appealing to rebellious and lost youth, voicing in a sense the frustration and escape into art of an entire generation terrified by the horrors of the Vietnam War.

Perhaps what the hippie movement is best known for, other than peaceful resistance and the chasing the concept of absolute freedom, are its music festivals, oftentimes gargantuan gatherings of flower children, celebrating existence itself in a drug-induced frenzy of art and lovemaking. 1967 marked the first event of this kind, San Francisco taking the guise of the unofficial hippie capital. While beatniks were rarely found in large gatherings, hippies thronged in a 500,000 people event at Woodstock, where all the staple artists intermingled to perform a three-day music festival which would survive through the years as the chief expression of the movement itself (<https://www.woodstock.com/>). The hippies’ penchant for gathering in the name of peace and love subsequently led them to champion to the cause of the natural environment, certain groups going as far as to become academically involved in the matter. Universities and college campuses became regular sites for hippie speeches, where they found massive support from students and open-minded faculty

alike. This form of activism eventually led to the celebration of the first Earth Day in 1970 (Lewis: <https://web.archive.org/web/20100328214819/http://www.epa.gov/history/topics/earthday/01.htm>).

Author of *Hell's Angels* (1967) and the better-known *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* (1971), Hunter S. Thompson, the father of gonzo journalism, is a priceless trove of knowledge when it comes to understanding both the euphoria of belonging to the hippie movement and the time of its loss of momentum, around the mid 1970s. In his acclaimed book, he ruminates that "History is hard to know, because of all the hired bullshit, but even without being sure of history it seems entirely reasonable to think that every now and then the energy of a whole generation comes to a head in a long fine flash, for reasons that nobody really understands at the time—and which never explain, in retrospect, what actually happened." (Thompson, 1990: 152) As Thompson aptly implies, the movement came to a halt by the 1970s, after the Vietnam War had ceased. It was not repression or catharsis that ended the hippies, but rather the realisation of many members, who had reached maturity, that the hippie way of life was unsustainable in the long term. Flower children cut their hair, strapped on their neckties and transitioned into the life of the yuppie (young urban professional), taking on a whole different kind of dream – a dream of a good career, stability and social success. These professionals did, however, carry on many of the hippie views, and were far more accepting when it came to sexuality and aware of the delicate state and needs of the environment. In a sense, one can say they took the best from both worlds and marked the beginning of true contemporary civilized society.

5. Conclusions

Who were the beatniks and the hippies? When was the exact moment the hippie movement was born? How much of the beatniks did the hippies take on and what did they pass forward? What did it all mean?

These are questions no one will be perhaps able to ever answer. Not in an accurate manner, anyway.

The Beat Generation was a bifocal point in the evolution of human values and beliefs in a war-torn dystopia and society, whose desperation to label and organize, coming from a life in crisis, had robbed its young inhabitants of the ideals so necessary for their coming-of-age. The bleakness of living in that world had urged them to initially abandon all hope and later to seek perspectives and visions compatible with basic human needs. The Lost Generation may have still been living in the trenches, but the beatniks sought a way out, as they soon discovered that pure hedonism was not enough to sustain a life of the mind and heart. They escaped into spirituality, culture and aestheticism, cementing the way for a new path, a path which would turn out to be a vital outlet for the youth traumatized and disgusted with the ever-looming threats of violence and regimentation.

After many of the beatniks had healed their spirit, they abandoned the dark sunglasses and bland clothes for brighter colours and hope for the future of humanity. They became the first hippies. Unlike the Beat Generation, the hippies did not shy away from openly protesting against the shortcomings of American society and government and, while they were in essence apolitical, their stand had a major impact on both U.S. politics and social reform, such as advances in the sectors of civil rights and anti-war

policies. One could say that the hippies, as a counterculture, provided the natural means to balance out the general zealotry that fuelled the Vietnam War and, more importantly, served as a safe haven for youth and adults alike, fleeing an oppressive mindset and discriminatory hatred.

From a literary point of view, the 1960's and 1970's, apart from the writers normally associated with the Beat Generation and the hippies, produced a series of writers heavily influenced by these two countercultures, most notably Amiri Baraka (formerly known as LeRoi Jones), Tom Robbins, Thomas Pynchon and Ken Kesey. The entire literary genre of cyberpunk is believed by some to have been inspired by William S. Burroughs, Larry McCaffery stating that "... it should hardly be surprising that to discover that the work of William S Burroughs had a profound impact on both punk music and cyberpunk science fiction." (McCaffery, 1991: 305). The hippies reached way beyond the literary field, having a major influence on all facets of popular culture, particularly music (several types of rock and heavy metal), personal style and clothing, mass-scale festivals and the New Age movement, not to mention environmentalism.

Popular culture and society today greatly benefit from the building blocks of quality of life that the beatniks and hippies set down on their modern foundations. As to exactly how, we may never find out, as the beatniks and hippies themselves did not know how and even if they would be of help. They took the human condition for what it was and tried to make the best (or the worst) of every moment of it. It is perhaps this human dimension that is their most valuable legacy and the focus today on equality, social justice, the environment and youth participation. These values are not only relevant for the United States, but also major points of the 2019-2024 European Commission priorities (European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024_en).

Finally, we can say that the beatniks and hippies might have intended to teach us the most important lesson of all: "Happiness consists in realizing it is all a great strange dream" (Kerouac, 2007: 657)

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EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. RESULTS OF AN EMPIRICAL STUDY AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract: *Any relationship or situation is maintained by the force of communication. In contemporary society, communication as a form of connection is essential. The importance of communication was highlighted by the changes it underwent during the COVID-19 pandemic period. It is very important to identify the changes that the communication has undergone, the teacher-student and student-student relationship, that has not happened in the classroom environment (face to face) but has passed in the online environment. A whole new world of communication has been opened to all those involved in the educational process. The issue of online school communication has become more than a concern. The real problem has now become what we say, how we say and especially how much we say and how long we need to achieve bilateral communication in the context of educational with a help of a computer, notebook or tablet. Communication is a continuous process of sending and receiving messages that allow teachers and students to share knowledge, attitudes and skills. Effective teaching depends on successful communication. When teachers and students interact, explicit communication takes place. In the context of traditional education, verbal communication is supported by nonverbal communication, they are in a relationship of interdependence, verbal behaviours being used to support or optimize verbal behaviours. In the classroom, the teacher-student, student-student interpersonal relationship is an important element that contributes to the students' learning process. In this study we explore the significance of teachers 'and students' experiences in achieving interpersonal relationships and communication during online education.*

Keywords: *educational communication; online communication; interpersonal relationships, COVID-19; communication networks.*

1. Introduction

The definition of communication leads us to two seemingly contradictory theoretical-methodological directions of action (Pânișoară, 2003: 14): the first perspective, an instrumental one, is a result of the fact that the communication process has been the subject of numerous studies and provides a structured and coherent framework of the use of communication; the second direction concerns the numerous studies intended to communicate in an additive vision, in the sense of cumulating all the openings operated by them and brings to attention a structured and coherent framework of the use of communication.

Educational communication is defined in the *Praxiological Dictionary of Pedagogy*, vol. I (Bocoș, 2016: 237) as an ensemble of interpersonal processes in which educational agents are directly involved in educational endeavors and in which interpersonal exchanges of messages, meanings, decisions are made, value judgments, emotional states and influences related to educational processes, with the help of

components / elements of their own communication repertoires, in order to achieve educational goals.

The difficulty of defining communication is also given by the diversity of perspectives from which it can be analyzed: "the perception, attribution, motivation, as well as the personality of each of the communicators influence the way a person receives the information transmitted to another" (Gordon, 1983 :223).

The multitude of variables identified in the definitions of the concept of communication are found in the multitude of models of communication. We present in summary some models with instrumental value for our study: the Andersch, Staats and Bostrom model offers a circular image of communication in which the roles of sender and receiver are not separated; S.L. Becher's model defines communication as a mosaic of sources of influence, being a complex process defined by several layers, some of them acting contradictory; David K. Berlo created the SMCR model on communication (Source, Message, Channel, Receiver) which emphasizes the expansion of communicators' repertoires in order to achieve as many connections and the possibility of a common repertoire, this being done at the level of values or attitudes of the sender and receiver; George Gebner's comprehensive model in which the relationship between form and content is dynamic and interactive; the model of communication as a reciprocal process of influences, offered by Richard and Patricia Schmuck (1992) presents a different vision of the phenomenon, emphasizing the implicit changes and the interaction that takes place in communication; Torrington Hall's (1991) model provides an instrumental procedural view of the phenomenon of communication. The summary analysis of the previously presented models allows us to make a finding: all models involve an exchange of information between a referent and a recipient, who can alternate their role, as well as an energetic or semantic transformation of their relationships, their messages. Education and learning, as communication processes, in turn involve exchanges of substance, behavior or images or knowledge, all of which have a certain meaning and meaning. Through meaning and meaning, communication becomes authentic and efficient (Neacșu, 2015: 242).

In the pedagogical literature (Pânișoară, 2003; Șoitu, 1997; Neacșu, 2010, 2015) it is considered that the essence of the teaching and learning processes is communication

2. The characteristics of educational communication

Until recently, the phrase "teacher-student relationship" was used to reproduce the relationships established between the actors of didactic interaction, in recent years the phrase "educational communication" has been frequently used to emphasize the role of the informational and interpersonal exchange relationship that occurs within the didactic interaction. The relationships that are established are between the same two interlocutors (teacher and pupil / student), but in using the "teacher-student" formula, emphasis was placed on the status of the two partners, one in relation to the other, in the case of the second formula, emphasis falls on the sharing of meanings, on the need to establish an agreement between the interlocutors engaged in a communication relationship (Potolea et al, 2008: 287).

Making a synthesis of the defining psychological, psychosocial and pedagogical determinations for educational communication, we highlight the following aspects:

educational communication is based on an intersubjective relationship, in which each partner participates in the interaction with the whole personality; the school-type communication relationship is specific to the inequality of the partners, in terms of age, experience, background, level of knowledge; messages transmitted in a school context are not reduced to purely cognitive ones, but partners send, in relation to each other, both messages with informational content and messages with interpersonal content (emotions, moods, attitudes); the communication relationship in the school environment in order to be authentic must work according to the principle of circularity, which means creating permanent opportunities for feedback.

The components of the student-teacher relationship continuum interact, often taking the form of mutual exchanges of information or connections in which feedback is absolutely necessary, allowing the calibration and fine-tuning of the relationship through the information obtained (Ceobanu, 2013: 193).

Online educational platforms, streaming platforms, in general, facilitate real-time communication between the teacher and his students. However, communication in this case is very often perceived as somewhat artificial, partly due to the impossibility of obtaining real communicative feedback (which makes communication authentic), and partly due to the awkward context of placement in the virtual space. . The fact that you can be recorded, the fact that you can be heard by anyone (not just your students), not having a real control of the target audience, determines the teachers to build a correct, consistent, fluid discourse. Nonverbal communication and mediated use of paralanguage complete the difficult paradigm of online communication where communication is done through instant chat, and some clues that good nonverbal communication could produce to support verbal communication are now lost through specific interruptions or blockages. these sessions in conditions of limited bandwidth capacity or loaded traffic.

From the range of disruptive factors of educational communication in the online environment we report the frequent occurrence of a physical or mental discomfort, the existence of deficiencies in the auditory analyzer, low motivation of students for training, poor presentation of content, too much fluency or too little speech, poor use of ectosemantic means by the teacher, excessive use of expository methods, ignoring students' expectations, existence of sources of interference (**Frunza**, 2003: 81).

According to some authors (Marcoccia, 2000), computer-mediated communication would be defined by the model of oral communication, from which it borrows certain characteristics and simulates what it cannot reproduce. It is possible to differentiate the channels, according to various criteria relevant in language practices, namely: real-time or synchronous communication, given the parameter with the strongest influence on language use. If we take into account the graphic dimension, it should be noted that the virtual multimedia spaces add the size of the image, in the completeness of the verbal dimension of the speech. Users seek, by all means, to simulate face-to-face interaction, using various procedures provided by the system.

One of the traditionally advanced risks of online communication is that it would place learners in a low social context, where the norms of social identity, self-awareness and a sense of belonging to the group, if not completely absent, are severe anyway. diminished (Kiesler, Siegel and McGuire, 1984).

From a great diversity of discordant results and comments, made especially in the last two decades, we note, in a brief synthesis, two theoretical developments (Nebunu, 2009: 58-59):

□ Absence of socio-emotional indices. The major argument starts from the finding that messages transmitted through computer-mediated communication do not allow the manifestation of physical (gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, postural expression, etc.) and traditional social interpersonal communication and that, therefore, mediated communication generates evolutions and behaviors. who do not obey socially agreed norms, which is likely to encourage deviant, impulsive or even aggressive behaviors. The positive corollary of the absence of socio-emotional indices would be the release of normative constraints and the escape from social borders, the democratization of relations between individuals, who are no longer prisoners of the same communication norms or no longer have the same status.

Similar effects have been found in education (Hara, Bonk and Angeli, 1998). Starting from the analysis of the content of the messages transmitted between a number of learning subjects, then between them and their trainers, in a situation in which the rhythm and the frame of the means of distance communication, were imposed for a certain duration of the course. cited, they noticed that the messages became progressively less formal and more and more focused on the learning task, to the detriment of the social indices related to the rituals of the interaction (respectively the obligatory completion of some stages of the discourse). At the same time, the interactions focused more on elements of completion or confirmation of already known information and much less on the engagement of an in-depth debate on the issues discussed.

□ Hyperspersonal" communication or processing of social information. Contrary to the previous perspective, this orientation (Walther, 1996) insists on how a message generated in the computer-mediated communication system can convey true social meanings, given the more relaxed time in choosing a writing style, structuring a relevant content, in relation to the interaction of the type currently. The impersonal aspect of exchanges through computer-mediated communication would be likely to give quality to the production of communication, because it involves a more focused attention from participants on the staging of speech, at the expense of nonverbal cues, considered here as distractors. Consequently, the communication partnership in the computer-mediated communication system would lead to a higher degree of self-awareness and introspective activity, which we do not encounter in presence interactions.

Replacing „face-to-face” communication with virtual communication is a big change in learning. Benefits include improved learning performance, more active and equal participation, flexibility of access and ease of use, very specific interaction, more enjoyable learning, better adaptation, less threatening environment for individuals with special characteristics, improved cultural understanding and reduced costs and time.

3. Methodology

The sociological survey undertaken in this research is an extensive survey, as it is addressed to a large population of 1,077 students of a state higher education institution in South-West of Romania; this type of research is based on special topics, aiming to extract general opinions of individuals). It is also quantitative, as it uses a questionnaire with pre-coded questions, easy to interpret and process; allowed us the extraction of a very large number of statistically representative answers; is direct, because it aims strictly to obtain information on the attitude, behaviour, opinions and opinions of individuals, aspects that refer to their activities) and is aimed at the public opinion of the masses (Cauc et. al., 2007: 47).

Our research tool, the questionnaire, addresses a cumulation of the category of respondents set out above - students of a state higher education institution and includes questions aimed at obtaining data on facts, opinions, attitudes and knowledge, because putting them together creates a complete picture and complex of the educational communication process (both vertically and horizontally) during the COVID-19 pandemic. It contains 23 closed questions, to which were added some identification questions (which concerned the specifics of the faculty and the specialization in which the respondents studied).

It is also important to mention that the research tool was a self-administered one, through the online, Google Forms platform. The questionnaire was sent to the target audience, with the help of social platforms, maintaining a continuous communication between the operator and the subjects. The creation of multiple-choice questions was avoided and the questions were formulated to have a single meaning, and could not be interpreted.

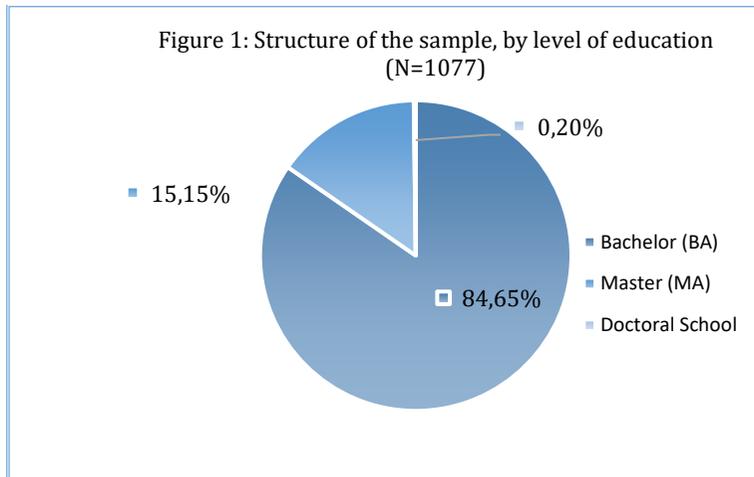
The main objective of our research was to perceive the way in which students of a higher education institution perceived the didactic activity carried out online, with all the aspects that this entailed (from disadvantaged advantages, used platforms, the way of communication with teachers and colleagues, the perception of feelings of isolation and insecurity, generated by quarantine at home).

The first hypothesis (a general one) from which we started in substantiating this research is that the virtual environment includes both risks (reluctance and isolation, in particular) and opportunities (increasing the level of user confidence) and as the level increases education of users, the greater the opportunities they see in using the virtual environment as a means of communication

The second hypothesis of our research was a specific one, focused on educational communication: the greater the openness and involvement of teachers in the use of technology for educational purposes, the more students perceive communication with them in a positive way.

The limit of the research undertaken by us is that of using the online questionnaire, in which the questionnaire operator no longer has absolute control of the study: often, it may happen that the questionnaire circulates and respondents may have difficulty completing it, which can lead to the extraction of erroneous or false data.

From the point of view of the structure of the sample according to sex, it was relatively balanced, in accordance with the gender structure of the students of the higher education institution: 66.2% of females and 33.8% of males. The respondents came from 3 levels of studies (bachelor, master, doctorate/Doctoral School), as shown in the figure below:



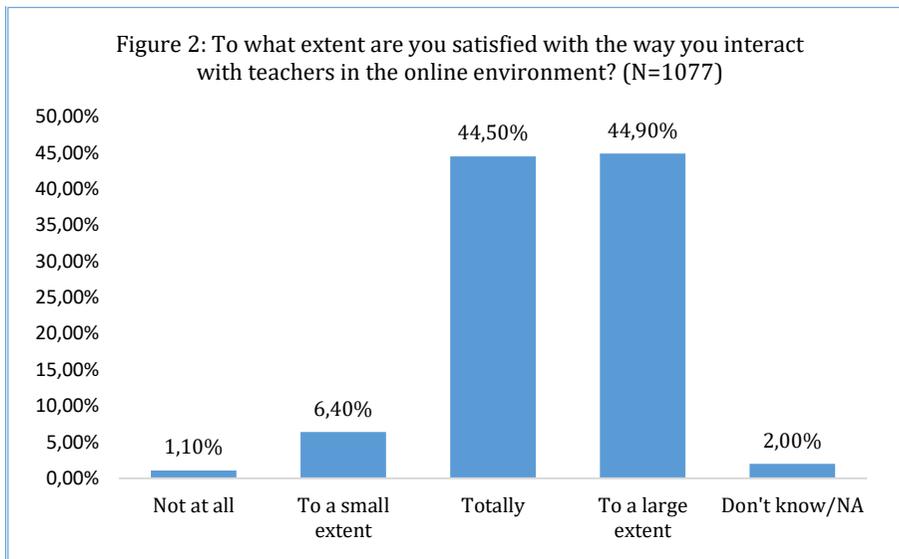
4. Discussion and results

The COVID-19 pandemic greatly influenced the communication process at the level of organizations. Of course, communication in the educational environment (with its two aspects: vertically - teacher-student and horizontally - student-student) was not an exception.

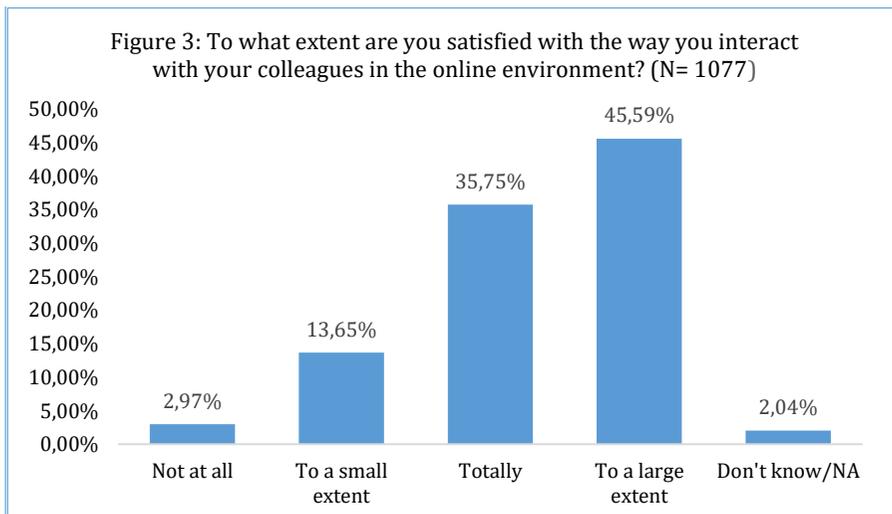
Educational institutions and their actors (teachers, students, research staff, administrative staff, management structures), have felt the negative impact of this crisis, through significant alterations at all levels of operation. The communication process, efficient for the functionality of all organizations (not only the educational ones). In addition, in terms of the education system, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected this system (although in different weights) at all levels, not only at the pre-university level, but also at the university level which is par excellence, "a communication environment, both in external relations with the society as a whole and in internal relations, especially between teaching staff and students (Otovescu, 2012: 243).

However, what we can certainly say, and the data in the graphs below (Figure 1 and Figure 2) confirm this, is that in the university environment, communication relationships have not been so impacted, being an educational environment who had access to technology even before the COVID-19 pandemic broke out. Although the communication process was disrupted (as in all organizations), the impact was low, compared to the pre-university education system (especially in rural areas, where the effects of the pandemic were strongly felt). Moreover, the university education system can be described as characterized by a much faster ability to adapt and a greater "resilience" to disruptive factors, such as restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following the questionnaire applied, to the question regarding the evaluation of the communication with the teachers in the online environment, an overwhelming majority of the respondents positively appreciated this communication process. The level of satisfaction was positively assessed ("to a large extent" and "totally") by 89.4%.



What can also be noticed from the figure above, is the fact that 7.5% of the respondents were not satisfied with the interaction with their teachers in the online environment. Of these, only 1.1% expressed total disagreement (by indicating the answer variant "not at all"), 6.4% saying that they are satisfied with the process of communicating with their teachers to a small extent. Without having the possibility (the data) to make statistical correlations, we could not identify the reasons why the level of satisfaction is low for this category of respondents. Most of the times, the deficient educational communication with the teachers came on the background of a non-adaptation of the latter to the new educational context (imposed on the COVID-19 pandemic) and as a result of a lack of openness to change or, better said, , adapting teaching strategies to this new social context.



Regarding the way in which our respondents perceived the communication relationship with colleagues, during the online teaching activities, starting from the answers obtained (indicated in Figure 2) we can build the same picture of the level of satisfaction and a positive appreciation; with small differences, which we will try to explain in the lines below.

As can be seen from Figure 2, the level of satisfaction with the interaction with colleagues is extremely high (81.34% said they were satisfied "completely" and "largely"). What we notice as the difference from the answers to the previous question is the fact that the percentage of those who said they were dissatisfied (2.97%) or satisfied "to a small extent" (13.65%) is much higher. This result can have two possible explanations (P.E.):

- P.E. 1: The level of stress induced by (self) isolation / quarantine was felt differently by different age groups, and social distancing measures were perceived as much more difficult by the younger generations. Numerous studies have shown that the COVID-19 pandemic and the containment measures imposed after its onset stimulated „the build-up of resilience and adapting mechanisms for the new contexts, but for others increased the feeling of alienation” (Pârnu and Niță, 2021: 143).

This also had an impact on the communication relations between them; paradoxically, although familiar with online communication, during the period of isolation at home (March-June 2020) the interaction with colleagues (especially for educational purposes) was deficient.

- P.E. 2: To a large extent, the online interaction of students for educational purposes has been reduced. In the university environment, the main communication relationship of the students takes place in connection with the teachers, meeting daily with them at classes and seminars / practical works. Most of the time, teachers encountered difficulties in finding the best strategies to make students work collaboratively on application projects for seminars / laboratories or semester projects. Moreover, this practice was not so developed in the pre-pandemic period, which created many difficulties for students to collaborate and interact with colleagues for educational purposes.

Table 1: The level of use of some platforms / software / applications for educational purposes and for educational communication (N= 1077)

| | Totally | To a large extent | To a small extent | Not at all | Don't know/NA | Total |
|---------------------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---------|
| Email | 27,02% | 50,14% | 14,11% | 5,85% | 2,88% | 100,00% |
| Google Classroom | 42,34% | 47,35% | 6,69% | 0,84% | 2,78% | 100,00% |
| Zoom Video Communications | 24,03% | 45,85% | 17,06% | 9,73% | 3,33% | 100,00% |
| Skype | 3,44% | 7,61% | 12,86% | 72,83% | 3,26% | 100,00% |
| Facebook | 7,48% | 13,75% | 18,58% | 57,07% | 3,12% | 100,00% |
| Phone (Audio calls) | 11,19% | 23,26% | 33,21% | 33,30% | 3,04% | 100,00% |
| Whatsapp | 16,76% | 29,92% | 32,31% | 21,41% | 3,6% | 100,00% |
| Cisco Webex | 1,49% | 3,90% | 7,24% | 84,07% | 3,3% | 100,00% |

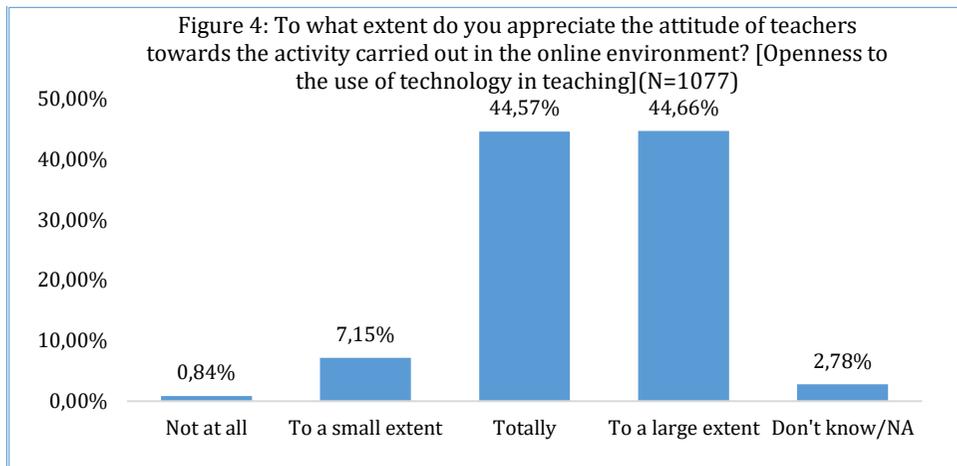
The COVID-19 pandemic determined the awareness of the gaps and deficiencies that the Romanian education system had in terms of connectivity, digital skills and the use of technology for educational purposes. However, as mentioned above, the university education system has been able to adapt more easily to this new context, especially since there were already platforms that were used for teaching purposes (for example, the Moodle platform).

The importance of the educational communication process and the acute need not to lose touch between educational actors (teachers and students) have generated a continuous concern to find the best and most varied ways of communication. This variety of communication methods used during the COVID-19 pandemic is also illustrated by the data in the table above (Table 1), which allow us to identify the most commonly used communication methods for educational purposes; as you can see, they range from software that was previously used by private sector professional organizations (such as Cisco Webex, Skype, or Zoom Communications) to email or regular communication applications such as Whatsapp.), social networks (Facebook) and even software used exclusively for educational purposes (such as Google Classroom).

In fact, as can be seen from the table above, Google Classroom is the most commonly used communication platform for educational purposes, being indicated by 89.69% of respondents as being used "in full" and "largely". In fact, the use of Google Classroom at the level of the higher education institution where the questionnaires were applied came together with the use of the institutional email, both by the teachers and by the students and the administrative staff. This fact explains the percentage of 77.16% of respondents who indicated that they used email as a means of communication ("totally" and "to a large extent").

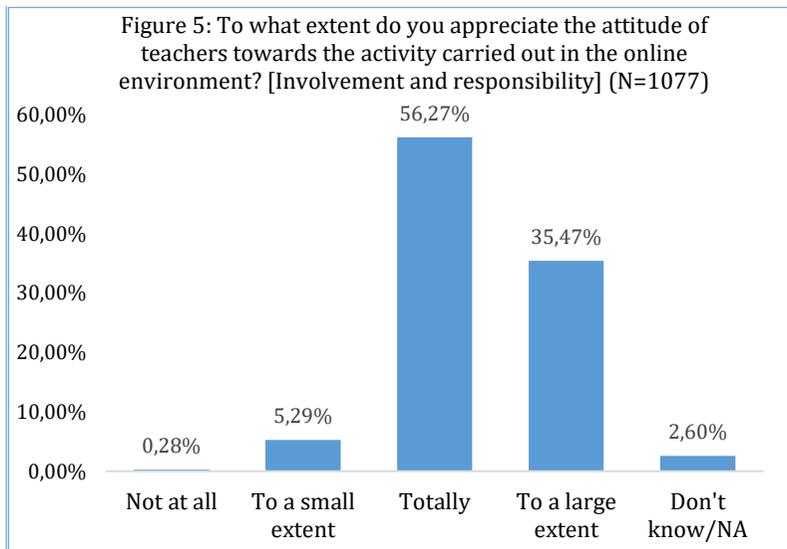
A "novelty" in the field of applications used in the educational environment was the Zoom Video Communications platform: in just four months (December 2019 - March 2020), the number of its users increased 20 times. Therefore, with the onset of the pandemic, Zoom enjoyed increasing success in the educational environment, especially due to the fact that it also offered a free version, which allowed users to use it with great ease for educational purposes. Of the responses provided by our respondents, 69.88% indicated that they used the Zoom application for online interaction for educational purposes ("totally" and "to a large extent").

The least used ways of online interaction, for educational purposes, were Cisco Webex (84.07% indicated that they did not use it at all), Skype (72.83% indicated that they did not use it at all) and Facebook (57.07% indicated that they did not use it at all)



During the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in the early part (March-June 2020), "everyone adapted to the online school as best they could". The context in which this pandemic occurred was not one for which the education system was prepared. The students did not benefit from media education programs in the school, and many of the teachers did not take introductory courses in new technologies, nor did anyone prepare them to use the necessary tools during a pandemic. The adoption of technology and its use for educational purposes is an extremely complex process and is determined by several factors. First of all, we can say that there must be a context that favors their use. A decision to make the use of technology compulsory, unaccompanied by access to an adequate infrastructure, can lead to an increase in the level of frustration of the teacher and to the refusal to use the technology for educational purposes. In addition, there are teachers who have minimal digital skills and who refuse to use technology for digital purposes for fear of making a mistake.

From the answers to the question aimed at assessing the level of openness of teachers to the use of technology for educational purposes, it was observed that in the university environment (at least at the level of the educational institution where the questionnaires were applied) the level of openness to use digital technology is high: 44.57% of students said that their teachers were "fully" open to the use of technology for educational purposes; for 44.66% of the students, their teachers were "largely open" to the use of technology for educational purposes. There was also a percentage of 7.15% of respondents for whom the level of openness of teachers to the use of technology is very low, probably being part of one of the two categories listed above.



When it comes to using digital technology, we need to differentiate between inefficient use and efficient use of technology. There is no doubt that an efficient use of digital technology for educational purposes is that in which the objectives of education are achieved, the content is transmitted effectively, the feedback obtained from students is positive and, most importantly, the evaluation of the content taught and mastered by students is a positive. Secondly, an efficient use of technology for educational purposes can only be achieved through the involvement and responsibility of the teacher, which was the basis for building a question in our questionnaire, which should focus on this dimension. The involvement and responsibility of teachers in the use of technology was positively appreciated by students: 91.74% appreciated that their teachers were involved "fully" and "to a large extent" responsibly in the use of technology for educational purposes. In case of a deficient teacher-student communication, the involvement and responsibility were perceived by the respondents at a minimum level (5.29% appreciated that their teachers were involved to a small extent in the use of technology for educational purposes and in the activity carried out on -line). The total lack of involvement and responsibility was indicated by 0.28% of the respondents.

5. Conclusions

Our research has highlighted the importance of communication in the university environment and the fact that any barrier in educational communication should not be neglected. Secondly, he emphasized that a greater openness of teachers to the use of technologies in education can contribute to improving their communication relationship with students. Last but not least, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the resilience of the university education system, which adapted quickly and easily to this new social context, by using various communication software that does not affect the communication relationship. of educational actors, more than the period of isolation did and the restrictions imposed at national level to limit the spread of the COVID virus.

Face-to-face and online communication will coexist in the educational process. For now, the only way to communicate with students is online, we do not have another way in the context of the pandemic. We consider that the problem of virtual communication represents rather the effect of the contemporary socio-communicative context, and at the same time it is the cause of the necessary determinations and analyzes on the communicative and educational space. The Romanian school must find its own system of educational strategies and policies to respond to the pressures and challenges of contemporary society. The teacher's online communication competence can be found as one of these answers that meet the concerns of parents, students, school. It is mandatory for the evolution of the educational space in the virtual society, to identify the optimal methods and means to avoid excess and efficient use of virtual space.

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RECIDIVISM CAN SERIOUSLY HARM SOCIETY

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Abstract: *Deviance in Romania is an important social problem, a phenomenon that constantly leads to research and studies aimed at analysing both the deviant behaviours of minors, young people and adults, with a view to explaining them, as well as the ways of state intervention in preventing and combating crime. A social problem, such as deviance, can affect social structure and organisation, generating reactions, attitudes, behaviours and opinions such as: What is deviance? Why does it exist? Who is responsible for its appearance? How much does it cost us? What can be done about the reduction of the phenomenon? The notion of deviance can not be understood outside the deviant's interaction with those who judge him. The punishment is becoming an essential function of public authority, for in its absence social cohesion could not be conceived, and public coerciveness is converted in this way into a constituent element of organised society. As a special form of crime, recidivism is one of the most serious social problems facing contemporary societies. Reducing recidivism remains not only an indicator of the effectiveness of structures that have target groups of prisoners or former prisoners, but also an indicator of community health. In order to support the criminally sanctioned persons, with the predilection of those released from prison it is necessary to build an institutional framework to support the former prisoner towards a positive change, from the attitude of 'to be given to me, to me' towards one of active and concrete preparation of a life away from the crime, with the active involvement of the community and institutions with the role of crime control.*

Keywords: deviance; public strategies and policies; recidivism; social problem; social reintegration.

1. Deviance and delinquency from a sociological perspective

Starting from the idea that each science corresponds to its own particular object, a reality which is imposed from outside observation and which can be studied with scientific methods, *Émile* Durkheim considers that sociology must also establish its own object, that is to say that special category of things to be dealt with only itself.

And this own object is the social fact defined by Durkheim as „any way of doing, fixed or not, capable of exerting an external constraint on the individual; or still, which is general in the scope of a given society, nevertheless having its own existence, independent of its individual manifestations” (Sudeteanu, 1924: 56).

In this context, *É.* Durkheim considered delinquency and deviance as social facts, inevitable and necessary in modern societies. According to him, people in the modern era are less constrained than they were in traditional societies. Because in the modern world there is more room for individual choice, there is inevitably some nonconformism. Durkheim acknowledged that there would never be an absolute consensus in any society about the norms and values that drive it (Giddens, 2010: 751).

Functionalist theories consider that delinquency and deviance result from structural tensions and a lack of moral regulation within society. If individual and group aspirations in society do not correspond to the rewards available, this disparity

between desire and fulfillment will be felt in the form of deviant motivations among some of the members (Giddens, 2010: 750).

As is already known, in the Durkheimian sense (sociologist É. Durkheim, author of the concept of integration), the phenomenon of deviance is characteristic of any society, regardless of the level of democracy established. Durkheim argued that deviance plays a key role in an orderly society. He argued that by explaining the deviance, we become aware of the standards we share as members of a society. And then it is no longer necessary to want to completely eliminate the deviation; rather, society must try to keep it within acceptable limits (Giddens, 2010: 752).

The sociological theory proven by experimentation as the clearest for understanding the inclination for deviance is the theory of social control. Its foundations were laid by É. Durkheim in „About Suicide.” In essence, it boils down to the assertion that insufficient social integration frees the individual from the socializing influence of his entourage, thus weakening his motivation to make the necessary effort to respect social norms.

Quoting E. Durkheim, is socially any behavior that is not due to hazard, but is regulated by „established and inevitable” rules and expectations, and „deviant” is that behavior that goes beyond the institutional and social limits acceptable by society, considered to be a moral environment. In a very well-known passage regarding the distinction between normal and pathological, É. Durkheim stated that in all human societies we find people who attract their criminal repression (Durkheim, 1895: 65).

The crime appeared to Durkheim as a normal sociology fact, because it is an integral part of life in society. To the extent that social solidarity requires everyone to share certain collective feelings, tolerating acts that strike hard in them would call into question an essential social binder. Since it is impossible for all members of a group to share collective feelings with the same intensity, there will be some who will commit acts judged as offensive by others and who will thus see themselves sentenced to a criminal penalty. A similar argument applies to deviance (Boudoun, 1992).

Durkheim said of the crime: „We do not condemn it because it is a crime, but it is a crime because we condemn it” (Durkheim, 1893: 48). This is also true for deviance: the sociologist considers that an act is deviant because it is disapproved.

Durkheim's research on deviance and delinquency proved to be extremely important, as it shifted the emphasis on individual explanations in favour of social forces. His theory of anomie inspired the American sociologist Robert King Merton, who said that „deviance represents all dysfunctional behaviors that threaten the balance of the social system.” Merton amended the concept of anomie to refer to the tension to which individuals' behaviour is subjected when accepted norms conflict with social reality (Giddens, 2010: 751).

The term deviation thus appears, for the first time in American literature, specifically in sociology, during the 1950s. That's when the notions of pathology or social disorganization were replaced.

R.K. Merton, concerned with defining the object of study of sociocriminogenesis, understood to define deviant behavior as „an abnormal reaction of normal people under normal conditions”.

Sociologist Kai Erikson wanted to test the Durkheimian thesis that the number of deviant abusers a community can afford to recognize seems to remain stable over time. Erikson published „Wayward Puritans”, a study of the 17th century deviation in

New England and the United States. His research has led him to conclude: the ability of a community to control the deviance, say, can be broadly estimated by counting prison cells and hospital beds, police and psychiatrists, courts and clinics. Control institutions often seem to regard their work as one of maintaining deviation within limits, rather than leading to its disappearance (Giddens, 2010: 752).

Deviant behaviour is behaviour that violates social norms and values, conflicting with socially, morally and culturally accepted standards within social groups or systems. It covers a wide variety of types, ranging from so-called „eccentric” behavior, defined by „unusual” gestures, peculiar clothing and behavioural disorder, to outlier, delinquent or even criminal behaviors (Otovescu, 2010: 373).

Deviance and delinquency are not synonymous, although in many situations they overlap. The notion of deviance is much more comprehensive than that of delinquency, which refers to non-conformist conduct in violation of a law (Giddens, 2010: 748).

Deviance in the sociological sense is similar to deviance in the statistical sense, deviation from the central tendency of a group, except that what is sociologically deviant is necessarily and disapproved (Boudoun, 1992: 442).

The term delinquency is of latin etymological origin and comes from the term „delinquere”, which means to be to blame, to be wrong.

According to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language delinquency delinquency, s. f. 1. „Social phenomenon consisting of committing crimes.” 2. „The totality of offences committed at any given time in a given environment or by persons of a certain age.” [Var.: delinquency s. f.] From fr. Délinquance (DEX: 1998).

Delinquency includes motivations, conduct, heterogeneous and very diverse etiologies, random acts and nonconformist tendencies specific to adolescent subculture. In conclusion it can be said that delinquency refers only to behavior that conflicts with the law, to violation of the legal, criminal laws of the state and not to any misconduct of the behavioural type.

In all forms and notions of social deviance, delinquency has the highest degree of social danger, because it affects the most important social relationships and values and violates the moral or legal rules and norms that guide the behavior of individuals. Regarded as a form of social deviance, delinquency is a complex social part as a result of the conjugated interaction between the individual and the environment. In fact, at the level of each company there are a higher or lower proportion of transgressions of the rules which by referring them to different criteria can take the form of deviance and/or delinquency.

Deviance is defined as any act, conduct or manifestation that violates the written or unwritten norms of society or a particular social group. Defined as a type of behaviour, which opposes the conventional or conformist one, the deviation encompasses not only the violations of the law (crimes or misdemeanours), but any „deviation” (deviation) from the rules of cohabitation and the imperatives of order of a collective life form (society, group, organization, institution, culture, subculture). In this respect, the deviance includes an extremely wide range of acts or conduct, from eccentric or bizarre ones (e.g. the adoption of an unusual outfit, a non-conformist language or gesture), incompatible with the cultural „codes” of the group or society, to the so-called immoral ones (indecent, obscenity, acts that defy public morals), which are not always sanctioned by law, and to those of an antisocial nature (criminal acts

sanctioned by criminal or social regulations (psychic diseases), in its essence, as a manifestation that offends the feelings and expectations of the collective (Vlăsceanu and Zamfir, 1998: 166).

Deviance is equivalent to deviation from the rule of conduct presumed to be universal - valid, deviation due to „pathological” disturbances of the entire social organism which manifests itself with acuity, in particular, during the processes of modernisation, industrialization and urbanisation (Vlăsceanu and Zamfir, 1998: 166).

Deviance in Romania, due to the high level, is a social problem, a phenomenon that constantly determines the realization of research and studies aimed at analyzing the deviant behaviors of minors, young people, adolescents and adults, in order to explain, prevent and combat them.

A social problem is a condition that affects a significant number of people in ways considered undesirable, about which there is a sense that something can be done through collective social action (Horton, Leslie and Larson, 2001: 463–473).

Any social problem involves a value judgment, a decision that the circumstance, the condition, is „bad”. But no circumstance or condition, however dramatic or shocking, is a social problem until the values of a considerable number of people in society define it as a problem.

Social problems are often seen as the result of dysfunctions occurring in the social order. When established rules are ignored or violated, a social problem arises.

In addressing deviance, in order to analyse social issues, we need to consider a few questions: Which deviant people and groups are involved? Are deviant people fundamentally adapted unsatisfactorily to the culture of society? Or should they be considered only members adapted to their deviant subculture? Are the deviants themselves a problem? How much of deviance is a product of labelling? Does it do evil deviance to anyone other than the deviants themselves? How much of the deviance of certain social groups stems from the inefficiency of generally accepted social norms? What alternatives exist for resolving these situations?

2. Purpose and role of punishment

The concept of punishment includes, in addition to the types, duration, modes of execution, the individualisation and the customization of the application and the possibility of acting in favour of the victim, but also for the purpose of trying to resocialise the offender.

The term punishment, having its roots in greek (paideusis), neo-greek (epédepsa – pedevo) means to sanction the wrongdoer with a teaching meant to right and be good. Therefore, the punishment comes from the greek „paideusis”, which means: instruction, education, physical or moral torment applied to someone for a crime, a crime, a mistake, a negligence or even for laziness.

The notion of punishment in the language of romanian was transmitted from the romans who called the criminal sanction „poeana”. The word, however, has even older origin because the romans took it from the greeks „poini”, and these from the sanskrit language „koena” which means verification, reckoning.

It should be noted that there is also a Latin principle enshrined „nulla poena sine lege”, with current reverberations regarding the principle of legality translated into the wording „no punishment without law”. It follows that the legal institution of

punishment is created by the positive law by the criminal law itself, which determines, specifies the punishment in the legal text.

In fact, however, punishment is a suffering for the one who has disobeyed the criminal law. After all, the „evil” done consisting of the victim's suffering must be „rewarded” with an „evil” done to the offender who must also suffer for the suffering of the victim. This suffering caused by punishment should not, however, be regarded as revenge, as it was seen in the old days, but should also be regarded as a righting, having a generous ethical function, it being a „medicine of the soul”, as Aristotle said. In his work „Ethics”, Aristotle asserts that punishment constitutes a „social utility” because the community refrains from violating the law because of the threat posed by the criminal law.

Platon also said: „Those who look only at the painful aspect of punishment are wrong. They are blind to the benefit that comes from it, and they do not know that it is the greater misfortune to have no healthy soul, but rotten, unjust and sinful.” In „The Laws”, Platon, through the voice of the Athenian said that „we must seek a cure (...) so that we do not talk, do not do, and suffer nothing that we must be ashamed of.” (Platon, 1995: 67).

The holder of the right to punish is the State, which, by virtue of that right, is capable of resolving the criminal conflict in an institutional, rational and predictable, constructive, efficient and equal manner, with care for individual guarantees, thereby ensuring fair protection of fundamental legal rights.

The power to punish becomes an essential function of public authority, for in its absence social cohesion could not be conceived, and public coerciveness is converted in this way into a constituent element of organised society.

The state, when it punishes, does good even to the punished (offender) because it, by the effect of punishment, is brought back into society. In other words, the offender, as a result of the application of the penalty, is invited to form a fair attitude towards the rule of law, the rules of social cohabitation and towards work.

„Jus puniendi” has become a powerful tool for criminal policy playing an important role in preventing crime. „Jus puniendi” is a latin phrase that can be translated as the right to punish belonging to the state. It refers to the power of the state or its punitive prerogatives. Etymologically, the expression „jus” means right, while „puniendi” means to punish, the translation of the Latin expression being the right to punish or the right to punish and has been used according to the relationship that the State has towards its citizens (Molina, 2005: p. 6).

Hugo Grotius considered that "the right of society to punish is a manifestation of reason and must remain inscribed in the margins of justice and humanity." (Grotius, 1968: 17).

The application of a penalty to the person who has violated the legal norms must lead to the prevention of criminal acts by the offender – special prevention – as well as to the discouragement of other persons in the community from committing such criminal acts – general prevention – thus defending the state against internal „aggressions” affecting the rule of law (Legal, 2021).

In the 18th century, Cesare Beccaria formulated his own opinion in relation to punishment based on social contract theory and utilitarian theory. The Italian jurist wrote that: „laws are the conditions by which people – living independently and in isolation – united in society, are able to live in a permanent state of war and enjoy a

freedom that became useless precisely because it lacked the certainty of being able to keep it as such. They gave up some of that freedom so that they could enjoy the rest of the freedom they had kept in peace and securely. Sensitive-concrete reasons were needed enough to contain the despotic impulses in everyone's soul, which could have thrown the laws of society into the previous chaos. These sensitively concrete reasons are the punishments set against those who break the laws." (Beccaria, 2007: 47).

Beccaria examines not only the question of punishment, but also the right to punish, what it represents, who and how it has the right to hold the offender accountable, drawing attention to the immense responsibility for law enforcement and the division of justice. „Necessity has forced people to cede part of their own freedom: it is therefore certain that everyone wants to put in the public warehouse only the smallest possible portion, only as long as it is enough to induce others to defend him." (Beccaria, 2007: 51).

Friedrich Nietzsche considered that punishment is „overdetermined by utilities of any kind" and survives because the desire to punish other people, and therefore to subordinate, coerce and transform, is very deeply rooted in human nature (Bedau and Kelly, 2015: 23).

The sociological perspective tries to overcome the limitations of other sciences (philosophy, law, criminology, etc.) which are concerned with studying punishment, by considering the social implications of this phenomenon. Without reducing its investigation only to the way in which punishment contributes to the control of crime, the sociological approach is concerned with studying the effects it has on society in general. Since punishment is seen as a social institution, sociology adopts an external positioning of analysis, through the eyes of society, focusing on identifying the social functions of punishment, on the social consequences and cultural significance of the application of different types of sanctions. Specifically, the sociological perspective aims to understand how specific forms of punishment of individuals arise, what are the social functions of punishment, how criminal institutions relate to each other, but also with other institutions, how punishment contributes to the establishment of social order and how it helps to form and maintain the power of the state, but also what are the negative/undesirable social effects of punishment and what are its extensive social costs. Among the most influential sociologists who have shown interest in studying punishment are Émile Durkheim, Michel Foucault, Norbert Elias, as well as neo-Marxist theorists Georg Rusche and Otto Kirchheimer.

É. Durkheim, who built a theory of punishment as a retribution, defined punishment as follows: „The punishment consists of a passionate, gradual reaction, which society exercises through a body, on those of its members who have violated certain rules of conduct." (Durkheim, 1893: 64).

Punishment, as a passionate reaction, presents itself as an act of revenge evolved for the defense of society. It creates the idea of a vengeful society against the individual, by this delegation of revenge by individuals to a specialized body, having the right to punish. Paul Fauconet, an illustrious disciple of Durkheim, tried to demonstrate, using anthropology and history, that punishment is a variety of the procedure for annulment of the criminal act committed, which must rehabilitate the faith disturbed by crime. In this conception, the cause of the penalty derives not from the offender, but the offence itself incorporates into it a dissolutive process. As a result, society must stop causing crime, otherwise it may not be maintained social life. His theory is full of symbolism and seeks a

substitute for crime in positive social behaviors. It is a manner of spiritualist and consensual is the following (Chiș, 2015: 118).

Utilitarian theories have also had a strong impact on ideas of punishment, with the most prominent representatives being Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill who advocate for the well-being of mankind and general happiness as essential conditions of morality. Punishment thus finds its usefulness in alleviating unpleasantness and increasing the accumulation of pleasure by discouraging the commission of antisocial acts in the future.

In view of the question of criminal sanction, its purposes and justifications, the utilitarian philosopher John Stuart Mill considers that there is a fundamental element in the relations between individuals, a basic law that controls the relationship of coerciveness and supervision between community and person, even if the method used would consist of the physical force disguised as criminal sanction or the moral pressure of the members of society.

Mill believes that the most important part of morality is justice based on utility. Moral rules that prohibit people from harm to each other are more vital to human well-being than any other, they are the main element that determines all the social feelings of humanity. Only their observance defends peace between human beings; if obedience to them were not the rule and disobedience of the exception, each would see in any other a probable enemy, to whom they should always beware. The same powerful reasons that command obedience to these moral or criminal rules also require the punishment of those who have violated them, and just as the impulses of self-defense, defense of others and revenge are directed against such persons, the desire to reward or do harm becomes closely linked to the sense of justice and is universally included in this idea (Mill, 2003: 326).

Utilitarians created the idea of a penalty based on representativeness, the punishment becoming a signal, an obstacle to the commission of criminal acts. The potential offender must show a greater interest in avoiding the punishment than in risking the commission of a crime. That interest can only be the penalty to be well known by all members of society.

We cannot leave without attention the modern doctrine of „social defence”, which promotes criminal policy aimed at effectively combating the criminal phenomenon. This doctrine concerned the thoughts of the early 20th century, which created the foundations of this doctrine, and its basic conceptions are limited to: the state has an obligation to socialize those who have violated the rules of social cohabitation, not the simple right to punish them; the individual who violates these rules is declared „antisocial” on the basis of the subjective assessment of his personality; the sanction or social defence measure has a preventive, curative, educational function, not a penalty of remuneration; social defence policy puts the entire legal system at issue, its applications extending from the study of man in society and the search for means of resocialization, to general policy (Gramatica, 1972: 633).

Social defence involves, above all, protecting members of the community, so that social defence measures, whatever they may be, must be capable of first protecting each individual member of society. This is quite natural, because any social danger is objective, as a first step, by a concrete danger to one or more identifiable individuals. The consequences of the criminal act are directly reflected only in a limited number of injured persons, but the danger that the act presents affects the whole community,

because an offence committed against any individual also constitutes a threat to all other members of society. In other words, we can say that the existence of a state of social danger (and, by implication, the need for the proper response of the society to mitigate or suppress that danger) is analysed by reference to the concrete state of danger in which one or more individuals are as a result of an aggression to which they have fallen victim. Social defence is therefore inseparable from the defence of the person, of each individual member of society.

Max Weber, in his sociological analysis of the state phenomenon, made extensive use of this notion. Thus, in Weber's view, social relations involving the participation of state authority are relations of „dominance, subordination, authority, force or power. Command-obedience ratios are at the heart of power, of power relations. It is irrelevant that the act of obedience is willingly consented to by the dominated, from his understanding of the rationality and social utility of the command, or that domination is based on coercion. The punishments imposed by the power factor confer specificity on the relations of power, although power is not limited to the use of compulsion.” (Weber, 1971: 229, *ap.* Ionescu: 94).

We note that these ideas place the emphasis on the state-person relationship, in which the state appears as the „protector” of society, by less repressive means (essentially decreases the character of coercion). Punishment is a means of state coercion, for it has a political source, as well as social-political ends; the penalty is applied by the State on behalf of society and through its specialized bodies. The State, through the State bodies, as a subject of law and holder of the social values protected by the criminal law, has the right, but also the obligation to hold criminally responsible those who are guilty of committing crimes, by which the rule of law is prejudiced.

At the same time, with regard to the essence of the criminal penalty, I agree with the view that the principle of the humanism of criminal law is reflected in criminal law and its sanctions.

This principle presupposes that the legislature must provide in criminal law only those penalties which „are fully consistent with the moral and legal consciousness of society” (Pascu, 2016: 421).

In the legal literature of our country, the concept of punishment appears as „a coercive measure, used by the State against those who are found guilty of committing crimes and consisting in depriving or restricting the exercise of rights, with the aim of re-educating the persons concerned and preventing the commission of other crimes in the future.” (Streteanu and Nițu, 2018: 281).

The Romanian Criminal Code no longer defines the penalty, but only the punishment provided for by law. The task of definition is left, on the one hand, to criminal doctrine and, on the other hand, to reduce the legal definition to the provisions of Article 187 of the Criminal Code gives specialists the opportunity to analyse the whole set of penalties, from which they can extract an appropriate definition.

Professor Ioan Chiș intended to define punishment as follows: „The punishment defines the means of coercion and force, as well as the motivation for the application of the supreme forms of sanction, exercised by the State to compensate for the damage caused to citizens or legal persons, the consequence of the commission of crimes and the need to establish the criminal order of law, by warning those who are willing to violate criminal rules, and to offer organisational possibilities of the State, such as resocialisation of criminally sanctioned persons who live in accordance with

the fundamental values and principles of living in a democratic society.” (Chiș, 2015: 299).

The provisions on the purpose of the punishment are no longer retained in the current Criminal Code (as compared to the Criminal Code of 1968) as it is contained in the law on the execution of sentences. Law No. 254/2013 on the execution of custodial sentences and measures ordered by judicial bodies during the criminal proceedings lays down the purpose of custodial sentences in Article 3, namely: „(1) The purpose of the execution of custodial sentences and educational measures is to prevent the commission of new offences; (2) The execution of custodial sentences and educational measures aims to form a correct attitude towards the rule of law, the rules of social cohabitation and work, with a view to the reintegration into society of prisoners or internees.” (Law No. 254/2013).

The institution of the criminal penalty has its legislative seat in Title III, Chapter I „Categories of Punishments” of the general part of the Criminal Code. In the Romanian Criminal Code (Law No. 286/2009), in the chapter of main penalties, are provided for life imprisonment (art. 56-59), imprisonment (art. 60) and fine (art. 61-64). Life imprisonment is the heaviest of the penalties, and is for the most serious offences, usually alternating with a prison sentence of 15 to 25 years.

The main penalty of imprisonment is provided for in Article 60 of the Criminal Code, and consists of the deprivation of liberty for a fixed period of 15 days and 30 years, and is carried out in accordance with the law on the execution of sentences (Crișu, Dunea, Michinici, et al, 2014: 136).

It should be noted that punishment is one of the three fundamental institutions of criminal law alongside crime and criminal liability.

The Constitution of Romania, in Article 23, enshrines individual freedom and the safety of the person, thus establishing two fundamental principles of the legal system: the presumption of innocence and the legality of punishment.

The individual is free to conduct his or her choices and is responsible for his or her actions, so that punishment, ethical and profound requirement of human reason, which is based on the idea of justice, is perceived as having a fundamental role in ensuring the re-education and reintegration of the individual into the community.

The need for criminal law and, by implication, the right of the State to punish is grafted onto the idea of social defence (Bulai, 1992: 10). This right is quite right, for there can be no denying to the community itself the right and the possibility to defend itself against those acts and persons who endanger its security and stability.

Professor Vasile Dongoroz and others mentioned in their famous paper „Theoretical explanations of the Romanian Criminal Code, the general part” that criminal punishment represents the concept of law instituted with the means necessary by the national state to compel the individual to comply with the law, and in the event of violation of the law – „to suffer forcibly, without his will, certain deprivations and restrictions” (Dongoroz, Kahane, Oancea, et al, 1970: 168).

Criminal punishment is a special measure of coercion by the State, which differs from other measures of state constraint, as the State's reaction to the injurious act committed, which in turn is not a criminal offence, but an offence, civil offence or breach of the discipline of work.

Professor Iancu Tănăsescu mentioned that the significance of any criminal policy lies in one characteristic: measures to punish and intimidate criminals.

Therefore, the application of the penalty is a form of the legal constraint necessary for the re-education and, by implication, the social reform of the convicted person (Tănăsescu, 1994: 171).

Punishment appears as a restoration of the balance which has been disturbed and which must be proportionate to the commission of the crime provided for by the criminal law, mandatory and determined, and will respond to the social need for justice.

Global assessments of countless attempts by criminal systems to stop the criminal phenomenon and reduce recidivism have led to the conclusion that they have not yet found the optimal solution to the situation. On the basis of practical experiments, the conviction that the solution can be offered by restorative justice has been increasingly emerged.

Restorative justice aims to balance the problems of the victim and the community, as well as the need for social reintegration of the offender, to assist the victim in the recovery process and to give all parties the right to be present and to be actively involved in justice. It also seeks to remedy the damage caused by the commission of a crime, based on an approach involving not only the parties, but also the community in general, in close liaison with the institutions specialised in the field. (Legal Dictionary, 2021).

Understanding the procedures related to restorative justice starts from understanding the action of society against the criminal phenomenon and from the justification of the action of punishing criminals.

Concerns to conceptualize the restorative justice procedure date back to the 1960.

In 1996, British criminologist Tony Marshall defined restorative justice as "the process in which the parties involved in a crime jointly determine how to deal with the consequences of the crime and its implications for the future" (Marshall, 1999: 5).

Restorative justice focuses on empowering offenders and the compensation/repair they can provide to victims. At the same time, emphasis is placed on their social reintegration both as a more humane way of treating offenders and as a concrete way to avoid recidivism.

In conclusion, it may be apparent that harmonisation with European regulations should not, however, reform the sanctioning system so strongly as to forget the purpose for which a penalty was imposed, or the humanisation of the penalty should not annul the stage by which the convict must also feel the consequences of the crime committed, since, as C. Bulai states, in *the Manual of Criminal Law. The general part*: „what is specific to punishment, as a means of re-education, is that, being the commission of particularly serious acts and therefore the need to re-educate the perpetrator, the appropriate means of this purpose can only be the measure of criminal coercion, which is punishment.” (Bulai, 2006).

3. Reducing the risk of recidivism, the main objective of the criminal justice system.

As a special form of crime, recidivism is one of the most serious social problems facing contemporary societies. For the representatives of the institutions involved in the execution of the act of justice, but also for the public opinion, the recidivism generates many concerns, due to the high costs it entails. Along with the huge costs

involved in the criminal justice system, recidivism also brings with it many unquantifiable costs. They are felt in the long term by the victims, their families and the community and relate both to the suffering of those directly affected by criminal acts, as well as to the feelings of fear and insecurity experienced by the inhabitants of areas with high recidivism (Quality of Life Magazine, 2021).

In the sense of some authors the relapse derives from re and fall, but it shows that this word is not of latin origin. Starting from the conceptual acceptance, it was found that, from an etymological point of view, the notion of "recidivism" comes from the latin term „recidivus” (Cocaină, 1995: 24), or from the latin verb „recidere” (Buzea, 1944: 715), which in translation means „relapse”, i.e., „falling into the same mistake” or „committing a mistake once again”, according to the encyclopedic dictionary. In the broadest conception, „recidivism” means „repeating the phenomenon after its apparent disappearance” (Mateuț, 1997: 51), i.e. „reiteration of crimes” (Mateuț, 2007: 214).

In accordance with the provisions of Article 41 of the Criminal Code, simply entitled „Recidive”, it is stated that: „There is a recidivism when, after the final stay of a sentence of imprisonment of more than one year and until rehabilitation or the completion of the term of rehabilitation, the convict again commits an offence with outdated intent or intent, for which the law provides for a prison sentence of one year or more. There shall also be recidivism where one of the penalties referred to in paragraph 1 is imposed on the person concerned. 1 is life imprisonment.” (Law No. 286/2009).

The state of recidivism can be defined as: the state or situation of an offender who has committed one or more offences of a certain gravity, after the final criminal conviction, a condition which gives rise to the presumption of persevering of the offender by antisocial activity and may therefore lead to an aggravation of the punishment for the offences committed in that state.

Recidivism can seriously harm society from a dual perspective: the relatively high costs of custody of an inmate in a penitentiary unit and the danger that a repeat offender poses to civil society.

According to calculations made by the National Administration of Penitentiaries (ANP), the cost of maintaining a single inmate per month is 5.180 lei and 75 money. The money provides accommodation, food, transport and security, as well as the payment of the staff in charge of the prisoners. More than two thirds of the cost per inmate is actually caused by the maintenance of the detention system.

If during detention a convicted person can derive income from the provision of services which may not be less than the gross minimum basic salary per country guaranteed in payment, in relation to the work schedule and, where appropriate, the degree of achievement of the working rule determined by the work evidence carried out in the presence of persons delegated by both Contracting Parties (art. 183 of Law No. 254/2013 on the execution of sentences and custodial measures ordered by judicial bodies during the criminal trial), upon leaving the penitentiary, persons who do not have the means of money, the ANP will ensure to them the consideration of transport to the residence or residence of the person who is released, at the level of the minimum tariffs charged by the National Railway Company „C.F.R.” - S.A., for passenger transport (Article 117 of Law No. 254/2013 on the execution of sentences and custodial measures ordered by judicial bodies during criminal proceedings). Prisoners

who can go out to work are selected from open and semi-open. These are therefore prisoners with sentences of up to 3 years, which do not involve serious or violent offences.

Prisoners are not required to go out to work. If they agree, they can earn days, get out of their sentence and increase their chances of being released on parole, being paid at least the minimum wage on the economy. It's just that the money is divided, according to the law, like this: 60% of the income goes to the penitentiary and 40% to the inmate. Of the remaining money, the convicted person can spend only 90% of the amount while he is locked up. The remaining 10% is set aside in an account to which he has access only to the prison leave.

Specialist studies have shown that individuals often leave prisons without the prospect of obtaining a job or a home, with health problems or associated with alcohol and drug addiction, etc. This phenomenon has been a topic of debate and analysis both at the level of institutions with a crime control role and at the level of the Romanian media (written media, radio and television), providing statistical data and relevant information on the evolution of recidivism and the criminal policies promoted by the Romanian state, with a view to diminishing the crime rate.

It is said that advertising is like air, that nothing can be created, built, succeeded, whether it is the promotion of a product, an organization, a party or a person, without the appeal to the knowledge and experience of communication specialists, who have become indispensable (Coman: 30).

Television is seen as the most agreeable way of information and the easiest to understand. In this context, the film industry has also demonstrated that it can be a genuine source of information.

Thus, the social problem of social reintegration was translated into a film, generically titled „2 lei 60”, a short film signed by Camelia Popa, a story that talks about categories and social prejudices, about entourage and broken relationships (Cinepub, 2021). Two inmates of different ages and social categories are released from prison on the same day. Their chances of reintegration into society start with two sixty lions, the road money they receive at the time of their release. Their struggle for reintegration is a struggle with their own nature, the prejudices of society and the temptation of an easy life offered by the old entourage. The stories of the two individuals of different ethnicities and ages are likened by the temptations that arise, through the stigma, the entourage and the violent past, that follow them, and by their struggle to keep themselves away from yet another condemnation.

At the heart of this film is the project „The ethnography of transitions to prisoners” which aims to acquire an advanced understanding of the process of social reintegration from the subjective perspective of prisoners. The processes, interactions, meanings and conflicts inherent in reintegration are examined from the perspectives of Roma and romanian prisoners.

The project „Ethnography of transitions to prisoners” has proposed to acquire an advanced understanding of the process of social reintegration from the subjective perspective of prisoners. The processes, interactions, meanings and conflicts inherent in reintegration were examined from the perspectives of Roma and romanian prisoners. In order to assess the impact of the cultural, political and social environment on the reintegration process, the research was carried out in two countries: Norway and Romania. Thus, the research universe included four distinct groups of prisoners:

20 romanian prisoners, 20 romanian prisoners of Roma ethnicity, 10 romanian prisoners imprisoned in a norwegian prison and 5 Roma prisoners imprisoned in a norwegian prison. In order to make it possible to compare between the two countries, the data collection and analysis processes followed the same pattern. (About [Justice, 2021](#)).

The study „Ethnography of transitions to prisoners” carried out in 2016-2018 at the Bucharest-Jilava Penitentiary, describes the process of reintegration, from the subjective perspective of persons deprived of liberty. Part of the conclusions of the analysis, with regard to the post-detention period, reveal the following problems with influences in the occurrence of recidivism: prisoners are released from the penitentiary with little money (2,6 RON those in Bucharest), being minority to those who have higher amounts at the time of release, as a result of work performed or coming from the family; releases may take place at late hours, with problems with the movement of the person released from home detention or to a temporary social shelter; for 95% of prisoners involved in research, the State is „non-existent”, who show distrust of it; most prisoners are in a state of heightened precariousness, especially those of Roma ethnicity or those who are socially isolated; few prisoners turn to institutions or authorities to solve their various problems or do not know who to turn to and how to proceed; most are convinced that they will be marginalised and have no chance of employment; few are homeless, but they are a very vulnerable category; lack of monitoring of former drug users or those with serious illnesses, lack of health card and impossibility of accessing medical services.

Regarding the post-detention period, Professor Ionuț Durnescu (2018) noted that it can be staggered as follows: in the first 2-4 weeks, prisoners have reduced mobility, concerned with restoring contact with the family and restoring after the traumatic experience of detention; after the first 2-4 weeks there is a desire for economic autonomy, with a chance of success if they benefit from the support of the family or a social network. The author states in the study that they have two weeks to succeed.

The findings of the research, with reference to the workplace, reveal the following aspects to be taken into account: prisoners are convinced that state support is non-existent; most choose undocumented work, associated with a whole range of risks (occupational instability, inconstant pay, inability to access medical services, etc.); earnings from work are often small and do not offer real prospects of social success away from the criminal career; lack of education and identity documents are serious obstacles to finding a decent job; one third want to emigrate; fears of persons deprived of their liberty that the existence of a criminal record may have a negative influence on finding a job; most of the time, the jobs found are seasonal and target unskilled work; entrepreneurship is sometimes a disguised form of unemployment and can be a response to the impossibility of finding a job. Although the studies presented above have targeted prisoners in certain prisons (Oradea, Bucharest-Jilava), their conclusions may be extended in terms of the relevance of the issue faced by persons deprived of liberty in prison units (Law 5, 2021).

An analysis of the causality and how certain individuals continue the criminal trail is represented by the perspective of risk factors. From this point of view, there are a number of factors that strongly correlate with the risk of relapse, and their accurate

and early identification is a key aspect in the development of individualised intervention programmes on the situation of each individual.

Specialists in estimating the risk of recidivism stress that antisocial attitudes, antisocial entourage, criminal behavioural history and antisocial personality are the central variables that correlate with relapse, and other significant factors, but moderated in intensity, are: problematic family circumstances (lack of affection, poor surveillance, neglect or abuse), problematic educational or lucrative circumstances (low educational level, lucrative instability), problematic/non-constructive leisure arrangements and substance use.

Drawing on the theory of general personality and cognitive social learning, James Bonta and Donald Andrews in his paper „Psychology of Criminal Conduct” (1998), provide an overview of the theoretical context and the major knowledge bases of criminal conduct psychology. They provided the Risk/Need/Responsibility (RNR) model for assessing and treating offenders, which has guided developments around the world.

Risk assessment is a process in which the offender is evaluated on the basis of selected variables that increase the likelihood of „error” if proven to exist. These variables or „risk factors” are further divided into static and dynamic factors. Both categories are causally associated with criminal behaviour. Static factors are historically based, stable and cannot be changed. Dynamic factors are present at the moment and can be influenced. Examples of static factors include the history of previous sentences, sex, type of crime, family crime or motivation for committing previous crimes. The age at which the offender committed the first offence is a very good risk indicator of future behaviour and a risk factor that cannot be changed: if an offender was first arrested at the age of twelve, this will always exist. Typical dynamic factors include financial situation, workplace, attitudes that encourage the likelihood of criminal conduct, addiction, family relationships, friends and criminal acquaintances or recreational activities. In some sources, these dynamic factors are also referred to as „criminogenic needs”, in other words, factors that generate crime and are closely correlated with risk (Combating ill-treatment in prisons, 2021).

From the point of view of the recidivism rate, there is currently no evidence in our country, precisely because of the absence of a framework for regulating the obligations to monitor released detainees, the National Strategy for the Social Reintegration of Deprived Persons of Liberty, 2020-2024 shows. On the other hand, the data managed by the National Administration of Penitentiaries (ANP) show that the share of recidivist prisoners, from the general prison population, indicated, in the last 12 years, a relatively downward trend, as follows: 44.82% (2009), 44.93% (2010), 45.87% (2011), 45.78 (2012), 45.78% (2013), 43.00% (2014), 40.33% (2015), 38.27% (2016), 38.37% (2017), 38.44% (2018), 38.40 (2019) and 38.46 in September 2020, out of a total of 21128 custody persons (20176 men and 952 women). (National Prison Administration, 2021).

Recidivism prevention activity should mainly aim at correcting, coordinating and re-educating convicted persons, in order to facilitate reintegration into open society. Interventions to prevent recidivism must be clearly correlated with continuous risk assessment for each offender. The paradox of about 40% of offenders who reoffend is that they do not find their place in society, and government institutions with a crime control role cannot provide them with solutions to be able to suppress their

desire to commit a new crime, although a significant percentage of the population lives modestly or even in poverty without resorting to any acts against the legal provisions.

4. The concept of social reintegration

The execution of sentences, non-custodial measures and custodial measures ordered by judicial bodies during the criminal trial aims to reintegrate criminally sanctioned persons into society.

Reintegration presupposes primarily their return to society, to the community, to the family, to the area where they lived and formed as self-aware persons. Reintegration also involves changing the way of life, occupying a socially appropriate place, through which to ensure a decent, legal and personality-developing life in the future.

Education, reeducation and resocialisation are three other topical concepts for all members of society, especially with regard to criminally sanctioned persons, particularly those released from detention, who have particular deficiencies in primary education. Against particular types of criminals, the activity of education and reeducation must be approached differently, not only by trying to change conceptions of life, but also by providing opportunities to obtain, with the help of society, the means of honest and legal existence in the post-execution period.

Education involves an extension of initial education, a major change that occurs over time, compared to the previous model received in family, school and society, whereby criminally sanctioned persons develop skills, enrich their knowledge, improve their professional qualifications, reorient their attitudes and behaviours in a dual perspective: through personal development and participation in social life.

Resocialization, a new concept that also includes education and re-education, tends to make its way more and more into approaches to persons deprived of liberty. Resocialization, a process by which those who have been convicted can resume their place, role and social life prior to the execution of the sentence, of course without committing any other crimes, seems to be the main purpose of non-custodial and custodial sentences, the way in which this is achieved being a growing concern of government institutions (Chiş, 2015: 546).

Of real interest in the proposed theme, remains the perception of civil society on the process of resocialisation and reintegration of persons deprived of liberty returning to the community, family, at work, in school, given that this vulnerable category, at risk of social exclusion, is more prone in relation to the majority of the population to commit new criminal acts, using various means of meeting their own social needs, which requires increased attention on the part of the state and institutions with the role of controlling crime, in the effective management of the phenomenon of crime and recidivism.

In order to achieve the objective of social reintegration, it is necessary to link the needs of persons serving custodial sentences with issues of education, social assistance and social inclusion and to ensure the competition of local communities in carrying out this type of activities both as partners of the prison service, but also as beneficiaries of the social reintegration programme. Adapting educational and psychosocial assistance programmes to the needs of persons deprived of their liberty, the community's awareness of the importance of social reintegration of persons who have served custodial sentences, the diversification of the offer of education and

psychosocial assistance programmes and activities, with a view to involving as many persons deprived of their liberty as possible, leads to a reduction in the risk of recidivism (National Administration of Penitentiaries, 2021). However, there has never been a question of the effectiveness of these programmes in removing from the conduct of criminals the desire to reoffend. In practice, the re-education work carried out with persons deprived of their liberty must be continued **even after** their release from prison, by preventing the social marginalisation of the former prisoner. The latter involves, on the part of the community, a process of resocialization which consists of a phenomenon of abandonment of previous beliefs and attitudes, of stigmatization and social exclusion of the former convict and of learning and adoption of new conceptions and behaviors regarding the perception of the former prisoner in the community.

It is also necessary for society as a whole to promote an attitude of tolerance towards the former prisoner, therefore considering him to be a person whose problems can be solved, not by isolating him from the community, but by including him. In reality, however, this does not happen, they carry the label of ex-prisoner for the rest of their lives, most of the time. Perhaps this is precisely where approaches should be nuanced, that is, in promoting tolerance and acceptance towards such people and beyond. The principle that prisoners are deprived of their liberty in order to be rehabilitated and helped to integrate into society, and not just to be punished and isolated from the community, must be understood and applied. Such principles of social inclusion of former detainees are successfully followed in other countries in Europe, such as Norway, where only 20% of detainees are repeat offenders and the crime rate is the lowest in the world.

We cannot confuse the acceptance or toleration of the convict with that of criminal groups, where committing a criminal act is a habit, an integration, a way of earning a living or all at the same time, but it must be an attempt to understand the particular situation in which the person is in and avoid labelling in any way.

The positive evolution of the concept of resocialization in Romania, has materialized with the emergence of Law No. 275/2006. In this law, In Chapter VI, new regulations were introduced on educational, cultural, therapeutic, psychological counselling and social assistance activities, school training and vocational training of persons sentenced to custodial sentences. For the first time, the old concept of „re-education of convicts” has gone from to the new phrase „social reintegration of persons sentenced to custodial sentences” and the concept of „recovery of minors”. By Regulation implementing Law No. 275/2006 explicitly introduced the purpose of the execution of sentences, namely „assisting persons deprived of their liberty with a view to their social reintegration and preventing the commission of new offences”.

On 19 July 2013 Law No. 254/2013 on the execution of sentences and custodial measures ordered by judicial bodies during the criminal proceedings which makes it an absolute novelty to establish resocialisation procedures by category of persons convicted in relation to the regime applicable to them.

In 2015 a programmatic document of the Romanian Government on the reintegration of persons deprived of liberty called "National Strategy for the Social Reintegration of Deprived Persons, 2015-2019" was drawn up. By promoting Government Decision No 389 of 27 May 2015 on the approval of the National Strategy for Social Reintegration of Persons Deprived of Liberty, 2015-2019, a national, interinstitutional, articulated mechanism was created to support the process of social

reintegration of persons deprived of their liberty. A system was also developed to diagnose the training and professional development needs of specialists at the level of the institutions responsible for carrying out social reintegration activities with persons deprived of liberty (both during detention and post-detention and seven interinstitutional procedures were developed, five of which were approved and implemented.

Consecutive to the evaluation of the activities carried out through the implementation of Government Decision No. 389/2015, through the Monitoring Report of the National Strategy for Social Reintegration of Persons Deprived of Liberty, 2015-2019, drawn up in the form of a memorandum, approved at the Government meeting on 24 April 2019, the proposal to continue activities was validated by a new draft Government Decision, valid for the strategic cycle 2020-2024.

In the coordinates presented, the new strategy approved by Government Decision No. 430/2020 on the approval of the National Strategy for Social Reintegration of Persons Deprived of Liberty, 2020-2024.

The new document envisages the measures implemented in the period 2015-2019 that need to be continued, the development and customization of locally available social support services for people returning to the community at risk of social marginalisation, as well as new measures that need to be carried out during the reference period. At the same time, it is developing the functional reintegration of persons deprived of their liberty in the family environment, the community and the labour market, by strengthening, optimising and developing the necessary legal and procedural mechanisms.

It is considered that, in order to ensure the translation between the prison environment and the community, it is necessary to have structures in place to take over persons released, to provide them with specialized services and to monitor them, in order to successfully overcome the critical post-detention period, in which there is a high risk of a relapse into crime.

In order to increase the chances of reintegration into the labour market of persons released from detention, it is necessary to regulate the legislative framework so as to make it possible to conclude individual employment contracts for persons deprived of liberty, in particular those in open regime, given that the work performed at various economic operators requires this form of regulation of employment relations, which would have a real impact also to facilitate socio-professional reintegration.

The aim of the current strategic approach is to make criminal policies more efficient and to prevent the marginalisation of persons who have served custodial sentences or measures by increasing social involvement and empowering the community. Moving the focus from assisting the person during detention (and, by implication, improving the quality of services made available to him during his or her stay in the penitentiary), to social rehabilitation, through instruments that support autonomous living and facilitating access to support services in the community, is the foundation of the emerging directions of action for the current strategy.

This new strategic exercise gives partner public institutions the chance to resume and strengthen the partnership under the auspices of the Ministry of Justice. Reducing recidivism remains not only an indicator of the effectiveness of structures that have

target groups of prisoners or former prisoners, but also an indicator of community health.

Social reintegration can be particularly difficult when the person returning to society has to live by old habits, in the same family or entourage where crimes are committed. In this case, proper reintegration begins by leaving that climate and by trying to „restore life”, often having particularly large material and social obstacles.

Integration into work, after the release from prison of former prisoners, constitutes a particular social problem, since, in times of crisis, some companies have restructured and closed their activities, on the one hand, and on the other hand, they are hardly accepted or rejected when they declare that they have suffered a conviction. Added to this is poverty, alcoholism, unemployment, drug trafficking, the promotion of violence in the media, abuses and discrimination, which are the great scourges of Romania, and also some of the risk factors of crime (Niță, 2012: 225).

In order to support those released from prison, it is necessary to establish a partnership with civil society and the community. This involves, imperiously and necessarily, a joint action, between all public governmental institutions and NGOs with legal powers and concerns, in the field of preventing and combating antisocial acts, which is why this particularly important activity requires coordination at the level of managers (Niță, 2012: 36).

However, research shows that people are not involved in solving community problems due to their socio-economic status, the low impact of individual participation in collective participation, lack of time and money, lack of knowledge and information, and lack of confidence in their chances of being effective. Few of us worry too much about things that don't directly threaten us.

When an act once judged as deviant no longer provokes reactions, it means that it has ceased to be deviant. The notion of deviance cannot be understood outside the deviant's interaction with those who judge him (Boudon, 1997: 441).

When social reaction is to be described, value judgments abound: it would be gratuitous, partial, subjective, discriminatory, repressive, intolerant. Research shows that there is a greater tendency towards tolerance and leniency when the offender is a relative or friend of the victim than when he is a stranger.

Another study reveals the most widespread attitudes towards social problems. Possibly, the most widespread attitude is that of indifference. The general interest in a social problem, such as relapse or social reintegration, is likely to arise, only when people feel a serious threat to their living or, try a real „shock” when their values are questioned or even cancelled.

Another way to react to deviance is to tolerate it. To abstain, accept or to quietly endure the behavior of another condemned. By definition, the act ceases to be deviant, for by reaction or abstention from reaction the normative boundaries of a group are drawn. Contrary to what some claim, if behaviour is tolerated, it will not disappear by itself (Boudon, 1997: 461). There are people who believe that the best way to deal with a difficult problem is to endure it quietly, with stoicism, and so they will not even try to solve that problem. On the opposite side we find the cynicism that some people manifest towards social problems. We can see in their assertion that discussion and action on one social issue or another is just a waste of time. They believe that people are motivated only by their own interest and that other „noble” reasons are nothing but illusions.

A third type of reaction to deviance can be called stigmatization. This is how reactions that risk exacerbating the deviance are designated, instead of reprinting it. This occurs when a deviant is subject to an exclusionary measure from society which removes him from the group's area of influence.

Stigmatised deviants (i.e. labelled and excluded) will be forced to develop solutions that will allow them to survive rejection by society by methods not always compliant but the rules of social cohabitation.

5, Conclusions

As a special form of crime, recidivism is one of the most serious social problems facing contemporary societies. For the representatives of the institutions involved in the execution of the act of justice, but also for the public opinion, the recidivism generates many concerns, due to the high costs it entails. Along with the huge costs involved in the criminal justice system, recidivism also brings with it many unquantifiable costs. They are felt in the long term by the victims, their families and the community and relate both to the suffering of those directly affected by criminal acts, as well as to the feelings of fear and insecurity experienced by the inhabitants of areas with high crime rates.

Recidivism occurs when, after leaving prison or after executing a non-custodial sentence, the individual does not choose the path of rehabilitation, but relapses in the old patterns of behavior, committed one or more crimes.

Studies and investigations into criminal execution studies show that punishment is not sufficient to reduce recidivism and protect the community, although the execution of custodial sentences and educational measures aims to form a fair attitude towards the rule of law, the rules of social cohabitation and work, with a view to the reintegration into society of convicted persons.

Criminal policy makers, practitioners and researchers have tried to identify the most viable measures by which the state can intervene effectively to keep criminals under control who repeatedly threaten the safety of their community.

By promoting and entering into force Law No. 252/2013 on the organisation and functioning of the probation system and Law No. 253/2013 on the execution of punishments, educational measures and other non-custodial measures ordered by judicial bodies during the criminal trial, the reintegration and social reintegration of former prisoners and criminally sanctioned persons has become one of the priority objectives of the work of the Romanian Government. In both normative acts the social reintegration of criminally convicted persons appears as a clear and programmatic strategy, with the involvement of the criminally convicted person as well as the community in the execution of punishments and non-custodial educational measures ordered by the judicial bodies during the criminal process. The aim of the measures of Community sanctions and measures is to reduce the social costs of the enforcement of criminal sanctions and measures by reducing the population of prison units, harnessing the socio-economic potential of offenders and maintaining the safety of the community.

The aim of regulating the execution of sentences, non-custodial educational measures and other non-custodial measures aims to ensure the balance between the protection of society by maintaining the rule of law, preventing the commission of new offences, and keeping in the community the person who has committed one or more

acts provided for by criminal law. In order to achieve the objective of social reintegration, it is necessary to involve local authorities in the process of social reintegration of criminally sanctioned persons.

Thus, the organisation and conduct of the execution of non-custodial sentences and measures is carried out, in the cases provided for by law, by institutions in the community, under the coordination of the probation service. In particular, legal persons governed by public law participate in the conduct of the abovementioned activities, by decision of the probation counselor or, where appropriate, by provision of the judge delegated to the execution.

Legal persons governed by private law may also be involved in activities of organising and carrying out the execution of non-custodial sentences and measures if they are empowered under the provisions of Article 20 of Law No. 253/2013 on the execution of sentences, educational measures and other non-custodial measures ordered by judicial bodies during criminal proceedings. For example, only companies that have granted a public service may apply for the organization of the execution of unpaid work for the benefit of the community. The consideration of the benefits of persons performing unpaid work for the benefit of the community within companies shall be transferred to the State budget, unless the consideration of the benefits is used to finance vocational qualification courses for persons under the supervision of probation services.

Also, by developing the new strategy approved by Government Decision No. 430/2020 on the approval of the National Strategy for the Social Reintegration of Deprived Persons of Liberty, 2020-2024, the development and customization of locally available social support services for persons returned to the community at risk of social marginalisation and new measures to be carried out during the reference period are envisaged. The new document also aims at the functional reintegration of persons deprived of their liberty in the family environment, the community and the labour market, by strengthening, optimising and developing the necessary legal and procedural mechanisms.

In order to increase the chances of reintegration into the labour market of persons released from detention, it is necessary to regulate the legislative framework so as to make it possible to conclude individual employment contracts for persons deprived of their liberty, in particular those in open regime, given that the work performed at various economic operators requires this form of regulation of employment relations, impact and to facilitate socio-professional reintegration.

The aim of the current strategic approach is to make criminal policies more efficient and to prevent the marginalisation of persons who have served custodial sentences or measures by increasing social involvement and empowering the community.

Recent studies show us that the legislature uses alternative measures where possible, as soon as there are the prerequisites for the recovery without deprivation of liberty of the convicted or criminally sanctioned person, the use of the institutions of pardon, amnesty, renunciation of punishment, postponement of the application of the sentence, suspension of the execution of the sentence under supervision, conditional release. All these measures tend towards the lower use of the custodial sentence, which is carried out in the environment in which other convicts with a negative influence on those with whom they come into contact are also carried out.

The concept of resocialisation in the current conditions of the execution of the sentence is more comprehensive, taking into account the multitude of variants of the execution of the sentence that are related to the co-ordination of the personality and behaviour of the condemned person in order to reintegrate socially.

Reintegration presupposes primarily their return to society, to the community, to the family, to the area where they lived and formed as self-aware persons. Reintegration also involves changing the way of life, occupying a socially appropriate place, through which to ensure a decent, legal and personality-developing life in the future.

Rehabilitation of the convict is one of the last doctrinal elaborations called to justify the punishment, according to which the punishment is meant to change or transform the personality of the offender in accordance with the provisions of the law. The punishment must look forward, not to the seriousness of the offence, but rather to the ability of the convicted person to change by the punishment imposed, by its duration and intensity.

The application of the punishment must lead to the influence of the conscience of the condemned and this is achieved by completing the mutual function of coercion with that of re-education of the punishment. The re-education of the offender is aimed at both special and general prevention for other members of society who, knowing the punishment, adapt their conduct.

Some experts and practitioners consider that punitive responses are inadequate, they need to be replaced by therapeutic correctional strategies, which focus on conduct reform, treatment, induction and resocialization. As regards the effectiveness of this measure, some authors have pointed to a reduction, but not large, in criminal behaviour, especially in the first period after release in the case of prisoners.

We believe that the humanisation of the sanction is the only right step towards social reintegration, and the aim of rehabilitation must be closely linked to the negative or positive behaviour of the convict. The assumption is the basis of the conviction's recovery, and we note that Dostoievsky's statement, respectively, is still topical: "the degree of civilization of a nation is measured by its prisons" (extracted from Feodor Mikhailovici Dostoievsky's novel, *Memories of the House of the Dead*, written in 1862, after he had also been in prison).

In conclusion, we note that reducing the recidivism rate remains not only an indicator of the effectiveness of structures that have target groups of prisoners or former prisoners, but also an indicator of community health.

My invitation is to ponder possible answers to questions such as: „What kind of ex-prisoner do you want to meet on the street? With one helped to reintegrate into society or a hard one in the penitentiary who, not being supported by the community in the process of social reintegration, will return with the same beliefs and problems as when he entered?” or „Did you know that recidivism costs? And a lot more?”.

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ROMANIANS 'OPINIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAMS FOR THE YOUNG DELINQUENTS INTEGRATION

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Abstract: *Juvenile delinquency remained high, between 2014-2019, with over 3,000 cases of minors sent to court from 2015 to 2019, increasing by almost a third in 2019, in comparison with 2014 - the reference year, when the new Penal Code started to be applied. Despite the increasing number of the prevention programs for juvenile delinquency, of the legal education in schools, as well as educational programs for the reintegration for juvenile delinquents into society, there has been a steady increase in the number of crimes committed by minors. The study to determines the public's perception of the effectiveness of recovery and reintegration programs in society for the young delinquents. The way in which the society perceives the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency and the real possibility of social reintegration of young people who commit criminal acts is important to determine the overall picture of the process of social reintegration for the young delinquents. The research uses both empirical and theoretical methods, qualitative and quantitative: Analysis of statistical data and case studies, as well as the Sociological Survey. The main hypothesis from which we started in this research is that although statistical data show an increase in the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency, the perception of the population about the effectiveness of educational programs for reintegrating young offenders into society is a positive one, favorable to continue these programs and projects that have been implemented in Romania in recent years, because the majority of the population considers that education is the main factor that can correct the behavior of the juvenile offender.*

Keywords: *juvenile delinquency; prevention; educational programs; society; reintegration*

1. Introduction

The public perception about the programs for the young delinquents reintegration in society is an important social component for the development of future projects in Romania. We set out to determine by scientific methods how these educational programs are perceived in society, because the need to increase the penalties for criminals, including for minors who become delinquents, but also the need to modify their reintegration programs, with the change of working methods, has been debated many times in the public space.

According to statistical data published by the Public Ministry², in 2019 there were 3,850 minors prosecuted for criminal acts, increasing by 146 in comparison with the previous year, but less than in 2016 and 2017, when there were registered 3,883, respectively 3,882 criminal cases of juvenile delinquents. In 2016, there was an

increase in the number of juveniles prosecuted in the previous year (3,548), but also compared to 2014, when there were 2,966 criminal cases which implied juvenile offenders. The increase of 884 cases in 2019 in comparison with 2014 is a bad sign, especially because the statistics also show an increase in the number of criminal acts committed with violence (rape and robbery), as well as an increase in the number of juveniles arrested. Thus, in 2019 there were 76 rapes committed by minors, in comparison with 66 in 2014, respectively 616 robberies, in comparison with 611 in 2014, being pre-trial detained 460 minors in 2019, in comparison with 371 in 2014. The pre-trial detention is a measure ordered if the person presents a high degree of social danger. During the same period, there was a decrease in the number of thefts committed by minors, from 1,496 to 1,369, which shows, however, that an important number of non-violent crimes have become violent crimes.

Table 1. The dynamics of juvenile delinquency cases in Romania

| Year | Juvenile trials | Pre-trial detention for minors | Rubberies committed by minors | Rapes committed by minors | Thefts committed by minors |
|------|-----------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2014 | 2966 | 371 | 611 | 66 | 1496 |
| 2015 | 3548 | 446 | 696 | 66 | 1726 |
| 2016 | 3883 | 445 | 768 | 72 | 1633 |
| 2017 | 3882 | 480 | 700 | 56 | 1478 |
| 2018 | 3704 | 473 | 558 | 67 | 1401 |
| 2019 | 3850 | 460 | 616 | 76 | 1369 |

Source: official data, Public Ministry

Educational programs for the recovery and reintegration of young delinquents into society are based on the in-depth study of crime psychology and criminal environments in which children and young people develop as future delinquents. The researchers have established some specific elements for the profile of young delinquents so that action can be taken, through educational programs, to eliminate, as far as possible, the favoring factors, as well as to increase the level of education of children and young people. One of the premises from which the research started were the favoring factors for the development of antisocial and criminal behavior of young people who become delinquents, starting from the idea that most of the young delinquents would come from disadvantaged communities and the criminal behavior would be based on poverty, but the statistics actually contradict this hypothesis. Even from the analysis of statistics in recent years we can see that the county with the most juvenile delinquents in recent years is Cluj, which is included in the statistics on the living standards of the population among the first in the top of the richest counties. The case study also shows that juvenile offenders come from both disadvantaged, poverty-stricken communities and high-income communities. Except for this indicator, the family becomes the most important factor for the development of the child and on the second position in top is the school.

2. The difference between normal and pathological in society

In order to have a correct picture of these social problems, we must take into account the fact that in any community we should distinguish between normal social facts and pathological social facts. There are no "societies of saints." That is why we must first delimit the difference between normal and pathological. "Internal balance and normality are the ideals of any modern society, but defining and separating states of equilibrium from those of imbalance, the normal from the abnormal involves a series of theoretical and practical difficulties. If for what is normal or abnormal there are sociological criteria for assessing them as such, instead, for establishing the boundary between them - where the normal ends and where the abnormal begins - the interpretations are different and even contradictory." (Otovescu 2009: 448). We can consider that the abnormality, as a real social phenomenon, is rather an indication of the non-integration of individuals and groups in relation to the general norms and values of society. This problem concerns, equally, sociologists, legal specialists, but also social workers and all those who work in prisons, in the field of reintegration of delinquents back in society.

Over time, sociologists, psychologists and psychiatrists have defined the pathological phenomenon in society. For the American sociologist J. H. Fichter, the normal way of life in society means the processes of cooperation between people, solidarity between people and between social groups. That is why Fichter defines opposition and conflict processes as abnormal, because they affect the maintenance and continuity of groups and societies. Normality and abnormality for society are also defined by the French sociologist E. Durkheim: normality is the conformity of individuals to moral rules, legal norms and other social facts to which most members of a given society are frequently subjected (Durkheim, 1974: 57-170). Durkheim says that in society there is a natural order of facts - called social facts - which are external to individuals and exert a coercive power on them, differing from organic and mental facts in that they are the product of people's common life, of the interactions between their consciences. Therefore, for Durkheim, the substratum of social facts is represented by society as a whole, not by the individual or by social groups.

Durkheim states that a social fact is recognized by the external constraint manifested in relation to the individual, and the presence of this power is recognized by the existence of determined sanctions and a resistance that the fact opposes to individual temptations to violate the rules. The French sociologist defined the pathological character of social facts both by reference to their restricted area of manifestation and by emphasizing the role of the collective consciousness, society being the one that has the power to judge and punish. Thus, according to him, a perfect society cannot be imagined, because it is a practical impossibility as long as the meaning of human facts - of being normal or pathological - is established by society. Minor mistakes - says the French sociologist - can be punished in a holy society, but there can be no such a perfect society in which individuals do not deviate from the average type, collectively, of socio-human behavior, among the deviations being, inevitably, some considered criminal. Pushing his reasoning to the extreme, Durkheim appreciated the crime as necessary, linking it to the fundamental conditions of social life, so that the crime itself is useful for the normal evolution of law and morality, being an anticipation of morality and law, an orientation towards what they should be.

"Therefore, the authority enjoyed by the moral conscience and the legal conscience in a society must not be excessive. Such a conclusion was derived from the analysis of the case of the Greek philosopher Socrates, sentenced to death by the Athenian right for the crime of having manifested his independence of thought. But his murder, Durkheim remarks, proved useful to the society to which he also belonged to mankind, because it served to prepare a new morality and faith that people needed. The same happened with the free-thinkers of the Middle Ages, who were struck by the law of those times." (Otovescu: 452). As Durkheim said, if the phenomenon of crime were not morbid, the punishment would not be to cure it, and then its function must be sought elsewhere. Of course, it is always important, especially for the individual, that the punishment be proportionate to the crime committed. The distinction between normal and pathological, as well as the evaluation of this relationship in various societies was made also by the American philosopher J. Morgan, according to three criteria: 1) cultural (used, especially, by anthropologists); 2) statistical (used mainly by sociologists); 3) psychiatric (used by psychiatrists). (Otovescu, 2009: 453)

3. The roots of juvenile delinquency from the psychological point of view

Many psychologists and sociologists tried to determinate the background of juvenile's crimes, in the last 25 years. As the psychologist Emilio Mira Y Lopez states, "Crime from a psychological perspective is a perfectly rational and inevitable consequence of the confrontation between the powers and the causes that caused it" (Lopez, 2009: 106) Both are the environments in which the education of the child and the young person have a decisive role for the future of his behavior. That is why the family and the school have a very important role for the most effective implementation of educational programs for the reintegration of young people who have become delinquents. "When the child develops and grows up in conditions far below normal life, improper conditions and in a broken family, with parents who have different behavioral problems or when the child is under the negative influence of schoolmates, friends at home etc., the premises of deviant behavior are triggered." (Child Hub, 2004: 11-12)

In the development of children and young people, the family and extra-family environment must be taken into account equally. The sociologist Maria Dorina Pașca defines the "extra-family group" from this perspective, drawing attention to the synopses that may occur during the formation of young people: as well as to fulfill professional obligations, they manage to define personality structures, facilitating the steps towards a life, antisocial, the stage towards crime is already undertaken." (Pașca, 2005: 29-30) The researcher also draws attention to the influence of media and TV programs on shaping the behavior of young people – and this phenomenon is almost out of control after the Internet became accessible to all, from an early age. "What is relevant to the media can also suggest and stimulate the juvenile's state of crime. The American psychologist Berkowitz claims that the violence we see on TV or in the movies leads to an increase in the level of aggression and crime, the effect of such shows being even higher among children with emotional disorders, as well as those with frustration. All these shows are joined by fiction that has as its main hero, a person made up of as many evils as possible, as well as newspapers that abound in news that controls the credibility of the minor. In these conditions, we can be sure that we are extraordinarily close to a future criminal." (Pașca, 2005: 29-30) Starting from this explanation

of several psychologists and sociologists, in the last 30 years, we can correlate the increase in the number of juvenile offenders with the population's access to the Internet in recent years. That is why educational programs must take into account the influence that the media and the Internet have on minors, not just the family or school environment in which they develop.

According to the psychologist Alina Sanda Vasile, the main social and psychosocial factors relevant to the genesis of delinquent behavior are: "the existence of external reinforcers of behavior such as rewarding deviant acts and punishing prosocial acts (learning through operative conditioning); the existence of patterns of negative behavior (learning by imitation); weak mechanisms of social control over behavior; labeling the person who committed a deviant act as a "delinquent" (followed by identifying the person with the label and perpetuating the delinquency); social factors such as social inequalities, poverty, racism, etc. and belonging to a deviant subculture and adopting the norms, values and behaviors specific to this culture." (Vasile, 2010: 275). Also, the researcher Oxana Rotaru, observes an important link between the individual's behavior, relationships and social needs - these influencing the formation of the young person's personality and criminal behavior. (Rotaru, 1999: 39-40) And mimicry is one of the most important factors that influence the behavior of the child or young person who can become delinquent, as noted by forensic psychologist Tudorel Butoi (Butoi, I.T; Butoi, T. 2004: 65-66).

All these studies and many others, about behavioral psychology and the factors favoring crime in society were the basis for the development of current educational programs for recovery and reintegration into society of juvenile delinquents, being correlated equally with the provisions of the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure. Criminal Procedure, but also with a broader framework of international jurisprudence.

4. Methods

The research uses both empirical and theoretical methods, qualitative and quantitative methods: Analysis of statistical data and case studies, as well as the Sociological Survey. The research started from the qualitative method (Analysis), continuing with the quantitative one (Survey). We did not include in the analysis of statistical data the period 2020-2021, because the year 2020 was an atypical one, and this research was conducted in the first half of 2021. The general aim of the paper was to identify and present models of good practice in reintegrating the young delinquents. The specific objectives of the research were to identify the reasons of increasing of the number of minor delinquents, despite the common efforts for education and reintegration, consulting the public perception about those efforts (reintegration educational programmes), as to understand how society perceive the necessity of the new projects for the education and reintegration of the young delinquents. The methods used in the research were document analysis, case study, comparative analysis. The research universe consisted of the results of the social programs for reintegration as they are perceived by the society in which the young delinquents must return. The analysis of documents as the first method used in the preliminary stage of investigation aimed at analyzing the pages and official data from the Public Ministry.

5. Results

The sociological survey was conducted in August 2021, on a sample of 251 people, of which 75.6% with undergraduate and postgraduate studies. 75.3% of the respondents are women, 85.3% of the respondents live in urban areas. Most respondents are in the age category 36-45 years (42.2%) and 46-55 years (24.3%). 10.4% of those who answered the questionnaire were or are still social workers, and 9.2% worked in a penitentiary. Also, 19.5% worked in at least one special program for the recovery of young delinquents, 39.8% have knowledge about the content of at least one educational program for the reintegration in society of young delinquents, 63.7% know young delinquents, and 42.2% know young delinquents recovered and reintegrated into society, with the help of educational programs.

92% of the respondents believe that young delinquents can be reintegrated into society with the help of educational programs (Figure 1).

Do you think that young delinquents can be reintegrated into society with the help of educational programs?

251 answers

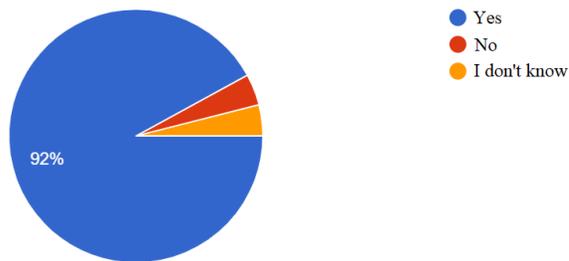


Figure 1

Also, a very high percentage (96%) consider that education is a solution to integrate in society young people who have already become delinquents (Figure 2).

Do you think that education is a solution to integrate into society young people who have already become delinquents?

251 answers

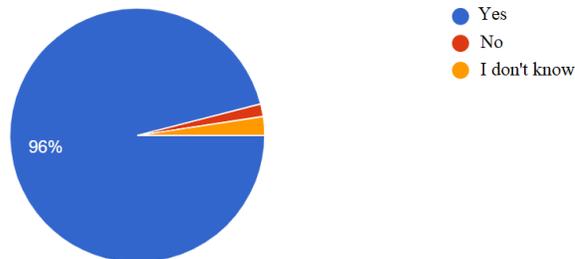


Figure 2

86.1% of respondents consider that the environment in which children and young people live and develop their personality is decisive for those who become delinquents (Figure 3), but most (64.5%) do not attribute this development of criminal behavior to poverty. Also, the family - and not the school - is indicated by the majority of respondents as the most important place in which the young person can become delinquent or recover (58.6% of respondents consider that the family is the most important for the young person to become delinquent or to recover, while only 32.7% indicate the school as having this role). At the same time, 65.7% of the respondents consider that the penitentiary does not have an important role neither in creating the criminal behavior of young people, nor as an environment in which they could recover, through educational programs. (Figure 4)

Do you think that the environment in which children and young people live and develop their behaviour is decisive for those who become delinquents?

251 answers

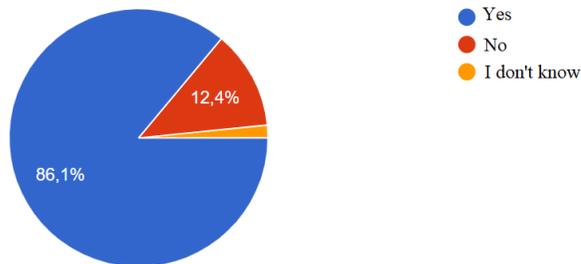
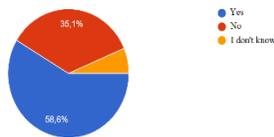


Figure 3

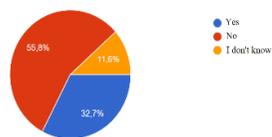
Do you think that the family is the most important environment in which the young person can become a delinquent or recover?

251 answers



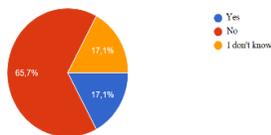
Do you think that school is the main environment in which the young person can become a delinquent or recover?

251 answers



Do you think that the prison is the most important environment in which the young person can become a delinquent or to be recovered?

251 answers



Do you think that poverty is the main trigger for the antisocial behavior of young people who become delinquents?

251 answers

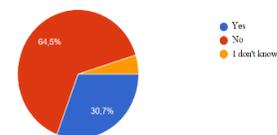


Figure 4

71.1% of those who answered the questionnaire believe that young people who have already become delinquents could recover and reintegrate into society with the help of educational programs, even if they remain in their living environment and are

still affected by poverty. 52.2% of respondents blame the permissive legislation for the increase in juvenile delinquency in recent years, while 33.9% do not consider that the increasingly permissive criminal legislation leads to an increase in juvenile delinquency and 13.9% do not know if this is the cause. Also, 60.6% of respondents do not consider that the possibility of getting out of poverty is the main remedy to reduce juvenile delinquency, while only 28.7% believe that it is, and 10.8% do not know if this is the remedy. Most of the respondents (87.6%) do not believe that young people should be given financial aid rather than educational programs, in order not to become delinquents or to be recovered and reintegrated into society, after they have already become delinquents.

Almost all the respondents (97.2%) believe that educational programs for the recovery of young delinquents should include career counseling and vocational training courses in order to find a job, and 82.1% believe that young delinquents should also be provided with jobs, not just qualifications, so that they would not be tempted to commit more crimes and in order that the recovery and reintegration programs for young delinquents to be effective and give young people the chance to work and live far from their environment and poverty. Also, 74.1% of respondents believe that solving the problems of disadvantaged communities, by increasing the quality of life for the people in these communities, should become a priority, as a preventive action, to reduce juvenile delinquency.

Most of the respondents (56.2%) believe that educational programs for the recovery of young delinquents should be done inside the community (without restrictions or coercive measures); 37.8% believe that it should be done in Correctional Schools (with open regime), while only 6% consider that it should be done in prisons (with closed regime).

6. Discussions

The research will continue with the analysis of the results obtained from educational programs for the reintegration into society of young delinquents, in the last 5 years, but also for the next 5 years, so as to track the degree of recidivism of subjects and the ability to reintegrate into society and the labor market. One of the issues that has been debated for several years about the possibility of studying in this field is the need to create an integrated data system, so that we can follow the evolution of those who have served their sentences in prisons, and also for the young delinquents who have been included in educational programs. In addition to the legislation on personal data protection, a problem that affects the research in this field is the lack of information (at the institutional level) about young delinquents who have left Romania after completing educational programs. What can be done effectively, in this situation, is to follow the activity of some subjects who agree, voluntarily, to continue participating in the monitoring of their socio-professional activity, as case studies.

7. Conclusions

The premise from which the research started was confirmed: most of those who answered the questionnaire consider that the educational programs applied so far are effective. People agree with their application in the community - as required by international law in this field -, not in restrictive environments. It is also confirmed, at the level of the population's perception, that education, not the financial side, is a first

necessity in the recovery and reintegration of young delinquents - with the mention that most of them consider that the programs must be integrated, so that they could offer the young delinquents career counseling, training courses and jobs, so as to help them get out of the influence of the criminal environment.

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CHILD LABOUR IN THE KOLOMINE AND KAMBELE MINING SITES IN EAST CAMEROON: COMBINED VIEWS ON THE WORST FORMS OF OPERATIONS

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Abstract: *Child labour is a worrying problem for two reasons: first, because of the number of children concerned, which remains very high, and secondly because of the negative consequences that premature labour has on the personal development of the child and on economic development. And social in East Cameroon. Our analysis shows that child labour in the Kolomine and Kambélé mining sites in East Cameroon, which is one of the worst forms of work under ILO Convention No. 182, is thankless, dangerous and repetitive and painful. Neither for children nor for their parents, has it resulted from choices influenced by positive social representations of child labour as a role of learning and socialization. This work compromises children's education, destroys their health, affects their personal development and impoverishes them. Engaged in this labour because of their family vulnerability, child labourers in Kolomine risk perpetuating the vicious circle of poverty indefinitely. In this forbidding environment where little girls and boys work, unequal gender relations are built and maintained. The organization of work, remuneration and the value conferred on various tasks are subject to discrimination. While they should be given attention and leisure, from the age of 5, little girls are busy between looking after the youngest and doing small chores. From an early age, they learn bitterly about all the segregations to which they will be victims as they grow up, and assume their share of family and social responsibilities which will only increase. Their active participation in mining and in the family economy does not seem to change the gender relations that are passed on from one generation to the next. Combating child labour means taking into account these gender inequalities that develop and reproduce, increasing the burden on girls and women.*

Keywords: *Work; Children; Mining; Kolomine; Kambélé; East Cameroon; Exploitation.*

1. Introduction

The fight against child labour is one of the major challenges accompanying Africa in this third millennium (National Institute of Statistics 2008: 16). The persistence of socio-economic crises, the insufficiency of basic services and socio-family changes constitute the main foundations of this phenomenon. In a social space marked by rapid changes, family survival strategies based on child labour are differentiated according to social gender relations, whether children or parents. It is therefore important to examine child labour from the perspective of gender inequalities (Manier, 1999: 11). Child labour takes on a harmful aspect in many of its forms. Those engaged in the mining sector run particular dangers, the conditions of their activity involve serious risks for their health and their well-being. According to estimates by the International Labour Office, there are more than 190 million economically employed children aged 5-14 around the world. These children are generally involved in agriculture, industry and services. In Africa, as in most developing countries, this phenomenon is also very preponderant. Nearly 50 million children aged 5-14 are economically employed in sub-Saharan Africa, according to ILO estimates in

2006. This early employment of children comes at the expense of their schooling. In the case of Cameroon, for example, we note that among young people (10-14 years), the highest activity rates are observed in regions where the Gross Enrollment Rates (GER) in primary education are the weakest. The statistics available also reveal the existence of a probable link between the phenomenon of child labour and poverty in eastern Cameroon. This is because the highest activity rates for children are found in localities with the highest incidence rates of poverty. This situation is said to be due to the economic crisis of the 1990s that Cameroon experienced and which was severely felt in the social sectors, in this case the education sector. In this context, the school can no longer play for households. Faced with such a situation, households in eastern Cameroon, especially the poorest, adopt a survival strategy by seeking an alternative to the education of their children. One of these alternatives is to solicit the contributions of children in the economic life of the household through their increasingly extensive involvement in the Kambélé and Kolomine mining sites, mainly in segments that do not require a particular qualification. Our analysis questions the types of work carried out by children in mining sites in Eastern Cameroon? What are their working and living conditions? What is the socio-economic situation of the girls and boys who work directly in the mines or in their environment? What gender relations are established or reproduced among child labourers? The envisaged analysis will form the backbone of our work.

2. The elements that characterize child labour in the Kolomine and Kambele mining sites in East Cameroon

Child labour in Kolomine and Kambele can in no way be defined as a means of socialization and education. The lack of qualification, the arduousness and the low technological level which characterize this type of child labour, lead to consider that it responds to other determinants, such as: poverty, non-schooling, competitive labour costs -children's work, and political and legislative factors.

2.1. Poverty in the villages: an impact on child labour in Kolomine and Kambele

Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon that includes both the deprivation of essential needs (employment, health, drinking water, food, etc.) and intangible needs such as vulnerability, the absence of social networks and exposure to risks (Adjiwanou, 2005: 5). The assumption that poverty is at the root of child labour in Africa is not unanimously accepted. Some studies conclude that in Africa the link between household poverty and child labour is not obvious; while others index poverty as the main cause of child labour (Adjiwanou, 2005: 6). Regarding Kolomine and Kambélé in East Cameroon, there is a close link between household poverty and child labour in the Kolomine and Kambélé sites. This relationship is largely explained by the fact that this kind of uneducated and particularly dangerous type of work is not seen by parents as a source of children's learning and socialization. Adults, parents and employers alike, stress that, if given the opportunity, children would do a different job. In this case, child labour responds more to a family survival strategy (Diallo, 2001: 21). For Lachaud, it is a risk management strategy that puts children to work to minimize the risk of disrupted resource flows. The new responsibilities granted to children justify their early employment in Kolomine and Kambele.

In the context of the economic precariousness of families, the data reveal that girls work more and earlier than boys. The sex of the child determines, in the context of our study, the propensity of children to work (Diallo, 2008: 15). It shows that the participation of girls in the labour force is significantly higher than that of boys; they constitute more than half of working children. Conversely, the propensity of boys to extricate themselves from this job is more evident. This massive presence of young girls on the sites, as well as their young age, can be explained by the social status vested in men and women in African communities. African children are socialized from an early age to imitate the respective roles of their mother and father. While boys receive an education focused on decision and action, girls learn respect, patience and submission early on (National Institute of Statistics, 2008: 22). They receive early training in domestic life and other reproductive tasks. Economic activity is not the only source of solicitation of children, who are also used for non-market domestic work. Household chores: dishes, laundry, fetching firewood and water, preparing meals, are primarily the responsibility of the girls, who are called upon to do most of them. From the age of five, little girls accompany their mothers to their workplace to provide care for the little ones. This presence leads them, little by little, to get involved in economic activities. This is accentuated in poor families where mothers cannot economize on the reproductive work of girls, especially that related to the care of very young children. The socialization of children, through values of submission and respect for the elder, has a greater impact on the enrollment of girls in work. Indeed, very young, they are economically empowered and take an active part in improving the living conditions of families. While boys use up more or less of their income, girls have no choice but to hand over all of their salary to their mother or guardian. The reorganization of functions within poor family units that accentuate the economic participation of all, including that of children, is also done on the basis of gender.

2.2. The non-schooling of children and the mining route of Kolomine and Kambele

The work of the Kolomine and Kambele children interferes with their schooling and makes the phenomenon particularly worrying (Coulombe, 1998: 17). Despite the efforts made by the State of Cameroon to improve the school system, access to education remains limited. The data collected by Kolomine and Kambélé, show that nearly half of the child labourers surveyed on the sites were educated in a formal school (Dumas, and Lambert, 2006: 8). Most of the work that children do in the Kolomine construction sites are usually manual and physical tasks, which do not require any special education or training. Also, not knowing how to write increases the possibilities of children to be at work in the long term. While some boys, to meet their needs, combine schooling and work at the same time, especially in mining sites, by working on rest days and during school holidays, this is not the case for any of the girls surveyed. At the sites studied, the causes of children dropping out of school are diverse. Among them, we can cite ignorance or refusal of parents and poverty. It goes without saying that working in the mines is also a reason for dropping out of school. The arduous nature of the work and the fatigue it causes in children make attendance difficult.

The difficulty of poor households to invest in building the human capital of their children is a ground of discrimination between girls and boys. In poor families,

education is expensive. In addition to the direct costs (books, school fees, uniforms, shoes, etc.), there is the additional cost resulting from forgoing the child's income when he is in school. In the context of girls' education, the indirect costs are greater. In addition to the value of the income, the family must give up its support in domestic chores. Domestic work by children, and more specifically by girls, is likely to hamper their school attendance. No girl, in Kolomine and Kambélé, links economic activity and schooling. Their early presence on the sites to ensure childcare and their participation in household chores make their presence in class irregular and exclude them from the school system. In eastern Cameroon, educational expenditure is a function of the degree of poverty of the families. The poorer the families, the more they will tend to withdraw children from school; and this withdrawal will primarily affect girls. Girls' education is often seen by families as a poor investment because they marry young and leave the family home, while boys are the guarantors of the family structure. This assertion is increasingly contradicted by the facts, girls even when they are in charge of a family are more predisposed, by their education, to support their parents. The postulate on the positive influence of the level of education of the head of household on the education of children, clearly demonstrated in existing studies, has been reaffirmed in the framework of the surveys. The majority of children who work in the Kolomine and Kambele mine sites come from illiterate families.

2.3. An adapted and profitable child labour force

Child labourers are paid less than adults. Their employment is explained by the financial gains enjoyed by employers. A working child, when paid, which is not always the case, costs less than an adult worker. For employers, this competitiveness in wages is coupled with a workforce that is submissive and less demanding than that of adults. Children ignoring their rights, they cannot claim them. In addition, there are so many small job seekers that the employer chooses the less demanding and, in the event of a dispute, sends the child away and takes another. This childish, inexpensive, submissive and hardworking workforce is viewed by the employer as a significant advantage. In Kolomine and Kambélé, child labour is done in an informal setting. Cheap child labour is used in precarious and unskilled activities that adults often dislike. Whether they work with their parent, directly for an employer, or on their own. Children are under intense pressure. Once a child's work is paid for, his or her personal needs and limitations take precedence over the expectations of the employer or the productivity goals of the family. The intensity of the work varies depending on the sex of the child. The majority of girls working with their mothers, or paying their wages to their parents, have to meet the demands of the family and the employer.

3. The worst forms of child labour in the Kolomine and Kambele mining sites

There are two types of worst forms of child labour: intrinsic worst forms, which by their nature are unacceptable work, and hazardous work which is also unacceptable under the conditions in which it is performed.

3.1. The intrinsic worst forms of child labour

The worst intrinsic forms are often illicit and also unacceptable to adults. These are all activities which, whatever we do to improve working conditions, will

remain classified as the worst forms (Diakit , 2009: 12). This is the case, for example, with the sexual exploitation of children for commercial purposes (prostitution) or the use of children for pornographic purposes, servitude and trafficking in children which, whatever may be said will remain unacceptable for a child despite any attempt to improve their lot (International Labour Office, 2006: 16). Convention No. 182 distinguishes three activities which fall under the rubric of "intrinsic worst forms of child labour". Those are:

- all forms of slavery or similar practices;
- the use or offer of a child for prostitution or pornography; and the use or offer of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs (Diakit , 2009: 14).

3.2. Hazardous work

Hazardous work refers to ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Article 3 (d) of this Convention defines "hazardous work" for children as "work which, by its nature and the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to endanger health, safety or health. The morality of children (International Labour Office, 2002: 5). The harm could result from a number of dangers such as: The risk of accident which may result from working at height or at depth with the risk of fall, collapse, landslide or the danger of being struck by an object in suspension, or even by the simple fact that the individual is exposed to a cut or a burn; The biological dangers which are related to the presence of dangerous animals and insects, toxic or poisonous plants, risks of exposure to bacteria, parasites or viruses Chemical dangers associated with dangerous gases, liquids or solids (glues), agro-chemicals (pesticides, herbicides, insecticides), explosives or flammable material; Ergonomic hazards that affect poorly designed workplaces.

The work requires lifting, carrying or moving heavy loads, repetitive or powerful movements, or awkward working positions; Physical hazards related to temperature extremes, noise, poor posture at work, exposure to bad weather, vibration, or radiation; Psychosocial dangers due to stress, hard or monotonous work, lack of control or choice, insecurity, harassment, or sexual abuse or violence (International Labour Office (IPEC), 2005: 19). Dangerous working conditions highlighting long working hours, night work or working in isolation. Hazardous work is assessed here on the basis of the following variables: transport of heavy goods vehicles; exposure to the following hazards: dust, smoke, gas, noise, temperature, humidity, radiation, dangerous tools (knife, blade, etc.), underground work, low light, chemicals (glue, pesticides, etc.), sexual harassment; underground work and construction for girls of all ages and boys under 16; the number of working hours per day exceeding 8 hours. We will refer to the recommendations of the ILO (International Labour Organization) which prohibit the use and handling of explosives by children. Likewise, exposure to noise, gas, humidity, radiation, low light and chemicals has been considered extremely dangerous for children (International Labour Office (IPEC), 2005: 20).

4. The impact of child labour in the Kolomine and Kambele mining sites in East Cameroon

Child labour and its worst forms damage their health, compromise their education, and lead to forms of exploitation and abuse (Canagarajah, and Nielsen, 1999: 15). The consequences of child labour, often overwhelming for the children concerned, are also felt at the level of economic and social development in the longer term. Countries that do not guarantee universal access to education will lack the skills and knowledge base required to build a solid economic foundation for the future, says Guy Ryder: "One of the major consequences of child labour is to perpetuate the vicious cycle of poverty". One in four children in the world is condemned to remain a poor and unskilled worker all their life. Child labour in Kolomine and Kambele, regardless of gender, has serious consequences for himself, his family and his community. This work, which offers children neither skills, nor socialization, nor self-esteem, condemns them to remain working poor all their lives. Whatever definition is given to child labour and the worst forms of child labour and its degree of vagueness, it robs children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity and constitutes a danger to their physical development and mental. It also damages his education, health and safety. It is important to understand these negative consequences on the child's personal development from a gender perspective. Indeed, interventions aimed at reducing child labour must address its foundations and consider that its causes may vary by gender. A better understanding of the differential effects of child labour on girls and boys improves the targeting and effectiveness of actions (Songhai, 2009: 13)

4.1. Consequences of the worst forms of child labour in the Kolomine and Kambele mining site on the health of child labour

The place of work and the activities that children perform have an impact on their physical and psychological health. Illnesses developed by children are often related to the demands of work in Kolomine. It can be said, without risk of being mistaken, that none of the activities take place in a framework adequate for the good health, hygiene and safety of working children. In Kolomine as in Kambélé, from the age of five, many children are assigned to dangerous tasks which often end in injuries. Many of these small workers suffer from chronic illnesses and do not have access to health care. At these physical risks, psychological illnesses develop resulting from harsh working conditions, violence, recurrent lack of sleep, alcohol and drug use, STDs and HIV-AIDS.

One of the first general aspects of the health of child labourers relates to the unhealthy environment in which they operate (Tsala Dimbuene and Senda, 2005: 12). The unsanitary conditions of the sites characterized by the lack of sanitary infrastructure, the lack of drinking water, the lack of latrines and sanitation, negatively impact the physical health of workers. The diseases most present in the sites of the three countries are: malaria, diarrhea, stomach aches and dizziness. The words of parents: "they often fall ill, they do not develop normally compared to other children" lead us to suppose that so-called "deficiency" diseases, often associated with nutritional problems, are also very present. If the environment of the sites has an almost identical impact on the health status of girls and boys, the sexual division of labour will have different consequences on their health, depending on the activities

carried out. The exploitation of children in the Kolomine and Kambélé mining sites is coupled with gender discrimination. While adults are acutely aware of the health risks to boys, largely due to landslides, the dangers to which girls are exposed are little taken into account. Less visible, they develop over the long term and can be very disabling (low back pain, sciatica, herniated disc, etc.).

The total absence of protective equipment, such as: masks, boots, sheaths and gloves, on land extraction sites leads to injuries and respiratory diseases resulting from inhalation of dust from gravel sifting (Kobiané, 2006: 11). The boys, because of the excavation and mining activities, are in danger of falling victim to a cave-in.

4.2. Incidence of child labour in the Kolomine and Kambele mining sites on schooling

When the school system is failing, the school can be a determinant of child labour (Assaad, Levison, and Zibani, 2001: 15). The poor quality of education, high school fees, the distance to travel to get there are factors that lead families, especially poor families, to put children to work. A significant number of children drop out of school in Kolomine in favor of the gold yards. There are many reasons for dropping out or failing at school. The most significant relate to non-payment of school fees and school supplies, the death of parents, poverty and the need to earn an income. Girls bring up other causes based on gender disparities, including: parental refusal, housework and pregnancy. The impact of child labour in the Kolomine mines on their school attendance is of great concern. Indeed, the economic activities carried out by children are repetitive, arduous and heavy, use rudimentary tools and only require their physical skills. Working in the Kolomine and Kambélé mines is by no means a source of learning and know-how. It hinders the education of child labour without, in return, offering it knowledge and experience which it could use to exercise a profession and improve its living conditions (National Institute of Statistics and Demography, 2006: 26). Children don't like the activities they do in the mines. Many of them have social and professional ambitions and would like to be able to exercise a more fulfilling profession. The adults of the sites have a more nuanced perception. Some of them are in favor of child labour in mines, the rest of the majority are against it, but feel that they have no choice (Doumandji and Ziane, 2006: 14).

This dropping out of schooling for children through work, linked to gender discrimination, will have stronger repercussions for girls than for boys (International Labour Office 2004: 10). The literature on child labour finds that family servitudes, which are imposed on girls for economic reasons, keep them and enclose them in a space of more pervasive constraints and obligations, without significant openness to initiative and leadership individual autonomy as in boys. Locked in social and family constraints, they have increased difficulties in developing their potential and extricating themselves from their economic precariousness. In contrast, boys who have freedom of action are more likely to get out of the mines and, gradually, to build a better future (International Labour Office, 2005: 22). A World Bank note highlights the gender-differentiated impact of child labour on future labour market outcomes. She points out that "research on Mexico and Brazil has shown that the price to pay, in terms of wages, for engaging in economic activities early (whether or not in school) is higher for girls than for boys (Boyden, 1992: 13). In the context of our study, it has been observed that boys, by virtue of the autonomy and capacities offered to them

(continuing their education, saving part of their income, being mobile), will be able, when they become adults, to value themselves in other sectors of economic activity. This is not the case with girls, who less than boys will have the chance to learn a trade and improve their living conditions. Through the generational transmission of poverty, a whole deeply unequal society is perpetuated.

4.3. A reproduction of gender disparities

In Africa, the learning of socially constructed roles occurs from an early age (Marcoux, 1993: 10). Despite significant advances in gender equality and the promotion of women's rights, many forms of discrimination remain. In the majority of communities, the little girl is educated to become a docile wife and a good mother, despite her role as provider of resources to families. The socialization of children, differentiated according to whether one is a girl or a boy, contributes to the maintenance of gender inequalities. In a context of proximity, such as that of mining sites, the issue of gender relations between working girls and boys is of great importance in understanding how sexual discrimination is woven and perpetuated. Within the framework of the division of child labour in the Kolomine and Kambélé mining sites, sexist stereotypes lead to a distribution of tasks and a differentiation of the value accorded to them. They have the effect of underestimating and underutilizing the talents of women and placing less value on their functions and responsibilities. It is because it is agreed that boys are taller, stronger, and smarter that they are assigned the duties of digging and mining (Songhai, 2009: 29). In fact even prejudices, because they are the prerogative of the male sex, these activities will be considered complex, painful and arduous. They will, de facto, find themselves valued socially and economically. The girls, considered weaker and less available, are assigned to functions which recall the prolongation of domestic and family tasks: sifting, washing and transport. These activities, despite their importance in the ore production process, considered secondary, are less remunerated. They are so little valued by the communities that part of the transport that of rubble, is unpaid.

The unequal perception of the work of girls and boys will lead communities, adults and children, to consider that the activities carried out by boys are painful and dangerous, that they pose a significant health risk for them (Maitra and Ra, 2000: 6). The recurrent carrying of particularly heavy loads by girls is not given special attention. Few people on the sites make the connection between girls' back problems and babywearing. This is explained by the fact that in the majority of African societies it is women who support the transport activity. A study by the World Bank has shown that in rural Africa, the female population supports two-thirds of the time spent on transport. It shows that a woman can spend an average of 1 hour to 2 hours 40 minutes per day for her commute. The total load that women in African villages carry over a year is three to five times greater than that carried by men. The Kolomine and Kambélé mining sites are part of the social authorities that control the individuals they bring together. Along with the field of symbolic transmission of knowledge, the mine fulfills a function of socializing individuals, evaluating and judging their behavior according to its own standards. Information collected on the perception of miners shows that adults and children believe that boys and girls do not have the same freedom to choose their lifestyle and that girls' behavior should be different from those of boys.

In the relationship between the two sexes, the strong majority of parents and employers favor the idea of dominance of boys over girls. The same is true of children who consider that girls should submit to boys (Haspels Nelien and Suriyasarn Busakorn, 2005: 15). The justifications invoked for this rule of superiority (domination versus submission) are diverse. They result from the social, material and symbolic construction of gender relations in the communities studied. Among the reasons, we note: the natural (physical) difference in favor of the boy, who would be more able to assume certain jobs, his intelligence, the social order (it is the man who marries the woman) and religious (the wife owes submission to her husband). The competition, which may exist between girls and boys at work, does not call into question these relations of domination (Canagarajah and Coulombe, 1998: 31). For working children, this ascendancy of boys over girls is linked to the profitability of activities and the division of labour.

While no society can be built on child labour, especially the worst forms, it cannot be deprived of female talents and maintain gender inequalities (Poirier, Baya, and Zoungrana, 1996: 15). It must be everyone's responsibility to take this reality into account. Thus, in the fight against child labour and the worst forms of child labour, it is urgent to generalize the gender analysis adopted by the member governments of the United Nations in 1997 and institutionalized by the ILO (International Organization of the United Nations). Gender must be recognized as a variable that affects the achievement of actions to combat child labour and the worst forms of child labour (Grootaert, 1998: 6). The removal of children from work in mines and quarries cannot do without the special situation of girls. It is not enough to include them in existing programs. It is necessary to structure the strategies and adapt the supports according to their specific constraints, needs and expectations. The main recommendations to strengthen the fight against child labour in the Kolomine and Kambélé mines are as follows: Make systematic the integration of gender issues in the analysis of the situation. Taking into account the inequalities between girls and boys, women and men in the intervention settings makes it possible to better identify the gender-specific needs that serve as the basis for the strategic planning of the project, to define specific actions for girls and boys according to their situation so as not to disadvantage any sex and adopt gender budgeting for an equitable allocation of resources; involve the ministry in charge of gender issues, the gender departments of employers 'and workers' organizations and women's associations in the formulation of programs to combat child labour. These institutions that are involved in the fight against girl child labour have a better knowledge of the gender disparities that affect their withdrawal from work, as well as their specific needs and expectations. The inclusion of child labourers and their families in consultations, essential to the success of actions, must ensure the active participation of girls and mothers. The social situation of girls, which is different from that of boys, has an impact on the activities of withdrawing children from work; Communicate adequately on the difficulties encountered by girls, their needs and expectations as well as the prejudices and stereotypes to which they are subject. An important measure, aimed at eliminating the worst forms of child labour with equal attention to working girls and boys, is to inform, raise awareness and mobilize society. In actions to combat child labour, sensitizing communities on the issue of gender relations makes it possible to take into account the vulnerabilities of

both girls and boys and to deconstruct representations that aim to normalize socioeconomic inequalities between girls and boys.

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SCHOOL CLIMATE AND ITS EFFECT ON THE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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Abstract: *In the educational process, school performance is determined by the implication of several factors: students, teachers, school climate, family, etc. Recent studies reveal that schools should focus not only on developing students' academic skills, but also on developing socio-emotional competences. The motivation of this study comes from the need to assess the current situation in Romanian schools to prepare and implement positive behavioral intervention at classroom level in schools. The study conducted was directed by the idea that any educational system can be improved by adapting it to the always changing social environments and implementing programs that have been proved by solid studies and researches that are efficient. When focusing on developing those soft skills, schools systematically help students to strengthen their socio-emotional skills, which leads to the cultivation of a positive learning environment that will be followed by a more engaging attitude of students in their learning process which will foster academic learning, thus school performance. Summarizing, students that don't feel safe and happy at school are less able to concentrate and maintain their attention and therefore learning is hindered.*

Key words: *school climate; school performance; organizational climate; positive discipline; challenging behaviors.*

1. Introduction

Violence is an increasingly growing phenomenon, encountered in society especially in educational settings worldwide including in Romania where social changes have supported the evolution of a new models of aggressive acts. Mostly, traditional approaches to school discipline are still based on punitive and restrictive policies. In the past, the teacher figure represented an authority, which is now questioned, facing a number of issues and especially with students that are challenging his authority. In traditional education, the use of punitive measures and reactive practices is practiced to confront the challenging behaviors of students, in other words, discipline was associated with punishment. Nowadays, education is aiming to ensure inclusive, positive learning environments, by defining conceptions, developing attitudes regarding student discipline have to change. In today's society, students' learning must focus on the way, the way in which they reach success and responsibility. It is claiming that this type of behavior, social behavior, can be taught, learned and trained.

The current state of romanian educational systems reveals a different orientation, the emphasis is mainly on developing cognitive skills, leaving in the background the the development of socio-emotional abilities, therefore, the holistic development of the student is not balanced in school curriculum. The articles is analysing the researches that focused on developing both side of the child's personality, focusing on a systemic sociological approach. The systemic approach is a general framework of thinking and also a method of global research of an educational system, which aims to highlight its structures, functions and internal organization, as

well as its external links with the social environment and other systems. It starts from conceiving education as „an open system in relation to the environment, respectively in relation to the global social system and the natural-economic-political-cultural-community social system” (Constantinescu, 1998: 155), thus the educational system is in a permanent exchange of information with the environment and other systems, constantly oriented towards modernisation and innovation, with the possibility of restructuring and self-organization, depending on the signals received from this environment and the effects of one's own behavior. From the view of the educational system as an open system can help us to conceptualize it as a whole and to individualize the many elements of the system; helps sort out observations and data about complex interacting elements and the types of relationships between them; allows the global critical examination of existing educational systems, the analytical openness to quantification, formalization and modeling.

The motivation of this study comes from the need to assess the current situation in Romanian schools to prepare and implement positive behavioral intervention at classroom level in schools. More and more researches show that schools produce multiple outputs (academic achievements, skills, attitudes, social behaviors), so ideally, the whole product of education should be taken into account in the case of a research on climate and school success. Positive aspects were identified in the present paper, which, by analysis of different studies, including the establishment of the notion of school success not only the students' environments, but also their well-being and resilience. The new philosophical approach of the discipline at school level aims to facilitate positive discipline of the students, of the class of students, creating a positive school climate and a supportive environment for the personal, social and academic development and growth of the students. Discipline means teaching, focusing on prevention and remediation in the current approach to education, it is a new type of behavior management (positive discipline of students), as opposed to the traditional approach based on fear, intimidation, punishment or aggression of any kind.

The article aimed to make an analysis of researched and studies done in this field and propose optimal solutions for improving the school climate and reducing violence in the educational environment, which will implicitly lead to increasing students' school performance. The study conducted was directed by the idea that any educational system can be improved by adapting it to the always changing social environments and implementing programs that have been proved by solid studies and researches that are efficient. Positive discipline of the child consists in teaching of some essential principles and facts (actions), both by giving reward, and corrective feedback. It refers to ways of setting boundaries in a firm, but caring way. Positive discipline rewards positive and appropriate behavior and corrects inappropriate ones and encourages the respect for the child, for the individuality of each child, implies the understanding child needs, temperament and abilities, without trying to change it excessively, just making him to behave socially appropriate.

2. Organization and organizational climate

People form and group themselves into different organizations, by interacting with each other on a daily basis, making decisions about their personal daily activities or about the functions assigned to them. The human being cannot live alone, isolated

from his fellows and in order to achieve his goals, he must live in interaction and cooperation with others, in social groups.

Public administrations, industrial, commercial and service enterprises as well as political parties or associations of all kinds, whose employees, members, activists and/ or customers, constitute organizations, ie formalized and hierarchical human ensembles in order to ensure the cooperation and coordination of their members for achieving given goals. Depending on the purposes of the technologies used, the mechanisms of authority and coordination applied within them, as well as their ways of legitimation, these social objects are very different, have divergent characteristics and modes of functioning. (Boudon, 1997: 397). Any organization is made up of human agents whose behavior must be understood, whose cooperation is indispensable, but who each retain a degree of autonomy and who pursue interests that are not necessarily convergent. Any organization has an organizational structure consisting of the coherent set of rules of collective action that provide normative protection to the effective cooperation of specialized individuals. An organization is a social process structured by interpersonal interactions in order to achieve common goals.

In today's society, according to Anthony Giddens (2000: 313) organizations play a greater role in our lives than in any other previous era. The organization can be defined as an association of people, formed in order to attain certain objectives. Examples of organizations include business corporations, government agencies, schools, universities, hospitals, prisons. Contemporary society is more than ever, "a society of organizations", according to Zamfir (2006: 74). Economic, educational, scientific researchers and political organizations are the most active actors in the rapid development of today's society. Organizations make a deep mark on our lives. The organization is "a rational, institutionalize form of interaction of a group of people, justified by the interest (or pretext) of achieving a common goal" (Preda, 2006; 17).

Therefore, more and more experts (Zamfir, 1999; Vlăsceanu, 1993; Boudon, 1997; Giddens 2000) in social sciences consider that the organization is a structured system of human interaction in order to achieve common goals. Sociologists (Zamfir, 1999; Vlăsceanu, 1993; Boudon, 1997; Giddens 2000) included in the defining of organizations the following characteristics: an organization involves a group of human beings, there is one or more explicit goals formulated, usually considered common to all the members of the organization; there is a form of rational, institutionalized structure of the component parts of the organization; group members interact with each other to achieve their common goals, within an organization behaviors of any member in line with the social order.

Organizational climate is a fundamental concept in the field of psychosociology. It refers to the set of social and human characteristics of the organization as a complex system; respectively, the decision-making practices are taken along the hierarchy, the functioning of the management bodies, the reanalysis of the social functions of the unit, the general strategy for stimulating the performance in the activity and the participation in the management, the cooperation relations between the work teams, between sections, services, offices, hierarchical relations, etc.

The concept of organisational climate reffers to all factors and variables that significantly influence the activity and the department of the members of the organization and its functional structures - respectively, norms and regulations, organizational (or environmental) constraints, motivational strategies, ways and

techniques of transmitting information, etc. In this sense, the organizational climate must be analyzed in close interdependence with the organizational culture, representing a product of the interaction between the formal and the informal dimension of the organizational culture. Organizational climate can and must be used in two distinct ways:

1. to designate the general characteristics of the unit as it manifests itself in relation to all working groups, or at least to the vast majority of them;
2. to designate the specific organizational environment of a work team, characterized both by general and particular aspects. It is therefore advisable, when analyzing a work team, to take into account its particular organizational climate that is the group psychological climate.

Each individual participant or each working group contributes to the crystallization of an organizational climate. In particular, however, the climate is determined by the style of general management of the unit, which is why - as already mentioned - it is considered as a central element of the organizational climate.

The complexity of the climate, in terms of content and its determinations, requires an understanding that, in perfecting the methodology of influencing it in a positive way, it is not enough to act solely only one factor - objective or subjective - but it should be taken into account all given factors, the close interdependencies that exist between them. In general, there is a consensus in the psycho-organizational literature regarding the multidimensional concept of climate, be it psychological or organizational. Among the significant factors of the organizational climate, it can be listed: internal communication, organizational structure, political climate, opportunities for professional development, evaluation, promotion, support in case of personal problems, job satisfaction (defined, by subfactors: participation in decision-making process, autonomy, power and control, relationships with colleagues, relationships with subordinates, relationships with superiors, pay and benefits).

School as organisation

As it has been previously shown, the school is an organizational institution. A series of specialists in the sociology of education and in educational sciences analyze the school through the perspective of the characteristics of an organization. Thus, Cristea (1998: 429) defines the school in pedagogical terms, as the basic unit of the educational system, a social institution specialized in carrying out the educational activity according to the pedagogical objectives and principles of the educational process, stated at the level of education policy. Păun (1999) defines the school as an organization constituted from a system of activities structured around explicitly formulated purposes (goals, objectives), which involve a large number of individuals who have well-defined statuses and roles within a differentiated structure, with the role of management and coordination of educational activities. Păun (1999) adds the fact that the development of the school takes place on two levels: the development of the school as a institution and the development of human resources (school staff). In pedagogical textbooks, the school is considered as an institutional factor of education. The school is an organized social framework specific to the development of educational actions in accordance with the pedagogical aims regulated by school policies. In school, education is provided, behaviors are modeled, knowledge is acquired. „A healthy school should provide a positive climate to support students' learning, development and well-being, provide adequate safety, support and academic challenges, activities

and engaging activities" (Constantinescu, Constantinescu and Dumitru, 2019: 13). Also in this regard, a number of studies (Evertson and Neal, 2006) show that students with challenging behaviors spend less time involved in academic activities and have fewer positive interactions with their peers and teachers. Challenging behaviors are increasing and schools fail to provide a safe environment.

The goals of an organization have a transindividual character, in the sense that the organization subordinate their individual goals to its members, having a priority character in relation to them. „However, they must not ignore the goals and aspirations of the individuals that make up the organization or be divergent with them. There must be a minimum of compatibility between each sets of goals, which is not achieved by eliminating or disregarding the individual ones, but rather by incorporating and integrating them into organizational goals" (Paun, 1999: 8-9). The school as an organization responds to several categories of goals: social goals, the goals of the respective school institution and individual goals. The school goals may vary, depending on the type of the institution. For example, a secondary school has distinct purposes in relation to a primary school and even to other types of secondary schools (high schools, vocational schools, etc.). Not always the individual goals of principals, teachers, students are consistent with the other purposes mentioned above. For example, some specific goals of students are related to connect with other children of the same age or to engage in attractive activities and the school should create opportunities for the students to work together.

Specific for a school as a social organization is the fact that it acts simultaneously to achieve several educational purposes. Some of these purposes are of quite general (the educational ideal) and have an axiological dimension that orients all educational activities carried out at the level of the entire educational system, in which the school unit is only one part. There comes other types of objectives, named *finalities*, that are specific to a certain category of schools. Specific objectives of some educational disciplines are added, provided to be studied in school and for the achievement of which all the necessary conditions are to be created. Specific to school organizations is the fact that the different social categories that make up the community of the school organization expect educational purposes to meet their particular needs and interests, but as these needs and interests can be very diverse, the consensus on the school's priority goals it is difficult to achieve and mostly tension are caused by that fact. For this reason, clarifying the school values in terms of the priorities to be pursued with priority is of crucial importance for the proper functioning of school organization.

The classroom as a social group

Life is an immense network of interactions with other human beings, a network that is formed by a wide variety of social groups. The need for people to connect in groups is both social and practical. From a social point of view, being isolation can have disastrous consequences. From a practical point of view, people depend on the collaboration of its members for everything from food to shelter, education and leisure. In the social space, the term group covers a large diversity of collective formations that occupy different places and varied functions in society. Goodman (1992: 87) defines the group as „two or more individuals who have a common sense of identity and influence each other in structured ways based on a common set of perspectives on each other's behavior”.

The main elements which are decisive for the social group formation are:

a) the existence of a principle of organization (formal or informal) which implies: the establishment of common objectives and tasks, models of action, hierarchical and functional relations, means of control and sanction;

b) a system of values and attitudes. In order to achieve the proposed objectives, the group is constantly in a position to make choices (express options) between different possibilities and means of action. In each group there is a recognized hierarchy of values, there are deep attitudes that correspond to adherence to these values, which translates into the behavioral coherence of the members of that group. At the same time, the values of the group presuppose certain symbolic representations (flag, badge, stamp, etc.), as well as their own material conditions of manifestation (environment, local, territory, etc.);

c) the feeling of belonging to the group (the consciousness of "us"). This element, which appeared in direct connection with the first two, is the expression of the social cohesion of the group, on the basis of which the group solidarity, the community of its will and action develop.

In fact, all the elements analyzed above, studied in interaction, ensure a more complete definition of the social group. They allow to differentiate the social group from a series of other categories (crowd, statistical grouping, social circle, etc.), thus, the crowd cannot be considered a social group, as it lacks both the purpose and the organizational structure; also, the reunion (meeting) which, although it has a purpose, does not present a crystallized organization.

Social groups are formed through the interaction produced in: ordinary situations, similar to individuals, as features and needs in relation to them, as in the case of youth who, enrolling in a certain faculty, constitute the social group of the year of study and the social group of the student group; or special situations, by the creation by them of common needs of several individuals, as well as in case of a calamity (fire, shipwreck) when the individuals, until then, not connected to each other, form groups as self-help groups in order to overcome the difficulty.

The ensembles of people (social groups) differ in terms of the degree of cohesion. Social cohesion is high when people think, feel and act as members of the group, and not as isolated individuals (Chelcea, 2008: 185). The groups can be divided into primary and secondary groups. The prototype of the primary group is the family, mostly with regard to friends' groups, classmates and teams formed at work. The secondary group consists of a large number of people, the relationships between the group members are indirect and the sense of relatedness and belonging to the group is weaker. Thus, students attending the same college form a secondary group. The relationships between members of secondary groups have a shorter duration and are impersonal which means emotional involvement. But it is not excluded that, in the long run, interpersonal relationships stabilize and acquire an emotional load (Zamfir and Chelcea 1999: 65).

The classroom is a social group composed of an equal number of members and a coordinator, whose relations are governed by common rules. From the point of view of the organization, school groups, as well as social ones in general, can be: formal groups and informal groups. Formal groups are officially organized, the relations between the members of the groups being regulated by certain norms. In classrooms, activities with common objectives, relations of functional interdependence are created

between its members. At the same time, we observed that in schools, the classroom is a social group, with a high degree of socialization, training, development and formation of students' personality, leaders acting to achieve goals and ensure group cohesion.

The group factors that influence the group formation of students and especially the cohesion of the school group are external and internal. Studies conducted in Romanian context (Constantinescu, Constantinescu and Dumitru, 2017a; Constantinescu, Constantinescu and Dumitru, 2017b) identify low communication skills of teachers with students, insufficient pedagogical training, motivation low for their profession as important factors in the expansion of disruptive behaviors in schools. To be more specific, we would consider as a behavioral problem any behavior that impedes the learning and development of students and affects the well-being and the quality of the educational process in the school environment and beyond it.

3. School climat

Due to its specificity, the school is an organization in which the climate, together with culture and management, is an essential variable that influences the quality of activity and the performance of teachers and students. Closely related to classroom management is the "school climate", a concept that refers to the atmosphere, morality, emotional state of the class, and it represents the health indicator of an educational group, which can be taken as a value criterion for differentiating some classes of students. The effects of the school climate are multiple: at the behavioral, cognitive, affective, attitudinal and motivational levels. A positive school climate supports adaptive, socially accepted behaviors and discourages the selection of disruptive behaviors. Exposure to an appropriate development environment facilitates both motivation and development, and exposure to an environment unsuitable for the development can create a rupture between the person and the environment that leads to decreased motivation and detachment from the institution's objectives.

When teacher-student relations are positive, based on trust, mutual respect, appreciation, students are more likely to have a positive attitude towards the school, and the perception of the school is a confident one, simultaneously with the increase of satisfaction for the time spent at school. A positive attitude towards school means a more active engagement in school life and in the learning process, which leads to better school results and learning performances. The school involvement of the students in the form of the effort made in reaching the school requirements and by participating in the school activities, helps the school success. "Managing disruptive behaviors in the classroom to ensure a positive school climate is a concern expressed by teachers in Romanian schools, confirming the expansion of problematic behaviors and the need to address them seriously" (Constantinescu, Constantinescu and Dumitru, 2019). Indiscipline is a reality and its incidence is high and affects almost every school and every class, implicitly any student.

School climate dimensions and effects

Despite the fact that it is difficult to establish a generally accepted definition of school climate, most researchers agree that the concept of school climate is a multidimensional one that includes physical, social and academic dimensions. The physical dimension refers to elements such as the appearance of the school, the number of students and teachers in the school, the organization of classes, available resources, safety and comfort. Relationship issues between students, teachers and

other staff, teachers' behaviors towards students or with the involvement of students and teachers in decision-making processes, are defining for the social dimension. The academic dimension of the school climate refers to the quality of instruction, teachers' expectations regarding students' performance, monitoring students' results and communication with their parents. The educational climate in schools has five defining dimensions: safety, relationships, teaching and learning, the institutional environment, the school development process. Although there is no common opinion on the defining elements for the educational climate, researchers at the National Center for School Climate (NSCC) have tried to synthesize studies done on the school climate and have proposed five major areas that help comprehend school climate (external environment, safety, teaching and learning, relationships, staff). If we tried to include in a single classification the dimensions of the school climate, identified by specialists in the field of education, we would get a global and detailed picture of the factors that influence the efficiency of educational processes from the perspective of the school climate. The teaching-learning process is included in the relationships that are established between teachers and students, first of all, the classification proposing 3 major dimensions: the physical environment (organization of learning spaces / safety in the school space / relationships within the school), psychosocial environment (sense of belonging / student results) and organizational development (teaching and non-teaching staff training / equipping with new materials) which include related sub-dimensions. Organizational development appears as a major dimension because, in the current context characterized by instability and rapid change, it is an element that should be in the permanent attention of schools.

Speaking of school, we are referring to the place where two distinct worlds meet that can easily contradict each other, the world of teachers and students. How do we approach the two realities? Theoretically we have a multitude of solutions, in practice there is still an open question in the minds of teachers and researchers in the field of education. A positive attitude towards school means a more active involvement in school life and in the learning process, which leads to better school results. A research-based curriculum that specifies the results of social and emotional learning by age can be useful for teachers in creating a positive social and emotional climate in the classroom and at school. Teachers and principals need to understand their own role in creating the school climate. Understanding the importance of social and emotional dimensions, and the interaction between cognitive, emotional and social skills by teachers and their application would be useful in creating a positive and healthy school climate (Segal, 1999).

4. School climate and school performance factors

A series of factors of the school climate are discussed in relation to the school success such as structural, relational or aiming at the instructive-educational process. Bio-ecological theory is one of the pillars of school success concepts, stating that, within a school, student development is influenced by all aspects from the structure and conditions of the building, to the disciplinary practices and curriculum of the school and up to interpersonal relationships between students and teachers (Way et al., 2007). The ecological model organizes the school climate elements at the level of microsystem (family, school, peer group, etc.), mesosystem (for example, school-family relations) and macrosystem (for example, the relations between school and peer

groups in the neighborhood, social networks of family, community). At the center of this system is the individual. The ecological cultural model offers a perspective on the relationships between personal traits, culture, ecological contexts and school climate. In the theory of social control the emphasis is on the importance of the quality of the academic climate to strengthen the attachment to the school and the trust in the moral code of the school (Roth, Dămean, Iovu, Mihai-Bogdan, 2009).

The theory of matching between the developmental stage and the environment provides an explanation of how the school climate is able or not to support the needs of students, especially in the transition from one educational cycle to another, with a direct influence on school success. Thus the cultural and social capital of the parents influences the school success of the children. As an institutionalized form of cultural and social capital, the way in which parents' studies and occupations influence children's perception of the school climate and the relationship with school success is pursued.

Teacher-student social capital is also important for school success. A favorable climate allows the members of the organization to focus on the tasks and stimulates their enthusiasm for work, so that everyone can make the most of their abilities. In a school unit the organizational climate can be determined by multiple factors: structural factors, instrumental factors, socio-affective and motivational factors.

The structural factors are related to the organizational structure of the respective school unit, in other words to the way in which the component members of the school unit are grouped and interact. The most important are:

- the school size - in schools with a large number of students and teachers the climate is "colder", unlike smaller schools, in which relationships are more intimate, people know each other better and establish closer emotional ties ;

- the human composition of the school - the average age of the employees, the predominance of teachers of a certain sex, the homogeneity of the professional training, the differences or the approaches from the aspect of the extracurricular social position can largely explain the climate in a school. For example, the predominance of young people can explain a climate of enthusiasm and the desire for the introduction of innovations, the atmosphere of competitiveness. A possible predominance of females can explain the existence of a climate of conscientiousness, professional self-exigency, but also manifestations of envy, an atmosphere dominated by everyone's family problems. Lack of homogeneity in the professional training of school staff sometimes generates complexes of superiority and inferiority that affect the school climate; too large discrepancies in terms of extracurricular social position can generate tension. The instrumental factors refer to the conditions and the means that the respective school unit offers for the accomplishment in good conditions of the professional attributions. The physical environment and difficult material conditions of the school can underlie feelings of professional dissatisfaction, for example, when students and teachers work in unheated, unhealthy spaces or do not have the minimum equipment with the necessary teaching materials. The leadership style of the principal (authoritarian, democratic, careless, bureaucratic) can be mobilizing for some and demobilizing for others, can disconnect or can generate a climate of collegial participation in solving school problems, or a disengaged behavior (lack of effort to form a team, negativity, low interest in increasing the prestige of the school). Communication strategies selected within the school can generate a climate of

collegiality (open relationships, friendships, mutual help, tolerance) or a family climate (emotionally impregnated relationships, interactions that continue during free), but also a climate dominated by the feeling of non-communication, of overload, with tasks that come untimely, without anyone being able to explain their reason.

Many students leave school without having developed prosocial skills, which lead to a flexible adaptation to the knowledge society. Moreover, educators and students are frustrated by the existing educational system, which does not provide sufficient opportunities for interaction and social acceptance. These frustrations arise due to traditional approaches of student group leadership, which are based on educator-centered instruction. Of course, educational innovations try to solve issues related to present school climate, by providing theoretical and practical support in terms of effective management of the group of students, so as to create an organizational climate that allows the development of positive feelings of social involvement. In this way students can naturally solve problems and difficulties that arise along the way, developing an approach that overcomes external pressures, by promoting mutual respect, tolerance and personal responsibility. Managerial styles are therefore manifested within a human construct, based on cyclical and hierarchical relationships, the mutual influence being a source of cohesion, self-regulation and direction of students' behavior. The premise from which it starts is that an organization cannot develop without cooperation, and the individual-organization relations must not be formulated in terms of conflict, but in terms of synergy (each takes into account the whole and acts in the same direction). It is necessary to restructure the relations between the members of the organization, having as principle the recognition of the merits of each one and the mutual respect. The theoretical approach of the interactions at the level of the organization from a dynamic and creative perspective, but especially the applicative value of this model, determined us to analyze the possibility to transfer it in the educational practice.

5. Conclusion

Social and school diversity promotes inclusive education for all students and can become possible by implementing a support framework for the creation and development of a positive educational climate and promotes proactive strategies for defining, teaching and maintaining appropriate behaviors of students (e.g., civic, social, relational, intercultural) to create positive, inclusive and equitable school environments. Through a behavior management, the teacher can prevent the development of conflict situations in the classroom where there are students with emotional-behavioral difficulties, challenging behaviors. The teacher's task is to direct the students' energies in constructive activities, towards appropriate, positive, constant behaviors. The child needs to be helped, loved, understood, defended, guided and to feel important to those around him. In order to have a positive impact on students, we must offer them love and respect. Discipline is not equivalent to punishment, and its long-term goal is to "teach" the child what are self-control and learning, to teach him which way to go, following us like a disciple, out of love and conviction, not out of fear and pain. Educational policies should also relate to school climate research and should take into account the importance of a positive school climate in promoting the emotional health of students and teachers, but also in obtaining the best possible school results. Diagnosing the school climate from the

perspective of students and teachers is a very common practice in other educational settings across USA and Europe, carried out by authorities at different levels, with the help of school counselors. In the USA, but also in other European countries, there are national centers for school climate research, which would be useful in Romania too, simultaneously with the expansion of research on the evaluation and improvement of the school climate at the national level (Missouri Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support).

Psychosocial interventions and changes in the educational system-local educational policies should be based on diagnoses of the school climate, the tools resulting from research being useful in this endeavor. A research-based curriculum that specifies the outcomes of social and emotional learning across ages can be useful to teachers in creating a positive social and emotional climate in the classroom and in schools. Understanding the importance of social and emotional dimensions, and the interaction between cognitive, emotional and social skills by teachers and their application would be useful in creating a positive and healthy school climate.

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CHILDREN'S EDUCATION IN ROMANIAN IMMIGRANT FAMILIES IN EUROPE

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Abstract: *In recent years, society has accumulated a multitude of problems related to the moral health of the family, disastrous social and economic conditions, even ecological. The family, as a type of human group, participates in these processes, adapting to changes and modifying their survival strategies. One of the most frequently adopted strategies is labor migration. The phenomenon of migration is one of the aspects of economic globalization, one of the great dramas of modern times. This phenomenon is largely favored by transport possibilities, information flow, social tensions and precarious economic situations. When we talk about parents leaving their children working abroad to ensure a better future, we inevitably believe that having more money, less poverty, a well-paid job, securing rent, with equal opportunities is what it matters most to them, but we do not think about abandonment, sad. The future of abandoned children by their parents for a better material life will be dominated by difficulties arising from: personal and interpersonal development, emotional and cognitive health and physical, behavioral problems, including those related to drugs and other toxic substances, problems related to vocational guidance, vulnerability in relation to human trafficking and other illegal actions, stress, worrisome, the separation of persons who love each other.*

Keywords: *economic migration; family; family functioning; communication; emotional involvement*

1. Introduction

Romania is a “peasantry country” – more than 47% people live in countryside. The rural Romania is characterized by a high rate of un- and under-employment, survival agriculture, low level of education and health services, informal activities, return migration from urban to rural, less livelihood diversification and poverty.

In official statistics the working population from rural consists of 5.6 millions of people; approximately 4.1 million are people who work in agriculture, 98% from these in private agriculture and just 1% from these are wage earners (80,000 persons). Most of the people in rural Rumania areas are familial unpaid workers. That means that in fact they don't have any kind of financial resources, so they may be considered as belonging to unemployed category.

The lower number of official unemployment, 2.8 % (yearbook, 2002) in official statistics hides a different reality.

On the other hand the rural labor market is unstructured. The State Agency for Labor Force, the private or non-governmental voluntary specialized institutions are poorly represented at villages level. The local mayoralty or the informal agents try hardy to put face to face the work demands and offers.

The rural labor market has a certain informal character. It developed its own rules, its own channels for transmission of information and its own networks and has a profound oral character.

So, a lot of people from rural Romanian areas choose to emigrate.

The specifics of the Romanian transition and the liberalization of the mobility of population, especially in the "European space", have generated a series of both positive and negative phenomena. The strongest phenomenon, involved in almost all fields, being the migration to jobs "from abroad" of very different demographic categories in Romania. The effects are multiple, some target the subjective dimension of personality, especially of "temporarily abandoned" children, but the phenomenon is objective and is part of the logic of transition to another type of civilization and the logic of inter-societal relationships, especially in the case of "metabolism" developed countries - underdeveloped countries or "in transition" countries - (paraphrasing the classical "rural-urban metabolism").

However, the Romanian society was not prepared to bear without risk the shock of such migrations with which it was not accustomed in the decades of the old society. Thus:

- The family is the most affected institution because, as a rule, one of the spouses migrates, which seriously damages the whole of the intra-family relationships and, therefore, the functionality of the basic group of the society;
- Children are the most affected persons both in family relationships and in their school status, in public perception and, especially, in their emotional state (breaking up with a parent causes stress, emotion of deprivation, shock, etc.);
- At the societal level, the belief is formed that ensuring acceptable living conditions in the country is impossible, children in turn aspiring to emigrate. The phenomenon may be included, hypothetically, in the process of globalization or in the natural circulation of persons and goods between countries and continents;
- The chain reaction of migratory flows and the phenomenon of imitation or contagion:
 - ✓ the bravest migrants went to work abroad with all the risks from 1990 to 1991 (no visas, no information from the destination country, with the risk of arrest and immediate expulsion);
 - ✓ "natural selection" highlighted the winners, on the one hand, and the losers, on the other hand, the former managing to stabilize and reunite their family, offering help or jobs to their partner remaining in the country, to others relatives or friends ;
 - ✓ finally, there are real networks of migrants looking for jobs.
- Unfortunately, the social polarization in the communities affected by external migrations is deepening, between the families with migrants, richer (modernized villas or houses, luxury cars, "western" goods) and the families of non-migrants, increasingly poor or undergoing continuous pauperization. Mentally, there has occurred a reaction from non-migrants against migrants, whom they label and devalue. Previous sociological research has highlighted the following results to the question "Why do Romanians go abroad?"

Table 1. Why do Romanians go abroad?

| | |
|-------------------|------|
| To make money | 100% |
| But, from begging | 31% |
| From stealing | 39% |
| From work only | 19% |
| From prostitution | 11% |

These opinions, of non-migrants, do not represent the reality, but - in sociological terms - it is significant that the public opinion has formed this image about "strawberry pickers", which, in fact, work hard in different sectors of activity.

The most serious problem caused by external migration is the situation of children left home (temporarily abandoned). In this context, the following questions arise: "What happens to temporarily abandoned children?", "Who will help or supervise them to grow up in" normal "conditions?", "Can anyone really replace parents?".

Romanian public opinion reacts almost daily to these matters (mass-media, especially the Internet through social networking websites and television). Some surveys have shown that the role of migrant parents is replaced by relatives, especially grandparents, or, in smaller percentages (estimated at 15-20% of all cases), children have been placed under the protection of extended families or left alone. (Irimescu, 2006: 45)

Finally, migrants who have succeeded and became stable in the destination countries take their children to the new foreign households so that Romania annually loses important echelons of children and, through them, of social values. (Irimescu, 2006: 52)

2. Methodology and analysis of data

This article is based on a study made out of the desire to bring some clarity on a delicate matter of our society, namely the matter of children whose parents had to go to work abroad and leave them alone.

From the beginning we specify that our approach was not a judicial one, with trying to point the finger at these parents and judge their attitude, but it was guided by objective reasons, by the desire to find out the actual situation of these children, which are the problems which they face and indicate, explicitly or implicitly, possible solutions. (Dumitru, 2000: 5)

Given that the questioned subjects were children who have one or both parents abroad, the study addresses the matter from their perspective, by referring to the material, moral, psychological, social effects, and the information that children have about the current situation of the departed parents. We may say that the study provides a perspective of one of the parties involved in the relationship between departed parents and children left in the country, respectively children, lacking (and this is a lack that is characteristic for several researches in the field) the perspective of the second party. At the same time, however, in the course of the research we also had in view the obtaining of data about Romanians who left their children for going abroad to work. (Traian, Iluț, 2006: 277)

Given that the questionnaires were applied to the children in the school unit, the research did not provide conclusive data on early school leaving situations or on

possible acts of juvenile delinquency. The major premise considered in this study is the idea that these children go through a more difficult period of their childhood, accompanied by some shortcomings and suffering, with which they try in one way or another, alone or with the help of those around them, to face them.

The fact that in the case of juvenile delinquency a large part of perpetrators have their parents departed to work abroad is not a sufficient reason to consider that all children who have their parents departed should be viewed with caution. We must keep in mind that the mirage of foreignness attracts both honest persons, eager to earn money in honest ways, and less honest persons, the latter being a model for their children they left in the country and who would have committed the same acts if their parents did not leave. We tried to avoid a reasoning that is analogous to that made by the western states which, considering that a large number of crimes on their territory are committed by Romanians, draw the conclusion that all Romanians are thieves; Italy is an example of such a state.

We wanted to identify both the problems that these children face and the changes in mentality that occur in their case and that of their parents; at the same time, we sought to identify some of the changes that may occur within these families, changes seen from the perspective of children. The dominant perspective of this study is: what do they think about them?

The study had the following objectives:

- ✓ Identifying the determining factors that intervene in making the decision to go to work abroad while leaving the children at home.
- ✓ Identifying children's attitudes towards their parents' departure to work abroad.
- ✓ Determining the ways in which the departure of parents affects children.
- ✓ Identifying the changes that occur in the family life, respectively between children and parents and between parents, following the departure of one or both parents abroad.
- ✓ Determining the changes in mentality, which occur in the departed parents, who are driven by living abroad and the influences exerted in this regard on the children left in the country.
- ✓ Identifying the ways in which children with departed parents project their professional life.

The following working hypotheses guided the research:

- ✓ The motivation for parents to leave is mainly determined by two factors: lack of a job and the desire for a better standard of living.
- ✓ Before leaving, the parents discussed with their children the reasons that determine them to do this, the children having a certain level of understanding.
- ✓ Most of the children were left with either the other parent or the grandparents when both parents departed.
- ✓ Children perceive certain changes both in the relationships between them and their parents and in the relationships between their parents.
- ✓ Children consider that their parents' departure to work abroad is accompanied by higher earnings and the possibility of a better life.
- ✓ The departure of parents affects the children in multiple ways, the children recognizing to a greater or lesser extent this situation.

- ✓ The departure of parents influences the decisions of the children left in the country regarding the choices made for the professional career.

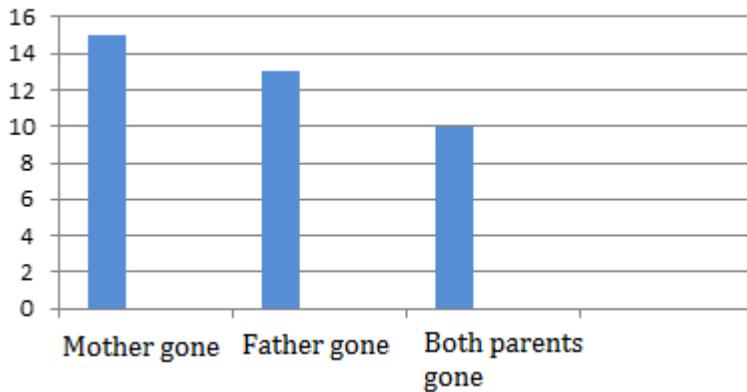
Regarding the methodology, the study had as main research tool the self-completion questionnaire in which we used several types of questions, namely, closed questions and open questions. Given the current situation in the context of the pandemic, the questionnaire was applied online and made using google forms.

The questionnaire was applied to a number of 38 students in the Energy High School in Craiova, children whose parents are working abroad. The students come from both rural and urban areas and are divided as follows: 18 urban area and 20 rural area.

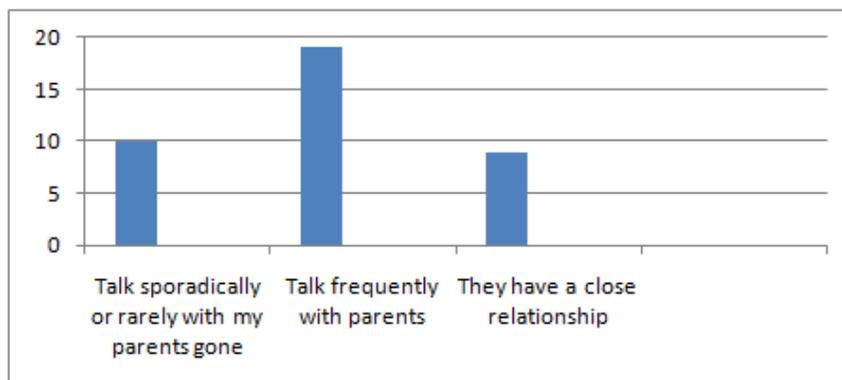
In terms of distribution by gender, 26 were male and 12 female.

3. Analysis of data

Figure 1. With regard to departed parents, the situation is as follows



Given the traditional family model, in which mothers play the most important role in raising and educating children, a dominant model in our society, we consider that mothers leave in the same percentage with fathers as a situation that accentuates children's problems; at the same time, this is one of the important factors that contribute to changing the family model. It is obvious that although 10 of the respondents have only one of the parents departed, they live with other persons, the latter not being able to replace the absence of parents and especially of the mother. The research indicated that 6 of the children state that they were left alone by their parents who went to work abroad. We could also find that 3 of the children who said they were left alone had only their mother departed, which suggests that they could be single-parent families.

Figure 2. Regarding communication with departed parents

10 of the children with departed parents stated that they talk sporadically or rarely with their parents who went to work abroad. This situation suggests a strong communication deficit between these children and their parents. Mainly, those who have fathers departed complain of these communication deficiencies, the differences compared to those who have mothers departed being still small. The data indicated that in the case of a permanent communication between the children and their departed parents, the relationships between them remained the same or became closer, while a poor communication deteriorates the relationships between the children and the parents who went to work abroad.

The period elapsed since the parents departed is for 50% of respondents between a few months and one year, which suggests an increase in migration; At the same time, 26 of the respondents have their parents departed for more than 3 years, which makes them more vulnerable to the various changes that occur in the absence of parents.

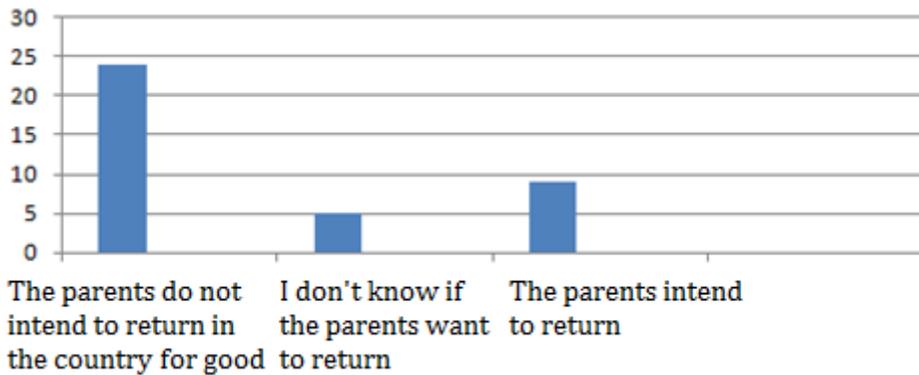
It is also noteworthy that 12 of the children with departed parents stated that they noticed changes in the behavior of others towards them; among the noticed changes in the first place were the fact that the others behave more nicely with them either to protect them or to obtain gifts.

At the emotional level, 30 of the children with parents who went to work abroad stated that they miss their parents very much; it is noted that most of them have their mothers departed, which leads us to consider that the suffering is greater when the mother is departed than when the father is departed; also, girls suffer more than boys from the absence of their parents. In almost half of the cases where children feel that they miss their parents very much, they become aware of their importance and role, while considering themselves closer to their parents, and appreciating that the relationships between them have become closer.

According to children's opinion, in 40% of cases, family relationships (relationships between parents, and between parents and children) are not affected by going to work abroad; 60% of children consider that their relationships with parents working abroad have worsened due to distance and lack of communication and 20% that they have changed, but without becoming closer. At the same time, 18 of the children whose

parents have departed to work abroad consider that the relationships between their parents have deteriorated; it is observed that the departure of mothers to work abroad deteriorates to a greater extent the relationships between the parents than the departure of the fathers.

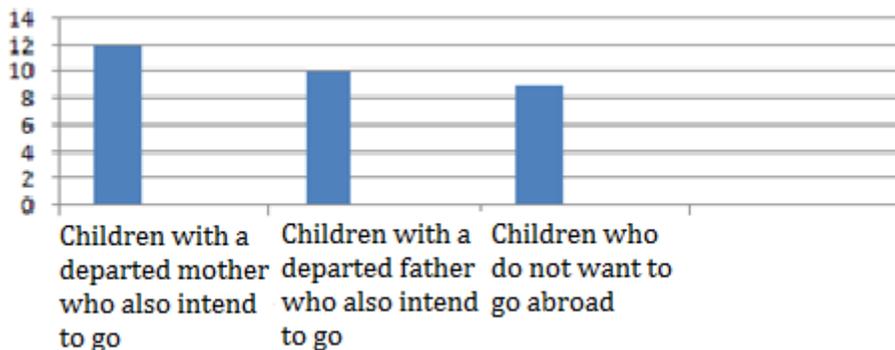
Figure 3. Future intentions are divided as follows



24 of the children state that their parents who went to work abroad do not intend to return in the country for good; 5 do not know if their parents want to return and 9 of them claim that their parents want to return in the country for good. The comparative analysis indicates that if only the mother is departed or both parents the percentage of those who think the parents do not want to return is higher than when only the father is departed.

Note the percentage of parents who bought a house 10%, which means, at the same time, that they have reached a certain level of well-being and social integration, but also the possibility that they are more reluctant to return in the country, intending at the same time to take the children with them.

Figure 4. Regarding future intentions

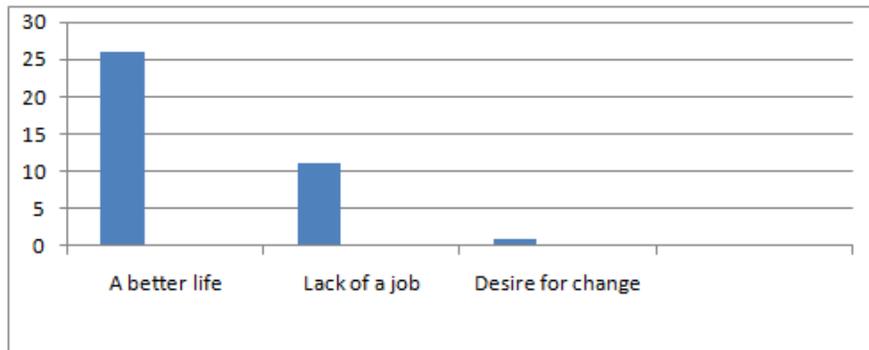


31 of the children with parents who went to work abroad want to go abroad, of which: 30 want to go abroad to work (6 of them would like to leave school), the most significant percentage being made up of students from the Xth and XIth grade

(professional profile), and 2 of these children would like to continue their studies abroad.

One may notice the predominantly positive appreciation by children of the changes that took place in the life of their parents when they went to work abroad, in the first place being the fact that they "earn more money" followed by the fact that "they have a higher standard of living than in Romania", cumulatively these being indicated by 90% of the interviewed youngsters. More than 80% of respondents believe that the departure of their parents to work solves some of the family's pressing problems, respectively covers the subsistence needs and removes family debts. Regarding the personal transformations that children experience with their parents, 23 of the respondents consider that they have changed for the better, 8 consider that they have not changed and 7 believe that they have changed for the worse, without being able to identify at this point what these changes consist of.

Figure 5. The opinion of children with parents who go to work abroad about the profile of those who leave (and implicitly about the reasons that determined their parents to leave) is divided



26 believe that the reason is the desire for a better life and 11 consider that the motivation for leaving is given by the situation in the country, being either persons with limited material possibilities or unemployed. We believe that the desire for a better life must be interpreted in a broader sense, obviously including financial achievements but also more than that, such as the level of civilization, which may suggest a negative relationship to the general context in the country.

We believe that the situation of children with parents working abroad becomes more complicated with the increase of anti-Romanian actions both unofficially and, unfortunately, officially. Given that such actions have become more frequent in schools, against Romanian children studying in these states (especially Italy and Spain), it is obvious that the gesture of Romanians working abroad to take children with them becomes an increasingly unattractive option. Mention should also be made of the tendency to reduce labor demand in the destination countries, amid either a saturation of the labor market or an economic recession, which limits the plans for long-term departures which may lead to taking children in these countries, the context being likely to preserve the situation of children remaining in the country for at least an average period of time.

4. Conclusion

When we talk about parents leaving to work abroad in order to ensure a better future for their children, we inevitably think of more money, less poverty, a well-paid job, ensuring a house, equal opportunities, but we do not think to pain, grief, abandonment, stress, upset, worries, emotional deprivation, separation from the loved ones.

Studies on this matter reveal the difficulties that children may encounter in their development, and these are related to: personal and interpersonal development, emotional, cognitive and physical health, behavioral problems, including those related to the use of drugs and other toxic substances, decision-making, matters related to vocational guidance, vulnerability to trafficking in human beings and other illegal actions. (Bumbu, 2003)

Children need support when trying to understand why their parents have to leave so it is recommended that parents prepare their children for the change that will take place in their lives, they need to explain to their children the reasons why they have to leave so that they should not feel guilty because their parents are sacrificing themselves for their sake. It is advisable to notify the competent authorities of the departure abroad, of the person who will be responsible for the child's fate as long as the parents are absent from the country.

It should also be discussed with the child about the person who will take care of him/her, in order to feel at ease, to develop and to be educated as effectively as possible. (Dolbo, 2003: 34)

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ADVANTAGES AND SHORTCOMINGS OF ONLINE TRAINING IN THE UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract. *The online school has shown more than ever that the paradigm of the educational act is, to a large extent, like that of a hundred years ago, that, unfortunately, many students do not want or can not get out of the scheme of teaching - memorization - rendering because it probably seems more convenient this way. Young people need behaviors (of the adults around them) to encourage them, to teach them responsibility, to help them overcome their fear of failure, to increase their self-esteem. It would be wrong to consider that the online school, imposed by the pandemic situation, was / is "a total failure". Perhaps it is, in fact, the first important step, in our country, towards a fundamental and necessary change in the way the school has been conceived so far. As electronic communication becomes more common and as students juggle study, work, and family life, many universities offer their students more flexible learning opportunities. Face-to-face courses are now being replaced by online ones. However, there is little research comparing students' experience and learning in these two ways. The purpose of the study presented in this article was to present the preferences of students, their academic performance in the context of the transition from the classic face-to-face teaching system to the online one. The study was conducted based on a social experiment at the Faculty of Theology - Social Work, University of Bucharest, on a sample of 20 students*

Keywords: *online training; students; advantages; disadvantages; university*

1. Introduction

With the changing lifestyle of students and rapidly developing technology, universities are offering more and more "flexible" learning environments. "As technology advances, the provision of online e-learning experiences has expanded rapidly in the higher education sector for over a decade" (Imel, 2002: 3). Today, online learning is part of the experience of students around the world, in a substantial proportion (e.g., Ituma, 2011: 57-68; Otter et al., 2013: 27-35; Tucker et al., 2013: 470-484).

The development of online teaching has made it possible to encourage students to take responsibility for their own knowledge acquisition (Ituma, 2011: 57-68). In a traditional, teacher-centered teaching model, it conveys knowledge to students, with reduced contributions from those students (Harden and Crosby, 2000: 334-347). However, "the shift to less traditional courses coincided with a greater emphasis on more student-centered learning, with the lecturer facilitating or managing student learning rather than simply transmitting information" (Balluerka et al., 2008: 222). Due to the more self-directed learning that is supposed to take place in online environments, "online learning can have the potential to produce more in-depth discussions and improve the quality of learning, as well as the practical benefits of encouraging greater student participation and to increase

the profitability of education compared to traditional face-to-face learning”(Smith and Hardaker, 2000: 16).

Numerous studies have focused on the efficiency, content, and delivery method that teachers have developed (e.g., Rossman, 1999: 1-8; Twigg, 2003: 28-38; O'Neill et al., 2004): 313-323), while the perceptions and experiences of the students themselves have been largely neglected (Alexander, 2001: 240-248; Holley and Oliver, 2010: 693-700; Ituma, 2011: 57-68). Some teachers seem to perceive web-based platforms simply as an alternative way of presenting traditional content, while others may look for more innovative ways to use such platforms to improve student engagement and thus their outcomes. learning (Holley and Oliver, 2010; 693-700; Ituma, 2011: 57-68).

The global trend towards providing online learning has led to many online-only courses, one example being the universities in Australia. However, students' experience in online courses is different from that of traditional face-to-face classes, and patterns of involvement seem to differ between the two (Robinson and Hullinger, 2008: 101-109). For example, Otter et al. (2013: 27-35) found that students in online-only classes felt more disconnected from their peers and teachers, more forced to direct themselves in their studies. Students may also feel discouraged by the technological expectations of online study, especially if they start without sufficient technical support and knowledge (Zhang and Perris, 2004: 247-264; Holley and Oliver, 2010: 693-700).

For example, Davies and Graff (2005: 657-663) found that students who interacted and participated more in online discussions did not perform significantly better academically than students who were less involved in that discussion. In contrast, other researchers have shown that “students performed much better when their online course material was accessible in an interactive, navigable format than through a series of web pages” (Evans et al., 2004: 43). Thus, there is mixed evidence as to the extent to which some online activities could help or hinder student outcomes compared to more traditional face-to-face courses.

There are various reasons to expect students to prefer at least some aspects of online learning over traditional courses. Previous researchers have suggested that, in contrast to the faster, real-time pace of face-to-face courses, the extra time available for online activities could allow students to think about more critical and reflective course material, leading to a deeper understanding. of course content (e.g., Ramsden, 1992; Robinson and Hullinger, 2008: 101-109). Others have suggested that the less confrontational or personal nature of online might encourage more shy students to engage more or feel less pressure than in face-to-face interactions (Warschauer, 1997: 470-481; Hobbs, 2002: 60-65).

Although social connection can be derived online (Grieve et al., 2013: 605-609), most students believe that face-to-face contact is essential for building a sense of community (Conole et al., 2008: 511-524). Even when the courses are only partially online, students may feel that online discussions diminish this sense of community with colleagues and their teacher. Moreover, on a practical level, “students need to exercise more motivation to complete online activities, compared to those in the classroom, where the role of motivator is taken over by the teacher” (Upton, 2006: 22).

2. Case study: the impact and efficiency of online teaching in the university environment

Therefore, the current research was designed (in May 2021) to examine the performance and perceptions, both in the face-to-face experience and in the online learning experience, of students who were enrolled in 2018 at the Faculty of Theology - Social Assistance, University of Bucharest. In the first two years, they conducted face-to-face courses, and in the second year, due to the pandemic, they conducted online courses. We have adopted a two-pronged approach, in order to provide an integrated picture of both objective and subjective results. To this end, we compared both the academic performance of students and their qualitative comments on their learning experience, between offline and online, as described below.

To control for individual differences and thus increase the statistical power of the study, we tested the same students in both offline and online tasks, rather than having separate groups for each modality. Along with the empirical rigor of this concept in the groups, I wanted to maintain the authenticity of the measures and thus chose to incorporate the tasks into the students' actual learning experience, rather than into an artificial study. I also wanted to make sure that, instead of just observing students' behavior (for example, counting their discussion contributions), I assessed both the objective and subjective measures of their learning.

The participants were 20 third year students, 13 girls and 7 boys. Their age ranged from 22 to 54 years. The students who took part in the study agreed that their data should be used for research purposes.

2.1. Research strategy:

The participants had two topics for discussion: one referred to the stages of children's cognitive development, and the second to the stages of children's drawing development. They were divided into 2 groups.

In week 1 there was a one-hour face-to-face course (in an informal, outdoor setting), group 1 students discussed their recent experience of observing a child performing multiple tasks. Some students who failed to directly observe those tasks were required to watch several online videos with children who were given the same tasks. Students in group 2 were offered a series of self-portraits drawn by children aged 2 to 16 and a copy of the developmental stages of Lowenfeld's drawing (1939).

During the course, the teacher initiated the discussion with questions addressed to students in group 1 in which he asked them to discuss in what cognitive stage they thought the observed child was. In group 2, the teacher asked the students to decide what stage of development each self-portrait seems to represent. For both groups, the discussions took place first in small groups and then with the whole class, for a period of one hour, with the questions offered by the teacher, but the discussion structured by the students. At the end of the class, both groups were then given a half-hour written test on the topic they had just studied.

In week 2, both groups of participants participated in the course online. Group 1 went through the series of self-portraits for children, presented in PDF format, and received an online copy of the developmental stages of Lowenfeld's drawing (1939). Group 2 was asked to think about the tasks performed by the children, which they had to observe

Both groups were asked to consider the same questions that were considered in the face-to-face course (described above), for drawing development (group 1) and for cognitive development (group 2).

At the end of this experiment, we asked the students to express their preference for the face-to-face or online course and they were asked to identify something that was good for online activities and something that was good for classroom activities.

2.2.Results of the study:

- students showed a general preference for studying subjects face to face
- the number of students who preferred to complete the tasks in the face-to-face course was significantly higher than the number of students who preferred to do them online

-I noticed if there is any association between the academic performance of the participants and their preference for face-to-face learning vs. online. First we considered the grades of the participants in the assessment test applied by the teacher (for the online course and for the face-to-face one). The correlations were not significant either for the subject done online or for the subject done in class. This suggests that the students simply did not prefer one way because they felt that they performed better in that task and did not perform better in the way they already preferred. We then analyzed the final grade of the participants throughout this academic unit and analyzed the correlation between this grade and their average preference for face-to-face and online tasks. The correlation was not significant, suggesting that there is no consistent relationship between overall academic performance and preference for online or classroom learning. Finally, we concluded that there was no significant correlation between the participant's age and the preference for the modality, nor between the age and the grades obtained.

2.3.Qualitative aspects

We also asked participants to write down something they liked most about completing face-to-face activities and something they liked most about completing them online. Participants provided their own answers, which we then subjected to thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 77-101). We chose a thematic analysis rather than a more specific approach, such as Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). We followed the six phases of Braun and Clarke (2006: 77-101) to identify topics as they emerged from an analysis of student responses:

- More involvement: This was the topic with the most responses, with students noticing that they felt more involved when the activities were completed in the social environment of a face-to-face interaction, rather than online. Most commented that the face-to-face discussion really allows them to think more deeply and reject other people's ideas. Online, they felt that their answers needed to be

more formal and accurate, while in face-to-face discussions they felt they could fight more ideas from colleagues before reaching a conclusion.

- Immediate feedback: Participants appreciated that each comment they made in direct interaction, immediately supported an associated comment from a colleague or a clarification from the teacher in real time, rather than waiting for hours for a response to their particular online comment.

- Don't want to read comments: Some students noticed that they did not want to read their colleagues' comments online, although they were happy to listen and interact with their colleagues in real life.

- Easier to examine paper documents: others noticed that it was easier to analyze the material in class because it could spread the pages in front of them on a table, rather than scroll on the screen.

- Comfort: the most common theme was a practical one; greater convenience of being able to complete online activities during their time, in any location.

- Wider contributions: the online discussion allowed contributions from a wider range of people than a face-to-face discussion, in which more timid students sometimes sat quietly in the presence of their more confident colleagues.

- More detailed answers: Students also noticed that the online encouraged more detailed answers than face-to-face discussions, because class time restrictions do not allow each individual to complete their task thoroughly.

- More time to think: Some students noticed that giving answers online gave them more time to consider their answers than to speak spontaneously in the face-to-face course.

- Less judgment: Eventually, some students felt less judged by the teacher and colleagues when the answers could be written than spoken.

3. Case study conclusions:

Study participants preferred, on average, to complete face-to-face activities rather than online. Their responses indicated that, although they were happy to complete individual written exercises online (especially if they had a reasonable level of difficulty), students much preferred to participate in face-to-face discussions. The thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) of the qualitative comments of the participants showed that the students liked the greatest feeling of involvement offered by the activities face to face vs. online activities. However, it must be borne in mind that the benefits of online do not diminish the existing benefits of traditional classroom learning.

Both ways of education have multiple aspects, and research that focuses on one aspect or a combination of aspects could reach very different conclusions from research that focuses on another aspect or a combination of aspects. Our participants enjoyed conducting online activities, but preferred to participate in class discussions in person.

One limitation of my study is that the size of my sample was modest. The participants were all advanced level students, who were initially enrolled in a face-to-face study program, but who later became accustomed to online learning in a self-directed way. Thus, additional work with a wider range of participants would help to establish the generalization of these findings. It should also be noted that we

asked students about only a few aspects of online learning versus face-to-face. This specificity is both a force and a limitation of current research. Although it offers good experimental control and strong ecological validity, the concentrated nature of these tasks and their context means that it is important not to over-generalize our findings. Future research should aim to extend questions about online learning to a wider range of disciplines, using online activities in a wider range of ways to build a broader picture of students' online and classroom preferences and performance. Expanding research into a number of dimensions will become increasingly important to understand how blended learning can progress along with the technology behind these paradigms.

By directly comparing the same students' performance and perceptions of face-to-face learning with online learning, this study confirmed that, in this group, at least, online activities led to similar levels of academic achievement as face-to-face activities. It seems that, although students appreciate the flexibility of choosing the time and place to carry out activities, they also appreciate the greater commitment offered by face-to-face discussions, rather than face-to-screen. Instead of being seen simply as an alternative way of providing academic content, the benefits of online technology should be tailored not only to provide greater flexibility, but to inspire student engagement and success in and beyond.

4. Advantages and disadvantages of online education

4.1. Advantages of online education

During the pandemic, the courses in the university environment took place in the online environment, which made it possible to spend a long time in the company of the family and obviously contributed to the emotional connection with parents, family members. The faculty headquarters also meant a time gained in favor of carrying out other activities. Unlike the faster, real-time pace of face-to-face courses, the extra time available for online activities allowed students to deepen more critical and reflective course material.

Another important aspect of online courses was the reduction of costs. Learning traditionally involves costs for courses, accommodation, meals, travel, consumables, books, etc.

Both teachers and students had to adapt as they went to the use of technology (acquiring technical skills such as downloading materials, interactive tests and practical exercises), and teachers worked to improve the teaching strategy, a strategy that migrated from passive to active methods.

Students were encouraged to take responsibility for their own acquisition of knowledge, as online courses allowed for a convenience in completing the activities.

Online training also facilitated deeper discussions that led to improved learning quality and allowed a wider participation of students from different years of study, from different groups-simultaneously. Also, not being able to practice in different institutions, the online environment facilitated the presence of a large number of specialists from the country and abroad. Thus we can say that a certain balance has been created between online and traditional education.

The less confrontational or personal nature of online has encouraged more shy students to engage more or feel less pressure than in face-to-face interactions. A decrease in the pressure exerted by the group of colleagues was created. Also, the

student had to exercise more motivation to complete the online activities, compared to those in class, where the role of motivator is taken over by the teacher.

This created a self-directed learning opportunity offered by online activities and, with the increased use of e-learning in mainstream education, online components have become part of the university experience for more and more students.

4.2 Deficiencies of online education

Online teaching methods and their efficiency were reflected in the results of students in the winter and summer sessions. The situation created changed the general perception of education. Attempts to defraud exams have visibly increased, with teachers facing new challenges and having to identify effective ways to stop them.

The young generation reported negatively to the norms and rules, the lack of direct contact led to the destruction of the feeling of community, of belonging to the group. It involves not only study, but also relationships, connection with others). The relationship with colleagues, group outings, discussions, debates and teamwork disappeared.

Studies have shown that the young generation has developed feelings of sadness, anxiety and even depression, from mild to advanced. The disaster was completed by the lack of physical exercise, outdoor spending time and messy daily routine (without a well-established schedule, even chaotic), long exposure to screens (source: <https://geografilia.blogspot.com/2020/05/impudul-de-caz-impactul-si-eficienta.html>).

The chaotic atmosphere was amplified by some teachers who failed to master the methods of online teaching, the lack of immediate feedback from colleagues and teachers, the lack of discussions about the content of the course with colleagues. In the family, parents or supporters experienced financial difficulties (caused by job loss, illness, isolation at home for a long time). The mood of adults (parents, grandparents, teachers) in the lives of these young people at the beginning of the road was precarious, marked of trauma, this is because no one was prepared to face the difficulties of the pandemic.

5. Conclusion

Regarding the deficiencies of online education, we have identified several solutions, which are directed on two levels, as follows:

a. Proposals to remedy the problems that appeared during the pandemic:

- the elaboration of a detailed study at national level would be necessary to identify and quantify the educational effects of isolation at home and the use of online platforms;
- mediatizing the problems encountered in online teaching and the transparency of the solutions identified by the decision makers;
- teachers could structure the class hours so that students can benefit from both the flexibility of online learning and the experience involved in face-to-face discussions;

- competition of training sessions for students and teachers in order to adapt to online teaching;
- permanent dialogue between teachers-parents-students in order to efficiently communicate any deficiencies and identify the best solutions to solve them;
- conducting additional training sessions for students with poor assessment results;
- creation of support groups (composed of parents, teachers, psychologists, classmates) in the online environment to provide support to students identified with problems adapting to the new requirements;
- creating a welcoming environment through the use of routines (these help to stimulate and strengthen the feeling of belonging to the group);
- online content developers need to consider a number of issues in designing the best way to deliver this content to students. Simply providing materials (Evans et al., 2004: 49-61) or an online discussion forum (Swan, 2002: 23-49) does not automatically aid learning (Davies and Graff, 2005: 657-663), and making more contributions to an online discussion does not necessarily lead to better academic performance;
- active involvement of psychologists in the case of students who have developed anxiety, depression, etc.

b. Proposals for improving the online teaching-learning-assessment process:

- communication with students to be efficient, with a supportive role;
- the way of presenting the course should be as adapted as possible to the level of the student group;
- providing all the necessary documents for the course;
- respecting the principles of active learning. We ask and encourage students to participate dynamically in the course, creating a friendly atmosphere from the first meeting;
- course sequences can be designed consisting of several sessions of 30 to 40 minutes. An adult's attention span is between 20 and 40 minutes for face-to-face lessons, so we don't try to get students' attention for two or three hours. Consideration can be given to conducting a series of 30-40 minute sessions with different activities;
- we make sure that students participate in courses. We ask and encourage them to speak. Another very useful strategy during discussions and sharing is to ask the student to name the next speaker;
- Diversification of activities. Like face-to-face lessons, activities must be modified to keep students' attention. They design interactive activities that they can do with their computers. Choose activities that are motivating and engaging;
- collaboration is encouraged. Some video conferencing platforms offer the possibility to divide the group into subgroups for group work. You can do the work in a small group due to this functionality. Collaborative writing platforms such as Padlet, Google Docs / Presentations, etc. can also be used;
- a plan B is considered in case of an unstable connection. Activities are prepared that students can do independently, in case of technical problems;

- creating a supportive environment, welcoming during classes;
 - deconstructing social stereotypes through interaction and interknowledge;
 - carrying out inter-knowledge activities;
 - involvement of students in the process of facilitating social interaction
- Example: Meetings with students to establish work rules.

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PSYCHO-SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF BULLYING IN SCHOOLS. WAYS OF PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

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Abstract: *In recent decades, bullying has become an undesirable but increasingly prevalent reality of the education systems, of schools around the world. Taking into consideration the destructive effects of any kind of aggression on children and adolescents, it is necessary to correlate the efforts of all the factors involved in the school activity, to prevent or intervene in order to reduce the effects of bullying on the emotional, physical and well-being of those involved. The present study aims to identify the specifics of this phenomenon, viewed from the perspective of some theoreticians and practitioners in the field of education, during the process of training, respectively of some students-future teachers. The incursion made in the literature of the problem aimed at substantiating the theoretical aspects on the stated topic, and the investigative approach, carried out on a group of subjects consisting of 93 students from the Faculty of Letters, University of Craiova, the first year of studies – bachelor and the first year in psycho-pedagogical training program. It was based on the capitalization of the results of their activity regarding both the diagnosis of the bullying phenomenon in the Romanian schools and the proposal of some ways of prevention/ intervention in this problem. Also, to complete the picture of the specifics of the bullying phenomenon in Romanian schools, we used an interview guide, attended by 20 students, selected from the sample mentioned above. The results of our investigation confirmed the established hypotheses and facilitated the achievement of its aims.*

Keywords: *bullying; violence; victim; aggressor; prevention; intervention.*

1. Introduction. Literature Review

Many authors define the phenomenon of bullying as a threat to the peace, tranquility, health and general well-being of the members of a society (Lekunze and Strom, 2017: 147) of exercising their social roles (Limo, 2015) or as a systematic abuse of power (Smith and Sharp, 1994, apud Rigby, 2020: 1), respectively „any undesirable hostile behavior(s) directed by an individual or a group of people with more power, repeatedly and intentionally cause hurt or harm to another person who feel hard time to defending himself or herself” (Gladden, Vivolo-Kantor, Hamburger and Lumpkin, 2014, in Krishnasamy, 2018: 30).

According to Fante (2005, apud Resendre Oliveira, Menezes, Irffi, Resendre Oliveira, 2018: 58), bullying is a situation characterized by repeated verbal or physical abuse by one or several students on one or more colleagues.

According to Olweus (1993, apud Aalsma, 2008: 101, van der Werf, 2014: 8; Downes and Cefai, 2016: 18) and Farrington, (1993, apud Gutierrez, Molina and Ñopo, 2018: 1), in order to define the phenomenon of bullying, we must consider three key elements: firstly, it consists in a form of verbal, physical or any kind of aggression, which produces fear, stress, injury to the victim; secondly, they are based on an

imbalance of forces between attackers and victims; thirdly, the phenomenon involves the repetition of the aggression on the same person, over a certain period of time.

Currently, the phenomenon of cyberbullying has become prevalent, involving new technologies, especially the Internet and any device through which children or adolescents may be subjected to aggression (Carr-Greg and Manocha, 2011; Smith, 2013).

Types of bullying

In table no. 1, we are presenting the main types of bullying, as well as the specific forms of manifestation.

Table 1: Types of bullying and forms of manifestation

| No | Types of bullying | Forms of manifestation |
|----|--------------------------|---|
| 1. | Physical Bullying | hitting, pushing, banging, coercing the other through physical contact, destroying the victim's personal belongings |
| 2. | Verbal Bullying | threats, teasing, labeling, insults, blackmail, homophobic and racist remarks, verbal abuse |
| 3. | Social Bullying (hidden) | spreading rumors and lies, jokes or ugly pranks, deliberate exclusion of someone |
| 4. | Psychological Bullying | threat, manipulation, pursuit, ridicule |
| 5. | Cyberbullying | use of technology to verbally, socially or psychologically intimidate |

It is not considered bullying: arguments and mutual disagreements; singular episodes of social rejection or antipathy; singular episodes of rejection or contempt; random acts of aggression or intimidation.

Source: adapted from The National Centre Against Bullying, apud Carr-Greg and Manocha, 2011: 99

Some authors (Jan and Husain, 2015; White, 2019) differentiate another type of bullying, the sexual type, including gender discrimination, coercion, sexual abuse).

Najam and Kashif (2018) also mention the kind of bullying initiated by the teacher on the students, which refers to any form of communication coming from the teacher that the students feel as an aggression and which causes negative psychological reactions.

We should also mention that between the already presented types of bullying there are intersections, overlaps, some forms of manifestation that can be easily included in several types of bullying.

In a bullying case, there intervene several people, who have well-defined roles, which also involve a specific type of behavior (Krishnasamy, 2018) and who form what specialists call the bullying circle:

- the aggressor - the person who commits the aggression.
- the victim - the person who is intimidated, harassed by others.
- active or passive followers of the aggressor, who are part of his group of supporters.
- passive followers (not involved) or active (defenders) of the victim.

- involved observers, who do not belong to any of the groups.

J. White (2019: 10-12) presents a series of risk factors in the production of bullying situations: age, sex, relationships, socio-economic status and additional risk factors (disability, ethnic, linguistic or cultural differences, poverty, sexual orientation, physical appearance).

Menesini and Salmivalli (2017) also mention risk factors that target the class, such as: size, class size, group dynamics, the hierarchical structure of the class, normativity, rules, the characteristics of the teacher. We could add to these all the elements that make up the culture of a class (either visible or invisible), respectively the values promoted by the team members, traditions, habits, perceptions, the interrelational dimension (teacher-student, student-student relations) and, of course, as a sum of all these characteristics, the syntality of the class.

2. Symptoms

As it happened with the causes, the symptoms of bullying can also be grouped into several categories. They must be differentiated according to the victim or the aggressor, too. In agreement with Carr-Greg, Manocha, (2011: 100), we are presenting in table no. 3 a possible list of the most common symptoms.

Table 3: The symptoms of the people involved in a bullying situation

| Types of Symptoms | Victim | Aggressor |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Physical, physiological, somatic | Bruising, cuts, scratches, suspicious injuries, damaged or broken clothing or personal items, abdominal pain, headaches, bedwetting, decreased appetite | |
| Psychological, emotional | Anxiety, agitation, sadness, insomnia, nightmares, obvious mood swings | - permanent dissatisfaction, irritability, aggression, negative attitude towards school, lying, deception, |
| Behavioral, social | Refusing to go to school or discussing what is happening at school, changing the route to school, isolation, loneliness, asking for extra money. | -changing the group of friends, aggressive behavior, unexplained angry outbursts, refusal to complete schoolwork, desire to stand out, tendency to dominate, bringing home foreign objects that do not belong to him/ her |

People subjected to aggression of any kind can develop diseases, which, depending on variable factors (the intensity of aggression, the duration of exposure of the victim to aggression, his/ her emotional structure, the family support, etc.) can take forms from mild to severe (Aulia, 2016). In most situations, people involved in bullying have low school performance (Alrokban, Alzaidi, Alqahtani, Almoayad and Fiala, 2019).

3. Ways of prevention/ intervention

First of all, regarding this phenomenon, it is necessary to insist on the prevention methods, to which all the factors involved must contribute, directly or indirectly in the school activity. As for the avoidance of this phenomenon, we can mention several types of actions, adapted from Seeley, Tombari, Bennett, Dunkle (2011: 6):

- Encouraging students' involvement in school or extracurricular activities
- Promoting a caring behavior model among students
- Initiating mentoring programs
- Providing opportunities for students to learn by engaging in various concrete activities
- Facilitating a smooth transition from one school year to another, from one stage to another
- Early initiation of certain prevention programs
- Adjusting the curricula to the needs and interests of the students

As ways of intervention, we can mention (Krishnasamy, 2018):

- at class level: frequent discussions related to acts of aggression, violence, intimidation; meetings with the parents.
- at individual level: having regular meetings with the people involved, focused on that particular matter; meetings with the parents of the children involved in bullying situations.

Although, most studies are aimed at the victims of the aggression and their counselling, we must not lose sight of the aggressors, who, due to some psychological, emotional, behavioural problems also require intervention (Richardson and Chii Fen, 2018). Moreover, in the process of preventing the occurrence of this phenomenon, the action on these people has a special importance.

4. The design of the research

The empirical research that we carried out aimed to know the opinion of the students - future teachers about the phenomenon of bullying in schools, in order to prevent/ intervene effectively in stopping it.

The pursued objectives were:

- Identifying the types of bullying, reported in schools, in Romania.
- Establishing an inventory of the causes of bullying in school.
- Identifying ways to prevent the occurrence of bullying in schools or some interventions meant to reduce the negative effects.

Closely related to the purpose and objectives mentioned above, we aimed to verify two hypotheses of the research:

1. Managing situations of aggression at class and school level represent an important skill in the profile of the future teachers.

2. Putting in actual situations of analysis and interpretation, respectively solving of bullying situations will ensure the formation of skills for the prevention/ resolution of bullying situations among students.

The sample of subjects consisted of 93 master-students from the University of Craiova, in their first year of master's studies, respectively in the first year of the psycho-pedagogical training program, designed to train future teachers to teach in non-compulsory education.

The research methods and tools used were the focus group interview and the analysis of the activity products of the students. The interview was attended by 20 students, randomly selected from different specializations. The interview guide consisted of 7 questions, which aimed to cover the issue of bullying in school, from forms of manifestation to the possibility of intervention.

For the analysis of the students' activity products, we used the results of the activity of all the students included in the sample. As types of learning products, we used the structured essay and problem solving.

In making the essay, the students had to analyze the issue of bullying in Romanian schools, having as benchmarks: identifying the already existing types of bullying; signaling possible causes of the event; presenting ways of prevention/ intervention.

For the evaluation of the essays, we used an evaluation grid structured on 3 dimensions (general aspect and content, writing), each with several subcriteria (see table 4).

Table 4: Evaluation grid for essays

| No | Assessment criteria | Indicators | Scores (1-10) |
|----|-----------------------|--|----------------------|
| 1. | General aspect | Indication of the title on the cover | |
| | | Follow the recommended structure | |
| | | Compliance with the requirements (number of pages, format, etc.) | |
| 2. | Content | Relevance of the issues addressed for the chosen topic | |
| | | The logical chaining of ideas | |
| | | Accordance between theme - title - content of the paper | |
| | | Correct formulation of arguments and counter-arguments | |
| | | Relevance of the provided examples or counterexamples | |
| | | The accuracy of the terms, their correct use | |
| 3. | Wording | Originality of ideas | |
| | | Essay style, reflective, interrogative | |
| | | Eloquence of speech | |
| | | Spelling, punctuation | |
| | | | General score |

Source: adapted from Mogonea, 2013: 190-191

Problem solving consisted in proposing intervention solutions, starting either from images or videos, which presented different situations of bullying. In order to assess how students analyzed the situations and provided solutions, we also used an assessment grid (see Table 5).

Table 5: Assessment grid for problem solving

| No | Category | Criteria, indicators | Score (1-10) |
|----|--|---|----------------------|
| 1. | General aspects related to the requirements of the task | - Adequacy of the answers to the imposed requirements - Compliance with all the requirements - Solving all the proposed requirements | |
| 2. | Aspects related to the scientific content | Critical analysis of the information presented Elaboration of solutions Critical analysis of the variants Arguing the efficiency of the chosen variant Correct identification of the roles of the participants - Adequacy of the scientific content of the answer to the theme and the problems expressed - Correct use of specialized terms, operational concepts - Capitalize and use examples correctly - Appropriate use of arguments/ counterarguments - Manifestation of originality in formulating the answer | |
| 3. | Writing issues | - Correct, coherent, expressive expression | |
| | | | General score |

Source: adapted from Mogonea, 2010b: 161

5. Results and discussions

We are presenting the results of our investigation, based on the two hypothetical statements we made.

Thus, we analyze the answers provided by the subjects to the focus-group interview, as well as some of the ideas expressed by the students in their essays, to establish the true value of the first hypothesis: *Managing situations of aggression in the classroom, in the school is an important competence in the profile of future teachers.*

Some of the questions posed in the interview also focused on the importance of training future teachers from the perspective of the possibility of managing conflict situations. Most of the participants reported an increase in the frequency of aggression situations among students at school. Teachers often face difficulties in carrying out

teaching activities due to tensions or even conflicts between students. Although many of them exist in latent form, there are, unfortunately, many obvious conflicts. However, in this situation, future teachers must be trained to deal with such situations.

Also, some of the ideas formulated in the essays written by the students emphasized the same aspect.

At the same time, the students had the opportunity to identify possible **causes** of bullying situations in schools. We are going to present below an inventory of them:

- family problems: disorganized families, with a low level of education and culture, domestic violence, deprivation of affection or emotional openness of the family to children.

- lack of empathy, tolerance towards others.

- taking over similar behavioral patterns, based on aggression, excess power.

- parenting styles, oriented either towards high demand or extreme tolerance.

- the aggressor, who is a victim of bullying in his own family, imitates the behavior of those who made him a victim of this phenomenon; abuse thus arises from the desire to impose oneself, to exercise control over the weak, putting them in an unfavorable light, as a method of regulating the negative self-image.

- the media can influence the behavior of the child/ adolescent, by exposing them to shows and programs with an aggressive and/ or violent character.

- the influence of the group of friends, the desire, the need to commit acts of aggression in order to be accepted by the group or in order to stand out.

- dysfunctions, emotional disorders.

Among the possible **consequences** arising from a bullying situation, the students mentioned:

- low self-esteem.

- sleep disorders, eating disorders.

- reduced school performance due to a decreased ability to concentrate.

- anxiety, followed by depression, thoughts and even suicide attempts.

- the risk of dropping out of school.

- the tendency to isolate the victim from the world around him/ her.

- weak empathy skills.

- the tendency of the victims to be manipulated in the future.

- exclusion from the group of the victim or the aggressor.

- the development of an antisocial behaviour that could affect the integration in society or lead to more serious acts.

The second hypothesis aimed not only to highlight the importance of the competence of future teachers to manage conflict situations in schools, but also to be able to practice the training of this competence. For this, we used the simulation of resolving procedures for different bullying situations previously presented, meant to validate the wording: *Putting in concrete situations of analysis and interpretation, respectively solving bullying situations will ensure the formation of the skills necessary to prevent/ resolve bullying situations among students.*

Problem solving is one of the most effective methods of skills training, by practicing learning based on discovery, investigation, exploration.

By presenting some images and videos, the students had the opportunity to analyze different situations of bullying, to propose different methods of prevention/ intervention.

We summarize from the answers provided by them:

- non-formal methods of anti-bullying education, such as role-playing games, through which children understand the position in which each part of the bullying action is exposed and become aware of the serious consequences that neglect can have.

- organizing seminars and free debates, meetings with psychologists or people who were part of the bullying phenomenon and who managed to overcome the situation, as an example of good practice.

- offering positive patterns of behaviour.

- the implementation of projects that develop the cohesion of the group, promote a positive educational environment based on empathy, cooperation, mutual support.

- encouraging, by the teacher, communication between students and the involvement of problematic students in teaching activities through which to create an environment favourable to socialization.

- good communication not only between students and teachers, but also between teachers and parents.

- setting up intervention groups that include representatives of the school, family, and community to combat bullying.

- organizing training seminars for teachers and other employees of the institution, on bullying.

- provision of methodological resources for the prevention of internet bullying.

- organizing excursions, camps in which students are taken out of their normal, ordinary environment, to build new rules of socialization.

- encouraging students to pursue their hobbies, to participate in as many cultural and sports activities as possible, where they will build social relationships with people who show the same interests as them, thus eliminating their frustrations, their tendencies towards aggression.

- recommendations made to students to participate in volunteer activities.

- use of role play.

- early identification of potentially violent students and the causes that can lead to their bullying tendencies, through the involvement of parents or specialized staff (school counsellors, psychologists, social workers, mediators);

- valorizing the interests, skills and capacity of students through various school and extracurricular activities to prevent problematic/ bullying events (sports, arts, etc.);

- encourage students to report any act of violence or suicide to a responsible adult.

- psychological counselling, training programs to ensure the well-being, facilitating school-family collaboration.

- organizing school contests/ competitions on bullying, in open spaces that can take various forms: from skits or small plays, painting and graphics exhibitions, posters (and/ or leaflets) created by them.

- once the aggressor is identified, his/ her behaviour must be shown as negative and punished, so that he/ she is rejected by the group and does not spread.

- guiding the aggressor to activities that would allow him to get rid of the tension or consume his energy (eg sports);

- discussions with a psychologist together with the family to understand the emotional state of the aggressor and the victim.

As there can be seen from the answers provided by the students, they mentioned both ways to prevent the phenomenon of bullying in schools and to intervene in such situations. Most of the recommendations target the victims of aggression, but there are also proposals that go to the category of aggressors, knowing that most of the time, it is more appropriate, more effective to act on the causes than on the effects.

Also, from the analysis of the examples provided by the students, we can notice that they look at the problem of preventing/ reducing or eliminating bullying situations in terms of possibilities, resources available to the teacher, but are aware that such a problem often finds itself solving through the synchronous, combined action of several factors that can provide support (family, school staff, psychologists, counselors, etc.).

Another aspect that we want to point out is related to the types of activities that students propose in order to prevent the phenomenon of bullying, both formal, organized by/ in schools, but also non-formal, carried out outside the school walls, starting from the premise that this kind of activities allow a different relationship between the students, much more natural, authentic.

At the same time, the investigated subjects proposed not only individual interventions on the students, but each of them being also, at the same time, a potential aggressor or victim. The improvement solutions they offered also aimed at stimulating the group interaction, the collaboration, its cohesion, which is especially important in the general context of preventing tension or conflict situations in the classroom.

Although, in case of certain aggressions, regardless of their type, the affective-emotional dimension is strongly involved and affected, we appreciate that students also sought to train or stimulate other dimensions of personality (cognitive, metacognitive) in describing ways of intervention.

6. Conclusions

The phenomenon of bullying is a harsh reality of any education system. Its causes are numerous and varied, from social to individual ones, related to the fundamental aspects of moral, axiological, cultural, economic, psychological type etc.

Also, the forms of manifestation of this phenomenon are diverse, with different intensity and consequences of different degrees, from mild to severe, primarily on the victims, but also on the aggressors.

Our research has shown that students who are training to become teachers are aware of the importance and scale of this phenomenon and have solutions, which can be useful in preventing its occurrence or, if it has already occurred, in prompt and effective intervention, so as to minimize the adverse consequences for those involved.

The intervention in such situations is a complex one, with the involvement of all qualified people and can only be firm, prompt, professional, personalized, oriented to the needs of those involved. Collaboration with the family is essential in this case, a fact reported by many students, both in their essays and in the ways proposed to solve some bullying situations. Obviously, the role of the school is to coordinate all these actions, meant to reduce, as much as possible, the frequency of this situation and to ensure the well-being of all its students.

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THE DYNAMICS OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract: *Higher education institutions are increasingly expected to engage with the challenges of the contemporary world. However, in Nigeria, Higher is facing a lot of challenges and unable to meet the basic demand of what it is established to achieve. This paper is therefore an attempt to examine the dynamics of Higher Education and Graduate Employability in Nigeria with the main aim of discussing the challenges facing the universities in general and how these could be addressed in the transformation and employability of the graduates.*

Keywords: Higher Education; Graduate; Skill; Employability; Nigeria

1. Introduction

Pointing out the role of education as a regenerative process of social values and as a fundamental instrument society's existence, Dewey (1997) defined education as the agent of social regeneration. Thus, for Dewey, education is a fundamental agency for individual and social development. That is why one of the main purposes of a post-secondary education system is to prepare graduates for the labour market, or to enable individuals to earn sustainable livelihoods through self-employment or through the establishment of a company or cooperative. Everyone should be able to make a living for themselves and contribute skills to a developing economy.

There are evidences supporting the fact that appropriate increase in the production of graduates benefits the society by raising work-related competencies thus boosting economic growth (Bakry and Bakry 2005; Omolo, 2010). Moreover, it has been globally recognized that higher education are centres of higher learning, which are considered as expedient agents of development in the nation building. For instance, universities generate, disseminate and utilize knowledge. As primary contributors to economic growth, they produce scientists, engineers, professionals, technicians, scholars, managers and men of exquisite capabilities. Thus, the aim of higher education is to meet the socio-cultural and developmental needs of a country. Higher education provides that opportunity for individuals to develop their potential fulfils the needs for high-level manpower in a society. As primary contributors to economic growth, they produce scientists, engineers, professionals, technicians, scholars, managers and men of exquisite capabilities. Thus, the aim of higher education is to meet the socio-cultural and developmental needs of a country. Higher education provides that opportunity for individuals to develop their potential fulfils the needs for high-level manpower in a society.

A country's social and economic development depends on the nature and level of higher education. Education and economic development are the twin rails that can lead any country to a higher plateau and help in achieving goals of raising the standard of living in their states. The place higher education occupies in the structure of education is higher than other levels of education

- it is the post-secondary education received in universities, polytechnics, mono- technics and colleges of education
- The purpose is uniquely to prepare middle- level and high-level skilled manpower for farms, factories, firms (companies, businesses and organizations) in an economy
- The programmes (in terms of curriculum and teachers) are of higher order than those at the lower levels of education
- These are degrees, certificates, diplomas at undergraduate and postgraduate levels as well as advanced scientific and technological information for the economy.

The forgoing therefore explains that the criterion for measuring the success of an educational system is in a part, the degree to which the schools provide trained personnel to fill the needs of firms (Blaug, 1970). Essentially, schools are viewed as the single most important agency of socialization for creating competent adult workers for modern work institutions (Parsons, 1960). Sanusi (2002: 8) probably had this in mind when he said that:

There should also be an effective linkage between the tertiary institutions and industries in undergraduate training, and in research and development. Our tertiary institutions should be guided strictly by a credible admission policy on course basis with a view to checking the imbalance in the system and reflecting national development needs.

The above remark is not without a cause. The general belief in the country is that the quality of tertiary education (and indeed other levels) has reduced drastically. Many have deteriorated beyond producing half-baked graduates. The labour market prospects for the undergraduates are therefore limited. The labour market report on the prospect of Nigerian graduates shows that employers complained that graduates are poorly prepared for work (Jimoh 2007). The report affirmed that academic standards have fallen drastically and as a result, Nigerian graduates are viewed as half-baked and ill-equipped for the labour market. The major consequence therefore is unemployment.

The forgoing shows that higher education institutions are increasingly expected to engage with the challenges of the contemporary world, that is why policymakers have repeatedly asked for investment in personal skills as a route to building resilience and aiding recovery following myriads of economic recession across the world. The industry reinforces this call by requiring professionals who can fulfil the demands of the new contexts and trends, such as the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

However, higher education institutions are often criticized for not preparing graduates for the real contexts involved in their professional practice. For that reason, it is not surprising that graduate employability has become one of the central issues that drive the mission of higher education institutions. Thus, the present situation of rapidly increasing enrolment in higher education without improving employability is

far becoming an issue. Thus, one of the problems that face undergraduate youths in Nigerian tertiary institutions is the inability to find employment when they graduate. The criticism has been that the educational system is bookish, elitist and colonial in orientation (Alapiki, 1984), and does not reflect the actual needs of the country in terms of the types and various mixes of manpower that are needed for the social and economic transformation of the nation.

Undeniably, the relationship between higher education and employment of graduates is an issue that is relevant both for academics, researchers, and practitioners in the area of higher education (Kalufya and Mwakajinga, 2016; P. Knight and Yorke, 2004; Mwita, 2018). This has called for a clear understanding of the dynamics of higher education and graduate employability in Nigeria. The education experts have also expressed some concerns about the and the rate of employment of the most highly qualified segment of the labour force (Schomburg and Teichler, 2006). As Anderson (2017) argues, graduate employability has become a thorny issue in the future economy of Africa. Some factors which have been mentioned as the leading cause of this problem include the lack of skills in business training, emphasis on the public sector, unattractive agricultural sector, and inadequate labour information on youth employment (Ndyali, 2016).

This paper is therefore is an attempt to examine the dynamics of Higher Education and Graduate Employability in Nigeria with the main aim of discussing the challenges facing the universities in general and how these could be addressed in the transformation and employability of the graduates.

2. Historical Dynamics, Functions and Goals of Higher Education in Nigeria

The capacity of a nation to develop economically, socially, politically and culturally derives largely from the power to develop and utilize the capabilities of its people. Higher education thus is considered sine qua non of national development, for it produces the highest level of manpower. In all advanced countries, the universities constitute the main spring of human capital. The most successful discharge of the universities role as a change agent is in the area of science and technology.

The training of high-level scientific manpower is a matter of vital national concern. Higher education is today recognized as a capital investment in education. It is considered investment of human capital which increases labour productivity furthers technological innovation and produces a rate of return markedly higher than that of physical capital. Today we find the world divided into developed and developing countries. The dividing line between them is the capacity of educational and scientific attainments and its application for economic progress and prosperity (The World Bank, 1990).

In modern times, higher education is considered as a means of human resource development in a society. In advanced countries, universities constitute the main spring of knowledge, ideas and innovations. Today, the most successful discharge of a university as an agent of change is in science and technology. The priming and grooming of high-level professional manpower is a matter of vital concern. As a pathway to socio-economic development in a country, higher education cannot be ignored or given low priority. Higher education in a state of rapid development

everywhere in the world as its benefits to the social, economic and cultural life of different communities is realizable. This has led to worldwide exponential expansion of universities and colleges; as many more people are encouraged remaining in education. However, there are problems. First, higher education is expensive, and its expansion requires ample resources. Second, rapid expansion raises problems of quality assurance and control, as increased numbers could so easily lead to a decline in standards. Third, expansion in the developing world often draws upon the resources, ideas and expertise of the developed world, even though these may not always be appropriate for every different economic and social system (North, 1997). Thus higher education plays an important role in the development of society. Universities for centuries had a crucial role in educating the potential professionals, businessmen, political leaders, religious and social philosophers, who serve the community, enrich its values and develop its resources. Universities are complex organisations with multiple missions and a myriad of roles. A university has the roles of providing of theoretical education and professional training, a developer and a disseminator of new knowledge, a catalyst to shape the practice of management and business and a contributor to the community and the national economy (Khurshid, Al-Aali, Soliman, and Amin, 2012). The foregoing explains that higher education is more or less specialized type of education which individual students obtain at the post-secondary level of schooling such as: universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, colleges of agriculture and other monotchnics.

However, following independence, Nigeria saw shortage of manpower as a bottleneck. Consequently, the country, focused on the expansion of higher education especially university education. Thus, between 1960 and 1999, there were 3 major generations of universities.

1. Six first-generation universities were established between 1960 and 1975
2. Second-generation universities (1975-1979) were created to satisfy the demands of the 12 new states created in 1970
3. Third-generation specialised federal universities were established 1980-1999.
4. State universities were creations of the 1979 Constitution which provided for concurrent ownership of universities
5. While private universities started to flourish in Nigeria between 1993 till date This gave room for increasing presence of regulatory bodies in higher education, because as each state struggled for equal representation, there was the federal character policy that eventually translated to the logic of admission quota system and creation of JAMB in 1977
 - National Universities Commission [NUC] was established in 1962
 - National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), established in 1977
 - The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) was later established based on Acts 3 of 1989 and amended by Acts 7 1997.

Currently, Nigeria has 171 Universities (National University Commission NUC, 2020). The summary therefore is that Nigeria has over 300 higher institutions. The rise in the number of higher institutions in the country finds explanation in the goals which the institutions are set to achieve in the country. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN 2014:36) stated that goals of tertiary education to include;

- (a) Contribute to national development through higher level relevant manpower

- training;
- (b) Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individual and society;
 - (c) Develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environments;
 - (d) Acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society;
 - (e) Promote and encourage scholarship and community service;
 - (f) Forge and cement national unity, and
 - (g) Promote national and international understanding and interaction.

Given the above goals and the number of higher institutions, one would have expected Nigeria to have overcome the problem of unemployment through the instrumentality of education. However, the problem remains unabated.

The phenomenon of graduate unemployment unavoidably began to emerge due to the lopsided production of high level manpower. With the eclipse of the second republic in December 1983, the succeeding military regime repealed the law on private universities in 1984 and closed down the established few. It is notable that the Minimum Standards Decree promulgated in 1985 provided for the accreditation of courses in Universities and polytechnics. Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) was introduced in June 1986 by the World Bank and this engendered a mixed grill on higher education system in Nigeria. How this happened was that SAP encouraged the withdrawal of the state from the economy especially from the social service sector considered to be non-productive and therefore, wasteful. Education sector was one of the victims of this philosophy. The communiqué of the conference on Academic Freedom organized by the Academic Staff Union of (Nigerian) Universities (ASUU) and the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESTRIA), Dakar, Senegal, summarized the state of higher education in Nigeria under SAP dispensation as follow:

- (a) Infrastructural facilities/equipment for teaching, research and learning are either lacking, or very inadequate, and in bad state, thus restricting the freedom to carry out the basic functions of the academia;
- (b) Students' residential accommodation are grossly inadequate and are frequently uninhabitable or environmentally hazardous, thus violating the right of the students to a conducive atmosphere for rest and studies;
- (c) There is a serious shortage of classrooms and office accommodation. The few available ones are inadequately and poorly furnished;
- (d) Conditions of service have completely deteriorated with serious negative impact on morale and productivity of academics, and the exercise of academic freedom;
- (e) Related to the issue of underfunding and in conformity with the World Bank philosophy is the withdrawal of subsidies on students' feeding and introduction of various fees in the institutions of higher learning which have imposed severe condition on students and violated the rights of many aspiring students to higher learning; and
- (f) There is a high level of moral decay in the institution of higher education largely as a result of the collapse of the conditions of service (for teachers), and the worsening

condition of subsidies (for students). The communiqué further observed that higher institutions and academic in Nigeria are now forced to accept reforms dictated from outside by either government or its agencies or through non-government agencies, by forces of international finance capital-most notably, the World Bank. (CODESTRIA 1996:6)

Given the above background, one is compelled to ask: what then is the labour market prospects for undergraduates?

3. What is Employability?

Employability can be defined as the possession of relevant knowledge, skills and other attributes that facilitate the gaining and maintaining of worthwhile employment(Kessy, 2020). While there are extensive discussions in the media about graduate unemployment and the 'skills gap' (between the skills graduates have, and those that are needed in the job market), there is in fact a surprisingly weak evidence base. The assumption is that a linear causal relationship exists between the input of university study, the attributes that graduates take into the job market, and their success in obtaining work, as seen in Figure 1:

Figure 1: Employability – a linear progression?



Source: Going Global (2014). www.britishcouncil.org/education/ihe

However, there are a number of other factors affecting progression between stages 1, 2 and 3. Graduate capacities are influenced by learning experiences outside the university, particularly in the family and previous schooling. Second, a range of factors beyond one's employability attributes affect entry into employment, such as the availability of jobs, graduates' social networks, and possible discrimination. The interaction between these influential factors is not sufficiently well understood. There are, however, three areas in which we do have existing knowledge.

To buttress this, Morley (2001) however states that employability is not just about students making deposits in a bank of skills, Knight (2001) further considers the notion of employability to be; "A synergic combination of personal qualities, skills of various kinds and subject understanding". Thus, the understanding of employability can be seen to be more complicated than the emphasis that Dearing (1997) has placed on student's personal qualities, which suggests less emphasis on these qualities and more on generic academic skills. However, it could be assumed that the individual's personal skills could have considerable bearing on a particular students' success in the employability stakes.

The jobs market is rapidly changing with new sectors emerging, changing the nature of work and the way employees perceive the workplace. Graduates will have to

be flexible and have the personal capabilities to manage changing and challenging work situations. Employers are looking to recruit graduates who fit into the organizational culture and utilize their abilities and skills to transform the company by facilitating innovative teamwork (Harvey, 2001).

According to Yorke and Knight (2004) employability is seen to be influenced, amongst other things by students' self-efficacy beliefs, student's self-theories and personal qualities. They highlight that what is of critical importance is the extent to which students feel that they can "make a difference". This, importantly, not only broadens the focus to include a wider range of attributes required to be successful within employment but also includes the attributes required to manage one's career development in ways that will sustain one's employability.

Similarly, Hillage and Pollard (1998), however, see employability as being capable of getting and fulfilling work through the ability to be self-sufficient within the labour market, to realise the potential through sustainable employment. Further, their finding from their report for the DFES for developing a framework for policy analysis on employability, found that employability is about having the capability to gain initial employment, maintain that employment and if necessary, find new employment. Knight and Yorke (2003), however, define Employability as; "A set of achievements, understandings and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen careers." (Knight and Yorke, 2003)

Employability of a graduate is the predilection of the graduate to show attributes that employers predict will be required for the future successful functioning of their organization (Harvey, 1997). He further suggests that graduates will need to be flexible due to the increasing number of short time contracts and part-time work in the workplace (Harvey, 2000). This suggests that employability is likely to be less about nurturing attributes, techniques or experiences just to enable a student to get a job; it is about learning with less emphasis on 'employ' and more on 'ability'. The prominence is on developing critical and reflective skills, with a view to empowering and enhancing the learner. Employment is a by-product of this enabling process (Harvey, 2003; Lees, 2002; Knight and Yorke, 2002).

From the foregoing, employability can be seen as a process of producing graduates who are capable and able, Williams and Owen (1997) state the most perceived graduate qualities are the ability to learn, intelligence, ideas and imagination and communication skills. Billing (2003) adds employers want employees who are "effective communicators, problem solvers and critical thinkers, and can work well within a team". (Billing, 2003). To understand employability therefore requires a consideration of the various component parts and the different ways in which it is described and evaluated, the generic transferable skills nurtured through university, through to competencies required for employment.

This suggests that employability is likely to be less about nurturing attributes, techniques or experiences just to enable a student to get a job; it is about learning with less emphasis on 'employ' and more on 'ability'. The prominence is on developing critical and reflective skills, with a view to empowering and enhancing the learner. Employment is a by-product of this enabling process (Harvey, 2003; Lees, 2002; Knight and Yorke, 2002). Therefore, if employability is defined as the 'set of personal attributes acquired by the under-graduate as a result of their investment in higher education', then what are the attributes that make graduates employable?

4. Graduate Unemployment in Sub Sahara Africa

Analysis and report from British Council (2014) indicated that in Nigeria the unemployment rate is as high as 23.1 per cent for those with undergraduate degrees. Although the rate for university graduates is much lower in South Africa (5.9 per cent 12), it is high for those with diploma or certificate level qualifications. Unemployment figures specifically for university graduates are not available in Ghana and Kenya. However, across the 25–29 age group as a whole (the range corresponding most closely with recent graduates) the unemployment rate is 41.6 per cent in Ghana 13, and 15.7 per cent in Kenya 14. (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). It has been estimated that, on average, it takes a university graduate five years to secure a job in Kenya. There is widespread concern about the work readiness of graduates. While employers are generally satisfied with the disciplinary knowledge of students, they perceive significant gaps in their IT skills, personal qualities (e.g. reliability) and transferable skills (e.g. team working and problem solving). Research carried out in Nigeria has shown a significant 'skills mismatch' between employer requirements and graduates' display of skills in the workplace, particularly in relation to communication, IT, decision making and critical thinking. (Omolo, 2010).

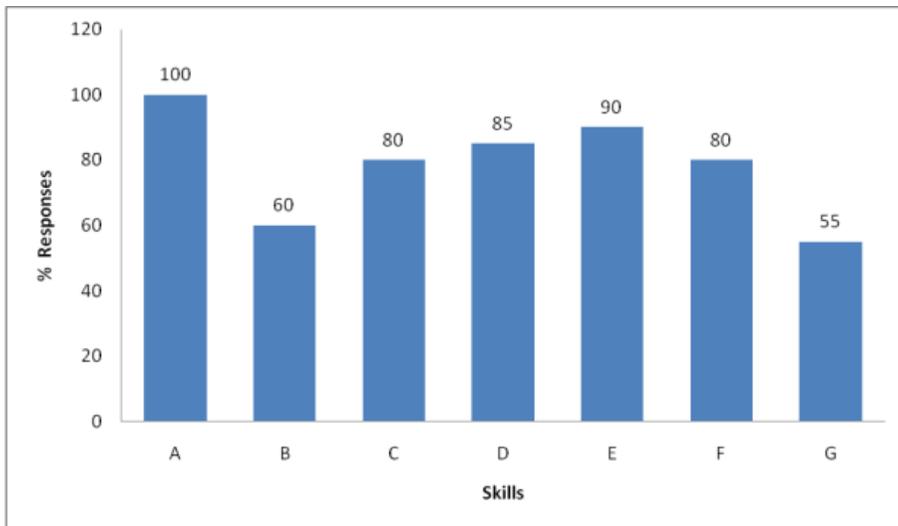
Similarly, in the 2nd quarter of 2019, National Bureau of Statistics said the national labour force was 69%, and the employment-to-population ratio was 66.6%, meaning 33.4% of the labour force were unemployed. Going by these figures, and working with an estimated population of 200m, Nigeria's labour force is roughly 138m, 33.4% or 66.8m of which are unemployed, as of mid- 2019. (NBS, 2019). The NBS also stated that 38.1% of unemployed have post-secondary education, translating to 25.4m unemployed graduates, with diploma or degree qualifications. Nigeria Graduate report 2016, in fact, said '36.26% of recent graduates are currently unemployed'. Many graduates are also underemployed or wrongly employed, in respective of their disciplines often ending up as schoolteachers, commercial drivers, uber drivers, farmers, salesmen, marketers, and factory workers.

5. Employment of Higher Education Graduates in Nigeria

Despite this upsurge number of tertiary institutions; enrolment rate; and increased graduate turnout, the issues of graduate unemployment and underemployment with their attendant consequences (such as increased crime rate, unfulfilled dreams, suicide, impaired financial position etc.) are posing a great challenge to many developing countries of which Nigeria is one. In Nigeria, national unemployment rate escalated from 11.9 percent in the year 2005 to 14.9 percent in 2008. As at 2009, the rate had increased to 19.7 percent (National Bureau of Statistics, 2010). This situation is seen as a generalized waste of human resources. The questions are: has there been enough demand for all these graduates by the labour market? Does this mean that the human resources development efforts of the government and individuals have been a waste since those trained cannot put their skills into productive use? How far has the Nigerian educational system been able to adequately prepare students for the world of work? Of what importance are skills acquired by graduates when they are not demanded in the labour market?

Buttressing this point Akinyemi; Ofem, and Ikuenomore (2012) reveals that Nigerian graduates do not possess employable skills to match-up to the requirement of jobs in the present-day labour market. He discovered in the study that apart from the qualifications that graduates possessed, there were other attributes which the employers emphasized as criteria for graduates’ employability. These attributes include; verbal and written communication, analytical and investigative abilities, entrepreneurship and managerial skills, team work, computer skills, time management, and drive and flexibility.

Figure 2: Skills Required for Graduate Employment in Nigeria



Keys

- A – Verbal and written Communication*
- B – Analytical and Investigative Abilities*
- C - Entrepreneurship and Managerial Skills*
- D - Team Work*
- E – Computer Skills*
- F – Time Management*
- G – Drive and Flexibility*

Source: Akinyemi (2012)

This finding also agrees with Dabalen, Oni and Adekola (2002); National University Commission (2004); and Boeteng and Ofori-Sarpong (2002) that analytical skills, good communication skills, good personal and social skills, technical and managerial skills are, among others, the factors determining graduates being employed in the present modern workplace and not their qualifications. Corroborating this, former president APJ Abdul Kalam emphasized that only 25% of graduates were employable while 75% were not because they lacked technical knowledge, English proficiency and critical thinking (The Guardian, August 31, 2010). The study also found that graduate turnout outpaced the graduate employment over the years in Nigeria. Officially, the percentage of the extent of mismatch between the registered

unemployed and placement between the year 2003 and 2007 ranges from 74% to 91%. In the words of Bankole (2002), many subjects studied in the Nigerian universities are no longer marketable and this has posed a serious problem to the country (NISER). This has led so many unemployed graduates into crimes such as frauds, armed robbery and others. It was also discovered in the study that the total graduate unemployment increased in an unprecedented manner in the years under study. By the year 2003, the total graduate unemployment rate was 25.6% but in the year 2009, it had risen to 40.3%. The World Bank (2009) report warned that unless constraints to growth were removed systematically in those industries that were particularly employment intensive and should stand a chance of being competitive globally, it was unlikely that these trends would be reversed, but further exacerbating tensions and youth unrest.

6. Why Employment of Higher Education Graduate is Important?

There is no doubt given the foregoing that higher education plays an important role in human capital development and economic growth.

Articulation between higher education and employment in the workplace has been a focus of initiatives in many African Countries and Nigeria in particular. There is pressure on higher education from both Government and employers to produce employable graduates with the attributes, capabilities and dispositions to work successfully. There has often been a complex relationship and a common misunderstanding between higher education institutions (HEIs) and employers, particularly in the private sector. Employers often voice concern over the quality of graduates from universities and other higher education institutions, while HEIs feel that business is not fully appreciative of what qualities and skills these graduates possess.

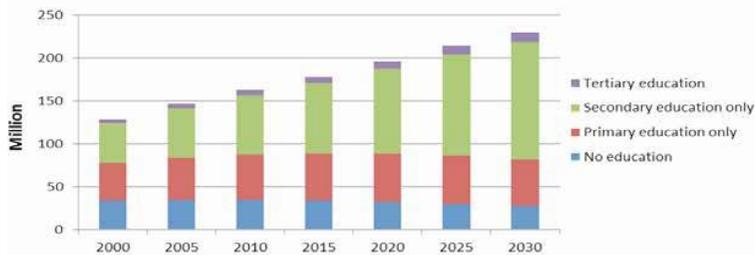
By international comparison, tertiary enrolment in African countries is still low and there is a lack of highly skilled experts in engineering, science and medicine. Thus, Africa has the youngest population in the world, and the educational level is ever increasing (Griesel and Parker, 2009). By 2030, 59% of the population aged 20-24 years in Africa will have benefited from secondary education. That will result in 12 million persons with tertiary education in 2030. This is a great opportunity but also a risk for more unemployed graduates. The expansion of tertiary education must be carefully planned. Nearly 60% of the unemployed are aged between 15 and 24, a significant number of whom are graduates. It is clear that merely increasing tertiary enrolment will not be sufficient to meet the needs of labour markets (Koloba, 2017).

The above discussion has exposed a very important fact that graduate employment and employability must be carefully considered. The factors affecting graduate employment and employability can be grouped into 3 categories: (i) exogenous factors relating to the absorptive capacity of the country for its graduates; (ii) endogenous factors associated with the institutions' effort to employability of its graduates; and (iii) factors linking the exogenous and endogenous factors. Buttressing this view, Dabalén, et al (2000), and Ogundowole (2002) have identified possible causes of low quality of graduates in Nigeria. According to them, one of these is decline in staff quantity which is reflected in the high rate of human capital flight. So many professionals and qualified lecturers have left Africa for developed world in search of jobs. Owen (Appleton and Teal, 1998) reporting the extent of the flight of the most

educated Africans from the continent in 1993 said, in the UK, there were 134,500 Africans: 14,500 had first degrees and 4,600 had advanced degrees. Of all the ethnic minorities in the UK, Africans formed the largest percentage with recognized educational qualifications. Williams (Appleton and Teal, 1998) also corroborates this fact by pointing out that as at 1994, estimated 100,000 skilled Africans worked in Europe and North America. These skilled Africans were typically doctors, research scientists and university teachers

The endogenous factors include massification of higher education and the lack of creation of adequate jobs, which is the main cause of the rise of unemployment rates for graduates. This situation has forced many students to continue their studies, thus paradoxically reducing their chances of being recruited because of over qualification. Exogenous factors include stiff competition for human skills globally, as other parts of the world attract many graduates from the continent and also depriving African learners of the best trainers. In many African countries, the unemployment rate among young graduates is higher than 30%. If the general unemployment rate reaches a level of around 15%, the unemployment among young graduates can typically reach around 30%. However, there are also countries like Malawi, where university graduates had almost no unemployment, according to the most recent study (Van der Berg, and Van der Broekhuizen, 2012).

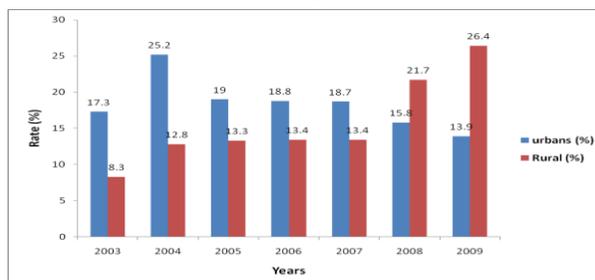
Figure 3: 20-24 year-old cohorts by education, 2000-2030.



Source: Omolo(2012)

In spite of this, enrolments in tertiary education according to Akinyemi (2012) are still low

Figure 4: Chart Showing Graduate Unemployment in Urban and Rural Areas of Nigeria



Source: Akinyemi (2012)

According to Oyekanmi (2020) Nigeria’s unemployment rate as at the second quarter of 2020 is 27.1% indicating that about 21,764,614 (21.7 million) Nigerians remain unemployed.

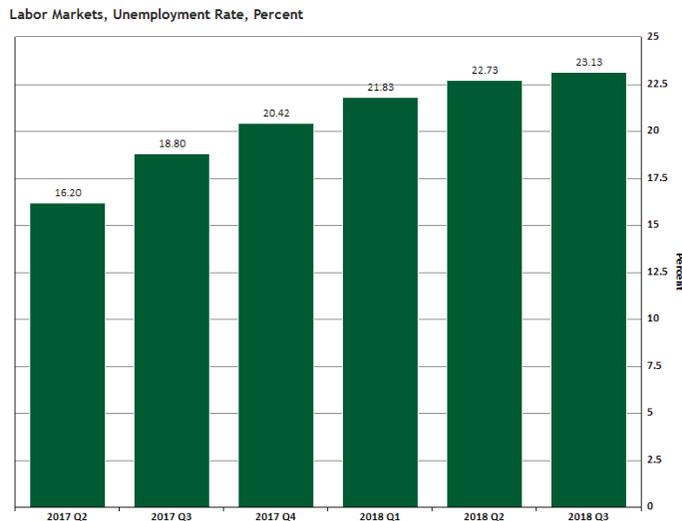
Nigeria’s unemployment and underemployment rate (28.6%) is a combined 55.7%. This means the total number of Nigerians who are unemployed or underemployed as at 2020 Q2. Nigeria’s unemployment rate as at the second quarter of 2020 is 27.1% indicating that about 21,764,614 (21.7 million) Nigerians remain unemployed. Nigeria’s unemployment and underemployment rate (28.6%) is a combined 55.7%. This means the total number of Nigerians who are unemployed or underemployed as at 2020 Q2.

The foregoing shows that Nigeria’s youth remain the hardest hit by unemployment with over 13.9 million people aged between 15 and 34 years unemployed. As a consequence, there is a lack of graduates in certain professions, which is made even worse by the brain drain. Furthermore and paradoxically, most African countries record high unemployment rates among young graduates. The present situation of rapidly increasing enrolment in higher education without improving employability is to be addressed urgently. In order to avoid increased unemployment among young graduates, more focus should be placed on quality and labour market needs.

7. How to Improve Employability for Higher Education Graduates

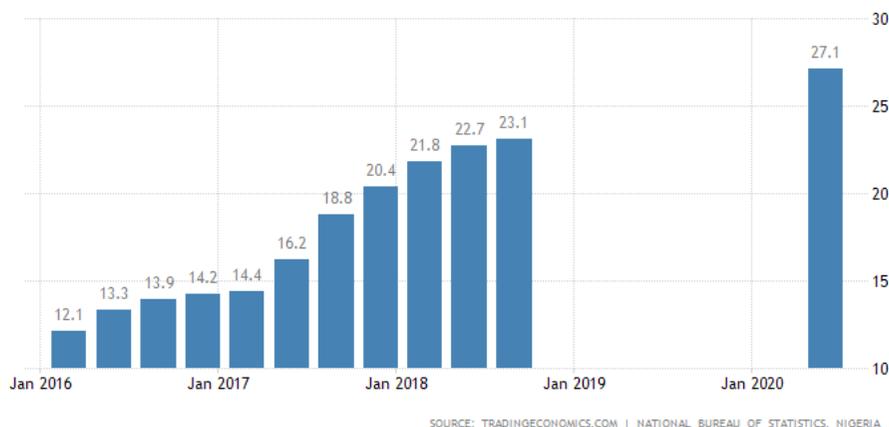
Graduate unemployment has been a major issue in Nigeria, and for almost a decade now, nothing has change for better.

Figure 5: Unemployment rate in Nigeria 2017-2018



Source: National Bureau of Statistics

([https://nigerianstat.gov.ng/elibrary?queries\[search\]=unemployment%20rate%20in%20Nigeria%202010-2020](https://nigerianstat.gov.ng/elibrary?queries[search]=unemployment%20rate%20in%20Nigeria%202010-2020)).

Figure 6: Unemployment rate in Nigeria 2017-2020

It is important to note however, that youth unemployment can be reduced if tertiary education institutions link up with productive sectors for the development of curriculum. The tracer studies carried out by national authorities in countries like Ghana and Namibia show that the greater the distance between classroom-imparted skills and skills required in the worlds of work, the higher the rate of graduate unemployment is likely to be. (ADEA, 2015)

Entrepreneurship education is essentially critical in most Nigerian societies, where students are highly socialized into a “wage-earner” mindset in the face of rising graduate unemployment. Accordingly, entrepreneurship education can be for all when it is aimed at equipping students of Higher Education Institutions with entrepreneurial behaviour to make them more marketable on the job market and to make self-employment an attractive alternative. At the same time, it can be designed with specializations for the purpose of extensively preparing persons for self-employment (and for job creation), equipping the self-employed with entrepreneurial competencies for the growth and development (job creation inclusive) of their ventures and/ or for developing SME development practitioners and even entrepreneurship educators.

Similarly, curriculum should be more adapted to the real world. Cooperation with business should be much closer. Higher Education Institutions should assist more in job-seeking in special dedicated units. The same units should provide support for alumni associations.

More job counselling is essential to ensure an efficient transformation from education to work. And it is essential to conduct tracer studies. First, tertiary education institutions have a big potential to push the frontiers of science, technology and innovation to greater heights; to do this, they need to adopt an innovative systems approach which focuses on making knowledge accessible for it to be used by all actors in the processes of innovation. In line with this, researchers and innovators in these institutions need a paradigm shift through which they stop looking at research, science, technology and innovation as ‘academic’, self-serving engagements but as vehicles for the growth and competitiveness of their organizations and the development of Nigeria’s economies.

Secondly, if 'science' as taught and practiced in tertiary education institutions is to meet and blend with the technology and innovation in the worlds of production in firms and farms, there needs to be convergences between this science and those technologies and innovations. In recent years such convergences have emerged in agricultural research. Apart from all these, there is also the need for:

1. Review and renew missions and visions of institutions of tertiary education to give them a sharper focus on science, technology and innovation.
2. Increase the share of student population studying science and engineering and ensure higher education follows an efficient system of vocational training and skills development, which feeds into the production of more technicians and engineers.
3. Strengthen the demand orientation of the courses taught and research carried out in the institutions of tertiary education to make them more relevant, location specific and embedded in local systems of production.
4. Increase opportunities and incentives for collaboration between industry and institutions of higher education.
5. Strengthen links with industry by getting industry players more involved in curriculum design, evaluation and innovation activities.
6. Focus more on African languages and other subjects which can support nation-building and national cohesion. In the field of social sciences, there is a need for economists, lawyers and accountants but also for anthropologists who can advise on the relationship between technology and social development.
7. Undertake regular and periodic tracer studies on the absorption of graduates into the labor market in order to help tertiary education institutions to undertake curriculum adjustments and innovation.
8. Make labour market analysis and a comprehensive labor market information system an integral part of the accreditation process.

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DIGITAL WELL-BEING BETWEEN LIFESTYLES IN LIMITED PANDEMIC CONDITIONS AND THE VARIED OFFER OF SOCIAL PLATFORMS

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Abstract : *The context of the new pandemic of 2020 came with new challenges that no one had faced before. The social interaction once generating pleasant experiences, beneficial to the individual, but also conflicts and pressures that moved almost completely to the virtual space where everyone was forced to create their own space for expression. This article highlights the challenge of online which offers on the one hand a multitude of tools, applications, platforms that invite the user to spend as much time there as possible, and on the other hand draws attention to digital well-being - a concept that focuses on the use of the virtual environment in a way that is as useful as possible and for the time being that does not affect the normal activity of an individual. Digital well-being is a wake-up call and a growing trend in social media that is improving the user's experience and time-consuming application interfaces.*

Keywords: *social media; limited pandemic conditions; digital well-being.*

1. Pandemic lifestyle

Any topic of discussion with any kind of approach to it today revolves around the only topic that has captured the whole of humanity - the pandemic generated by Coronavirus. The coordinate that divides any subject today is "before the pandemic" and after it. People had not yet woken up since the winter and the pandemic and the measures taken sent them back home.

Avoiding potentially dangerous physical contact comes as a shock to every individual, whether he is extroverted and accustomed to an active lifestyle, surrounded by people, or something more secluded for which interaction with others is limited. Most companies have moved offices from large and tall buildings to employees' homes, institutions have digitized as much as possible the activities previously carried out face to face, and in periods with increasing numbers of infections, age groups exposed to a higher probability of infection had the recommendation to go out at the indicated time intervals for activities of strict necessity.

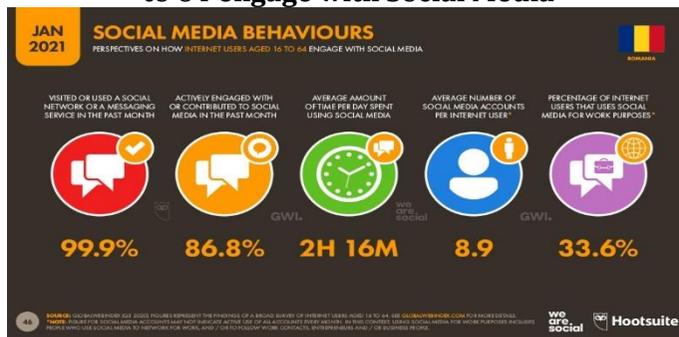
Limiting the exits according to everyone's preference caused waves, and the reactions were among the most controversial. The security of these meetings in front of the laptop, desktop, tablet or, the phone was a challenge, and if within the corporations the IT departments were vigilant in stopping any possibility of leaking data from the company, the Romanian school had at least in the first months of online some external presences that disrupt the activity and distort the purpose of meetings with teachers, educators or instructors. The problems were remedied in a relatively short time, which is not a guarantee that things cannot have a negative turn in the virtual educational environment in the future.

However, the measures taken seemed to have the necessary and sufficient arguments to limit the spread of the pandemic and its effects, so that a majority of

individuals complied with them. Each rethought its activities according to the factors of its life dynamics and looked for ways to adapt to the new reality that would not cease its effects too soon, after a few weeks as most of us hoped, but a few months later. Some of these measures even tend to be permanent.

The new lifestyle has familiarized many individuals with virtual social behaviors and has made those who were already accustomed to the ways of online communication and expression migrate to other channels or develop some skills on the Internet. If in the case of those with children of any age the activities of the house require a little more time, and social media platforms are perceived as an escape, entertainment, disconnection from that environment, single people felt the free time they otherwise spent in the city at various events, as an opportunity or a good opportunity to test new skills.

Figure 1: Social Media Behaviours. Perspectives on how internet users aged 16 to 64 engage with Social Media



Although specialists have warned about the excess time spent in front of the screens and its effects, the average number of applications per user in Romania is 9 (<https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-romania> - accessed on 19.02.2021), which, transposed in a relatively short browsing time on each platform, leads to a number of a few hours spent daily online. At the same time, Eurostat publishes an infographic with the degree of use of social platforms, and Romania with a percentage of 65% exceeds that of the European Union located somewhere at 59% (https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?query=BOOKMARK_DS-053730_QID-758A9195_UID-3F171EB0&layout=IND_TYPE,L,X,0;GEO,L,Y,0;TIME,C,Z,0;UNIT,L,Z,1;INDIC_IS,L,Z,2;INDICATOR_RS,C,Z,3;&zSelection=DS-053730INDICATORS.OBS_FLAG;DS-053730UNIT_PC_IND;DS-053730INDIC_IS,IUSNET;DS-053730TIME,2019;&rankName1=UNIT_1_2-1_2&rankName2=INDICATORS_1_2-1_2&rankName3=TIME_1_0_0_0&rankName4=INDIC-IS_1_2_0_0&rankName5=IND-TYPE_1_2_0_0&rankName6=GEO_1_2_0_1&rStp=&cStp=&rDCh=&cDCh=&rDM=true&cDM=true&footnes=false&empty=false&wai=false&time_mode=ROLLING&time_most_recent=true&lang=EN&cfo=%23%23%23%2C%23%23%23.%23%23%23 - accessed on 12.02.2021).

By age segments, 86% of users aged between 16 and 24 use social platforms, and a not negligible percentage is 23% of people aged between 64 and 75 years. By the degree of use of social platforms, we mean "the percentage of the population that has made user profiles or posted messages or other contributions on social media in the last 3 months until the time of data collection.

(<https://www.startupcafe.ro/marketing/romani-retele-sociale.htm> - accessed on 12.02.2021)."

The figures indicate that Romania's online transition did not happen with great difficulty, the physical distance recommended and imposed by the authorities leading rather to a virtual approach or a desire for greater exposure in the online environment, in the absence of the possibility of offline exposure.

2. Time spent online seen as a lockdown strategy

As time spent offline has dropped considerably due to measures to stop the virus, the world has moved online. Any activity that could be carried out remotely became virtual. School, work, leisure - everything has taken on a new form since March 2020. The trend towards increasing the online area has been predictable, and creators in the digital area have taken advantage of this opportunity to crowd the users. Each platform offered new functionalities, intuitiveness and access to as many categories of public as possible were the watchwords faced by technology specialists. The increase in the percentages of social media users, especially in the age segments between 35 and 64 years old, is proof of this and has determined IT industry specialists to adapt the interfaces of platforms, websites, blogs, applications for any type of screen so that it is easy for any user, more or less experienced.

Figure 2: Percentage of internet users who use online social platforms

| Social Media Users in Romania, H1 2019 & H1 2020 | | |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| <i>% of internet users, by demographic</i> | | |
| | H1 2019 | H1 2020 |
| Gender | | |
| Female | 89.2% | 88.7% |
| Male | 88.2% | 89.4% |
| Age | | |
| 16-24 | 89.8% | 88.9% |
| 25-34 | 89.8% | 86.4% |
| 35-44 | 87.6% | 89.6% |
| 45-54 | 89.2% | 89.7% |
| 55-64 | 86.7% | 91.6% |
| Annual household income group | | |
| High | 91.1% | 90.3% |
| Medium | 88.4% | 90.8% |
| Low | 88.7% | 87.0% |
| N/A* | 83.7% | 85.8% |
| Household location | | |
| Urban | 88.7% | 88.7% |
| Suburban** | - | - |
| Rural | 88.8% | 89.7% |
| Total | 88.7% | 89.1% |

Note: actively engaged with or contributed to at least one service in the past month via any device; services include Facebook, Facebook Messenger, Instagram, Line, LinkedIn, Pinterest, reddit, Sina Weibo, Skype, Slack, Snapchat, Tencent Weibo, Twitch, Twitter, WeChat, WhatsApp, YouTube and/or other; respondents were asked, "Which (of the following services) have you actively engaged with or contributed to in the past month via any device?"; *don't know/prefer not to say; **omitted due to small sample size
Source: GlobalWebIndex, Q1-Q2 2019 & Q1-Q2 2020, August 2020

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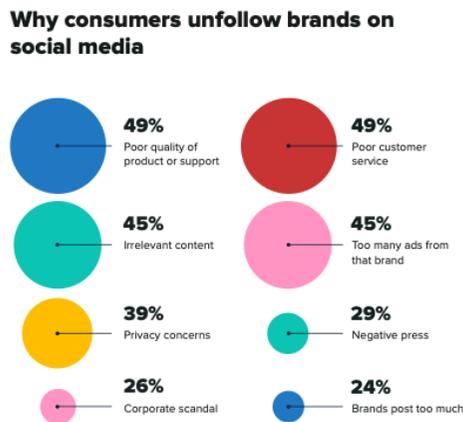
(https://www.globalwebindex.com/hubfs/Downloads/global-media-intelligence-report-2020.pdf?utm_campaign=Generic%20nurture%202019&utm_medium=email&hsmi=97800303&hsenc=p2ANqtz-96bz1_kgFkOQ7vV-FxIMfafbf3CvPERfonqd5NzlyoK0V8UtXqTkbKD9yb4kR7hULgmlxlsU8KoD0BtLUtcm_w_kc-A&utm_content=97800303&utm_source=hs_automation - accessed on 17.02.2021)

The above figures indicate an increase of about 5% for the age group over 55, which should come as no surprise given that we are talking about the most vulnerable

age group in a pandemic and with a way of predominantly offline socialization, through direct face-to-face interaction with others. The aspect of increasing the percentage of users among the rural population is an equally direct consequence of isolation and physical distancing, the increase of the percentage suggesting rather the adaptability of those in rural areas with online interaction, given that activities in rural Romania are time-consuming and leave more little room to stay online.

On the other hand, although the number of users of social platforms has increased, their tastes and interests have been refined and acquired some characteristics and directions. Although the pandemic has somehow forced an increase in the percentage of people who choose social platforms for information, entertainment, leisure, education, etc., users have become much more sensitive to the posts and content they find on their accounts. I'm watching them. They are much more attentive to what they are looking for and to whom they give their time.

Figure 3: Reasons why users refuse to follow brands



Source: <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-statistics/> - accessed on 19.02.2021

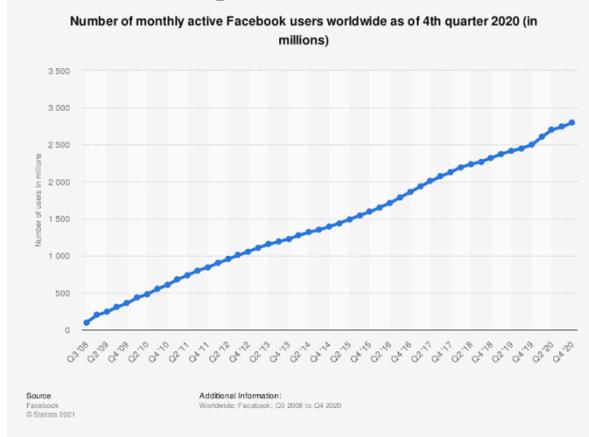
Content consumers, also called followers, are moving more towards quality posts from which they can extract something useful. 49% of users would unsubscribe from following a brand if it did not have relevant and quality content. At the same time, followers are very sensitive to the concern for them perceived as consumers of brands, the mere perception that brands do not care about customers or well-known customer service in a broadly perceptible sense user will leave that brand. Users also have a high sensitivity for irrelevant content or too many advertisements from brands, strong enough reasons for users to leave brands.

Thus we notice that on the one hand the creators of IT have implemented their knowledge according to the data collected from the market and the need of the public, and on the other hand, the simple aspects related to the use of an application and user experiences are not enough. The need for individuals to find something that resonates with is as important as the technical aspects through which they end up using applications and platforms.

3. New applications and folding on the needs of the consumer in the isolated house

Predictably, traditional social platforms have had increases in terms of the number of users, time dedicated to each application, the volume of content created and uploaded by people. Facebook had the same growth rate as before the pandemic, and other networks with a certain history remained on an upward trend.

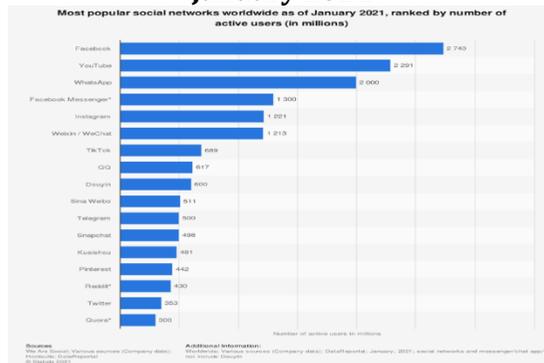
Figure 4: The trend of the social platform Facebook in the last months of 2020



Source: <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-statistics/> - accessed on 19.02.2021

After Facebook, which stands out at the top of traditional networks, the YouTube platform that provides video content and applications for written, audio or, video communication such as WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger occupies the first positions by the number of users worldwide, and immediately after Instagram appears. promoted for years in a row mainly the image and the photo followed at a very close score by another chat application. The percentages only show that the interaction in any form was and is a much healthier and more desirable choice than its lack.

Figure 5: The most popular social platforms by number of active users in January 2021



Source: <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-statistics/> - accessed on 19.02.2021

The network with the most spectacular growth during the pandemic was TikTok, an application that suggests from the description that any type of content is accepted there and that regardless of preferences, it is for everyone. A marketer says of this new social network that “at the moment, TikTok is one of the few mainstream places on the internet where you are not driven by any idealistic conception of what the application could be. Or, even more current, about who you could become. Nobody guesses why you're on the internet, at least in the beginning - until the algorithm knows exactly what kind of content to deliver to you. It's a feeling of security, even liberating, but also annoying at the same time. The Internet is no longer about the mystery of a parallel life or maybe it never was; nor about the actual connections as I thought when Facebook appeared. We have reached the point where the internet needs to be relatable, and TikTok is now what the internet can be in the next few years, the next decade, or why not, forever.” (<https://www.forbes.ro/tiktok-now-tiktok-forever-155038>)

On a trend of virtual social platforms already on the rise, is developing this young platform that allows any type of content, does not focus on finding friends around the world and connecting with them such as Facebook, or on the photographic skills of users such as it was Instagram in the beginning, it didn't want any elitist platform with specialists from various fields such as LinkedIn. The aspects that define TikTok are the short videos of a few seconds left to the user without imposing a certain direction in terms of its content. In the first year after launch, the platform had relatively slow growth, given the reluctance of new users, given the lack of a set of rules for the platform. However, since March 2020, the network has exploded precisely due to this aspect, the lack of a regulation or content directions.

If before the pandemic the world had its proper organizational strategy, and the desire to comply with various regulations was the watchword, after the moments of imposing restrictions, the platform, which at first seemed used by unemployed teenagers, captured interest by the possibility of does not follow any pattern. The transition from the ease of leaving homes without any restrictions to the careful scheduling of each road outside the home has transformed the application seen ironically before, as one in which if you feel to express something, anything, there is the right space. A virtual space that has no impositions of any kind, which also has the advantage of intuitive elements with which users can become video creators. The application provides a vast music library and only with a few own videos filmed at home about anything, to which you add a background song and a few other elements existing in the application you become a content creator that attracts followers.

A social network launched even in a pandemic and reached in a very short time to several million users confirms once again the need for people to create their online strategy to go through the pandemic and disconnect from the whole daily life full of news about Coronavirus. "Clubhouse" is the audio version of direct interaction platforms such as Zoom, Skype, MicrosoftTeams, GoogleMeet, etc. Users from anywhere in the world meet virtually based on common interests and talk like a conference in sessions called rooms, to take the floor, the wish must be signaled by a button, and the moderator of the respective meeting grants the "microphone" according to the order in which the wishers registered. Things go like an offline meeting, except that the application does not have video functionality, but only audio.

Although the apparent lack of this functionality makes it seem more strange or generate some questions about the purpose of this utility, having no official explanation for this detail, some experts believe that application developers have responded in this regard to a need in the market. Although online interaction platforms have seen significant increases in the number of downloads and uses, as was natural, there is a niche of users who refuse to appear in front of others with a webcam and be seen by other participants. at the meeting. The creators of the application understood that even in the online environment, the fear of public speaking and the fear of exposure persist, therefore they adopted the new formula for exchanging ideas to this need. Anyone's voice can be heard in this way, but the eye pressure to which the speakers are exposed is eliminated with the help of this application.

Certainly, the issue needs to be analyzed in-depth and connected with concrete data, but at the first level of analysis, IT experts seem to have understood the needs of experts in various fields who behind the level of expertise face exposure anxiety. TikTok and Clubhouse are the most spectacular examples of new platforms that people spend their time with.

Music applications or mostly niche audio content have also seen a visible increase. Since many of these applications contain sections where specialists in various fields upload podcasts in their field and topic of activity and interest, the audio content reveals its usefulness through the very possibility of doing something else while listening to an episode, a lesson, a collage of music. While the child is sitting at the family's laptop in a meeting with colleagues, the parent can take care of household chores and in the background be a podcast in which he learns or listens to various aspects of interest. Topics such as gardening, arranging the balcony, creating a small corner of nature in a block of flats had great searches on Google during the isolation, and those who owned a blog or a niche site understood this trend very well and adapted very quickly.

Figure 6: Digital Audio Listeners in Romania – percent of internet users, by demographic (2019 vs 2020)

| Digital Audio Listeners in Romania, H1 2019 & H1 2020 | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| <i>% of Internet users, by demographic</i> | | |
| | H1 2019 | H1 2020 |
| Gender | | |
| Female | 51.3% | 69.7% |
| Male | 63.3% | 67.4% |
| Age | | |
| 16-24 | 88.3% | 82.0% |
| 25-34 | 60.3% | 73.5% |
| 35-44 | 48.6% | 65.7% |
| 45-54 | 42.9% | 58.7% |
| 55-64 | 44.1% | 61.0% |
| Annual household income group | | |
| High | 60.9% | 65.4% |
| Medium | 54.5% | 68.1% |
| Low | 59.5% | 73.7% |
| N/A* | 51.4% | 62.5% |
| Household location | | |
| Urban | 55.9% | 67.6% |
| Suburban** | - | - |
| Rural | 63.8% | 71.5% |
| Total | 57.4% | 68.6% |

Note: services include Apple Music, Audible, Deezer, Google Play Music, iTunes, Musify, SoundCloud, Spotify and/or others; respondents were asked, "In the last month, which of these services have you used to listen to/download music, radio or audiobook content? Please think about any sort of music, radio or audiobook content that you have listened to, streamed, downloaded or accessed in any other way."; * don't know/prefer not to say; **omitted due to small sample size
Source: GlobalWebIndex, Q1-Q2 2019 & Q1-Q2 2020, August 2020
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Source: <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-statistics/> - accessed on 19.02.2021

The data show increases by several percent of audio applications in both rural and urban segments, the increases being similar in gender categories.

4. The concept of digital well-being

As it is easy to notice, both from statistics and a simple observation around us, digital is at every step and enjoys very fast development and adaptation. With the help of technology we communicate with our loved ones, we hold conferences at work, we access any type of information we want, we make our products and services known or we use technological tools for our promotion.

The device we enter today is no longer connected to an office, a physical space, and has a single element called a smartphone. If you take the desktop a bit harder with you with a suite of components needed to be useful, today we have only one gadget that includes writing programs, editing, social media, photos and, videos or you may too well keep a speech or even a course. Only on social platforms, a Romanian user spends on average 3 hours and 36 minutes a day, and "an ordinary adult checks his mobile phone about 50 times every day, while younger people do this much more often, over 80 times."

(<https://learndigital.withgoogle.com/atelieruldigital/course/digital-wellbeing/lesson/221#!#%2F> - accessed on 17.02.2021)

The aspect can have both positive and negative valences, depending on the arguments brought and their solidity. On the one hand, we are talking about work efficiency through all applications and platforms with the variety of tools useful for each activity. The same discussion includes creating opportunities for leisure and the new forms of self-education and self-training should not be omitted either. We thus notice a changed, strongly digitized behavior that is seduced by the creativity of IT people. Aspects such as UI and UX (<https://www.usertesting.com/blog/ui-vs-ux> - accessed on 18.02.2021) make a significant impact on each user, causing them to stay there as long as possible. Justifiably the specialists, but also the users, ask themselves how good is the time spent online. Even when we talk about the one used for educational purposes, is the efficiency the same as in the case of classical study? The pandemic did not offer other alternatives, so there are certainly cases in which the platforms have reached their goal and others in which they have not. But except for the training and learning aspect, how long would it be appropriate to explore online? Where exactly do we put the boundary between beneficial and harmful? There is no valid general answer, which is why the concept of "digital well-being" has emerged, which in the opinion of Google specialists "involves creating and maintaining a healthy relationship with technology. The concept refers to the way in how technology helps us to achieve our goals, without distracting, interrupting, or being an obstacle in their way. If we have control over technology, we can reap its full potential and all its advantages"

(<https://learndigital.withgoogle.com/atelieruldigital/course/digital-wellbeing/lesson/221#!#%2F> - accessed on 17.02.2021).

The interest in digital well-being has materialized through applications in most smartphones that monitor time spent online and are like assistants who warn the user that the time set by him for spending on social networks has been exceeded. All smartphones can indicate the time spent online and where you lingered the most, but

some apps work as online stay advisors based on your initial individual settings. However, the use of these tools is overshadowed by the possibility of extracting relevant data and percentages. What may seem useful to one user from one platform, to another may seem captivating in terms of entertainment, so application settings can count at most the time allotted and networks where users linger longer.

Although the desire and intention of digital well-being are already in discussions and applications, specialists have not come up with objective solutions to achieve it, other than the timing of time spent on one platform or another. So the solution of digital well-being also lies in the subjectivism of each individual and his perception of his existence online. In other words, although we have applications for almost anything, digital welfare metering is still at the discretion of each user and their management. So our analysis of the time spent online and the purposes for which we give the virtual area our time resource is visible in antithesis with the vast offer of social platforms.

One solution to support the user to be aware of the time allocated to online - in any form - would be to include in smartphone applications a series of periodic rankings based on their responses to the purpose for which they were in an application or another. Of course, this also involves the involvement of each user and the use of the same time resource that he can allocate to viewing photos on Instagram or videos on TikTok instead of giving answers to an application on the phone. At the same time, such an approach may seem intrusive, as the individual's first reaction is to defend or feel questioned, although the purpose of such a questionnaire would be for a long-term digital welfare strategy.

The discussions will probably be divided for a long time from now on and until there is real cooperation between users and specialists in digital health and well-being. Even if some existing applications for digital well-being are improved, application and platform developers may see this as a threat to their products and services, and this will put even more pressure on perfecting user experiences enough to seduce them for as long as possible.

At the same time, the last generations are more and more digitalized and this context is normal for today's young people, they do not raise the issue of digital welfare in any way and call for an application for most of their activities. Without going into the psychological effects of this phenomenon, it is increasingly visible that today's society must counteract this profound digitization of young generations with truly captivating offline options.

5. Conclusions

In a society hard hit by a pandemic that no one had predicted, we are all unwittingly subject to rules that, even if we find it difficult to integrate them into our economy of life, are meant to make us better and for a return to normalcy with which we were already comfortable. For now, no one can say clearly when we will return to normal, so the adaptability to each new experience brought by the current situation is all we have at hand.

Online is the word for any interaction between several individuals, and those who prefer face-to-face communication and the exchange of ideas without any technological support have fully felt this challenge of the virtual that has taken the place of offline. But as it was one of the few measures that seemed to be the best for a

return to normal as soon as possible, individuals created/improvised their corner of the house where they could mark their presence and bring their contribution to a job or free time. The explosion of media platforms overlapped over the first period of the lockdown, which was a shock for most and which they had to mitigate or overcome in their way.

The world of IT, however, very quickly adaptable to user requirements, came with a quick response, creating the necessary tools so that the transition from offline to online can take place in optimal conditions. They adapted platforms that did not support a very large number of users, changed interfaces on the fly, and made them more friendly to those for whom, even if they did not need them, they at least had time to allocate it out of curiosity.

An application that no one gave much importance to its launch, which seemed to target audiences teenagers who want to create fun content and share it with others, has grown unexpectedly long, and a quarter of users today is people over 50 years old, who constantly post and open the application almost daily. The desire not to just watch the content of others led to the creation of their short videos through which people manage to escape from everyday life with increasing numbers of infections.

Another application created right in the pandemic brings a new utility - one in which everyone can take the floor can reveal their voice without having the pressure of many eyes on him. The platform seems to respond psychologically to experts in certain fields who can make significant contributions to the area in which they operate, but who suffer from the fear of public speaking. This fear is known to be the strongest after the fear of death, therefore, the creators of IT have combined the elements of utility with those of psychology and have covered a seemingly unmet need so far.

Traditional social networks and their related applications have remained predictably in the charts, also adapting their functionalities to the new data of reality. With a much larger volume of time spent online than offline, there is the problem of finding a mechanism to count the time spent online, but also its usefulness, its efficiency. Some brands have included in their phone settings applications that bring together a new concept, digital well-being, but have not found the necessary tools to attract people to declare there how much time spent online has been effective and how not. We are not referring here to the very small percentage of users who search for such applications and carefully monitor their online activity, analyzing it pragmatically and acting immediately. The direction of this approach is the large mass of people who are seduced by the online environment without making their work more efficient or improving their well-being but especially without being aware of the large time allocated online. Awareness of the time allocated to the virtual environment is especially important because it can send the user to subjective reflections on the usefulness of the hours and minutes spent on an application or platform. This reflection on one's user behavior leads him to perceive the concept of digital well-being and to understand the need to improve this aspect.

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THE TEACHING OF HISTORY IN HIGH SCHOOLS AND TECHNICAL COLLEAGUES IN CAMEROON: PATERNALISM OR NEOCOLONIALISM SINCE 1960?

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Abstract : *In the aftermath of its independence, Cameroon, called upon to define itself the main lines of its development, sets up at the level of education a system which seems nowadays to glorify the metropolis. Thus, the different arrangements of the programs stand out with difficulty from Western studies. However, the teaching of history should not only give students a greater awareness of their cultural identity and promote understanding between peoples, but also shape in them, national integration, and the strengthening of patriotism. This teaching seems somehow to be oriented towards the knowledge of Western civilization. In addition, the manuals put in place or used remain and remain those written by the tenants of Eurocentric thought.*

Key words: *history; teaching; education; textbooks.*

1. Introduction

The education system in Cameroon is set up through the political will to literacy, socialize and enhance citizens. Thus, since 1960, multiple commissions have been organized and have sat in order to revise the programs in History, Geography and Education in Citizenship and Morality (ECM). The last one, which dates from February 9, 2001, does not always seem to meet the expectations and hopes raised by a good number of historians of the territory. This is all the more remarkable when we observe that all the programs adopted since 1960 are difficult to separate from the studies of Western civilization. We then wonder if this initiative is part of the colonial administration system or a metropolitan imposition through neocolonialism? More, Cameroon is it so poor in past events of such fate that the need imposes to go to search elsewhere? These are the lines of exploration that this study proposes by presenting and deciphering some programs of technical and vocational secondary education.

2. Some programs in the history of commercial and industrial technical education in Cameroon and the reasons for their adoption

2.1. Presentation of some second cycle programs: case of second and first year classes

In the second class (Order n° 60 / D / 53 / MINEDUC / IGP / ESTP of February 9, 2001) revising the programs of the classes of the First and Second cycle of technical and vocational secondary education, the annual program provides for seven lessons distributed as follows:

- Lesson 1: political ideologies in France
- Lesson 2: Political ideologies in Great Britain
- Lesson 3: Economic and Social Ideologies in England

- Lesson 4: the consequences of the movements of ideas in the world
- Lesson 5: Scientific and Technical Advances in Africa: Egypt
- Lesson 6: Scientific and technical progress in Europe
- Lesson 7: Scientific and Technical Progress in Asia: China.

Concerning the first classes (Order n ° 60 / D / 53 / MINEDUC / IGP / ESTP of February 9, 2001), they have a set of twelve lessons throughout a school year. Thus, we have:

- Lesson 1: scientific, technical and economic transformations
- Lesson 2: social transformations and the working class condition
- Lesson 3: ideologies: liberalism and socialism
- Lesson 4: the evolution of production techniques since 1850
- Lesson 5: the evolution of work since 1850
- Lesson 6: the socialist international
- Lesson 7: imperialist doctrines
- Lesson 8: conquests and resistance in Africa
- Lesson 9: conquests and resistance in Cameroon
- Lesson 10: the economic exploitation of settlements
- Lesson 11: Africa and the First World War
- Lesson 12: Cameroon and the First World War.

3.1. The actors and the reasons for adopting these programs

3.1.1. Those involved in the review and adoption of programs

According to the explanatory memorandum for the revision of the History and Geography programs of 2001, it is " on the instructions of the hierarchy that a technical commission composed of experienced teachers, English and French speakers, proceeded to the revision and to the updating of the History and Geography program of vocational technical secondary education. " And if we observe closely, we realize that this hierarchy is nothing other than the minister in charge of responsible for secondary education. This one works in collaboration with the inspectors, the delegates, the secretariat of education and the heads of establishments. The Minister gives instructions to the latter authorizing them to update the programs intended for teaching (circular n ° 53 / D / 64MINEDUC / IGP / ESG / IPN-HG). This is why this block has been put in place for years to bring a broad vision to teaching in Cameroonian schools with a view to perfecting the education system. This initiative cannot be implemented without objective reasons. For that, what justifies the government's attitude to look into the overhaul of programs?

3.1.2. Reasons for adopting these programs

The states general of education and the 1st national forum on technical and vocational secondary education had recommended the overhaul of education programs because of a number of data deemed unsatisfactory. In fact, since the independence of African countries, the Cameroonian government in the search for the intellectual balance of its citizens never tired of revising the programs allocated to

teaching. In History, Geography and ECM, the redesign of the programs has only taken place several times. We can have as examples:

- The History and Geography programs adopted by the conference of ministers of national education of French-speaking African and Malagasy countries in 1963 (circular n° 53 / D / 64MINEDUC / IGP / ESG / IPN-HG),
- The reorganization of the programs of October 8, 1973 (Circular n° 70 / G / 49 / MINEDUC / SG / SAP of 08/10/1973),
- The reorganization of the programs of February 16, 1979 (Circular n° 21 / D / 1964 / MIEDUC / SG / IGP / IPN-HG of February 16, 1979),
- The reorganization of the programs of November 15, 1990 (Circular n° 53 / D / 64 / MIEDUC / IGP / ESG / IPN-HG of November 15, 1990),
- The reorganization of the programs of May 28, 2001 (Order n° 3645 / D / 64 / MINEDUC / SG / IGE / IGP / SH)

These various modifications are justified by the government's concern to give students a broad awareness of their identity, to promote the strengthening of the current understanding between peoples on the one hand, national integration and the affirmation of the Cameroonian personality (Circular n° 53 / D / 64 / MIEDUC / IGP / ESG / IPN-HG of November 15, 1990) In view of these orientations, the revision of the History programs thus placed the emphasis on:

- Adaptation to the needs of the future technician;
- The agreement of a large place to the study of the History and the geographical framework of the country where the future technician will have his activity;
- The privilege of the thematic approach of the facts in History without neglecting the chronology;
- The promotion of scientific, technical, technological and economic culture;
- a concern of updating, because those existing were very old.

All of these main lines constitute the leitmotif which in 2001 would have pushed the minister in charge of secondary education with his collaborators to reorganize the programs in the different classes. After more than a decade of using these new programs above, what can we see?

3.1.3. History programs adopted in technical education in Cameroon between paternalism and neocolonialism

If the independence of the French-speaking African states were to lead to the "Africanization" of personnel and educational programs, it was difficult to make a sudden break with the colonial heritage. The structures could not function without transitional aid from French technical assistance and the very content of the lessons raised questions. Indeed, the elites of African governments were often attached to the French cultural model and it seemed necessary to ensure a certain homogeneity for African students wishing to pursue their higher studies in France. Political independence therefore did not mean the end of the links between the old metropolis and the African part of its Empire. The search for a balance was negotiated in the many cooperation agreements concluded between 1960 and 1962(Manner, 2010: pp. 163-190).

In view of the analysis made by this author, it is clear that since colonization there have been very deep roots between France and its colonies as well as its associated territories. For this, measures had been taken to strengthen ties after decolonization. The Africanization of educational programs was proving difficult in a context where independence had been acquired in bloodshed and in the division of nationalist leaders. In the name of technical assistance, many agreements had been signed between France and its former possessions after 1960.

4. Towards the establishment of intellectual neocolonialism in Africa and Cameroon

Long before the end of the tutelage, the French metropolis had already thought about its relationship with its colonies and associated territories after independence. This is why, as early as 1944 in Brazzaville, she had debated on the bases of a new association between her and her overseas territories. She decides to set aside the spirit of secession among Africans in exchange for their aspirations to become adults, to be involved in the management of their own affairs and the realization of their own destiny. At the same time when France granted independence to its overseas territories, an academy had been created in West Africa with at its head, a rector, structures and diplomas comparable to what existed in France. (Capelle, 1990).

The process of Africanization of education had to take place in this particular context, straddling the new national ambitions of African states and a strong centripetal tendency linking them to the French system. The search for a balance was negotiated in the numerous cooperation agreements concluded between 1960 and 1962, which were to organize the transition between the two political systems (Manner, 2010: pp. 163-190). With the establishment of this new legal framework, consultation between France and African countries was developed around a series of meetings which regularly brought together French and African representatives from 1959 (Liaison bulletin, Ministry of National Education, 1960: 3).

The table below mentions the various agreements signed at the end of the said meetings.

Table 1: List of the main educational cooperation agreements between France and the African and Malagasy States (1960-1964)

| Country | Agreement dates | Primary education | Higher Education | Publication in the Official Journal, Laws and decrees. |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|--|
| Cameroon | November 13, 1960 | X | | August 9, 1961 |
| Cameroon | August 8, 1962 | | X | Aug 4, 1963 |
| Council of the Entente (Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Upper Volta, Niger) | April 24, 1961 | X | X | February 6, 1962 |
| Federation of Mali | June 22, 1960 | | X | July 20, 1960 |
| Gabon | Aug 17, 1960 | | X | November 24, 1960 |
| Guinea | July 29, 1961 | X | | April 19, 1962 |

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---|---|-------------------|
| Madagascar | April 2, 1960 | | X | July 20, 1960 |
| Mali | February 02, 1962 | X | | July 10, 1964 |
| Mauritania | June 19, 1961 | X | X | February 6, 1962 |
| Chad, Congo, Central African Republic | Aug 15, 1960 | X | X | November 24, 1960 |
| Senegal | May 15, 1964 | | X | January 16, 1966 |
| Togo | July 10, 1963 | X | | June 10, 1964 |

Source: Manner, 2010: 163-190.

By observing this table closely, we realize that these legal agreements reinforced the domination of France on its former territories. Gold, the French community established by the constitution of October 4, 1958 recognized the internal autonomy of African states previously belonging to the French Union. In the field of education, each state became responsible for its own education system. Unfortunately, after their signatures, it proceeded to experiment with its intellectual neocolonialist system.

5. The experimentation of intellectual neocolonialism in Cameroon

5.1. Educational programs glorifying metropolises

Despite the initiatives of the Ahidjo and Biya governments to strengthen the education system in Cameroon, the finding remains almost alarming because these developments are difficult to separate from the studies of Western civilizations. However, history teaching in technical and vocational secondary classes in the country should support future technicians in:

- Become aware of your cultural identity,
- Develop a national feeling and contribute to the affirmation of the national personality,
- Create a self-awareness allowing him to situate himself in relation to others,
- Strengthen your sense of patriotism,
- Promote national integration,
- Put within his reach the true historical knowledge of his country and his continent,
- Make him know his living environment so that he can measure its potentialities and limits for his development.

On the other hand, these programs do not really fit in with the socio-cultural realities of the African continent, thus leaving wide thought to believe that the cradle of humanity is without history, as the tenors of the Hegelian conception have maintained in the past. When we take a look at the programs in our vocational high schools and technical colleges, it is clear that they participate in the complacency or the glorification of our ancient metropolises. In the second year classes, the emphasis is on the study of political, economic and social ideologies in France and England. Four lessons out of the seven in the program focus on this theme, or 71.42% of the program.

In the first year classes, five out of twelve lessons still seem to swear allegiance to these powers. These lessons focus on ideologies already studied in second and fourth year. To this must be added the study of the evolution of work, of production techniques, of the working-class condition and of the socialist international in Europe. These lessons leave enormous indelible consequences on the training of students.

At the end of his schooling, the technician learning in Cameroon is unable to express himself with ease on the facts and historical knowledge of the continent in general and of Cameroon in particular. In addition to these neocolonialist methods linked to the development of programs, French assistance or paternalism is added, which paralyzes the education system in Cameroon.

5.2. Technical assistance and internships granted to Cameroonians: a vast field of experimentation with neocolonialist milestones

At the time of independence, the workings of African states were still to be built and the essential object of cultural agreements was to organize French technical assistance. It consisted of providing supplies of material and money, but one of the most urgent tasks was to provide French personnel and to train Africans. In the context of education, the needs were not the least. Inspectors and teachers were needed for the courses. Thus, many French people in the framework of bilateral cooperation remained in Cameroon to ensure management in the field of education. In doing so, they have occupied positions of great responsibility and have long dictated their points of view to the Cameroonian governing body. This is more noticeable in the programs and manuals used. While it is true that Cameroonian authors appear in the list of textbooks (E. Mveng for example), it should be noted that most of the authors used for the preparation of lessons come from the metropolis (Sentou and Carbonell, 1982). . Sometimes it is less qualified or less literate executives than the nationals who are at the base of the orientation of the education system; which leaves much to be desired in terms of performance. Sometimes it is managers who are less qualified or less literate than the nationals who are at the base of the orientation of the education system; which leaves much to be desired in terms of performance. Sometimes it is less qualified or less literate executives than the nationals who are at the base of the orientation of the education system; which leaves much to be desired in terms of performance.

Table 2: Distribution of teachers in West Africa during the 1963-1964 school year)

| | Number of technical assistance teachers | Total number of teaching staff | Proportion of technical assistants in the teaching staff |
|---------------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|
| First degree | 470 | 27 762 | 1.69% |
| Second degree short cycle | 1,149 | 1,518 | 75.69% |
| Second degree long cycle | 1,863 | 2 190 | 85.07% |
| Superior | 1,042 | 1,151 | 90.53% |

Source: Ministry of Cooperation, General Directorate of Cultural and Technical Affairs, Activity Report, 1963-1964.

Apart from this technical assistance in matters of inspection or teaching, a few rare training seminars have been organized in France where certain Cameroonian teachers of nationalities have been invited to take part. These intellectual meetings are the places where French policies are popularized since they serve as models for the assisted states. After half a century of freedom, Africa in general and Cameroon in particular should already take commendable development initiatives. Historians should tirelessly address questions relating to the continent's historical past.

In principle, if the historian is the guardian of tradition and the guardian of time, what should we leave to future generations as historical riches in our civilizations? Should we sit back and let the recommendations of Ki Zerbo and Cheik Anta Diop sink, which called for the history of Africa to be rewritten? If the latter have led and won the fight around an existence of African history, it is high time for historians of the present century to highlight it and include it in school curricula.

6. The need for a new overhaul of programs

6.1. The reasons

Several motivations plead in favor of a need to revise history programs in Cameroonian technical and professional establishments. It is from the observations resulting from the socio-cultural evolution of the Cameroonian populations that these ideas of redesigning the programs were born; because those in place are considered unsatisfactory. In addition to making the glory of the old powers, the following observations emerge:

- They are repetitive (case of 4th year, 2nd and 1st year classes),
- They are very old and unsuited to the realities for a world that has become competitive at the international level,
- They do not take into account the specificities of technical education with the Cameroonian reality in a world in perpetual change,
- They are very long in some classes,
- They do not put enough emphasis on the technological and economic aspect,
- They are poorly organized, especially with regard to the study of Cameroon.

In the light of these difficulties, it is urgently desirable that the authorities take a hard look at this issue so that Cameroonian citizens can be taught their history as well as that of Africa.

6.2. Why teach Cameroonian and African history to Cameroonians?

We cannot understand the current situation of the African continent without analyzing it in the light of the continent's complex legacies. This one was "born" neither with the independence some fifty years ago, nor with the colonization nearly a century before, nor with the "discovery" by the Portuguese at the end of the 15th century: the Europeans only discovered and built "their" Africa, even though they were, without knowing it, the latest arrivals in a long history of globalization. Because Africans have never lived in isolation, if only because humanity was born there (Coquéry Vidrovitch, <http://aggiornamento.hypotheses.org/qui-sommes-nous>).

According to Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, the African continent has a rich and diverse history. This one must be the subject of interminable excavations and of which the researchers must invest themselves to nourish the thought. For this, it is

important to bring it to the knowledge of the daughters and sons of the continent so that they find their real social and cultural identities. Africa has provided so much to humanity that it becomes immoral to let darkness hang over this glorious and worthy history. Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch even says that from this story, the world owes a lot to Africa. This debt can only be known through the teaching of said history. For her:

- Africa was located at the crossroads of three worlds, the first of which has been mentioned since Antiquity and the second described since the tenth century by Arab travelers and geographers: the Mediterranean-Afro-Asian world, the oldest, which was sustainably supplied with gold from Western Sudan via trans-Saharan caravans. Herodotus spoke of it already in the 5th century BC, evoking the Phoenicians who practiced this "silent barter" beyond the "Pillars of Hercules".
- the Indian Ocean world, which flourished between the 5th and 15th centuries, and was nourished by gold from Zimbabwe via the major port of Sofala, which was its main outlet on the Indian Ocean. An archaeologist even exclaimed that the eastern coasts of Africa were "paved with Chinese porcelain".
- Finally the Atlantic world, the last to arrive, only in the second half of the 15th century. The Europeans did not "discover" Africa, they only discovered "their" Africa. And since at the same time they discovered the gold of the Caribbean and the silver of Mexico, it is the men they are going to traffic in Africa. What is more: it is African gold that financed Portuguese shipbuilding and the first plantations (Coquery Vidrovitch, <http://aggiornamento.hypotheses.org/qui-sommes-nous>).

The importance of this declaration is summed up in the diversity of the historical richness of the continent. Thus, it is important to tidy up the programs in Cameroon by emphasizing the major themes referring to the life of Africans in general and Cameroonians in particular. We know the greatness of the medieval African empires (Ghana, Mali, Songhai) which established their power on this international trade. Africa has therefore been a major supplier of raw materials essential to European industry. This role has been impeccable in the globalization of trade through trans-Saharan or transatlantic trade.

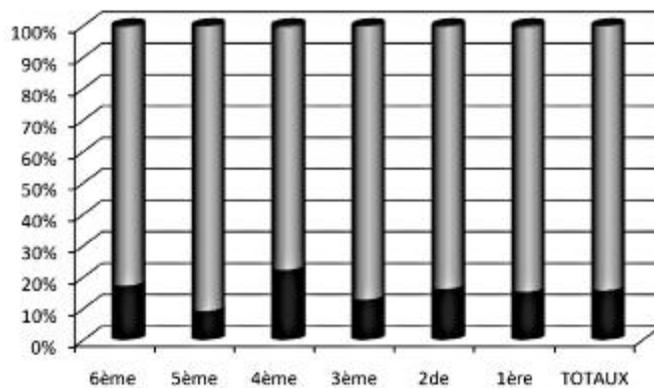
In the French programs, one wonders if the citizens of the metropolis also receive the teachings concerning Cameroon. Even though in 2009 the history programs in French colleges and high schools have undergone changes in this direction, it must be said that these new programs have created a lot of commotion. A French collective called "Our history is our future" has launched a campaign "to promote and defend the history of France and its teaching in public education" by fighting the integration of the teaching of African history in these French colleges and lycées. For this collective:

The teaching of African history provided for by the new programs (decided upon when Xavier Darcos moved to National Education) (...) would have sacrificed the teaching of Louis XIV and Napoleon for the benefit of that of the history of France. 'Africa. Historian Dimitri Casali, one of the main voices who brought the debate to the fore, assures us that the fourth year program includes the study of the slave trade (3

hours) "while the entire history of the Revolution and the Empire ships in less than 8 hours ". Likewise, Louis XIV, would henceforth be studied at the end of the fifth year program "at the end of an enormous program on which we will have lingered at length on the African civilizations of Monomotapa and Songhaï and on the Eastern slave trade" (Sionneau, When teaching, in [http:// nouvelleobs.com](http://nouvelleobs.com)).

Many French intellectuals therefore persist in teaching the history of foreigners at home because, according to them, this exercise would have a negative impact on the teaching of the history of their great figures that we continue to teach in Cameroon. It is easy to understand the intellectual terrorism carried out by French neocolonialism in the teaching of history in Africa and Cameroon. In 1962, a conference was held in which the question of inserting African historical facts into French programs was part of the agenda. At the end of the day, the analysis of the history programs recommended by the said conference clearly shows the reluctance to integrate the lessons devoted to Africa into the teaching content: this distribution does not exceed 19% for the entire secondary level (Manner, 2010: 163-190) as shown in the diagram below.

Figure 1: Distribution of lessons devoted to Africa in the history curricula recommended by the conference of June 1962



Source : Manner, 2010: 163-190.

Compared to 71% of lessons on Europe taught in the 2nd grade in Cameroon, only around 12% are given at the same levels in favor of Africa as a whole and not Cameroon in France. Faced with this situation, Africans owe it to themselves to defend their ideas in order to impose their dreams, their awareness-raising methods, their great autodafés where they have become all consenting slaves of European myths. They must also intensify research on the history of their continent, failing which Nicolas Sarkozy will continue to be right when he declares that:

The tragedy of Africa is that African man has not entered history enough. The African peasant, who for thousands of years has lived with the seasons, whose ideal of life is to be in harmony with nature, knows only the eternal recommencement of time punctuated by the endless repetition of the same gestures and same words. In this imagination where everything always starts anew, there is no room for the human adventure, nor for the idea of progress. In this universe where nature commands everything, man escapes the anguish of history which grips modern man but man remains motionless in the midst of an immutable order where everything seems to be

written in advance. Man never rushes into the future. It never occurs to him to leave rehearsal to invent a fate for himself. The problem of Africa and let a friend from Africa say it, there it is. The challenge for Africa is to make more history (Sarkozy, 2007).

Likewise, African teachers must realize the gravity of things and put more emphasis in their teaching on the values of Africa. The ruling political class must also stop playing the role of puppet in order to allow a real take-off in the teaching of the true history of their country. If this is not the case, we will also agree with De Jean Sevilla when he quotes Robespierre and Trotsky who, while praising the domination of metropolitan ideas, affirmed that these " managed to pass, despite these leaders (...) who had no real revolutionary consciousness and who gave themselves ridiculous feelings to furnish their mediocre moral life without real adventure " (Sevilla, 2004: 3).. This act aims to make a clean sweep of the African past and illuminate that of metropolitan France. This is why we qualify it with Sevilla as intellectual terrorism. Moreover, he himself in his paragraphs affirms that:

In 1950, the elites extolled Stalin. In 1960, they ensured that decolonization would bring happiness overseas. In 1965, they ignited for Mao or Castro... For fifty years, the minds refractory to this discourse were discredited, and the facts which contradicted the dominant ideology were ignored. This is intellectual terrorism (Sevilla, 2004: 3).

Teaching African history to Africans would make it possible to break with the scraps of knowledge of this history in the classrooms which boils down to the slave trade and colonization. These major themes would also make it possible to fight gently and with solid arguments against prejudice and racism.

7. Conclusion

The technical and commercial secondary classes in Cameroon, in the light of this study, truly constitute the bases for the materialization of neocolonialism and intellectual terrorism. These programs which are taught there only perpetuate the domination of the old metropolises while the country and Africa as a whole have a very rich and unknown history. Programming this knowledge for the benefit of students would be welcome for the advancement of the continent. The world is constantly changing, which is why each block of the globe must move to carve out a place of choice for itself in the concert of the great nations. This is undoubtedly what prompted Camille Niaufre on the subject of the teaching of African history to think that:

The revaluation of the history of ancient Africa in school curricula appears to be the logical mirror of the evolution of the world, less European-centered and more multipolar. But while the inclusion of the study of "Han China at its peak" or "Classical India in the fourth and fifth centuries" in the sixth grade program, responding to the same logic, has done little. waves, the introduction of the study of the great African empires still arouses strong reactions. The oblivion into which they fell in the collective culture is deep, and the representations inherited from centuries of domination are still powerful (Niaufre, in [http: // wordpress.com/about-these-ads/](http://wordpress.com/about-these-ads/))

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SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES OFFERED TO HOMELESS PEOPLE

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Abstract: *The main objective of this article is to provide a detailed picture of the social services network currently in operation, to identify the development needs of certain categories of services that are missing or insufficient. The literature and the latest reports highlight the fact that not only in Europe, but all over the world there is a growing demand for social services. As social needs diversified, the number of potential users of social services increased, and this led to an increase in the complexity of social services provided. Primary social services are the complex set of measures and actions taken to respond to individual, family or group social needs, of a general nature and aimed at preventing or limiting situations of difficulty or vulnerability. These primary social services are: activities to identify individual, family and group social needs; information activities on rights and obligations; social awareness and sensitization measures and actions; emergency measures and actions to reduce the effects of crisis situations; measures and support actions in order to keep people in difficulty in the community; counseling activities and services; measures and activities of community organization and development in the social plan to encourage participation and social solidarity; any other measures and actions aimed at preventing or limiting situations of difficulty or vulnerability, which may lead to marginalization or social exclusion.*

Key words: *social services; social protection, homeless people; vulnerable group, social exclusion.*

1. Introduction

In 2011 in Romania over 162,375 people were homeless, according to the 2011 Census. In 2019, in order to benefit from the legislative provisions for low-income and vulnerable people, counseling activities were held for 26,409 people alone and for 59,929 families. Regarding access to housing, during 2019, local councils facilitated access to housing for 8,742 single people and 6,552 marginalized families. Access to housing was achieved through the construction, purchase or rental of housing. In 2019, at national level, 27 conventions were registered, which ensured the access to public services of strict necessity. 3,895 single people and 2,336 marginalized families benefited. The need to identify and assess local social issues is also mentioned in the National Strategy on Inclusion and Poverty Reduction (2015-2020).

The phenomenon of street children received increased attention after 1990, but studies on their number and profile are very few. Through quantitative research - Assessing the phenomenon of "street children and youth" (2014), Save the Children caught the evolution of the phenomenon both from the perspective of the volume of this population, and especially from the perspective of the social profile of these people. Analyzing the volume of this population, children and young people who live temporarily or permanently on the streets in Bucharest and who are between 0 and 35 years old, it was thus reached a population volume of 1235 (in Bucharest).

Of the total respondents, 58% stated that they live permanently on the street (or in makeshift shelters - sewerage system, abandoned cars, abandoned buildings, makeshift homes, tents, etc.), and 42% have a home, but spend part of it time on the street, carrying out various activities to procure money¹⁰ - begging (44% of them), collecting waste (33%), performing various occasional jobs (23%) etc. Of the children and young people living on the streets, 58% are boys and 42% are girls. Another study on estimating the number of homeless people was conducted by the Samusocial Organization of Romania (2010), provider of social assistance, medical services, psychological counseling for homeless adults in the Capital shows in an activity report, according to official estimates, the fact that, in 2010, in Bucharest there are a number of approximately 5,000 street adults, the number of new beneficiaries registered by the Mobile Teams and at the Samusocial Day Center in Romania in April, May and June exceeded 430 homeless people.

In Romania, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection (MMPS) - Social Services Policy Department reported in 2019, a number of 1,515 homeless people. Corresponding to 2019, 2,948 people were reported without a home or residence and without housing receiving a guaranteed minimum income. In accordance with the provisions of Law no. 116/2002, the local councils, through the specialized working apparatus, must offer free counseling services in order to benefit from the rights established by this law. In the European Union, the European Parliament estimates that there will be 700,000 homeless people in 2019, with a rising level across the continent, with the exception of Finland, which has reported a 45% drop. Latvia increased by 389% between 2009 and 2017, and in Ireland, the number of homeless people increased by 203% between 2014 and 2018. Lack of housing is at the heart of poverty and social exclusion, and closely linked to unemployment.

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as: chronic diseases, begging, dropping out of school, labor exploitation, sexual exploitation, prostitution, drug trafficking, drug and alcohol addiction, leading to death.

2. What are the social service?

Social services are non-contributory social benefits granted to disadvantaged people at risk (Buzducea, 2009). According to Pilinger (2001), social services are public services designed to meet the needs of employment, health, education, social security, social assistance. Given the diversification of social needs, social services raise the issue of defining systems for prioritizing needs and developing clear eligibility criteria (Pierson and Thomas, 2010).

As a system, "social assistance refers to all social programs, forms and structured activities of support-support carried out by specialized factors, from public or private institutions, NGOs, to ensure the minimum basic living conditions of individuals, groups] ii high risk, for a normal and dignified integration in the community "(Zamfir, E., 2006b, pg. 10). According to national legislation, in particular Law 47/2006, "the national social assistance system is the set of institutions and measures by which the state, through central and local public administration authorities, local government and civil society intervene to prevent, limit or eliminate temporary effects or permanent situations that may generate marginalization or social exclusion of the person, family, groups or communities. Social assistance, a component of the national social protection system, includes social services and benefits provided in order to develop individual or collective capacities to ensure social needs, increase the quality of life and promote the principles of cohesion and social inclusion "(art.2). From a systemic point of view, social assistance works in interdependence with other social systems: health, education, administration. At present, the world system is constantly changing (Buzducea, 2005b).

Romania, according to statistical data, provided by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, Social Services Policy Directorate, are licensed so far, a total of 78 Residential Care and Assistance Centers for homeless people, public and private providers and only 5 Licensed day centers for the homeless. The residential protection centers for this vulnerable group, homeless people are: night shelters, temporary accommodation centers, emergency reception centers, sheltered housing, night shelters, medical and social assistance centers, palliative care centers, information and counseling centers, vocational guidance centers, social canteens. Social services addressed to people living on the street can be organized as:

- a) mobile street intervention teams or social ambulance services;
- b) night shelters;
- c) residential centers with fixed-term accommodation. In order to prevent and combat the risk of young people leaving the child protection system becoming homeless, as well as to promote their social integration, local authorities can set up multifunctional centers that provide conditions for living and housing for a fixed period.

For people living on the streets, social services are provided free of charge or, as the case may be, against a small contribution from the beneficiary. Within the night shelters they can benefit from: temporary accommodation; food preparation and serving. In temporary accommodation centers can benefit from: temporary

accommodation; healthcare; resocialization. According to the Law on Social Assistance (no. 292/2011), social services represent the activity or set of activities performed to meet social needs, as well as special, individual, family or group needs, in order to overcome situations of difficulty, prevent and combat the risk of social exclusion, promoting social inclusion and increasing the quality of life.

Social services are a form of active support for families and communities in need. Social assistance includes, in addition to the payment of social benefits, the provision of social services. It is also a component of the national social assistance system and aims to support vulnerable people in overcoming difficult situations, preventing and combating the risk of social exclusion, increasing the quality of life and promoting their social inclusion. Social services are a form of active support for the individual, the family and the community. Social services have both a primary, prevention character and a specialized, personalized character, for overcoming difficult situations. The purpose of these social services is to protect the individual and the family to prevent social marginalization and exclusion, with the aim of promoting social inclusion.

The social assistance system contains the following fundamental structural elements:

- staff involved in the system (specialists - social workers and other specialized staff),
- categories of beneficiaries (assisted persons),
- social environment (institutional network, services and benefits, legislative framework).

In Romania, according to Government Ordinance 68/2003, social services represent the complex set of measures and actions taken to meet individual social needs, family or group, in order to prevent and overcome difficult situations, vulnerability or dependence to preserve autonomy and protection of the person, for prevention of marginalization and social exclusion, to promote social inclusion and to increase the quality of life. Thus, in GO no. 68/2003, with subsequent amendments and completions, social services are classified into primary social services and specialized social services, both categories being proactive. Primary social services aim to prevent or limit situations of difficulty or vulnerability, which can lead to marginalization or social exclusion.

Specialized social services are: recovery and rehabilitation; support and assistance for families and children in difficulty; informal extracurricular education for children and adults, depending on the needs of each category; assistance and support for the elderly, including dependent elderly people; assistance and support for all vulnerable categories; support and guidance for integration, rehabilitation and vocational re-education; social and medical care for people in difficulty, including palliative care for people in the terminal stages of some diseases; social mediation; institutionalized counseling, in information and counseling centers; any other measures and actions aimed at maintaining, restoring or developing individual capacities to overcome a situation of social need.

Socio-medical services which are defined as a complex of activities that are provided within an integrated social and medical system and have as main purpose the maintenance of the person's autonomy, as well as the prevention of the aggravation of the dependency situation. Social-medical care services are specialized social services

provided to persons who are in a situation of partial or total dependence to perform alone the current activities of life, those isolated, as well as those suffering from physical, mental, mental disorders.

Social benefits are a form of financial support that responds to a wide range of social needs and covers both universal rights and benefits that are addressed only to individuals or families in a situation of difficulty, vulnerability or dependency.

The social benefits system in Romania includes: family allowances, social benefits, allowances and facilities. It is granted in money or in products, based on the testing of means according to the following criteria: assessment of the family context, income of the applicant or his family, living conditions, health status and degree of dependency.

There are the following types of benefits:

a) family allowances - are granted to families and take into account the birth, education and maintenance of children;

(b) social assistance - is granted to people or families in difficulty and whose income is insufficient to cover their minimum living needs;

(c) allowances and facilities - granted to persons to promote social inclusion and ensure an independent life. Types of social benefits for social categories in difficulty or in a situation of social risk: state allowance for children, complementary family allowance, support allowance for single-parent families, allowance for newborn children, monthly allowance for adults and infected children with HIV or AIDS, social assistance to ensure the guaranteed minimum income, assistance for home heating, exemption for prenatal consultations, changing working conditions for maternity protection, maternity leave and allowance, maternity leave and allowance, leave and allowance for maternity leave raising the child, leave and allowance for the care of the sick child, emergency aid, financial aid, death assistance, reimbursable aid for refugees.

3. Types and functions of social services

In O.G no. 68/2003, the functions of primary social services are presented as highlighting, diagnosing and evaluating individual, family and group social needs; information on risk situations, as well as on the social rights of the person; identification of persons and families in difficulty, in order to carry out preventive actions and measures; providing emergency measures to remove the difficult situation in which a family or person may find themselves at a given time; development of community programs, in order to socially promote individuals and communities; prevention of any form of dependence through actions of identification, help, support, information, counseling, transfer and monitoring of the beneficiary, when his situation requires it, to specialized social services and active management of the interface with other services, such as : housing, educational, medical, employment, etc. Article 34 presents the purpose of specialized social services, which is to maintain, restore or develop individual skills to overcome a situation of social need and then the services through which it can be achieved, recovery and rehabilitation services, support and assistance for families and children in difficulty, informal extracurricular education for children and adults, according to the needs of each category, assistance and support for the elderly, including dependent elderly people, assistance and support, support and guidance for integration, rehabilitation and re-education professional, social-

medical care for people in difficulty, including palliative care, for the care of those in the terminal stages of some diseases, social mediation and legal advice.

Primary social services: are social services that aim to prevent or limit situations of difficulty or vulnerability, which may lead to marginalization or social exclusion and carry out activities to identify individual social needs, family and group information activities on rights and obligations awareness-raising and social awareness-raising measures and emergency measures and actions to reduce the effects of crisis measures, support measures and actions to keep people in need in the community; counseling activities and services measures and activities of community organization and development in social plan to encourage participation and social solidarity any other measures and actions aimed at preventing or limiting situations of difficulty or vulnerability, which may lead to marginalization or social exclusion.

Specialized social services: are social services that aim to maintain, restore or develop individual skills to overcome a situation of social need. They have an important role in recovery and rehabilitation support and assistance for families and children in difficulty informal extracurricular education for children and adults, depending on the need of each category assistance and support for the elderly, including dependent elderly care and support for all defined categories by ordinance support and guidance for the integration, rehabilitation and re-education of professional social care for people in difficulty, including palliative care for people in the terminal stages of social mediation diseases institutional counseling, information centers and counseling any other measures and actions aimed at maintaining, restoring or developing individual capacities to overcome a situation of social need.

The functions of specialized social services are: accommodation, care, recovery, rehabilitation and social and professional reintegration of people with disabilities, the chronically ill, people addicted to alcohol or drugs, victims of domestic violence or human trafficking; accommodation, care, recovery, rehabilitation and social reintegration of the elderly in a situation of social need; support and assistance for children and families in difficulty; special accommodation and education for children or young people with disabilities or difficulties in adapting; accommodation in a protected system, for a determined period, of young people leaving the child protection system; social and professional integration of young people leaving the child protection system; fixed-term accommodation of homeless people; assistance and support for ensuring an independent and active life for the elderly, as well as care services for the elderly in a situation of dependency; providing support measures for integration into employment, other than those provided for by current legislation; provision of rehabilitation, reorientation and vocational re-education measures established by the legislation in force; receiving and caring in emergency situations, with or without accommodation, providing social support or accompaniment, adapting to an active life or social and professional integration of people or families in difficulty or in situations of risk; legal advice; information, counseling, support and specialized treatment. In special cases, considered rather exceptional, people in difficulty are placed in residential / institutional services (Moore, 1993). Non-residential social services (provided outside the institutions): day centers, home care services, day rehabilitation and recovery centers, shelter centers, counseling centers. Residential / institutional social services: care homes for the elderly, hospital homes, homes for people with disabilities (care and permanent care), etc.

Social and medical care services are a complex of activities that are provided within an integrated social and medical system and have as main purpose the maintenance of the person's autonomy, as well as the prevention of the aggravation of the dependency situation. They are organized at Community level, depending on the needs identified, the number of potential beneficiaries, the complexity of the difficult situations and the degree of social risk. Social services can be social assistance services and social medical care services. Social assistance services are primary services and specialized services.

Basic services: body hygiene assistance, dressing and undressing, disposal hygiene, feeding and hydration, transfer and mobilization, travel inside, communication support services: food preparation or delivery assistance, shopping, housekeeping, accompaniment in the means of transport, facilitation of travel abroad, company, administration and management activities, leisure activities rehabilitation and adaptation services of the environment: small arrangements, repairs and other such social-medical care services of a medical nature may be represented by complex activities of diagnosis, treatment, care and the like, recommended and performed in accordance with the types of diseases presented by the beneficiaries of social services social-medical care services of the nature of related services, interdisciplinary can be recovery and rehabilitation services , physiotherapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, psychotherapy, psychopedagogy, speech therapy, podiatry and the like. They aim to prevent or limit situations of difficulty or vulnerability, which can lead to marginalization or social exclusion.

The primary services aim at preventing or limiting situations of difficulty or vulnerability that may lead to marginalization or social exclusion, which may consist of:

- a) activities for identifying individual, family and group social needs;
- b) information activities about rights and obligations;
- c) measures and actions of social awareness and sensitization;
- d) emergency measures and actions in order to reduce the effects of crisis situations;
- e) measures and support actions in order to keep people in difficulty in the community;
- f) counseling activities and services;
- g) measures and activities of community organization and development in social plan to encourage participation and social solidarity;
- h) any other measures and actions aimed at preventing or limiting situations of difficulty or vulnerability, which may lead to marginalization or social exclusion.

Conclusions

The pandemic has also changed the attitude of each person towards himself and towards others. Street people are the most vulnerable group exposed to covid infection 19. To prevent infection with the covid virus 19, they are required to comply with new protective mechanisms in their relationships with others: masks, gloves, protective clothing; imposing a rule of keeping a distance of at least 2 meters from the others. The introduction of extremely severe restrictions on movement outside the

home had an immediate impact on the way of life of people living on the streets. The risk situations in which social protection is requested are more and more numerous. The number of homeless people is growing, because the current social problems, the pandemic and especially the financial crisis have created the premises for this development. Many of them do not have an identity card, are excluded from medical services, are not registered with a family doctor, and in the absence of an effective vaccine, it is obvious that no crowding and social interaction will be possible without assuming the risk of an increase of the number of infections. However, homelessness is not a "lost case" or a dispensable resource. They have equal rights and opportunities with other citizens.

The idea is that the creation of as many social protection and support services for this socially vulnerable category of welfare beneficiaries, the creation of mobile teams to work directly on the street, regular monitoring of each case and early intervention are more than important.

As a solution to this problem are the need to establish emergency social centers for homeless people, with an important role in: preventing social exclusion and ensuring the social protection of homeless people; monitoring the number of homeless people, as well as the percentage of solving existing cases; ensuring normal living conditions, respectively hosting; counseling, support for social integration, for combating the social marginalization of this category of people, solving problems related to the lack of identity documents, facilitating access to medical services; identifying a job; identifying a living alternative; professional training by enrolling the beneficiaries according to their studies and potential in qualification courses. A fundamental principle in the provision of social services is to have the beneficiary at the center of the system that provides the services. Once in the critical situation of living on the street, people enter a process of mental regression and, over time, become desocialized, if this state is perpetuated over months and years. Non-governmental organizations are making considerable efforts to reintegrate people living on the streets. Through psychological and socio-professional counseling in a specialized center, obtaining a job and a living space, there is the reverse process of regaining self-esteem and self-identity, while returning to society. However, the balance is very fragile: there is often the risk of returning to the original situation of living in public. Homeless people living on the streets are still the most visible and extreme form of poverty and social exclusion.

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE LIFE OF THE ROMA COMMUNITY. CASE STUDY TIMIȘOARA AND CLUJ-NAPOCA

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Abstract: *The Roma ethnicity from Romania it is very significant in terms of population reported to the statistical data, as well as to the unofficial data issued by Roma organizations. This community it is in the spotlight of local public institutions and also of non-governmental organizations (Ionescu and Cace, 2006: 67). In official documents we can talk about Roma people since the second half of the fourteenth century (Petcuț, 2009: 17). Roma ethnicity is formed of several subclasses. The names of these subclasses are generated by the profession practiced, for example: the group of musicians (Lăutari), the group of spoon makers (Lingurari), the group of goldsmiths (Aurari), the group of silversmiths (Argintari), the group of tinsmiths (Spoitori), the group of florists (Florari), the group of blacksmiths (Fierari) and so on. In this article I will present qualitative research through the interview method. The question of the research was formulated like this: I consider that although all the people from Roma community practice traditional jobs, as well as non-traditional jobs, there is no connection between trades and the defining subgroup to which they belong and for the membership at a specific subgroup. The general objective is to aim the identification and the qualitative analysis of the traditional and non-traditional economic practices of Roma community from Timișoara and Cluj-Napoca. The technique I used is the interview technique. The tool used in this research is the semi-structured interview guide. At this research 20 people of Roma ethnicity participated, 10 people from Timișoara, 10 people from Cluj-Napoca. The results of this research provide to the local public institutions and to the non-governmental organizations an integrated, grounded approach to understanding the traditions, the traditional and non-traditional trades so that the disparities between the Roma community and the majority population could be reduced.*

Keywords: *Roma ethnicity; Roma people; traditional trades; non-traditional trades; Roma, Gypsy; Timișoara; Cluj-Napoca*

1. Introduction

Recently, the issue of Roma has attracted the attention of Romanian and European institutions because the gap between the Roma community and the contact population is too large (Zoon, 2001: 40). The massive migration of Roma from all over the country to European spaces has also aroused this concern (Fleck and Rughiniș, 2008: 169). The sociologist Achim Viorel shows that the Romans have existed in Romania since the second half of the 14th century. Sociologists say that there are three types of slaves: monastic slaves, liberal slaves, and prince slaves (Achim, 1998: 18). George Potra said that after a long and difficult period of slavery in the mid-nineteenth century, Gypsies gained ultimate freedom. From the beginning of liberation, we have witnessed the integration of Gypsies (Potra, 2001: 105). Most of the time, Roma communities are located on the outskirts of towns (Horvath, 2017: 195). They are poor communities with almost no access to infrastructure, education and health care, almost

no employment opportunities, and their housing is precarious (Fleck and Rughiniş, 2008: 123). We are witnessing the polarization of the Roma. The conservative Roma keepers of their traditions, language and customs has a low degree of integration and acceptance among the majority of the population (Fosztó, 2009: 153). These ethnic groups include: Gaborii, Caldăraşii, Spoitorii, Aurarii, Lăutarii. These groups engage in traditional trade on a small scale (Toma and Fosztó, 2011: 15). Within the scope of social distance, the acceptance level is lower than that of the integrated Roma nation.

Other peoples who abandon the Roma's tradition and who don't use the Romani language have a higher success rate in the process of integration. Some of these groups are: Vătraşii, Băieşii, Rudarii, Caştalii. They live in the majority of the population and have access to quality education, medical services, stable jobs and they have a home that provides them with a decent life (Kiss, Fosztó and Fleck, 2009: 85). Within the social distance between the Roma and the majority of the population, their acceptance of interracial marriages is higher (Bădescu, Kivu and Robotin, 2005: 19).

In traditional ethnic groups, formed of two or three families living in the same house, there is a greater respect and attachment to the family they come from. Within the family, traditional industries are passed on from generation to generation, from father to son, based on the system theory, which determines a country, a family, and a closed system. They live and manage together. Since there is no market for services and products derived from the practice of traditional industries, in his case, the main business is entrepreneurship. The defining elements of Gypsies, except for visual identification elements, such as skirts, hats, moustaches, gold jewellery, and money in hair is Romani language. The Romani language is learned in the family and passed on from generation to generation.

The Romani language has origins from Sanskrit in India. The linguistic arguments prove that Gypsies are from India (Grigore and Sarău, 2003: 5)

For assimilated Gypsies, they are more likely to leave the family due to the following reasons: high level and quality of education, some of them are graduates of higher education, have stable jobs and own high-quality housing. For these groups, the source of a better life is the practice of non-traditional trade (Toma and Fosztó, 2011: 15).

In recent years, the existence of European funds and programs has facilitated the qualification or requalification of Roma in non-traditional occupations. Through these non-traditional industries, job opportunities have increased (Ionescu, 2014, p. 149).

In particular, the Roma community of Timișoara and Cluj-Napoca recorded a high coefficient of external migration. The list of countries where Gypsies emigrate is: Italy, France, Britain and Belgium. In the context of immigrants, most Roma are engaged in non-traditional trade (Fleck and Rughiniş, 2008: 169).

2. Roma from Timișoara. In the 2011 census, 2145 people declared that they belong to the Roma ethnic group. The large and compact communities of Timișoara are: Kunz community (here are 164 families), Ştrand colony community, Polona community (or Fraidorf near the sugar factory), Fratelia community. The rest of the Roma are scattered in all neighbourhoods of the city and they live in their own or rented houses.

The Roma people we found in Timișoara are: Căldărașii, Pițuleștii (from Hunedoara), Gaborii, Ghipterii (they are German Gypsies living in Circari on Slavic streets), Geambașii, Lăutarii and Băieșii. The Roma professions in Timișoara are traditional and non-traditional. The traditional profession is fiddling and making gutters. Some Roma is engaged in street trade and second-hand car trade. Roma are employees of health services, commercial workers, vendors, kitchen assistants or dishwashers.

3. Roma from Cluj-Napoca

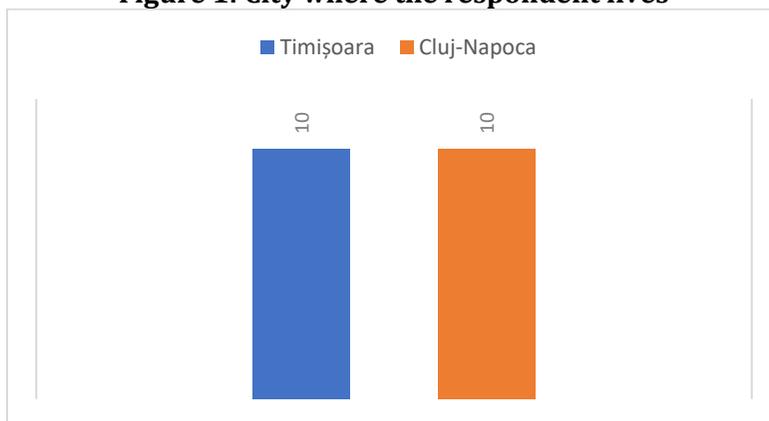
Official and informal Roma leaders announced that the number of Roma in Cluj-Napoca is approximately 6,000 to 6,500 people. From a geographical point of view, there are compact Roma communities in the suburbs of the city, namely: Community Pata Rât (4 different communities: Dallas Community, Canton Community, Coastal Community, Lampa Community), Community of Iris, The community in the Barbu Lăutaru Someșeni community, the Gabor community in the station area.

A large number of Gypsies are scattered in different neighbourhoods of the city, living in their own houses, renting or living in nationalized houses (Dohotaru, Harbula and Vincze, 2016: 96). In general, the Roma occupations in Cluj-Napoca fall into the following categories: male are construction workers, female work in supermarkets and sanitation facilities, and other non-traditional industries required by the labour market. In a limited range, there are also some traditional occupations, such as: making sheet metal objects, playing the violin, making brooms and certain handmade objects (mills, spoons, corks, wooden objects and food, such as glazed apples). A small number of Roma are engaged in street trade and recycling (iron, cardboard, bottles, cans). The Roma found in Cluj-Napoca are: Lăutari, Romunguri, Gabori, Vătrași, Ciurari, Silk Romans, Florari , Lingurari.

4. Research methodology

In this research, we chose a qualitative method through interviews. As a tool, I used a semi-structured interview guide, which was applied to the Roma communities of Timișoara and Cluj-Napoca from March 2021 to April 2021, and the conversation was conducted by phone (Rotariu and Iluț, 2001: 63).

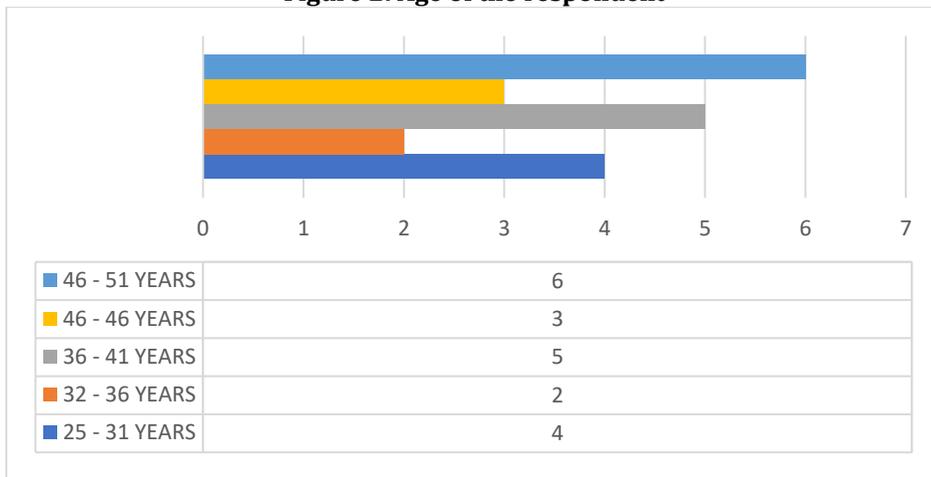
Figure 1: City where the respondent lives



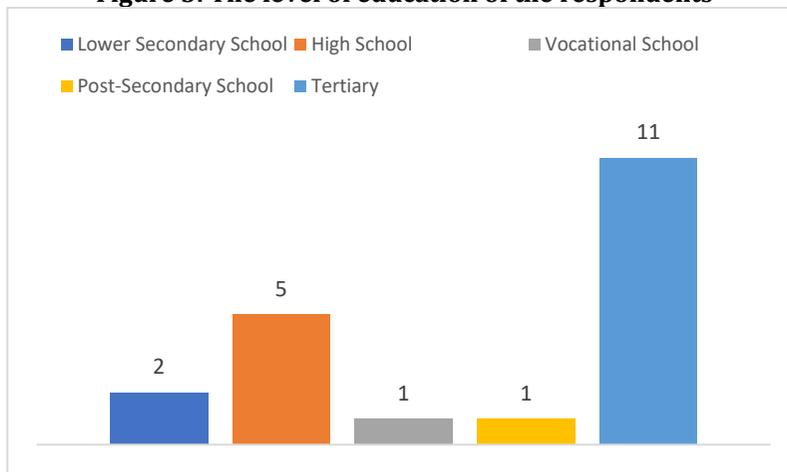
In the interview guide, we discussed the following topics related to traditional and non-traditional occupations of Roma. The first topic refers to the occupation and professional experience of the parents of the interviewed. The second topic refers to the occupational history of the family of origin and how the interviewed followed the traditional or non-traditional occupational practices of their grandparents or parents. The third topic refers to the interviewer’s views on immigration abroad, work and trade carried out abroad, and the benefits it brings to the family's economic situation, as well as the illegal activities carried out by some Roma. We chose these themes to analyse the desire of Gypsies to participate in economic life through traditional or non-traditional occupations.

When the interview guidelines were developed, these themes had already been manipulated into the core of the discourse. For the first topic, we identify the following core discourse: traditional activities today, non-traditional activities, current occupation / professionalism, professional experience so far, attitudes towards work and earnings. The core of the discourse on the second topic is: past traditional activities, past non-traditional activities and the value of non-traditional activities. For the third topic, the core of the discourse is: overseas immigration, Romania, other countries, foreign traditional activities, foreign non-traditional activities and illegal activities. The respondents were chosen with the snowball method. The first respondent indicated the next respondents.

Figure 2: Age of the respondent



In the context of quantitative research, 20 Roma from different cities, 10 people from Timișoara and 10 people from Cluj-Napoca were interviewed. Their levels of education are different, namely: 11 people have higher education and 1 person with post-secondary studies, 1 person has professional education., 5 people with secondary education, 2 people with secondary education. They also have different ages: 6 people are between 46 to 51 years old, 3 people are between 42 to 45 years old, 5 people are between 36 to 41 years old , 2 people are between 32 to 35 years old and 4 people are between 25 to 31 years old .

Figure 3: The level of education of the respondents

4.1. Research objectives and questions

Research question: We believe that although members of the Roma community are engaged in traditional and non-traditional industries, there is no longer a close relationship between occupation and subgroup affiliation (ethnicity) defined as belonging to a subgroup. General objective: to identify and qualitatively analyse the traditional and non-traditional economic practices of the Roma communities of Timișoara and Cluj-Napoca.

Specific objective 1. To determine the traditional and non-traditional trade in which the Roma of Timișoara and Cluj-Napoca currently participate.

Specific objective 2. Identify traditional and non-traditional trade in the context of foreign immigration.

4.2. Results

After processing the data obtained, applying the content analysis grid to the core of the discourse, as a quantitative processing technique of qualitative symbolic materials, and through the hermeneutical interpretation of the data, we obtained the following results.

The first topic refers to the interviewer's professional experience. I want to get an approximate idea of the first payment received by the participants, their professional experience (traditional and non-traditional activities) so far and their current occupation. For the first topic, the following question was developed: *How did you earn your first money? Where did you work? What did you and your family do? So far, from what areas of work have you supported your family financially?* The Roma ethnic group is made up of several Roma peoples. Most of the time, the name of this group is determined by the occupation that the group engages in. In some conservative groups, such as Gabori, Lăutari, Florari, Lingurari, these industries are still passed down from generation to generation. In these families, the first professional experience is the occupation in the family (Fleck and Rughiniș, 2008: 122). Non-traditional trade takes place in assimilated families.

Regarding the first money they made, most of the interviewees stated that they received rewards for helping their parents or grandparents in their traditional activities when they were children:

I have worked with them since I was a child. That is, I help them get the tableware, sell it in the market, and so on. (S6, 35 years old, Timișoara, vocational school)

I went to the old CAPs for the first time to water, dig soil, harvest hay, and pick fruit from the orchard. This was my source of income for during my vacation. I had to try to buy him to go to school. Everything you need. In the end, I became an industrial painter in a company that produces all kinds of chandeliers, so I was able to get a more adequate salary. I also work the night shift to help out making aluminium parts. (S17, 38 years old, Cluj-Napoca, high school study)

However, some interviewees admitted that they have been working to support their families since they were young so if they wanted to have a high enough income, they have to work with the Gypsies to which they belong, especially non-traditional activities.

Since I came from an ordinary family, I must support myself since I was 17 years old. My family and I worked in a company during communism, and I worked in this company for 8 years after the revolution. I continued my studies at the university, I had to work another 3 years and then I had to give up. One year after I graduated, the Cluj County Council hired me as a specialist in Roma relations in the Office of Public Relations and Communication. (S14, 49 years old, Cluj-Napoca, higher education)

The main discursive nuclei determined from the responses of the respondents are the following:

- ✓ Current traditional activities (4 positive, 1 neutral, 2 negative)
- ✓ Non-current traditional activities (8 positive, 0 neutral, 3 negative)
- ✓ Current occupation (8 positive, 2 neutral, 2 negative)
- ✓ Professional experience so far (5 positive, 3 neutral, 2 negative)
- ✓ For work (10 positive, 2 neutral, 4 negative)
- ✓ Income / earnings (6 positive, 1 neutral, 2 negative)

The second topic involves the respondent activities, crafts and occupations of their grandparents or parents in the past. I would also like to know if the participants in this study followed their parents' occupations and if they thought that they could continue to participate in traditional activities to adapt to the new living conditions. Questions related to the second topic of the interview guide are phrased as follows: *What are your grandparents and parents doing for the living? Do you follow your parents' work? Do you think it is possible to practice the profession of your grandparents or parents today?* There was a time when the Romans were dedicated to industries such as Fieraris' group -metallurgy, Argintaris' group- silverware, Lăutaris' group- singing at events, Linguraris' group- carpentry. With industrialization, many of these occupations no longer have a market, in this context, people find themselves in a situation where they are engaged in non-traditional industries. Interestingly, families who are still engaged in traditional industries and own the market have taught their children that they in turn must engage in the same industries (Surdu, 2011: 72). People currently engaged in traditional industries.

Depending on the group of Roma who belong, it is said that Roma people have activities similar to their grandparents / parents with cutlery and precious metal processing, metals, commerce, floods.

My grandparents handled some traditional practices, some of the mother's grandparents made certain toys and handicrafts of crepe paper and sawdust, which they sold at fairs during the communist period. (S14, 49, Cluj-Napoca, higher research)

The father was craftsmanship. Grandparents also work with companies, gold extractors, mining workers and my grandmother was a housewife. (S11, 28, Cluj-Napoca, superior research)

Dad was an expert in tinware, and he was an artist. He was making gutters; it was all manual. However, in praise, his father was the best, for what he was professional. All kinds of flowers, all kinds of tables, copper, stainless steel. (S4, 31, Gymnures Research)

The interviewees talk about grandparents and respect and pride their parents, but few of them follow the same jobs, so they turned to other non-traditional activities from the hospital field, health or various factories (Vincze, 2011: 23). In the original answer, one interviewee proudly states that he carries out his profession learned from his ancestors.

Now I'm working here in Germany and I'm making roofs. Six years ago we did business, we usually live, we will grow with this business and we are tinsmiths from father to son. (S4, 31, Gymnasium studies)

On the other hand, most of the interviewees believe that traditional activities have not been preserved until now due to the different living conditions than in the time of the grandparents and these are less likely to continue going to Romania (Stănică, 2014: 54). However, abroad, the products of these traditional handicrafts can be much more appreciated.

I think that's a pity to go to the street, and I'm trying to fix pots, buckets and buckets of pleu.. Then he did not have the world, even if they had money or had no money like now. Find all the corners now, you understand me. Now it was a place where a man broke a bucket, and it was a place where the vegetables and chickens were washed at that time in the vegetables. Now I feel better than buying new things instead of repairing. (S4, 31, Timișoara, Gymnasium studies)

After the communist period, non-traditional trades were lost by subsequent policies for these occupations or stopped. Currently, people could practice this work, but competitive markets from the perspective of these products are not understood for several reasons. In a much better design for qualitative and "attracts his eyes", the similar toy market, is competing with the current market and must fight against the prejudice of people, will be purchased by foreigners who appreciate art, culture, and mastery of Roma people. (S14, 49, Cluj-Napoca, early studies)

The main discursive nuclei, identified according to the response received from the subject of the interview is as follows:

- past non-traditional activities (9 positive, 2 neutral, 0 negative)
- past traditional activities (5 positive, 1 neutral, 2 negative)
- evaluation of traditional activities (11 positive, 3 neutral, 1 negative)

The third issue is external migration and it follows the information and the data on the method. The interviewees are related to traditional and non-traditional activities abroad. I also want to find the recognition of their illegal activities (beggars, fraud, prostitution, or theft). The questions in the interview guide are formulated as

follows: *For how long did you work abroad? What did you do there? Did you have your family with yourself? In what country do you want to live? What do you want to work there? Why do you like to live in that country? Do you think your family will live a better life in that country? Do you know people of Roma who have begged? What do you think of begging?*

Small parts of Rome in the Banat area have migrated during communism. In addition, some of Rome moved after 90 years. Along with the migrations of the majority, there was also a migration among the Roma to the West (Fleck and Rughinis, 2008: 169). Most Rome worked in seasonal agriculture or practiced traditional handicrafts, for example the Gaboris' group and Lăutaris' group. They are Romans who have been migrated or established with the family practicing traditional handicrafts. There is also a tendency to external migration (Fleck and Rughiniș, 2008: 169). The testimonies of Rome and the press indicate that certain segments in this country practice illegal activities, such as begging and prostitution. A Rome person, which has a personal property house and a stable work, does not migrate, wants to migrate (Salat, 2008: 60).

For external migration, most of them have the desire to leave the country from the point of view of the possibility of providing for their children and family members a better living, in countries such as Denmark, Belgium, England, France, Germany, Cyprus. In the same line, there are many possibilities of development abroad, but the recognition of homeless people is the main reason for that they are not ready to receive such a decision.

The longest one was in Norway, in a vulcanization. It is very difficult to go with the family, especially in terms of income. Every time I go somewhere, I can't find my place, it's not like home. The ideal workplace is the community coordinator I still have. I meditate on the relationship between the community and the organization, and I turn them into the organization that the people in the community need. (S12, 37 years old, Cluj-Napoca, secondary school study)

In Scandinavian countries, I am only in Denmark, so I am further north. Yes, I know, they are more developed. I would like to work in the social field there. Yes, my wife will also be a nurse. The family will definitely live a better life there. As a more developed country, wages are higher. The main defect is that you are not in your country, and you are not at home. (S1, 41 years old, Timișoara, higher education)

However, I also found an original answer: the interviewee mentioned that he would not go abroad and that he would never want to live abroad.

I have been to 14 countries. I am not going to provide Romania for any country, I start from 0, "shot" to do some things for the children, my wife and I also went. I've been a driver and a construction crew leader. My wife picked oranges at a pallet factory in the UK. I never thought to settle there, a stranger took advantage of you, and then kicked you out. (S17, 38 years old, Cluj-Napoca, high school)

No respondent supported illegal activities, whether at home or abroad. The practice of begging is the most discussed. The interviewees either negatively condemned it and pointed out that it was a despicable behaviour or chose a neutral report. In a sense, it did not even condemn the gypsy who resorted to this practice.

Begging, I think it is something like a work, because it requires the courage of that person. I understand them. They expose themselves a lot to make money. Maybe many times the money does not belong to them. They are taken away by certain groups.

Lack of education leads to begging, and then lack of decent housing leads to poverty. I will do a housing project like in Finland. Through this project I will provide people with a house. I will make sure that the person realizes the importance of maintaining the house and he will lead a normal life. (S12, 37 years old, Cluj-Napoca, high school education)

In principle, I do not agree because it is not good to beg when you can work. (S11, 28 years old, Cluj-Napoca, higher education)

Begging? Honestly, I have a bad opinion about it, because I know young people who have the ability to work, create the future, sit on the street like that, and treat people well. (S2, 31 years old, Timișoara, secondary school)

I don't know her in a personal way, I know a girl who is begging, but she is not Roma, she comes from my grandparents' village, her parents are Romanian, but no, that is a family in a difficult situation. She left home. This was the only way she could support herself. I don't think he even went to school. Yes I understand. But to me it seems very miserable that people end up in this type of begging situation, on the other hand, I know that there is a small mafia, no, there are others that use the disabled. Yes, I get it, do I get it? I know there is such a situation. This is a tragedy. (S3, 43 years old, Timișoara, higher education)

The main discursive nuclei determined from the responses of the respondents are the following:

- ✓ External migration (12 positive, 0 neutral, 6 negative)
- ✓ Romania (9 positive, 5 neutral), 4 negative)
- ✓ Other countries
 - Germany (5 positive, 0 neutral, 0 negative)
 - Denmark (1 positive, 0 neutral, 0 negative)
 - Italy (3 positive, 0 neutral, 0 negative)
 - Greece (1 positive, 0 neutral, 0 negative)
 - England (3 positive, 1 neutral, 1 negative)
 - Cyprus (1 positive, 0 neutral, 0 negative)
 - Belgium (1 positive, 1 middle sex, 0 negative))
 - France (1 positive, 0 neutral, 1 negative)
- ✓ Traditional activities abroad (5 positive, 4 medium, 0 negative)
- ✓ Non-traditional activities abroad (9 positive, 2 neutral, 1 Negative)
- ✓ Illegal activities- begging, cheating, prostitution, robbery (0 positive, 4 neutral, 15 negative)

5. Conclusion

Research question: We believe that although members of the Roma community are engaged in traditional and non-traditional occupations, there is no longer a close connection between the occupation and the subgroup (ethnicity) that defines the culture of the Roma because they belong to the overall goal of the group: the identification and qualitative analysis of traditional and non-traditional economic practices in the Timișoara and Cluj-Napoca Roma communities resulted in two specific goals, which we believe have been achieved.

Specific objectives 1. Determine the traditional and non-traditional trade currently engaged in by Timișoara and Cluj-Napoca Gypsies. We believe that a specific goal is to be achieved. In the Roma community, there are occupational diversity ranging

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SEXUAL CRIMINAL OFFENCES - DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES THE CRIMINAL CODE IN FORCE AND THE CRIMINAL CODE 1969

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Abstract: *The state of danger created by the committing of sexual criminal offences and their impact on the victims and on the society in general, the legislative modifications occurred in the last period of time makes it necessary to define the concepts of sexuality, sexual deviance, sexual aggression, the presentation of the types of perversions and of sexual aggressions, as well as of the similarities and differences between the new Criminal Code and of the Criminal Code from 1969. One of the fundamental institutions in the criminal law is the penalty seen as a modality of constraint and a mode through which the re-education of the convicted person, so that this is wanted both for a coercive purpose, as well as for the rehabilitation. Through the enforcement and the execution of the conviction, one has in view the obtaining of the compliance with the norms and conventions of social cohabitation, the correction or the formation of a correct attitude towards the legal order and the values of the society. It is important to define the concept of sexuality in order to understand the evolution of the sexual behaviours labelled as normal or as deviant during the time. The person committing a crime can be rehabilitated and integrated into society of this rehabilitation feature becomes reality from the first moment of the criminal process and a solid re-education action takes place.*

Key words: sexual criminal offences; criminal code; sexual deviance;

1. Introduction

The categories of convictions, the limits within which they apply and the general execution of these are stipulated in the criminal law. Detention is stipulated in the Criminal Code as being one of the main convictions, which might be applied alone. The imprisonment as a conviction is stipulated almost for all the criminal offences, their general restraints being comprised between 15 days and 30 years. Probation represents an evolution of the sanctioning system by transferring the centre of gravity from the sanctions strictly based on the isolation of the criminal offender through the construction of an alternative system which is based on keeping the criminal offender and sanctioning him/her within the community, being counselled and supported with the scope of a good integration into the community (Durnescu, 2011).

In the category of the sexual disorders, among other sexual criminal offences, one can find paedophilia, which is categorized as a disorder of the sexual preference (of the object of the sexual preference).

2. The definition of the concept of sexuality

The dictionary of sociology defines the concept of sexuality through the behaviours which have as purpose the obtaining of the sexual desire in a direct way. It is generally considered that we can talk about sexuality, about the obtaining of desire, without making any reference to the feelings, emotions which can accompany these

behaviours and which can provoke them, represented by words, images or fantasies (Boudon, Besnard, Cerkaoui et al., 1996).

From the perspective of psychology, sexuality is defined as the totality of the elements which make reference to sexual life. Sexuality is influenced in its manifestation both by the physiological maturation, as well as by the social and cultural conditions, through the submission to norms which can be moral and/or religious (Sillamy, 1996).

When we talk about the disorders and the pathology of sexuality at (Rădulescu, 1996), two types are distinguished, one which makes reference to the anatomical pathology and another to sexual behaviours, which can manifest starting with puberty. It is not possible to set a unique model, generally valid for the manifestation of the sexual instinct by people, taking into account the influence culture has on it, the values, norms, customs, traditions or the written or not written rules of the human community it represents. The impossibility of the existence of a unique model to report to when we analyse the “deviations” or the forms of “deviance” shows us that the term of deviance is a relative notion, because defining the normal or the deviance differs from one society to another, from one period to another, respectively, what in one community is considered normal, in another can be considered deviant, abnormal (Rădulescu, 1996: 9).

If the society we live in passes through a period of balance, expressed in stable social institutions, in a protected and safe environment, with well-established social policies which have long term, with predominantly positive inter-human relationships, the sexual behaviours no longer represent an issue, because the values appropriated and manifested by the people through education and tradition are positive and are accepted by the social norms, whereas in the moments marked by the lack of a positive education, of the social norms and values, socio-political changes, economic crises, migrations of populations, natural imbalances, also the sexual deviances appear (Enăchescu, 2003).

3. The definition of the concept of sexual deviance

In order to differentiate between the sexuality considered normal and the one considered deviant, three criteria can be taken into consideration, respectively:

- **Statistic**, the difference between the behaviour considered normal and the deviant one being given by the statistical average, which shows us that there are more normal behaviours than deviant ones. It is a criterion subjected to critics, because the normality of a behaviour can be appreciated differently, according to culture, historical period, society.

- **Normative**, according to these criteria, the assessment of the sexual behaviour as being a deviant one is made in the relationship to the social norms, a socially accepted behaviour is manifested, which the individual acquires following the socialization. It is, at the same time, a criterion which bears critics, being given the possibility of the change of the social norms, which bear changes given by time and space

- **Medical**, the deviant behaviour is determined by genetic, psychopathologic problems, it is a criterion which can bring the understanding of the community towards the behaviour adopted by the individual, being conditioned by the subjection to a treatment. The critic brought to this criterion is that the majority of the people

considered to exhibit a deviant sexual behaviour are not assessed as being sick, but were fully aware with regards to the behaviour chosen (Rădulescu, 1996).

A classification of the types of sexual deviations which also Rădulescu S. refers to in his paper "Sociologia și istoria comportamentului sexual „deviant” ("The sociology and the history of the "deviant" sexual behaviour") establishes three types: normal sexual deviance, pathological sexual deviance and „group” sexual deviance. Out of the three aforementioned types we find two most relevant for the present paper.

- **Normal sexual deviance** from the point of view of the correspondence between what society considers to be normal, the legal regulations and the behaviour adopted by the individuals, the pre-marital sexuality, the masturbation and the oral sexual contact are taken into account, in relation to which an ambivalent attitude is manifested, these ones being tacitly approved;

- **Pathological sexual deviance**, case in which the correspondence between the social norms, the legal regulations and the behaviour adopted is large and it refers to rape, sexual aggression against a child, incest. These behaviours are not specific to a group, they are more related to individual characteristics of the ones manifesting them. The exhibitionism and the voyeurism are also specified (Rădulescu, 1996).

The sexual aggressions are part of the actions included in the behaviour considered as deviant. It is considered deviant, because it contravenes to the norms admitted by the society, through the feeling of fear the violent character they have induce on people.

In the specialty literature, the definition of the deviant behaviour is intended through the separation of the term of psychic disease and the definition of the deviance through the reporting to normality, being considered a deviation from normality. Being a multitude of trials and definitions of deviance, one can conclude that deviance represents the result of the actions of the negative models on the person, who has learnt to interiorize them, models which are against the values and the norms of society.

4. The definition of the concept of sexual aggression

The definition of the aggression from the perspective of the theory of learning is done being a learnt behaviour, a result of the society and of a succeeded social control, behaviour which is manifested in accordance with the social norms, learnt in order to obtain the approval and the confirmation from the other surrounding people. Not always frustration produces aggression, it can also determine a repressive behaviour. The secondary aggression is explained in sociology as being the behaviour determined by the lack of adapting to the social rules of the people belonging to certain delinquency cultures, having a negative model of education.

One can define aggression as being unspecific, when we talk about aggressivity as the battle between species, with a constructive role in the (evolution) development of species and intra-specific when we describe the aggressivity manifested within the same species, becoming unnatural, if it is not manifested under the form of certain organized modalities of manifestation, "tournaments" (Scripcaru, 2002: 109).

5. Types of perversions and of sexual aggressions

The theories talking about sexual perversions consider them as, constitutional pathological states", affecting the instinctual sphere of individuals and are considered

as having an anti-social character, being diverse as manifestation, from violence, assault to depravation, prostitution, considering that sometimes the states of deviance can be confused (Enăchescu, 2003: 176).

Difference is made between what the perversions represent in general, the ones considered as sexual and deviant perversions. The differences come from the categorization under the sphere of psychopathology of the first ones, and of the last ones under the legal sphere, being considered deviances of behaviors and their antisocial and sociopathic behaviour being retained. Initially, sexual perversions were defined by resorting to the religious norms and moral interdictions, they were related to certain taboos.

B. Ball, when defining sexual perversions, defines them in the psychopathological sense and considers them as being opposed to the scope proposed by nature through us. From this definition, the classification of sexual perversions can be incurred, into two large categories, having as criterion their reporting to the object and to the modality of obtaining pleasure, therefore:

- in relationship with the object: homosexuality, paedophilia, gerontophilia, bestiality, etc;

- in relationship to the means for the obtaining of pleasure: fetishism, sadism, masochism, exhibitionism, voyeurism etc. (*apud* Enăchescu, 2003: 178). Homosexuality reported to our present days no longer represents a criminal offence, existing an acronym defining the diversity of sexual identities LGBT.

When we try to define perversion, there are definitions which have in view the behaviour of a person who does not abide by the law, being aware that this, by doing harm purely because that person wants this or all the deviations of the instinct are excluded from the scope, the object and the way that person gets satisfaction in accordance with the moral or the legal norms especially. The literature also mentions that “the true perverts are rare and they have four defining characteristics: lack of affectivity, lack of morality, impulsivity and the lack of adaptability” (Sillamy, 1996: 232).

The following are considered criminal offences to sexual life, the relationships which do not ensure the normal and moral development of the intimate life, and namely: rape; the sexual contact with a minor; sexual perversion which addresses to one’s own body and the ones addressing to the body of another person; sexual corruption; incest; the trading of sex and proxenitism.

Following the researches performed, as concluded in the paper “The deciphering of human behaviour”, of Hans Eysenck and Michael Eysenck, there is a link between the presentation of the materials regarding sexual violent acts, pornography and their influence in the committing of sexual aggressions, as well as that the personality type, respectively psychotism in a high degree determines the committing of sexual aggressions. The relationship between the persons committing rapes and the type of personality with a high degree of psychotism and schizophrenia was scientifically proved. The authors are the adepts of the free speech for the media, television, but not of the libertinage with regards to the manifestation of the behaviour (Eysenck and Eysenck, 1998).

Sexual perversions are defined as a disorder of the sexual relationship and not as a disorder from a biological point of view, so that in the situations of difficult or abnormal relationship building, affection and eroticism, considered forms of the sexual

instinct, shall have aspect of perversion and not of sublimation. Rape is considered to be a criminal offence, taking into consideration that the obtaining of pleasure takes place through aggression and inequality of force, the other situations are considered by DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) “sexual minorities and not mental disorders” (Scriparu, Boișteanu, Astărăstoae et al.2002: 298).

6. Similarities and differences between the Criminal Code in force/The Criminal Code 1969 regarding the criminal offences against persons and the ones which prejudice certain relationships regarding social cohabitation

From the category of criminal offences against the persons, we have stopped on the criminal offences against the sexual liberty and the integrity and on the ones regarding the traffic and the exploitation of vulnerable persons, and from the category of criminal offences which bring prejudice to certain relations regarding social cohabitation, on criminal offences against the family. The literature in the legal field treats all the criminal offences against sexual freedom and integrity as being a special category granted by the social values forming the object of the legal protection, respectively the freedom and the sexual inviolability of the person and the morality of the sexual life.

The law considers that the committing of facts which breach the freedom and the morality of the sexual life of a person and produce serious repercussions on it and on its family are criminal offences against the sexual freedom and integrity (Bulai, Filipaş and Mitrache, 1997).

We have performed the analysis of the criminal offences previously mentioned through the identification of the similarities and of the differences between them from the perspective of the Criminal Code in force and of the Criminal Code from the year 1969, taking into account the social impact, the state of fear induced through their committing and the legislative modifications occurred.

Table 1: Presentation of criminal offences differences and similarities

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| <p style="text-align: center;">The category of criminal offences</p> <p>I. <u>Against sexual liberty and integrity</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Criminal Code in force / The Criminal Code 1969</p> <p>1. Rape-art.218//art.197</p> <p>NOTE: modifications are brought through the Law no. 217/29.10.2020</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Differences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ the conviction decreased in the cases when the victim is a relative, his/her death results (from 5 to 25 years in the old code from 7 to 18 in the new one) and the age of the victim in the new Criminal Code increased, ✓ in the new criminal code it is considered a criminal offence even if the purpose of the committing is the production of pornographic materials, mention which does not exist in the old criminal code, <p style="text-align: center;">Resemblances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ in both codes the criminal action is started at the preliminary complaint of the victim ▪ the criminal offence is not defined in the same way, |
|--|

- the conviction for the criminal offence is the same, the imprisonment if there are no special situations,

2. Sexual aggression -art.219, in the old Criminal Code was not stipulated

NOTE: modifications are brought through the Law no. 217/29.10.2020

Differences

- ✓ it is defined as being a sexual act the sex which takes place through the forcing of the victim and through the fact that this one is under the impossibility and cannot express his/her will, but it is different from the sexual act categorized as rape,
- ✓ the conviction is from 2 to 7 years
- ✓ the conviction from 3 to 10 years, if the considered conditions are fulfilled also for the rape and namely the victim is a relative of the person committing the criminal offence, and is under the care, education of this one, the purpose of the production of pornographic materials, there results the bodily harm of the victim and the deed is done by several persons, together,
- ✓ if, following the committing of a deed, there results the death of the victim, the conviction is from 7 to 15 years,
- ✓ at the prior complaint of the victim, the criminal action is started,
- ✓ if the sexual acts are preceded or followed by the acts stipulated under art.218, the criminal offence is considered to be a rape,

3. Sexual act with a minor - art.220/art.198

NOTE: modifications are brought through the Law no. 217/29.10.2020

Differences

- ✓ in the new Criminal Code, it is specified the age level for the victim, in the old criminal code it was specified that the victim should not have fulfilled the age of 14 years,
- ✓ the conviction stipulated in increased,
- ✓ into the analysis it is introduced the differentiation of the deed if the minor was between 16 and 18 years old,
- ✓ in case between the person committing the criminal offence and the victim the age gap does not exceed 3 years and an act of a sexual rapport takes place, the deed is not convicted,
- ✓ in the old criminal code the conviction is stipulated in the case when there occurs the suicide or the death of the victim,

Resemblances

- The criminal offences are defined the same.

3. The sexual corruption of minors -art.221/sexual corruption -art.202

NOTE: modifications are brought through the Law no. 217/29.10.2020

Differences

- ✓ The difference is made between the act of a sexual nature defining the sexual corruption of a minor and the sexual act with a minor
- ✓ The age of the minor is stipulated, who have not fulfilled the age of 14
- ✓ The conviction is increased from 1 to 5 years, in comparison with the old code, from 6 months to 5 years,
- ✓ In the new penal code more aspects are mentioned regarding the committing of the deed
- ✓ In case the age gap does not exceed 3 years, the deeds are not sanctioned.

- ✓ Under the aggravating form, the maximum of the conviction stipulated has increased

Resemblances

The maximum of guilt is the same in both criminal codes.

5. The recruitment of minors for sexual purposes -art.222- it does not exist in the old Criminal Code

NOTE: modifications are brought through the Law no. 217/29.10.2020

Differences

- ✓ The age of the minor person is mentioned, 16 years old.

6. Sexual harassment -art.223/203¹

Differences

- ✓ in the old criminal code the person who abused had authority or influence offered by position, in the new code only work relationships or similar ones are mentioned,
- ✓ in the new code, the criminal action is started only with the prior complaint of the damaged party,
- ✓ the mixed limit of the conviction in the new code decreased by one year, in the old one the maximum being of 2 years,
- ✓ a note is mentioned in the criminal code in force repeatedly, without existing the threat or the constraint anymore

Resemblances

- In both codes the obtaining of certain sexual benefits is specified

The category of criminal offences

II.The traffic and the exploitation of vulnerable persons

The Criminal Code in force / The Criminal Code 1969

1.Proxenetism art.213/art.329

NOTE: modifications are brought through the Law no. 217/29.10.2020

Differences

- ✓ In the Criminal Code in force one or more persons are mentioned, and in the old one only one person,
- ✓ In the cases where the victims were minors in the old criminal code the conviction was not specified, respectively from 5 to 18 years old, in the new one it is mentioned the fact that the special limits of the conviction are increased by half
- ✓ In the old criminal code the goods, the values or any other goods acquired or obtained following the committing of the deed are confiscated or the person convicted is obliged to the equivalent in money,
- ✓ The attempt is not convicted any longer by the criminal code in force,

Resemblances

- The definition of the criminal offence and of the conviction, the same.

Category of criminal offences

III.Against the family

The Criminal Code in force / The Criminal Code 1969

1.Incest art.377/art.203

NOTE: modifications are brought through the Law no. 217/29.10.2020

Differences

- ✓ In the Criminal Code in force, the mention is made that it is an agreed sexual act
- ✓ The conviction is modified from prison from 1 to 5 years to prison from 2 to 7 years

Resemblances

- The sexual intercourse must take place between relatives on the direct line or brothers, sisters. (Boroi, 2014).

Law no. 118/2019 regarding the National automated registry regarding the persons committing sexual criminal offences, for the exploitation of certain people or on minors was approved in the month of June 2019 and it is intended to have a registry of the persons convicted for criminal offences against the sexual freedom and integrity and not only, on whom certain obligations are imposed to be fulfilled, and the police bodies shall take care about the assurance of their compliance.

The Law 217 for the modification and completion of the Law no. 286/2009 regarding the Criminal Code regarding the content and the conviction of the criminal offences which relate to the sexual freedom and integrity was approved on the date of 29.10.2020, and on the date of 12.04.2021 it was unanimously approved by the Senate in its quality of chamber of first instance notified (known as the Law no. 267/2021) for the modification and completion of the Law no. 286/2009 regarding the Criminal Code with regards to the impossibility to prescribe the criminal liability for the cases of sexual aggression against minors, traffic of minors, infantile pornography and proxenetism.

7. Conclusions

Deviance can be the result of the combination of socio-cultural, situational factors and of the ones related to the individual, to the individuality. A solution for the reduction of the appearance of the deviant behaviour following the urbanization and its specific phenomena (divorce, unemployment, the lack of personal relationships) could be set up by education and culture.

The deviance is always where the factors which relate to individuality and the ones related to the social side intersect. "Merton claimed that deviance is a normal reaction of behaviour in abnormal social conditions" (apud Scripcaru, Boișteanu, Astărăstoaie, Chirița, 2002: 125), and "Howard stated: the level of civilization attained by a society is illustrated the best by the place the woman has in the respective society, by the care the society grants to the child, starting from birth" (apud Predescu, 1989: 196-197).

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WORKING ABROAD. ROMANIAN ROMA EXPERIENCES.

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Abstract: *In Romania, the Roma constitute the third largest ethnic group and the group considered the most disadvantaged in economic and social terms. Their marginalization originates in a long history of rejection, starting from the condition they initially had in society, that is of slaves (the liberation of the gypsies from servitude ended in 1856). The communist regime tried to assimilate them, especially through measures of integration in the national education system, in factories, in agriculture. Many Roma believe that their life has been better in socialism, as they have found relatively easy employment and access to housing. Nostalgia for these benefits is constantly marked by their discourse, in the narratives about the current standard of living, unemployment and going abroad, for a better life. The impossibility of finding a job does not only affect the Roma, and it is not only them who decide to migrate abroad for better salaries. Many Romanian citizens go to the West but unlike them, Roma are less likely to achieve a decent life in their origin countries. "Roma are exposed to a much higher degree of extreme poverty, discrimination and exclusion in their countries of origin."¹ This background characterise the phenomenon of labor migration represented by Roma. In this paper we will analyze a several migration experiences, based on some interviews collected in the first project dedicated to the oral history of Roma in Romania, "The Untold Story. An Oral History of the Roma People in Romania".*

Keywords: Roma; poverty; survival; abroad; migration.

An ample national report on the Roma situation (Situția romilor, 2012) showed that in the first two decades after the December Revolution, more than 20% of the Roma went out of the country, mainly in order to find a more substantial income form than the one at home (Șerban, 2012: 55). No other ethnic minority in Romania has shown a similar percentage for the same migration objective. The Roma leaving abroad was and still is justified by a chronic lack of resources (Șerban, 2012: 55). It goes on, given the unchanging condition of the Roma (as well as that of many Romanian citizens afflicted by poverty) and it is supported by the benefits generated by their experience there.

Poverty is the first and principal reason for their going to work abroad, but Roma sometimes mention their fellow citizens' intolerance. The two are frequently closely connected. The mentality according to which the Roma are poor because they do not want to work is often met. The inability to get a job diminishes the self-esteem and the esteem from the others too, generating a feeling of "non-belonging" and increasing the separation between ethnic groups (FRA, 2009: 6). "I lived in very poor conditions in Romania. There they only have working positions for the Romanians, not for the Roma, you can't make a living there. Here, in Spain, if you seriously look for a job, you will finally find one, but not in Romania." (Interview with a Roma woman, Spain, 17.03.2009)" (FRA, 2009: 22). The states in the West of Europe are credited by the Roma as a space of tolerance, an image which reinforces the belief that they can

¹ Nils Muižnieks, "Time to debunk myths and prejudices about Roma migrants in Europe"(16/07/2015), [online] available at: <https://www.coe.int/az/web/commissioner/-/time-to-debunk-myths-and-prejudices-about-roma-migrants-in-europe>.

reach a decent life standard there (FRA, 2009: 21). "You should know that the Germans are very civilized, very thoughtful people. If they see you are alright and hard-working, then you are...they are very welcoming and greet you, talk to you and..." (I. S./Gelu)

After the Romanian revolution, the Roma were the first Romanian citizens to initiate this type of experience, being less fearful to venture in a world which most people had just heard of. The group's ability to move seems to be a feature which ensured its survival along centuries, in various historical contexts, often not in their favor. "Faced with the changes taking place in the Romanian society after 1989, this population will react according to its specific adaptive pattern. J. P. Liegeois (1994) points out that territorial mobility is an important adaptive element for the Roma, when circumstances change." (Voicu, 2002: 232). The conditions created by the fall of communism offered the possibility to know the Occident directly to the Roma as well, which led to a new way of earning money, either by contract-based employment or by unlawful activities.

However, the Roma were also the first to be affected by the transition to the market economy during the 90s. Under Ceausescu's regime, their life standard had risen to a threshold never reached before, but they were the first to be made redundant too, because of the low occupational training and deficient school education. In the new democracy, the Roma could hardly find a job, a fact which triggered inherent difficulties in benefiting from basic services (such as health care) and from decent housing (Situția romilor, 2012: 10). The educational capital (skills we acquire in school and outside this institution) (Voicu, 2004: 137-138) was and stays low among the Roma population, despite some support measures taken by the school training system.

On the other hand though, school tuition is seen as separated from the socio-professional path, since it does not generate advantages, as it does for the majoritarians. "Our life as Roma is harder...because the Romanians, they have education, they go to faculties and what not, so they find jobs, enjoy their own businesses and stuff. We, the Roma, can cope harder, for the fact that we have no literacy: it is not only that, though it does matter, but this fact does not help us at all, because we don't know, we don't have a job, a salary, some certain income from somewhere." (L. B.) It is difficult to explain to the Roma living in poor communities (places from where many people leave to work abroad) the usefulness of school, given that attending school requires resources and a set of facilities which those people lack.

After the fall of Ceausescu's regime, especially in highly industrialized towns during the socialist era, there emerged a poor layer of society consisting in workers who used to live in the factory dorms. Once the institutions and the affiliated housing buildings were closed, they could not go back to their native places (Ladányi and Virág, 2011: 65). Among these, the Roma, originally coming from countryside environments had settled in towns only a few decades before. They used to do unqualified jobs, were given access only to "underpaid and vulnerable positions, thus being the latest to arrive and having to leave the jobs among the first in case of redundancy." (Duminică and Preda, 2003: 31-32)

"(These people, how come they have to beg and live from day to day? Are they from the town or did they come from other places? Were they employed?) - They are (she sighs)... there used to be a district here, 'Peace'. Back then here lived just the Gypsy the poorer ones... But they could not support the flat. They all used to have flats, but just couldn't keep them. They didn't work. Only the social aid they got, plus those who

had children. And all of them were thrown out in the street. (Who did that?) - The council [the County Council] All of them. They threw out the poorest ones too and no place to go to. (In Ceausescu's time, how did they make a living?) - They would work. Back then, the cleaning women who would sweep the staircase were all Gypsy. But now, now everybody can also sweep the staircase. Or there used to be a public toilet, a long time ago. Well, not any more. There the Gypsy women would work and clean and do stuff. So they had where to go. (And from the pensions they received or...couldn't they keep living in the blocks?) - (she sighs) I don't know what the poor people did, but a lot of them were left out in the street. A lot!..." (M. L.)

Outsiders in the areas they inhabit, lacking support nets (large family, relatives), having too few years of work experience and thus no social welfare, these persons are characterized by "high" vulnerability. (Duminică and Preda, 2003: 32). Vulnerability has been a constant of the Roma population, especially due to the lack of professionalization. This is the reason why the work done abroad has been part of menial jobs, such as: dish-washing (in restaurants), car washing or slaughter houses jobs (V. H.) Stefania Toma also mentions the "historical determinism": in time, the Gypsy have been day laborers, hired for a season or periodically (Toma, 2011: 148). A state of affairs perpetuated by the force of the majoritarians, it has created an inter-generational pattern among the Roma. A lot of Roma young people copy occupation-wise what they see at their parents, believing they cannot become more than daily laborers. Their development in this mental frame also stimulated the idea of migrating abroad as a way of getting out of the inescapable economical and social status. Work migration is seen by the Roma as bringing about a double advantage: in the Occident, they can find better paid jobs, and also the ethnic-based discrimination is less frequently met than at home (our interlocutors said that it appears especially in cases of begging).

The Roma have sensed the economic instability also in the segment of the conservatory groups, those (self)identified by a trade. Their professional specifics have disappeared in the last decades (including the communist era). The products made by tinkers or brick-makers, as well as the services of the painters and blacksmiths getting out of demand, the occupational identity has not been pursued by the youth. A part of them, to which elderly members of the family were added, left abroad. At the beginning of the 90s, they used the political asylum as a pretext for leaving, invoking persecutions from the communist. Germany was mainly aimed at, but there are documents about other target states too: the Roma from Floresti arrived in the UK in 1995 (Situția romilor, 2012: 11) and others went to France (Ilie, 2016: 92). Thus, they benefited from subventions and material aid given by the host state, for a period of 4 to 6 months, which encouraged them to bring more and more relatives from Romania. According to an estimation regarding the asylum seekers coming from Romania into Germany between 1990-1992, almost half of them were Roma ethnics, that means about 70,000 people (Voicu, 2002: 248). Germany represented the standard of well-being, an "El Dorado" which attracted particularly the Roma from Banat and Transylvania, regions in the West of the country exposed for centuries to the German cultural influence through political conjunctures (they belonged for a while to the Habsburg Monarchy and then the Austro-Hungarian Empire)

Dumitru Sandu believes that the attraction of the Roma could also be explained by the (permanent) emigration history of the Transylvanian Saxon², who they lived together with, locally or regionally (Sandu, 2010: 78). He points out that in the 90s, it was not the majoritarians who first showed an interest in migration, but the minority (ethnic) groups, such as the Roma and the Saxons. However, once the financial aid from the German government stopped coming, very few of the illegal Roma migrants entered the German labor market, turning instead to other countries, unexplored before (Yaron Matras, 1998, cited by Voicu, 2002: 249). “My father-in-law was in Germany, in...Munich. He was then in the 90s. Furtively, you see. Well, they put him in a camp...gave him a salary [welfare aid]. My wife was with him too. So that’s how... how ours... have made it. Then they left to Poland...till 2000.” (A. O.) The quote emphasizes the importance of family nets as the main support means for circular migration. The family ensures the support of the new-comer in the host society. Compared to those of the majoritarians, the Roma nets are much larger, denser, reflecting their cultural specifics (large families, with lots of children, multi-generational families living together). They sustain the migrants in the adaptation process. “(Why did you choose Poland?) - We all followed one. He went there and said: ‘Come on, there is...’ – One of ours went there and he managed well. Then another one left, and after him, another one, and so we let each other know and left one by one. Till ‘96. We all came back till ‘96 -‘98. There are others who continue to go... I was a child, I even went to school there. We lived there for two years. In Białystok. (Did you learn Polish?) - Well. I still know it. And so, one by one, we went all, we helped one another there.” (A. O.)

The migration to the West of Europe experience proves that the Roma often do occasional jobs and/or work in agriculture and construction. Here they get bigger amounts compared to the money they would earn in the country for similar jobs. However, such tasks remain in general poorly rewarded, both in Spain and Italy, countries mainly chosen by the Roma for seasonal agriculture contracts (picking up olives, asparagus, strawberries, grapes, tomatoes etc.). Generally, the money is spent on the migrant’s daily expenses and those of the family left at home. Longer staying stages or multiple cycles in the circular migration process allow them to gather more significant savings aimed at reaching meaningful objectives (building a house, buying a car). “The kids kept saying they would come back home to make a block [house]. Here, in the back. To build a block, ‘cause they are two. Two sons! Both are in Spain. And they said they come home to make it, they made a project and what not. Yes, a block with two exits.” (I. S.) At the beginning of the 90s, when the migrants flux had not reached the current number, the money for such ample investments was earned in a shorter time. “I was in Germany. In ‘91-‘92. I stayed for a year and a half. From there I made my house as well. I worked in construction and agriculture, at harvesting, as they paid good money there.” (I. D.) The people whose circular migration experience started 15/20 years ago, tend to tell that “back then” (that is at the beginning of the period), they acquired important sums which allowed major material investments.

“For four euros and you had to work hard in order to...(like) damsons – you’ve seen damsons, what it’s like to pick them up to fill [a basket]. They would fall a hundred,

² Population of German origin, colonized in the Middle Ages in Transylvania and which repatriated almost entirely to Germany in the 20th century.

sometimes thirty, other times, twenty, if there was rain and we had to go back. No way to...make thousands of euros. Just for the house and children, for the living..." (B. F.) The money transfers are not significant enough to be capitalized: they are aimed at providing for the daily needs, including the expenses regarding household management (for example: repairs, purchasing appliances or furniture). The money can be rarely/hardly saved, considering that the families have children who go to school, moreover being the most exposed to mass cultural temptations. Many families who practice circular migration live in the rural environment, thus sending the children to high-schools in the city increases the financial pressure required by their support. "We have to keep them in school too. We have to offer them a loot and if you have no money saved, it's hard!! When they say 'Mom' or 'Dad', and you don't have what to give them, it breaks your heart. She is a young lady now too and she must have: 'Mom, I want this and that.' If we don't have to give her, it's hard. (What do the children ask for?) - All that's necessary, which they see at another girl... a tablet, a phone, living conditions. A lot... Now she's in the 7th grade, she will also go on. In Craiova it's hard to support a child, but..." (B. F.)

The Roma continue to be pleased with menial jobs, as in the previous decades, the main focus being the money reward. To become professionally-trained is not an objective of the circular migration actors (maybe more so for their children – compared to their parents, they benefit from wider access to various resources, in particular, educational, formative and informative ones). The parents pick up certain occupations which are in higher demand in the countries where they work (also accessible to them, as there are no high skills required), and whenever they seize the opportunity for better terms, they change their destination. "(Has your uncle been gone before?) – Yes, he has. (Where?) - Through France. Now in Ireland 'cause they are paid better than here. And there is more work. (What occupations have you noticed to be the most wanted – or the easiest to find a position for, in fact?) - Those who know how to paint or make houses. (and also) in construction, jobs like that. And also, and in the kitchen too. For instance, my cousin, who is in England. There... where they make bread... at the baker's. Wherever they can find something to make money. Where they can find work. Even if they don't know, they still learn and go. And yet they like it and they can manage." (V. H.)

The changing of the migration destination often depends on the amount estimated to be earned. The living conditions, the existence of an employment contract, its duration, the presence of the family/friends (acquaintances) net, the fact that the job is relatively stable, are all parameters which can be differently assessed by one and the same person, depending on the nature of the experiences gathered. "(You live in barracks, didn't you?) - They had those barracks too, we lived in an older house and now, in the last years, in a school. Well we, what can I tell you? About conditions: to have conditions you have to pay and we were glad they didn't ask us for any money. So we lived together seven women, we got on well 'cause we are from the same town and of course one shouldn't have problems, we had money, we had hot water and it made us happy. And a shared kitchen... so I can't say it was bad. There are others in other places worse than this. So we can't complain." (A. T.) The living conditions are overlooked, as long as the basic need of having a roof over your head is satisfied; knowing that other migrants' experiences were less fortunate increases the positive value of one's own experience. A series of factors can influence (alter) the situation,

particularly the migrants' earnings. People have expectations, but they are placed out of context. For instance, considering the fact that a lot of contracts view agricultural work, they do not understand that nature is unpredictable, which can shorten (significantly) the season's length, a fact reflected by the remuneration received.

Conclusions

The synthesis of all the above mentioned experiences reinforce the well-known reality, that of economic stagnation for most of the Roma, lack of perspectives – especially for the youth, finding momentary solutions, leaving and returning, to and from abroad, alternatively with getting occasional makeshift jobs. The very existence of these people is placed under the sign of the temporary, being unstable and offering them little access to capital resources. Even if a part of the actors involved in the work migration phenomenon appreciate the benefits resulting from their experience in the foreign lands, this can be considered neither a long term solution, nor a model for the young generations.

The dragging economic state in Romania and the possibility to circulate freely in the European space maintain the migration fluxes. Under the socio-economic circumstances of the Romanian space over the last decades, a lot of Roma, especially in the rural environment, have been faced with the necessity to take radical measures in order to survive: for those willing to work, going to a Western country has become the first option. Particularly, given the old inequity background between the Roma and the others, the former assess circular migration as an advantageous way of satisfying their financial needs. Season contracts especially, linked to agricultural needs in countries such as Spain and Italy, do not require professional training and bring a quick income. The constant demand for work force in the West generated and now supports the idea of a "safe income – coming from opportunity jobs" (Ilie, 2016: 83). Finding and keeping a job in the country (a path associated by the Roma with countless difficulties) is thus surpassed by the reality of an income obtained from circular migration. Even if they do not leave abroad constantly, people are pleased with this pace. They believe that, at any rate, they will manage to get at least one contract per year and in the time left they will come back home and stay with the family and mind the household. Having been through the experience of several such periods, they nurture trust in a somehow regulated income or anyway, easier to access than getting one in Romania. The Roma invest trust in this income source "which has improved the life of their community both economically and socially" (Goina, 2009: 254). Thus, segments of the community have gradually reached a decent standard of living, a fact which raises self-esteem and also rearranges the hierarchy, the power terms with the majoritarians.

Circular migration does not offer a solution for socio-economic problems faced by most of the Roma. To integrate the Roma on the labor market at home to a larger extent would be a key element for improving the life standard of this ethnic group. The increased number of Roma employees in Romania stirs interest among the Roma militants, but not also among the employers or the public sphere. Activists, community facilitators, mediators, sociologists and anthropologists have been involved in various projects trying to insert the Roma on the local labor market. They have been taking place in the aboriginal space and yet the chronic issues of the community have not been solved. The continuous leaving abroad stands out as one of the solutions the Roma has

found in order to cope with the vicious cycle formed by these three factors: poverty-lack of education-discrimination.

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List of interviewees³:

- L. B. (female), b. 1968, interview conducted by S. Preda in Bistreț (Dolj county), August 7, 2015.
- I. D. (male), interview conducted by D. Săcărea, I. Bogdan, N. Cristea in Craiova (Dolj county), August 13, 2015.
- B. F. (female), b. 1960, interview conducted by S. Preda in Orășani (Ostroveni) (Dolj county), August 6, 2015.
- M. L. (female), b. 1960, interview conducted by S. Preda in Zalău (Sălaj county), February 27, 2016.
- A. O. (male), interview conducted by S. Preda in Sîmbăta de Jos (Brașov county), June 8, 2015.
- I. S. (Gelu) (male), b. 1953, interview conducted by D. Săcărea in Sebeș (Alba county), February 7, 2015.
- I. S. (male), b. 1959, interview conducted by S. Preda in Eșelnița (Mehedinți county), August 18, 2015.
- D. T. (male), interview conducted by S. Preda in Craiova (Dolj county), August 8, 2015.
- A. Ț. (female), b. 1966, interview conducted by D. Nistor, I. Bogdan in Uila (Mureș county), September 6, 2015.

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'A NATION BEWILDERED AND A STATE IN COMATOSE': CORRUPTION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract: *Tolerance for corrupt practices is gradually making the most populous black nation in the world- Nigeria becoming synonymous with corruption. The previous and the recent rating of Nigeria by Transparency International on the Corruption Perception Index between 2015 and 2019 greatly suggest Nigeria is enmeshed in corrupt practices. The prevalence of corruption in the country has constituted a clog that stifles the developmental efforts in the country. This paper explored the existing Nigeria-focused corruption literature and other scholarly works to dissect the impact of corruption on the socio-economic development of Nigeria. From the review of studies, it is revealed that corruption remains the biggest threat to socio-economic development in most countries of the world including Nigeria. The study also revealed that several developmental programmes in Nigeria have failed as a result of the high prevalence of corruption in Nigeria. Also, it was found that owing to years of corruption and the failure of the government to nip the menace in the bud, the poverty level is high, insecurity of lives and properties is alarming and infant and maternal mortality in the country is endemic and pandemic. Hence, Nigeria is described as a nation 'bewildered' and a state in 'comatose'. The study recommends that appointment into various governmental institutions should be merit-based and democratization processes must be strictly adhered to in a bid to limit the corrupt act. Various governmental institutions should be strengthened in a bid to fast track other aligned institutions in the society such as the family, traditional and religious institutions.*

Key Words: *Corruption; Development; Economy; Insecurity; Poverty.*

1. Problem statement

Among numerous other problems bedeviling Nigeria; the most populous black nation in the world is corruption. The prevalence of corrupt practices in the country is a complex cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabric of every sphere of private and public lives of the people. Successive governments in the past have taken diverse steps to nip the scourge in the bud albeit with debatable degrees of success. Today, Nigerians applaud and tolerate ill-gotten wealth, the menace has permeated into all facets of the society; the family, the church, and even the traditional systems are not left out of this preventable but highly contagious disease. Corruption, therefore, affects the developmental efforts of the successive government in Nigeria. This has been responsible for the non-completion of projects and programmes that would have helped in alleviating the sufferings of Nigerians. Like every other country, no quantum development can be attained in a country where corruption strives such as Nigeria. Considering the alarming level of looted resources currently experienced in Nigeria, as revealed by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC) one ponders whether

the menace can be stamped out of the country. Unfortunately, this seemingly unabatable act of corruption has submerged the social structure in Nigeria such that it makes it very likely to pervade the unborn future generation of Nigeria (Umah and Eboh, 2013).

Without much emphasis, the problem of corruption is arguably one of the most significant issues of developing and undeveloped countries throughout the millennia. The pervasive nature of corruption in most of these countries has stifled entrepreneurship, professionalism and erodes the values of hard work and honesty, and is one of the root causes of under-development in most of these countries. Without much ado, in Nigeria, the manifestation of the effect of corruption is evident in all sectors of society with collusion from the public to private sectors to sports bodies and even civil societies.

There is no need to emphasize that the much-celebrated anti-corruption crusade of this present government has nose-dived considering the recent rankings of Nigeria's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) by Transparency International. The CPI ranked Nigeria as the 135th, 144th, and 136th most corrupt nation in the world in 2012, 2013, and 2014 respectively. More recently, Nigeria, the largest economy in Africa was ranked 136th, 148th, 144th, and 146th position in 2016, 2017, 2018 & 2019 respectively ((Transparency International, 2019; 2018; 2017; 2016; 2014; 2013; & 2012) and the most corrupt nation in West Africa. Rightly or wrongly, the seeming failure of the war against corruption in Nigeria may not be unconnected with the epileptic nature of political will on the part of the political leadership as well as the weakness of relevant institutions saddled with the responsibility of being at the vanguard of combating corrupt practices. This probably explains why sceptical eyebrows are raised and considered a national embarrassment whenever the war against corruption is paraded as one of the success stories of the government. Owing to this ranking, Nigeria is still perceived most especially by the foreign countries and investors as a country deeply rooted in corrupt practices for condoling the menace.

Although corruption and development lie on a continuum but occupying opposite poles yet, it has been widely identified as a clog in the wheel of socio-economic development of any country. However, corruption serves the narrow interest of family allies, this assertion is hinged on clientelism and prebendal politics that characterized the Nigerian political culture. Development, on the other hand, with its end goal of creating advancement, serves the interest of the people.

Several studies have indicated that corruption is one of the biggest threats to socio-economic development in most countries of the world and its negative impacts on sustainable peace and development have made it an issue of universal concern (Igbuzor, 2008; Ikubaje, 2004). Alabi and Fashagba (2010), explicate that one major challenge to Nigerian search for enduring socio-economic, political, and technological development as well as efficient and productive utilization of allocated resources in the millennium is the pervasive corrupt practice in the polity. Paradoxically speaking, the prebendalization of state power in Nigeria has dire consequences on Nigeria's socio-economic development. The unprecedented and adverse effects of corrupt practices on Nigeria are evident in the unequal distribution of resources, epileptic state of infrastructure, and poor living conditions among the populace (Alabi and Fashagba, 2010). The severe crisis rocking the economic, socio, and political development in Nigeria cannot be disconnected from the problem of pandemic corruption.

Indeed, it is a paradox that a significant number of the Nigerian population, a country endowed with many resources (tapped/untapped), the world's eighth-largest exporter of crude oil, and acclaimed giant of Africa, still lives in poverty owing to its corruption and economic mismanagement. Pathetically, those who occupied the decision-making position in the country have resorted to the pursuit of personal aggrandizement at the detriment of broader national interests. Literature has shown that there is a synergy between socio-political development and selfless political leadership. This is largely because qualitative growth and socio-economic developments have always been an outcome of good governance.

The persistence, pervasiveness, and trends of corruption in the country have consequently suggested Nigeria as a nation 'bewildered' and a state in 'comatose', hence a failed state. This is because there are abundant reports on how billions of naira are siphoned and misappropriated in the country by public officials and private individuals through fraud, embezzlement, gratification, and all manners of bribes (Alemika, 2012; Charlie 2015) with its attendant effects on security of lives and property and socio-economic development of Nigeria.

The criticality of studying the impact of corruption on Nigeria's socio-economic development is not just academically important but politically, socially, and economically imperative. The discourse on the implications of corruption on Nigeria's socio-economic development has spurred a wave of interest which goes well beyond academic circles and reaches out to the public at large. It is because of these foregoing problems that this paper explored the impact of corruption on the socio-economic development of Nigeria. To put the discussion in a proper perspective, this paper is divided into segments. This segmentation includes Problem Statement, the concepts: corruption, and development; Theoretical platform; Methodology; Manifestation of Corruption in Nigeria and the impacts of corruption on Nigeria's developmental efforts, and lastly, the final segment of the paper concludes with recommendations on measures to combat corrupt practices in Nigeria.

2. Conceptual clarification

2.1. On Corruption

The study of corruption is hindered by the lack of adequate definition (Johnstine, 1991; Izbili and Aiye, 2007). The reason for this definitional fluidity cannot be farfetched as corruption comes in various forms and a wide array of illicit behaviours, such as bribing, extortion, fraud, nepotism, pilferage, theft, embezzlement and falsification of records, kickbacks, influence peddling, and campaign contribution (Klitgard, 1991).

The World Bank (2000) defined corruption as "the abuse of public office for private gains". This definition attributes corruption to the public sector alone neglecting the existence and prevalence of corruption in the private sector. Corruption also exists in other aspects of governance, such as political parties, the private business sector, non-government organizations, religious organizations, etc. Garner (2004:370) defines corruption as the act of doing something with the intent to give some advantage inconsistent with official duty and the right of others, a fiduciary's official use of a station or office to procure some benefit either personally or for someone else contrary to the right of others. Garner's definition broadens our knowledge of corruption as an act done with the intent to give an advantage not in line with the official duty and the

rights of others but for one's advantage. It includes bribery though more comprehensive because an act may be corruptly done through the advantage to be derived from it.

Nye (1967) defines corruption as "behaviour which deviates from the normal duties of a public role because of private-regarding (family, close private clique), pecuniary or status gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private-regarding influence. This includes such behaviour as bribery (use of reward to pervert the judgment of a person in a position of trust), nepotism (bestowal of patronage because of ascriptive relationship rather than merit); and misappropriation (illegal appropriation of public resources for private regarding uses)" (p.419).

Nye's definition emphasized the introduction of arbitrariness and discrimination in decision makings so that rules, regulations, and procedures are circumvented within a course of action for selfish gains. Given the above definitions, this study defines corruption as behaviour that abuse societal legal or social standards, as well as public roles or resources, meant for public purposes for private benefits.

Over the years, the debate on corruption in Nigeria has taken a systematic and institutional dimension such that it is now publicly celebrated not only by the corrupt individuals but by the families, loyalists, and supporters of this set of people. Perhaps, corruption has deadened the sense of righteousness among the people. In Nigeria corruption appears in different dimensions ranging from bribery, contract fraud, embezzlement, public procurement abuse, influence trading, complicated money laundering schemes, coercion by superior powers, and the use of public office for personal aggrandizement among others. Corruption has become a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabric of Nigerian social institutions (Adenike, 2013).

2.2. On Development

Development and its usage in contemporary social science disciplines are not only vague and nebulous but also polemical (Igwe, 2010:118). For example, such terms as "growth", "change" and sometimes "industrialization" often used interchangeably with development complicate the problem of providing a generally accepted definition for the concept.

To Gboyega (2003), development is an idea that embodies any attempt to improve the socio-economic wellbeing of people in all ramifications. This definition suggests that development constitutes both material and improvement in the sustainable wellbeing of citizens without fear or favour from any quarters. It seeks to improve personal physical security and livelihood and expansion of life chances.

Seers (1969) asserts that the concept of development must be conceived as a multidimensional process involving changes in structure, attitude, and institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and the eradication of absolute poverty. Hodder, (2000) also sees development as economic, social, and or political processes that result in cumulative rights in the perceived standard of living for an increasing proportion of a population. This definition suggests that an increasing standard of living involves socio-economic and political processes. Thus, the improvement of the standard of living must be durable and cumulative.

Development is considered to include not only economic growth, but also equitable distribution of healthcare, education, housing, and other amenities and services all with the view to improving the collective quality of life (Naomi, 1995). From

whatever perspective one might view development, it presupposes a process of societal advancement where improvements in the wellbeing of people are granted through equitable distribution of resources.

The above indices of development appear to be missing in Nigeria. The rate of unemployment is alarming and increasing, the state of health care facilities is appalling and education infrastructure in the country is dilapidated. Modern security apparatus is missing, maternal and infant mortality rate is high, and road facility is poor. All these are obtainable in the most populous black nation in the world that champions itself as the giant of Africa. Hence, Nigeria can best be described as a nation 'bewildered' and a state in 'comatose'.

3. Theoretical platform

Several theories on African politics have helped in shaping the understanding of underdevelopment and the issue of pervasive and endemic corruption in Africa. Among these theories are the Prebendalism theory by Richard Joseph and Gurnal Myrdal's soft state thesis. This study explores the prebendalism theory as developed by Richard Joseph to explain the prevalence of corruption and its effect on Nigeria's development.

Joseph (1987), contends that "the National Cake" as popularly called in Nigeria has its most dire consequences, the transformation of the office of the state into prebend... "According to the theory of prebendalism, state offices are regarded as prebends that can be appropriated by officeholders to accrue material benefits to themselves and their constituent and Kin groups. The main thrust of this theory is that the prebendalization of state power makes it possible for the political elites to use state power for personal or group aggrandizement. In a prebendal society, corruption seems to be intrinsically part and parcel of the political culture. This informs why many Nigerians may not know the term "prebendalism" but they know the practice and attitude to which it refers (Steven, 2016).

In its application, prebendalism portrays corruption as a culture or common practice in Nigerian politics. Politicians see corruption as a normal practice as the state itself is turned prebend. This theory explains the pattern of political behaviour which reflects the office of the existing state as something worth competing for and utilize for the holders' benefit as well as that of their reference or support groups. To a significant extent, the "state" in such a context is perceived as congeries of offices susceptible to individual cum communal appropriation. The statutory purposes of such offices become a matter of secondary concern. In this sense, the private interest supersedes the public interest. Development is usually taken to be a primary concern of all states. However, in a prebendal state like Nigeria where state power is used for self-benefit, development becomes a secondary concern. This theory, therefore, explains corruption as a virus itching against Nigeria's development.

4. Methodology

This study adopts the exploratory method. This method enables the researcher to use facts or information already available in the literature and review them to make a logical evaluation and arrive at a logical conclusion. This paper explored the existing Nigeria-focused corruption literature and other scholarly works seeking to categorize different types of corruption and their impact on socio-economic development.

Accordingly, secondary data are utilized. Facts and information were derived from textbooks, journals, articles, and other data depositories useful to the study. The gathered data are reviewed, while interpretations and generalizations are made through systematic qualitative content analysis.

Table 1: Evidence of Corruption cases in Nigeria: The journey so far

| Corrupt cases and cash involved | Personality(ies) involved | Punishment |
|---|---|---|
| ₦195 Billion Pension scam | Alhaji Abdulasheed Maina | Interim forfeiture of his property. The case is still ongoing. |
| \$6 Billion fuel subsidy scam | Mamman Ali, Mahmud Tukur and others | Ongoing court cases, no conviction |
| ₦123 Billion Naira Civil service fraud | Mr. Stephen Oronsaye, a formal head of the civil service of the federation | No action is yet taken |
| ₦32.8 Billion-naira police pension funds fraud | Atiku Abubakar Kigo, Mrs Uzoma Cyril Attang, John Yusuf, Egai Dangabar, Ahmed Inuwa Wadi, Mrs Veronica Ulonma Onyegbule, Sani Habila Zira, and Christain Madubute | Two years sentences or #750,000 fine |
| ₦ 255 Million cars purchase scandal | Stella Oduah, a formal minister of aviation | None |
| NNPC Missing \$20 billion | NNPC personnel | The personnel were fired, the Federal Government ordered an audit of the NNPC |
| Immigration recruitment scandal | Abba Moro, a formal minister of interior and controller general of immigration services | None |
| \$1.1Billion Malahu Oil scandal | Private firms (a group construction Co. Ltd (\$157M), Mega-Tech, Engr Co. Ltd (\$180M), Imperial Union Ltd (\$34M), Novel Properties and Development Ltd. | None |
| \$2 Billion arms deal scandal | Sambo Dansuki, former national security adviser (NSA) and other chieftaincies' of the Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) | Trial ongoing |
| \$700 Million Raw cash found in the throne of former petroleum minister | Allison Madueke | Interim forfeiture of it to the federal government |
| Diversion of 60% of \$1Billion foreign loan obtained from the Chinese | Ministry of finance | None |
| Diversion of \$2.2 Million vaccination medicine fund | Ministry of health | None |

| | | | | |
|--|--------|--|--|--|
| N13 billion fraud | Nimasa | Patrick Ziadeke Akpogu-Lokemi, a formal D.G of Nimasa and 6 others | | Trial ongoing |
| N200 million collected from the office of the former NSA | fraud | Uche Secondus | | None |
| N1.4b collected from the office of then NSA | | Olisah Metuh | | Trial ongoing |
| N2.1 billion collected from the office of then NSA | | Dr. Raymond Dokpesi, Chairman of DAAR Communications | | Trial ongoing |
| N830 million kept in accounts of four different companies | | Ex-SSA to former President Jonathan, Dudafa Waripamo-Owei | | Trial ongoing |
| ₦15 billion allegedly looted with the help of 18 co-accused. | | Senator Abdullahi Adamu | | The case continues to linger in court. |
| \$40 million collected from the office of then NSA | | Ex-President Jonathan's Cousin Robert Azibaola | | Trial ongoing |
| N544 Million grass cutting Fraud | naira | Babachir Lawal | | Trial ongoing |

Source: Compiled by the Researcher as Retrieved from Selected Newspapers/ Dailies.

From 2011 to 2019, there have been several alarming and scandalous cases of corruption in Nigeria. The most disturbing and perturbing ones among those cases are presented above.

Results and discussion

The data presented in this section were gotten from national daily articles published between January 2015 to March 2020. The corruption cases were grouped according to themes and were synthesised with related corruption cases to make for the argument of the socio-economic effects of corruption in Nigeria.

5. An Over-reaching Impact of Corruption on Nigeria's Socio-Economic Development

The leading greatest obstacle preventing Nigeria from achieving its mammoth potentials is corruption. It weakens the social contract in the country; it leads to the loss of billions of dollars investment from the country's economy causing stymies development. The scope and complexity of corruption in Nigeria are immense. This is because corruption in Nigeria is a web of interconnected practices that cleave across sectors. There is no need to over-emphasize the fact that Nigeria is already drowning in many of the most devastating consequences of corruption such as youth unemployment, poverty, infrastructural decay, human capital deficiency, and insecurity.

According to Alemika (2012), corruption undermines society's capacity to provide opportunities for citizens to meet the necessities of life. This informs why Sakariyau and Abdulrahman (2014) link the high poverty range in Nigeria to corruption. They believe that diversion of the private fund by private individuals for

selfish interest has done more harm to the country's economy and the people's standard of living, an assertion that the theory of prebendalism contends with. Given the words of Alemika (2012), it is obvious that corruption renders the government ineffective in providing opportunities such as jobs, health facilities, etc, for its citizenry. These deprived opportunities no doubt necessitate the high rate of unemployment cum high poverty rate in the country.

The menace of corruption has also been linked to "damage of public interest" which includes security (Alemika (2012)). The pathetic state of security in Nigeria today is axiomatic as a result of the high rate of corruption that pervaded the Nigerian state. In Nigeria's security sectors, most especially in the police, corruption is destabilizing and compounding security challenges. In the northern part of Nigeria, the level of insecurity and the havoc wrecked by Boko Haram insurgents and banditry are inestimable. While in southern parts of the country, kidnapping, robbery, and pipeline vandalization are daily evident and the security agencies are handicapped logistically to nip the menace in the bud. This perhaps explained why Nigeria's defence and security sectors are considered as one of the most corrupt in the world (Transparency International, 2019). The personnel of the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) is considered to be endemically corrupt, poorly paid, and often predatory. Police officers are Nigeria's most-bribed type of official; they are often seen at the road check-points soliciting petty bribes from the motorists (UNODC, 2017). Decades of unchecked corruption in the security sector have hollowed out the Nigerian military and security services and rendered them unable to effectively combat Boko Haram, banditry, kidnapping, and farmer-herder clashes in the country.

The effects of corruption on human capital development cannot be overstressed. Corruption and corrupt practices have contributed to human capital deficiency in no small measure. Even though Nigerians recognize education as a key to socio-economic advancement, the country's education sector has been affected by years of corrupt practices and misappropriations of resources (Matthew, 2018). The enormity of corruption in the Nigerian education sector includes officials embezzling resources meant for equipment and facilities in schools, demanding money and sex from students for grades. The atomic effects of corruption have hollowed out mostly proud institutions in Nigeria where shreds of evidence abound on corrupt practices of both management and staff of major tertiary institutions in the country. Hence, educational corruption remains a nationwide problem and an impediment to the socio-economic development of the country.

Pathetically and more worrisome is the corruption in the judiciary and within anticorruption agencies which undermines the country's already wishy-washy accountability mechanisms, thereby fuelling corruption across the spectrum (Matthew, 2018). The seemingly un-abatable level of corruption in the educational, health, and humanitarian sector, has wrecked the country's social capital and has an outsized impact on its most vulnerable citizens. This corruption also reduces the impact of foreign aids, particularly in north-eastern Nigeria, wherein humanitarian crises of over 2 million people displaced by the Boko Haram insurgents are evident. Corruption is widespread across the country's economic sectors: petroleum, industrial, agricultural, infrastructure, power sector, and banking. Together, these forms of corruption erase billions of dollars from Nigeria's bottom line and prevent it from realizing its great human and economic potentials. This suggests that understanding

the pitfall of corruption, which have crippled the Nigerian socio-economy and thrown the Nigerian state into a state of 'bewilderment', 'comatose', and mourning requires a more nuanced and pragmatic analysis to dissect and unravel its socio-cultural, psychological, and political undertones to proffer appropriate solutions and strategies.

5.1. The Reach for Corruption in Nigeria Political Sector

Ogundiya (2012) observes that the experience in the Fourth Republic indicates that corruption has become a norm. In Nigeria, electoral corruption unlocks corruption opportunities across other sectors. Kleptocratic capture of political party structures is a sine qua non of gaining power and thereby unlocking corruption opportunities across a range of other sectors. There appears no difference between Nigeria's two main political parties - The all Progressives Congress (APC) and the opposition People's Democratic Party (PDP) in this regard. Perhaps, both are assemblages of national, state, and local elite networks that rely on misappropriated public funds to finance election campaigns (Adebowale, 2016; Matthew 2018). This observation solidifies the argument that the Nigerian political culture is hinged on prebendal politics where everyone sees corruption as normal and not amoral. The implication of this on Nigerian society is that corruption remains unmitigated. The Nigerian political sector remains highly laced with corruption and other negative vices, a review of reported cases continues to show the Political sector as the bedrock of corruption in Nigeria. Public office holders continue to siphon money from the corridors of power to personal pockets and only a few are brought to book.

Some of the high-profile corruption cases have no actions taken on them yet, while some have trials that are still pending. For instance, Mr. Stephen Oronsanye (Former head of federal civil service) has a case of ₦123 Billion civil service fraud, while a former minister of aviation (Mrs. Stella Oduah) has a case of ₦255 million car purchase scandal with no actions taken. Similarly, the federal ministries of finance and health also have within its threshold corruption allegations of a diversion of 60% of a \$1 billion foreign loan obtained from the Chinese Government and a diversion of \$2.2 million vaccination medicine funds respectively. Both accusations to date have no action taken on them and no newspaper is yet to report a worthy explanation for such corrupt practices. The Ganduje saga (Kano State Governor), which has been labelled Gandollar by social media observers displayed the cankerworm of corruption in the country. The Governor reportedly received dollars on camera from an unidentified contractor in order to implement a project; to date, no action has been taken to investigate the saga as the Governor got a court injunction to stop every enquiry (Toromade, 2018, December 14).

On the other hand, other corruption charges in the public sector have had mild punishments being melted out; a perfect example would be a \$700 million raw cash found in the office of a former petroleum minister (Mrs. Alison Madueke) and the only punishment given to her is an interim forfeiture of the cash to the Federal Government (Adegoke, 2017, January 7). Similarly, there is also a newspaper report of a \$195 billion pension scam attributed to Alh. Abdulrasheed Maina; the only resultant event for this act is an interim forfeiture of his property.

While many of the earlier cited cases either have no actions or mild actions taken on them, other cases of corruption in the public sector have their cases on trial for years. For instance, a \$2 billion arms deal corruption charge against Sambo Dansuki (former

National Security adviser; NSA) remains inconclusively on trial, while connected cases such as Olisah Metuh receiving N1.4 billion, Dr. Raymond Dokpesi receiving N2.1 Billion from the same money also remains inconclusive in court. The public sector is laced with corruption, this explains the low corruption index score Nigeria is always recording as Transparency International places Nigeria 146 out of 180 countries sampled in January 2020.

It is not all gloomy in the Nigerian fight against corruption, the early days of President Buhari in power communicated commitment to fight corruption as certain landmark corruption cases were investigated and eventually brought to book. For instance, Toromade (2018, December 14) reported the cases of Former Governors Dariye and Nyame who were jailed for corruption by Justice Adebukola Banjoko. Sen. Dariye (former Taraba State Governor) was sentenced to 14 years imprisonment in June 2018 after he was found guilty of criminal breach of trust and diverting N1.162 billion state ecological funds while he was Governor between 1999 and 2007.

5.2 The Reach for Corruption in Nigerian Electoral Processes

In Nigeria, electoral corruption is not merely the perquisites of public office, it is also a lucrative pursuit unto itself. The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) estimates showed that it spent about \$1 billion on the 2015 and 2019 general elections while the country's political parties perhaps spent as much as \$5 billion campaignings (Queenesther, 2018; Emmanuel et. al., 2017). While corruption has been a defining feature of Nigerian electioneering processes since 1999, it rises to climax during the 2015 and 2019 general elections. As reported by EFCC prosecutors, the former petroleum minister was alleged to have spent \$115 million to bribe INEC officials during the 2015 election (Matthew, 2018). Over the years, reports from local and international observers concluded that electoral malpractices marred the 2015 and 2019 elections in Nigeria.

It is no gainsaying that electoral corruption is the most discussed and the least persecuted type of corruption in Nigeria. Many corruption cases about elections are usually reported in the dailies. For instance, a study conducted by Adeshola, Jamie, and Oliver (2019) found that corruption stories were more reported during the 2019 elections than in previous elections beforehand with about 200 articles across the nation monthly about corruption stories. In addition, the major themes of the stories bothered around fraud and misappropriation of election funds while graft and bribery ranked next.

In discussing the relationship between the electoral process and corruption, Adeshola et al (2019) noted that efforts were made by the presidency to water down the corruption allegations against Gov. Ganduje (Governor of Kano state) during the build-up to the presidential race. Their study found that the lack of interest in prosecuting the case is because the President considered Kano state as a key factor in his re-election bid and cannot afford to lose popularity in a state that eventually produced 10% of the total vote cast in his favour. Bringing a closer view also to the choice of President Jonathan to ignore corruptorial allegations levelled against Gov. Ayo Fayose in 2015 (an election year), shows that anti-corruption fights are usually tuned down during elections, allowing corruption to thrive during the period of elections.

The non-prosecution of election corruption cases have led to under investigation of these cases. Joshua, Richard, and Chinenye (2015, April 26) noted that corruption cases brought up during election periods against key stakeholders are intentionally watered down by paying editors to re-write the stories. This has made discussing corruption cases lined with election difficult to discuss as many offenders have not been pronounced guilty by any court of law.

5.3. The Reach for Corruption in the Nigerian Economic Sectors

The lifeblood of official corruption in Nigeria is petrol revenue because they constitute over 90% of government income. The revenue generated from Oil & Gas constitutes "national cake" often divided and shared by the federal, state, and local governments. The epicentre of corruption is the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) which shapes oil industry policy and regulations and spends lavishly without adequate oversight and auditing, and these are not in tandem with international best practices (Alexandra, Aaron, and Christina, 2015; Matthew, 2018). There are reported cases of how former petroleum ministers embezzled hundreds of millions of dollars, and how most of these ministers were accused of allocating oil bloc to the company they had an interest in (Agence, 2017; Will, 2016).

Similarly, Nigeria's industrial and manufacturing sector is not immune to the devastating effects of corruption resulting from misguided fiscal and trade policies. These sectors have nevertheless clung to loss-making and decline drastically simply because they are important mechanisms for distributing patronage and siphoning public funds. Evidence of these capital projects that gulp large quantities of public funds yearly despite incurring huge losses abound in Nigeria and constitute monuments of corrupt practices (James and Ragnar, 2005). Over \$5 billion is considered to have been spent by the federal government on Ajaokuta Steel Mill in Kogi State, spent ₦30 billion in worker salaries since 2010 and an additional \$1.2 billion investment is required to make the facility operational (Yekeen, 2018; Henry, 2018). Unfortunately, the moribund facility has never produced any steel since 1979.

The Nigerian Economic sector, which is chiefly administered by the private sector, has fewer reported corruption cases both in court and in media. However, a study conducted by Ufere et al (2012) cited by Gonzalo (2013) showed the pervasiveness of corruption in the private sector of the economy. They argued that the private sector is viewed as victims of corruption in the country when in an actual sense they are active bribers and have developed highly sophisticated bribery practices that are supported by the social norms and relations of production within the private and public sectors.

In any case, corruption in the private sector is usually not discussed as enormous attention is placed on the public sector. However, what is surprising is that many private sector corruption bears a relationship with the public sector, thereby making members of the government an ally to private sectors to win contracts from the public sector carry out corrupt activities such as money laundering, bribery amongst others. A perfect example here is a \$1.1 billion Malabu Oil deal was first initiated in 1998 by Dan Etete (the Minister for petroleum), who registered the company as a third party and then allocated a lucrative oil block to himself which he legally paid only 10% of the required fee. In furtherance, Malabu brought in Shell Petroleum as a technical partner in a deal that was now worth \$1.1 billion and is being

reported as a fraudulent move on the part of Malabu Oil and Gas and its principal actors by the EFCC (NAN 2020, January 20). Another example is Gov. Ganduje Saga, who reportedly receive dollars from a contractor in exchange for a government project in 2019 during the build-up to the general elections.

5.4. The Reach for Corruption in Agricultural Sector

The agricultural sector constitutes the largest non-oil economy, accounting for roughly 30% of GDP. The corruption in this sector has disproportionate effects because of its outsized impact on the country's poorest citizens. Numerous, agricultural subsidies and grants by the federal government are either misappropriated by government officials or end up in the hands of the wrong people (Godson-Ibeji, Anyoha, Chikaire, and Ani, 2016). Out of ₦873 billion agricultural subsidies, an estimated ₦776 billion was lost to corruption between 1980 and 2010 (Bassey, 2013). Under Nigeria's constitution, farming is the only outside employment public officials are permitted to undertake and many political elites in the country used this provision to launder money from government coffers. This buttress efforts by the government to supply cheap fertilizer to smallholder farmers never reached the targeted people.

Corruption in the agricultural sector is usually underreported and under-discussed because of its close affinity to corruption in the public sector. Activities of public servants translate into corruptorial practices in the agricultural sector as earlier noted. The data gathered and analysed showed that efforts to empower and diversify the economy to grow agriculture are more of words than actions, as such efforts are sabotaged by those put in charge to manage them. A great example here is the ₦69 billion Edo Oil Programme Grant given to the Edo state by the Central Bank of Nigeria in December 2019; however, observers have reported that all of that money has not been translated into any meaningful growth in the Agricultural sector, they even speculated that the money has been embezzled by those put in charge of the programme (Chris 2020, May 7).

While allegations made against the Edo state government is yet to be substantiated, Aderibigbe, Oladuntan, Adetayo et al (2017) suggested that corruption exists in the agricultural sector; according to their study, corruption in agriculture is manifested through favouritism in distributing government-sponsored fertilizer, hoarding of farm produce, bribery and inducement. In practice, the news and national dailies do not report these happenings but instead, they are often left out of corruption stories.

5.5 The Reach for Corruption in the Nigerian Power Sector

Nigeria's pathetically wishy-washy power sector has long been undermined by grand corruption. A study conducted by BudGIT (2017) & SERAP (2017), revealed that Nigeria has lost about \$64.7 billion to corruption in the power sector between 1999 and 2017. Indeed, the more money the government invests in the sector, the less power the country has. Nigeria with a population near 200 million when compared to Oman with about a 4.5million population currently generates roughly the same amount of power (4,500 megawatts) (Femi, 2018). In an attempt to revitalize the sector and root out corruption, 2013 unbundling and privatization of Nigeria's power generation and distribution networks were carried through poorly executed and did little to salvage mismanagement and chronic underperformance. This is because most of the winning

bidders are either former public officials or wealthy individuals who enjoy close ties with the ruling elite and had no prior experience in the power sector.

According to the Centre for Health, Equity and Justice (2019) cited by Olatunji (2019, September 19) Nigeria has lost a total of 11 trillion Naira to power sector corruption from 1999 to date, they further estimated that the losses may climb up to 20 trillion Naira in this decade. In substantiating their claims, they cited series of corruption cases that have been overlooked in the power sector and meant an immense loss to the economy and a crippled power sector.

6. Conclusion

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that corruption has sent Nigeria into a state of 'wilderness' and plunged the country into a state of 'comatose'. It can be aptly argued that there is a critical link between corruption and development, though corruption tends to affect development negatively. With these negative effects, Nigerians have suffered series and serious setbacks in all ramifications of social, economic, and political development. The scourge of the damages done by corruption has a long term effect on the economy and more so, on other fabrics within the society as it is seen in the poor standard of living of Nigerians, dilapidated social infrastructures, food insecurity, mass rate of unemployment, social insecurity of life and properties, inadequate medical and health facilities, poor standard of education, bad road network to mention but a few. The damage of this scourge to the economy and other fabrics of the society is seen in the poor state of security, the hospital without medicines, the school without educational facilities or resources, the road that is not passable, and the failure of citizens to improve.

Corruption has become an anomaly in Nigeria in many aspects. It is described per administrative, cultural, social, political, and economic influences; it is local and international. Corruption is not an intuitive pattern of behaviour but rather, a syndrome of broad gestures. Its consequences come from strengths and weaknesses in socio-political structures, favourable circumstances, and interactive synergies. It juxtaposes for institutions, organizations, groups, and individuals that occupy the state, the public, and the private sector, and the civil society. Above all these, corruption is a result of influential connections between multiple actors. Hence, it is a generic problem that requires a generic solution.

6.1 Recommendations

Corruption is a global phenomenon that exists virtually in most societies across nations and Nigeria is not exempted. In a bid to curb or reduce this vice called corruption in a contemporary society like Nigeria, some factors that enable systemic corrupt practices must be checked. Therefore, anaemic disengagement of the public and private spheres from the prevalence of private allotment of public assets should be strengthened. The supremacy of perpendicular (that is, patron-client) and particularity-based friendship (that is, religion, ethnicity, and kinship) over parallel and appropriate-based friendships should also be addressed. Emblematic or "big man" malady shown by the elites within the political terrain must also be checked. Democratization processes and electoral competition create dynamics that foster corruption. This dimension should be checked by the government in a bid to limit the corrupt act. Weak institutions: the various governmental institutions should be

strengthened in a bid to fast track other aligned institutions in the society such as the family, traditional and religious institutions. Anti-Corruption measures are most useful when backed by other notional factors and broadly interspersed as governmental reforms. Corruption is a collective approach rather than an individual challenge; it requires different interactions and interdependencies between multiple actors, institutions, and organizations at various levels. Therefore, corruption cannot be left unattended. The ministry of information and the National Orientation Agency (NOA) should embark on public orientation on the need for the fight against corruption. Corruption, like all other forms of behaviour, is sometimes influenced by an individual emotion, situation, and need to achieve. The Nigerian Government must be committed to curb corruption. The fight against corruption should not be sectional or directional. It should be a fight against all Nigerians who perpetrate corrupt acts irrespective of party affiliation or status. Also, the Money Laundry Prevention and Prohibition Bill of 2016 cum the Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matter Bill of 2016 should be quickly passed into law as this will improve Nigeria's legal framework to combat corruption. Finally, the two anti-graft bodies (EFCC and ICPC) should be given full autonomy in the discharge of their duty(ies). Government interference in their affairs would make them inefficient, bias and subjective as the best result from these two bodies can be achieved through total autonomy.

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EMPLOYER BRANDING-DIMENSIONS OF EMPLOYER ATTRACTIVENESS AT GENERATION Y AND Z

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Abstract: *In today's global economic context, in order to be market competitive, organizations need to differentiate themselves from their competitors not only through products and services, but especially by developing an attractive employer brand. The employer brand gives an organization a competitive advantage to attract and retain the employees it needs. Through employer branding, considered a strategic tool for human resources management, organizations can highlight internally and externally what makes them attractive and desirable in a context of recruitment and retention. The objective of this study is to identify the attributes (dimensions) of an employer's attractiveness (employer branding) seen from the perspective of generations Y and Z. The research question is whether or not there are significant differences between generations Y and Z regarding the perception of these attributes. A quantitative research method (online survey) was used for data collection. Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations), T-test and a rank-ordered of dimensions of employer attractiveness were used to analyze the data. The results show there are no statistically significant differences between the two generations regarding the perception of the dimensions of an employer's attractiveness. Both generations place the attributes management value and the social value (of integration) in first places. This study may offer some recommendations in order to attract, recruit and retain youth generations Y and Z.*

Keywords: *Employer branding; Employer attractiveness; Generation Y; Generation Z; Youth recruitment and retention.*

1. Introduction

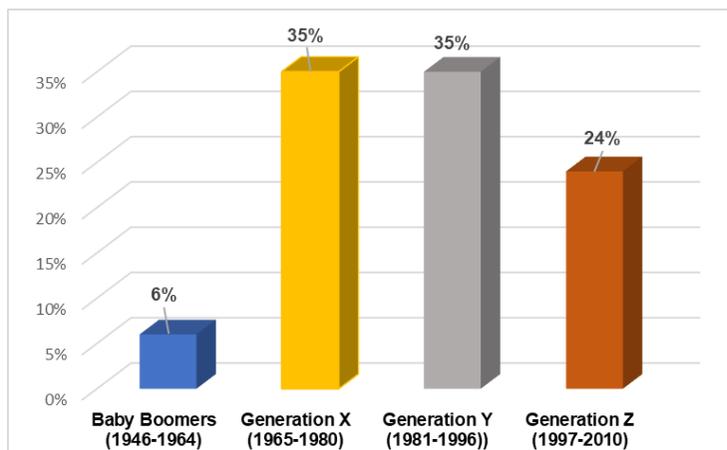
In today's global economic and technological environment, where change is rapid and the need for adaptation is essential, organizations need to differentiate themselves from their competitors and be considered attractive employers for potential or current employees (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003). Most organizations are looking for talent or employees with specific or rare skills, in order to remain competitive in the marketplace. By talented employees, organizations refer to those employees who have the necessary skills to lead the organization to success and performance (motivated, creative, adaptable, proactive, etc.). Human resources bring value to the company and through skillful investments in human capital, organizational performance is obtained (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). A global study conducted in 2014 by ManpowerGroup 2014 on 37,000 employers in over 42 countries shows that over a third of these companies face an acute shortage of talent. In the context of the development of online communication and the widespread use of social networks, companies have begun to use adapted recruitment methods, especially online recruitment or e-recruitment (Brandao, Silva and Vieira dos Santos 2018; Țîru and Mohorâta, 2020). Differentiating organizations in this *war for talent* (Michaels, Handfiels-Jones and Axelrod, 2001) is absolutely necessary in order to be seen as attractive employers. Thus, the efforts of the organizations are focused on uniqueness

and emphasizing the benefits offered to employees or potential employees and the development of an employer brand.

Through the employer brand, organizations build a unique and easily recognizable identity as an employer. Thus, a tool available to specialists and managers in human resources is employer branding. The application of branding principles to human resources management has been termed as “employer branding” (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). By effectively communicating an employer’s unique and positive aspects regarding working experience, employer branding strategies and initiatives contribute to increase employer attractiveness in the labor market as a whole and, more specifically, among potential skilled candidates (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Edwards 2010). Creating a strong Employer Brand not only reduces the cost of employee acquisition, but also enhances employee engagement and retention. By applying effective employer branding strategies, organizations can increase their organizational attractiveness as employers. Organizational attractiveness is defined as the sum of the benefits seen by employees or potential employees of a specific organization (Berthon, Ewing and Hah, 2005).

The scope of this paper is to identify the attributes of attractiveness in employer branding and their relative importance in two new generations on the labor market, so called generation Y and Z. The arrival of the new generations of professionals in organizations has the potential to promote challenges to the policies and practices related to the management of people. Taking into consideration that Millennials and Generation Z will represent the largest generation in the workplace (60% of global workforce according to Statista 2021) organizations really need to know and understand how they can attract these generations in order to engage, retain and motivate them. In this study we aim to track the differences between generations Y and Z and to identify the similarities and contrasts in dimensions of attractiveness in employer branding.

Figure 1. Global workforce 2021



Source: Statista 2021

2. Employer Brand. Employer branding

The Employer Brand has emerged as a natural need for companies to respond to the challenges they have faced in the labor market since the 1990s, in terms of recruiting and retaining talent in organizations. In 1995, Ambler and Borrow, in their established work, "The Employer Brand", defined the employer brand as "a package of functional, economic and psychological benefits offered by an employment experience and identified with the employer company". In 2003 The Economist observed an awareness of the employer brand of 61% among the management of organizations. Employer brand refers to a company's efforts to promote, internally and externally, a clear vision of what makes it different and desirable as an employer" (Lievens 2007). "A strong employer brand should include rewards, salary, benefits, career progress and value-added opportunities" (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003). Edwards (2010) sees the employer brand as a "unique and particular employment experience" and Michington (2001) as the "image of the organization as a wonderful place to work in the minds of employees, active and passive candidates, customers and other interested parties".

The process of building and communicating an Employer Brand has been called Employer Branding. The term was taken from marketing, from branding theory and refers to "the application of branding principles in human resource management" (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). "Employer branding represents an organization's reputation as an employer and the value of employment it offers to employees" (Barrow and Mosley, 2011). Through employer branding, the organization develops an image of a potential employer that can attract future employees and retain current employees.

3. Organizational attractiveness (employer attractiveness)

Employer branding was operationalized by measuring organizational attractiveness. An organization is considered attractive to existing and potential employees if their perception and image of the company brand (employer brand) is associated with a positive one. "The more attractive an organization is perceived by potential employees, the stronger the employer's brand of that company will be" (Berthon et al., 2005). Organizational attractiveness refers to "the expected benefits that a potential employee sees in working for a specific organization" (Berthon et al., 2005; Alniacik et al., 2014). Organizational attractiveness is also considered the power that motivates an applicant to apply to a particular company and existing employees to stay in the company (Bakanauskiene, Bendaravičienė and Barkauskė, 2017).

Organizational attractiveness was first measured using the EmpAt Scale developed by Berthon et al. (2005) and which derives from the dimensions of psychological, functional and economic benefits developed by Ambler and Barrow (1996) when he defined the concept of employer brand. Berthon et al. (2005) show that the value of the employer brand is given by a multidimensional construct of attributes of its attractiveness. These dimensions reflect five types of values offered by a company to potential employees and which characterize the employer brand: economic value, interest value, social value, development value and application value. Economic value captures economic benefits: above average salary, attractive compensation package, job security, promotion opportunities, value of interest refers to an exciting work environment, new work practices, encouraging employee creativity

to produce innovative products/services and quality, social value in a pleasant work environment, "fun", good collegial relationships, good team atmosphere, development value at recognition, self-esteem and confidence, career development, development for the future and application value to the opportunity to apply what was learned and teach others, customer-oriented and humanitarian organization. The value of interest and social value capture the psychological benefits while the development value and the applicative value capture the functional benefits.

4. Generations

The demographic generation or cohort represents a group of people born every 20 years. This division proposed by Strauss and Howe (2007), takes into account 4 significant periods of life: youth / childhood, maturity, middle age and old age / old age. Generations have three criteria in common: an age location in history (the same historical events and crucial social trends in the period when they are in the same phase of life), they are sustainably shaped by the eras they encounter in childhood, and of adult youth and they share certain common beliefs and behaviors (about family, culture, values, risk, civic engagement, etc.), (Strauss and Howe, 2007). Thus, there is a sense of common belonging perceived in that generation. "As a social category, a generation probably provides a safer basis for generalizing personality than other social categories such as sex, race, religion, or age" (Strauss and Howe, 1991: 63).

The names of the generations and the age ranges (approx. 16-20 years) differ depending on the researchers / research institutes (there are different arguments about the influence of the events from the analyzed periods) but also depending on the country and / or region. The active generations in the labor market considered global are: Baby Boomers Generation (1946–1964), Generation X (1965–1980), Generation Y (Millennials) (1981-1996), Generation Z (after 1996-approx. 2010). More recently, the Alpha Generation (born after 2010-present) is also discussed. Studies show that there are significant differences between generations, which can create conflicts in the workplace and the need to rethink human resource management practices. The literature has reported that different generations tend to prioritize different elements in the workplace (Tejesen, Vinnicombe and Freeman, 2007). Different expectations regarding potential employers, different preferences and motivations of generations can have a significant impact in building companies' employer branding strategy. Most generational studies have focused on issues such as personality traits (Twenge and Campbell, 2008), values at work, and career expectations. However, there are quite a few studies that have investigated the dimensions of employer branding for both generations Y and Z. Reis and Braga (2016) have shown that to attract people from Generation Y, the rewards package is very relevant, as well as the development opportunities and a positive workplace.

5. Generation Y (Millennials) (born 1981-1996)

Figure 2. Generation Y (Millennials)



Source: VectorStock

Born at a time when the world has enjoyed relative peace and growing prosperity, Howe and Strauss (2007) called them the "Millennials" generation because they entered college in the 2000s. Their distinct connection to technology led some authors to call them digital natives, while Generation X (1965–1980) is known as digital immigrants (Hershatler and Epstein, 2010). „Millennials use their digital skills to build and maintain close connections between colleagues” (Howe and Strauss, 2007). Unlike the Baby Boomer generation considered individualistic or the X generation (their parents) seen as pessimistic, millennials are team-oriented, confident and optimistic, more learnable at work than their Boomer and X generation colleagues, while sometimes they are viewed as “spoiled and addicted” (Howe and Strauss, 2007). They tend to be very career-oriented and expect rapid advancement and benefits.

Millennials appreciate organizations with meaningful missions, they are motivated to help their peers and they contribute to preserving the environment and making the world a better place to live. Because of their education and intense focus on lifelong learning, millennials are likely to appreciate opportunities for lifelong learning. Millennials expect a lot of feedback and clear directions for their work, but at the same time the freedom to do their job the way they want. They want both a career and a personal life and expect flexible working hours to maintain a work-life balance (Luscombe et al. 2013). In addition, they expect to be rewarded and valued for their contribution, they want to be part of the decision-making process and they expect a high level of recognition from the organization (Luscombe, Lewis and Biggs 2013).

6. Generation Z (1997-approx. 2010)

Figure 3. Generation Z



VectorStock®

VectorStock.com/29179309

Source: VectorStock

Generation Z is considered to be formed of those young people who are "highly educated, technologically savvy, innovative and creative". (www.ey.com). They have encountered political, social, technological and economic changes in their brief lifetimes. Born into a digital world (born digital), they live online, integrate and become virtually involved with their favorite brands and are great users of technology but see it only as a tool. They have hypercognitive skills, are comfortable with the cross-use of multiple sources of information and with the integration of virtual and direct experiences (McKinsey 2018). They have higher expectations from employers than Generation Y, they are less loyal to brands than Generation Y and they care more about experience. McKinsey (2018) labeled this generation as having basic behaviors anchored in a single element: "seeking the truth". Generation Z appreciates individual expression and avoids labels. It mobilizes for a variety of causes. They deeply believe in the effectiveness of dialogue in resolving conflicts and improving the world. Finally, they make decisions and relate to institutions in an extremely analytical and pragmatic way (McKinsey, 2018). At work waiting for face-to-face discussions with the manager, flexible career opportunities, want to simultaneously explore more roles and competitive industries and salaries (Tysiac, 2017).

7. Methodology and research results

The objective of this study is to identify the attributes of an employer's attractiveness from the perspective of generations Y and Z. The research question is whether or not there are significant differences between generations Y and Z regarding the perception of the dimensions (attributes) of an employer's attractiveness.

The research method is quantitative, using online survey. The study was conducted on a sample of 156 respondents, students in the final year at the Faculty of Sociology and Psychology of the West University of Timisoara, some of them already employed. They are part of Generations Y and Z, which have entered or are preparing

to enter the labor market soon. The study was conducted online at the end of 2019 by distributing in social networks and specific groups of the university. The sample includes 78.8% women and 21.2% men, generation Y represents 36% and generation Z 64% of the total respondents. 4 respondents were eliminated because they did not belong to the two types of generations studied.

In order to identify the most important aspects of an employer's attractiveness it was used Berthon et al. (2005) scale (EmpAt) to measure the dimensions of organizational attractiveness. The EmpAt scale was slightly improved with few questions related to the value of management, an aspect highlighted by some generational studies, as a relevant value attributed to the job, especially for these two generations. The statements were assessed using the Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means "total disagreement" and 5 means "total agreement".

The results of the analysis (using the SPSS 20 software) show in general that there are no statistically significant differences between the two generations regarding the perception of the dimensions of an employer's attractiveness. The only exception is the items "Regular feedback offered by the manager" and "A manager who constantly motivates the team" which for generation Z are much more important than for generation Y (see Table 4). This may mean that for young people in generation Z the regular feedback provided by the manager and their constant motivation are significantly more important attributes compared to generation Z. What is interesting to mention is that these attributes are not mentioned as among the preferred ones for generation Z (see Table 2). This could also be explained by the fact that Generation Y does not yet have work experience compared to Generation Z and expectations in this regard may be different.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Employer Attractiveness Items in descending order

| Employer Attractiveness Items (Attributes) | N | Mean | SD |
|---|----------|-------------|-----------|
| A competent and honest manager | 152 | 4,81 | ,485 |
| Having an open and clear communication with your manager | 152 | 4,74 | ,546 |
| A manager who appreciates employees 'merits | 152 | 4,72 | ,542 |
| Happy work environment | 152 | 4,68 | ,592 |
| Job security within the organization | 152 | 4,66 | ,701 |
| Having a good relationship with your colleagues | 152 | 4,61 | ,719 |
| A manager who constantly motivates the team | 152 | 4,57 | ,668 |
| Acceptance and belonging | 152 | 4,53 | ,745 |
| A fun working environment | 152 | 4,50 | ,681 |
| The organization both values and makes use of your creativity | 152 | 4,43 | ,843 |
| To be helped when I need it | 152 | 4,43 | ,742 |
| Training programs | 152 | 4,41 | ,833 |
| Other benefits (private medical insurance, sport allowance, meal tickets, etc.) | 152 | 4,40 | ,824 |
| Flexible schedule | 152 | 4,39 | ,877 |

| | | | |
|---|-----|------|-------|
| Extra - salary benefits (bonuses, performance bonuses, 13th salary, etc.) | 152 | 4,37 | ,786 |
| Regular feedback offered by the manager | 152 | 4,33 | ,867 |
| Innovative employer-novel work practices/forward-thinking | 152 | 4,33 | ,828 |
| The organization produces high-quality products and services | 152 | 4,32 | ,843 |
| The organization easily adapts to market changes | 152 | 4,29 | ,881 |
| Supporting and encouraging colleagues | 152 | 4,20 | ,822 |
| An above average basic salary | 152 | 4,18 | ,833 |
| Work from home / remote | 152 | 3,88 | 1,173 |

Regarding the importance given to the attributes of organizational attractiveness (see Table 2), both generations pay approximately the same attention to certain aspects. (*A competent and honest manager*-rank1 for both generations, *A manager who appreciates employees' merits*-rank 3 for both, *having an open and clear communication with your manager*-rank 4 for gen. Y and rank 6 for gen. Z, *Happy work environment*-rank 5 for gen. Y and rank 4 for gen. Z, *having a good relationship with your colleagues*-rank 6 for both) but there are differences in two attributes that are important only for that generation. Generation Y placed job security in 2nd place and Generation Z in 5th place motivated by the team manager. This shows that there are, however, some differences between the two generations in terms of job expectations, which can also be explained by the weight of education. Generation Y was raised by Generation X which put a lot of pressure on their children to succeed and be the best and thus they are more insecure about the future as opposed to Generation Z raised by other values and extremely protected by their parents who cannot motivate themselves. They are the so-called *bored* generation, hard to please and motivated in the long run.

Table 2. Most-Preferred and Last Preferred Employer Attractiveness Attributes by Generations

| Preferred Employer Attractiveness Attributes | GenY | GenZ |
|--|--|--|
| | Most Preferred Attributes (in descending order) | A competent and honest manager |
| Job security within the organization | | Having an open and clear communication with your manager |
| A manager who appreciates employees' merits | | A manager who appreciates employees' merits |
| Having an open and clear communication with your manager | | Happy work environment |
| Happy work environment | | A manager who constantly motivates the team |
| Having a good relationship with your colleagues | | Having a good relationship with your colleagues |
| Last Preferred Attributes (in descending order) | Work from home / remote | Work from home / remote |
| | An above average basic salary | Supporting and encouraging colleagues |

| | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| ascending order) | Regular feedback offered by the manager | An above average basic salary |
| | Supporting and encouraging colleagues | The organization easily adapts to market changes |
| | The organization easily adapts to market changes | Innovative employer-novel work practices/forward-thinking |
| | Flexible schedule | The organization both values and makes use of your creativity |

Table 3. Paired T-Test: Significance of relations between Employer Attractiveness Items and Generations, Preferred type of Employer, Preference for Entrepreneurship and Gender

| Comparisons of Column Means ^a | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|------|----------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|-----|--------|-----|
| Employer Attractiveness Items | Generation | | Preferred Type of Employer | | Preference for Entrepreneurship | | Gender | |
| | GenY | GenZ | Public | Private | Yes | No | F | M |
| | (A) | (B) | (A) | (B) | (A) | (B) | (A) | (B) |
| Having a good relationship with your colleagues | | | | | | | | |
| Happy work environment | | | | | | | | |
| Supporting and encouraging colleagues | | | | | | | B | |
| A fun working environment | | | | | | | | |
| Acceptance and belonging | | | | | | | | |
| To be helped when I need it | | | | | | | | |
| The organization both values and makes use of your creativity | | | | | | | | |
| The organization produces high-quality products and services | | | | | | | | |
| Innovative employer-novel work practices/forward-thinking | | | | A | | | | |
| The organization easily adapts to market changes | | | | | | | | |
| Job security within the organization | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|--|---|--|
| An above average basic salary | | | | | | | | |
| Extra - salary benefits (bonuses, performance bonuses, 13th salary, etc.) | | | | A | | | | |
| Other benefits (private medical insurance, sport allowance, meal tickets, etc.) | | | | | | | B | |
| Flexible schedule | | | | A | | | | |
| Work from home / remote | | | | A | B | | | |
| Training programs | | | | | | | | |
| Having an open and clear communication with your manager | | | | | | | | |
| Regular feedback offered by the manager | | A | | | | | B | |
| A manager who constantly motivates the team | | A | | | | | B | |
| A manager who appreciates employees' merits | | | | | | | | |
| A competent and honest manager | | | | | | | | |
| Empbrand | | | | A | | | | |
| <i>Results are based on two-sided tests assuming equal variances with significance level ,05. For each significant pair, the key of the smaller category appears under the category with larger mean.</i> | | | | | | | | |
| <i>a. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost sub-table using the Bonferroni correction.</i> | | | | | | | | |

8. Conclusions

Both generations place the value given to management and the social value (of integration) in first places. In last places we can see the work at home / remote attribute that can be explained by the pre-pandemic context when this attribute was not so important and the salary, as well as the attribute *Supporting and encouraging colleagues* which correlated with the attribute *Having a good relationship with your colleagues* from the top of the most favorite can mean that these generations want a pleasant working environment and integration but do not place such a high value on solid relationships, but rather approach them on a more superficial level. If we correlate this with the results obtained by gender (see Table 3) we notice that the female gender considers this attribute more important (*Supporting and encouraging colleagues*) than the male. Also, in the gender analysis we notice that significant differences between genders appear in the provision of feedback by managers,

permanent motivation and other expected benefits (health insurance, sports, etc.) which are more important for women compared to men. In terms of significant attributes depending on the type of preferred employer (public or private) the attributes related to innovation, adjacent benefits (medical, sports, etc.), flexible hours and work from home are associated and considered more important in the private context than the public one (see Table 3). Also, the variable employer branding (average items) is considered more important for the private environment than for the public one, which is easy to intuit from practice.

A limitation of this study is its focus on Western Romania (Timisoara) and on a student population, thus it does not represent the reality of the workforce population as a whole; further studies may cover a more diversified sample, better representing the workforce population. Further research could also examine the impact of attractiveness attributes over time considering the actual pandemic context that changed the workplace expectations and the work values of new generations.

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THE IMPACT OF LEGISLATIVE CHANGES IN THE EDUCATIONAL FIELD ON ROMANIANS IN UKRAINE

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Abstract: *The Romanian and the Ukrainian culture, in fact the one from the Chernivtsi region, have intersected several times throughout history, knowing different stages of intensity, depending on the political evolutions. As the sociocultural reality does not always correspond to the legal reality, the study of Romanian communities abroad is a duty of Romanian researchers, especially since the Romanian community in Ukraine was not, historically, a marginal, insignificant, but was a cultural center and scientifically significant during the period of Greater Romania. Some of the important problems faced by Romanians abroad are: access to education in their mother tongue, the official use of the Romanian language in administration and justice, financing the activities of Romanian minority associations, Romanian-language media, preservation of religious identity, representation at the level of the administration, the lack of parliamentary representation, the restitution of the properties that belonged to the Romanian community. In this context, it is interesting to know the legal framework with incidence in the field, as well as the role of the institutions that the Romanian state has placed, over time, in the service of Romanians abroad. In this article, we will bring to the fore the phenomenon of migration and the eternal attempt of Romanians everywhere to preserve their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity. From this perspective, the legislative framework that responds to the needs of Romanians everywhere has a major impact on them and any change in it greatly affects them.*

Keywords: Romanian culture; Ukrainian culture; the Romans from Chernivtsi; ethnic groups; the right to education.

1. Introduction

In the following, we aim to draw an overview, as close as possible to reality, to bring to the fore the organizational, structural and even legal turmoil that have marked and are marking those who, for various reasons, whether they wanted to or not, they live outside the country's borders. We will highlight both the expectations that those in this corner of the world have, but also the effects that the legislative changes that have taken place over time have had on them.

The migration of Romanians in the world is both a historical process, whose roots can be detected in the second half of the nineteenth century and which continued throughout the twentieth century, and one of the largest social phenomena that has left its mark on the evolution of Romanian society in the last two and a half decades. Romanians, wherever they are, are an integral part of the country's social body (Otovescu, 2017).

As parts of the Romanian society and exponents of the national culture, the communities of Romanians everywhere represent true bridges between Romania and the states where they are established. Both the Romanian communities that were torn from the national territory, and those that were formed and evolved on the territory of other countries have kept their linguistic and historical identity, their own spiritual values and relatively compact, without dissipating or dissolving in the national social

framework of the host countries. The strong attachment to inhabited and cultivated lands was a decisive factor in the self-preservation and perpetuation of traditional Romanian communities.

2. The sociological perspective of approaching ethnic groups

Although the concept of race was launched in the scientific space of biology, its applicability in the perimeter of human societies turns it into a concept of social bill. The biological characteristics that differentiate between different human races are significant in terms of our relationship to others, only insofar as we value them socially.

A concept used in close connection with race is ethnicity. Ethnicity refers to groups of people who have a common origin, share the same cultural background and possess the same language (Otovescu, 2009: 338). The Romanian minority in Ukraine is an example of an ethnic group. Therefore, unlike racial groups, defined according to a criterion of a biological nature, ethnic groups are defined by linguistic and spiritual criteria, by characteristics of a cultural nature.

Several racial or ethnic groups can live in a territory, one being the majority, and most being the minority, numerically. According to Louis Wirth (1941), the minority group is a group of people who, in a unitary way, suffer unequal treatment and who see themselves as a distinct group and object of collective discrimination. In this perspective, the attribute of "minority" is defined by the nature of intergroup relations, dominant-dominated relationship and not by population volume. Unequal treatment involves any form of exclusion of members of the minority group from participation in social life. In South Africa during apartheid policy is relevant in this regard.

The dominator-dominated relationship does not fully explain the complexity of inter-ethnic and inter-racial relations. They differ according to the nature and character of the relations of domination. Historically, the main patterns of ethnic and racial relationships that have been imposed have been: Genocide, the harshest pattern of ethnic and racial relationships, which involves the systematic, programmed killing of an entire population by another population; Expulsion, which refers to the expulsion of minority populations from their own territory by a dominant population; Slavery, a historical social institution and which is rarely found today, being specific especially to antiquity and the Middle Ages. In modernity, the most famous slave model is the American one, based exclusively on racial criteria; Segregation, which refers to the isolation of one population from another, both institutionally and territorially; segregation can be voluntary (in the case of populations that choose to isolate themselves from the majority population), as well as involuntary (when the minority population is forced to live in isolation from the dominant population). Also, segregation can be de jure (established by law) or de facto (existing outside legal norms that enshrine it); Assimilation, a process by which a minority population is gradually assimilated on the basis of linguistic and cultural borrowings by the majority population.

The historical / traditional communities of Romanians around the country's borders were formed as an effect of the historical configuration of the geopolitical contour of the Romanian state. They remained outside Romania, but kept their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity with dignity. Along with the other communities of Romanians everywhere, they are a landmark for the Romanian nation.

Some owe their external position to the specific process of ethnogenesis, carried out in a geographical and administrative area that never belonged to our country, and others belonged historically, culturally and administratively to Romania, but, following brutal rectifications of the Romanian state borders remained apart from them.

Both the Romanian communities that were torn from the national territory, and those that were formed and evolved on the territory of other countries, kept their linguistic and historical identity, their own spiritual values and relatively compact, without dissipating or dissolving. within the national social framework of the host countries. The strong attachment to inhabited and cultivated lands was a decisive factor in the self-preservation and perpetuation of traditional Romanian communities.

Among the latter are Romanians in Ukraine, a community about which there are no recent data on the values and needs of its members.

3. Legislative changes in Romania with an impact on Romanians abroad

Looking objectively at the succession of legislative changes experienced by institutions with responsibilities in the field of Romanians abroad, we will understand that frequent changes lead to uncertainty and uncertainty, as well as the impossibility of long-term plans for the benefit of this category. Thus, the Council for the Problems of Romanians Everywhere was established in 1995 within the working apparatus of the Prime Minister and represented the first structure to support Romanian communities outside the country's borders. In 1998, the Undersecretariat of State for Romanians Everywhere was created, and in 1999, it was transformed into the Department for Relations with Romanians Abroad. In January 2001, the Department was renamed – Departamentul Românilor de Pretutindeni (DRP) - and became part of the Ministry of Public Information. In 2003, the DRP was transferred to the General Secretariat of the Government, and in March 2004, to the Chancellery of the Prime Minister. Since March 2005, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has taken over the activity and funds of DRP and has developed and applied the Romanian state policy in the field of relations with Romanian communities abroad through the Department for Relations with Romanians Everywhere (DRRP). Starting with December 29, 2009, according to OUG no. 115/2009 on the establishment of reorganization measures within the central public administration, the Department for Romanians Everywhere was established as a structure with legal personality within the Government apparatus, in coordination with the first the minister. In 2012, it became part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs again, without legal personality, until 2017, when the Ministry for Romanians Everywhere was first established.

However, after less than three years, it was abolished and divided into two departments without legal personality: the Department for Romanians Everywhere and the Department for Relations with the Republic of Moldova.

4. Difficulties in the educational process of Romanians in Ukraine

The Romanian community would represent the third largest ethnic group in Ukraine, after Ukrainians and Russians, if it were not artificially divided into Romanians (151,000 people) and "Moldovans" (258,600 people), according to data from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Romanian community in Ukraine is a domestic community, being constituted either by territorial transfers made as a result of the agreements on

international borders concluded at the end of the Second World War between Romania and the USSR (Ukraine is the successor in sovereign rights of the former USSR), or by the refuge of some Romanian communities (originating from the Principality of Moldova) in uninhabited spaces (see the Romanian communities in the Dniester-Bug area), later incorporated in the Russian Empire (then in the USSR and finally in Ukraine). The most important Romanian population communities in Ukraine are concentrated in the districts of Noua Suliță (Novoselytskyi), Herța (Hertsavskyi), Hliboca (Hlybotskyi), Storojineț (Storozhynetskyi), Izmail (Izmailsky), Reni (Reniiskyi), Sărata (Saratskyi) Rahivskyi), Teece (Tiachivskyi).

Some of the important problems faced by the Romanian minority in Ukraine are: access to mother tongue education, the official use of the Romanian language in administration and justice, financing the activities of Romanian minority associations, Romanian language media, preservation of religious identity, representation at the level of the administration, the lack of parliamentary representation, the restitution of the properties that belonged to the Romanian community. The Romanian community in Ukraine is one of the most important communities, from a historical, cultural and demographic point of view, and education in the Romanian language plays an essential role in preserving its linguistic identity.

Ukraine recognizes the existence on its territory, both internally and externally, of both Romanians and Moldovans, speakers of Romanian and Moldovan, respectively. The administrative regions that incorporate Romanian historical / folk regions are Transcapatia (Zakarpaska oblast), Chernivtsi (Chenivitska oblast) and Odessa (Odeska oblast). Only in the Chernivtsi region, the total number of educational institutions with teaching in Romanian is 63 (compared to 69 in 2010), in which 11,063 students study. In the total of pre-university education institutions, there are 2 Romanian high schools and 2 gymnasiums.

There are also mixed schools, with teaching in Romanian and Ukrainian in the regions of Hliboca, Noua Suliță, Storojineț, while in the city of Chernivtsi there are no such schools. At the university level, the teachers for the Romanian language schools in the Chernivtsi region are trained at the "Yurii Fedcovi" National University - Department of Romanian and Classical Philology, Chernivtsi Pedagogical College.

At the last census, 724 self-declared Romanian ethnics and over 123,000 Moldovan self-declared were registered in the Odessa region. Local authorities continue to call the Romanian language spoken by ethnic Moldovans "the Moldovan language". Those who study in Romanian are considered to be learning in the "Moldovan language." We do not know the exact number of students learning the so-called "Moldovan language", because we cannot discuss with officials about a non-existent language. Hence the position of the authorities according to which in the region there are no schools with teaching in Romanian. In reality, students who learn Romanian in the Odessa Region receive textbooks identical to those after which they learn in the Chernivtsi Region, which is mentioned on the first page: "textbook in Romanian" is replaced by: "textbook in Moldovan".

The Ukrainian authorities distinguish between Romanians and Moldovans, refusing to consider the problems of self-identified Ukrainian citizens as Moldovans a legitimate topic on the agenda of discussions with the Romanian side. According to current testimonies of the inhabitants of Chernivtsi (Otovescu, Cioacă & Păsătoiu, 2019), in their daily lives they have to face challenges and pressures such as the

abolition of Romanian schools or the Ukrainian language, a compulsory language in schools. They fear that Romanian schools could become Ukrainian schools because Romanian language classes are becoming fewer and fewer. The Romanians from Chernivtsi would like, according to the mentioned analysis, the development of alternative institutional structures that would allow them to use the Romanian language in the interaction with the local, sanitary and religious authorities.

An overwhelming percentage (45%) of the Romanian community consider that the rights of Romanians in Ukraine are violated: recent restrictions in the new education law in Ukraine, Romanian as a desirable language in public space, restriction of administrative rights and the possibility of preserving traditions .

The problems faced by Romanians in Chernivtsi, as shown by the study, can be classified into three categories: structural problems related to the Ukrainian state (restricting the right to education in the mother tongue through the new law on education, discouraging the use of Romanian in public space, media limitation policies in Romanian), structural problems related to the Romanian state (low capacity of national institutions with competence in the field of Romanians everywhere, lack of large-scale programs for Romanians in Chernivtsi, problems related to poor self-organization of the Romanian community in Chernivtsi (lack of solidarity, trust, reduced capacity for association, lack of strong leaders in the community)

An extremely important moment on the chronology of events with profound implications regarding the attempts of Romanians in Ukraine to preserve their identity by preserving the Romanian language, was that of 05.09.2017, when the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted, in final reading, the Education Law (Law 3419-D), which entered into force in 2018. Romanian language education was already affected by the reduction of the number of educational units, corroborated with the administrative reform and the lack of clarity of the concept of localities compactly inhabited by minorities ”- determined by the process of decentralization and administrative reform of Ukraine. The law had a direct impact on Romanian mother tongue education in Ukraine, which may lead to the gradual loss of the linguistic identity of the Romanian community in this country.

The adoption of this law has generated a situation of instability within the community of Romanian ethnic origin in Ukraine, which considers that the very linguistic and historical identity of this community is endangered.

5. International legislative framework

The Romanian community in Ukraine has sent numerous appeals to the Romanian authorities, noting that the new Education Law ‘blatantly violates the right to learn in the mother tongue’. The provisions on secondary and secondary education in the law on education, by reference to the disappearance of the right to education for the respective cycles (grades V-XII), contradict the provisions of Article 13 of the Treaty on good neighborly relations and cooperation between Romania and Ukraine signed in 1997 of the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of the Rights of National Minorities (FCNM) and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, insofar as the authorities would not comply with requests from these, if there is sufficient demand from them.

This is relevant from the perspective of the rights enshrined in the European Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (Council of Europe system

enjoyed by members of national minorities living in traditional areas - use of mother tongue in administration and justice and bilingual registration). at least 20% of the population), providing education in the mother tongue.

The Romanian-Ukrainian Joint Intergovernmental Commission for Cooperation in National Minorities, set up under Article 13 of the Treaty on good neighborly relations and cooperation between Romania and Ukraine, is a framework for cooperation in fulfilling the commitments made by the two states. concerns the maintenance and development of the ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural identity of the Romanian minority in Ukraine and of the Ukrainian minority in Romania, which periodically evaluates the manner of fulfilling the relevant provisions of the treaty. The Commission meets in annual sessions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania makes every effort for the politico-diplomatic relations between Romania and Ukraine to evolve, including for the benefit of the Romanian community.

6. Romania's response to the amendment of Ukrainian legislation in the field of education

The state issues its messages to citizens through normative acts. They must practically reflect the needs expressed by the recipients and appear as life-saving solutions to the problems that have arisen, with the ultimate goal of aligning the legislation with the existing social reality. Here comes the need for laws to reflect the public will and to be developed in accordance with the needs of their recipients, who are ultimately the people, society as a whole. That is why they must be consulted before they can be adopted, they must be clear and concise enough to be understood and respected by the people.

Therefore, the starting point of our scientific approach is that the law must always reflect the will and aspirations of society, to be developed in order to serve the general interests, without creating disadvantages for some or privileges for others. The need to issue legal norms comes from the need to satisfy the particular interests of individuals, as well as the general interest. Laws must address both the dissatisfaction of individuals and the global conflicts within society.

On the one hand, the legislation must spring from the needs, traditions and aspirations of the people, on which sociology can lean, and, on the other hand, the effect of imposing the rules of law must generate the solution of some problems of society. Only in this way can legal rules become effective, easily applicable and easy to understand by those to whom they are addressed. In the context created by changing the legislative framework in the field of education that had a major impact on the Romanian community in Ukraine, the Romanian state intervened by creating a legal framework to allow its intervention, within the law, in order to limit the devastating effects - produced the reform of Ukrainian education.

Thus, in fulfilling its role in supporting Romanians everywhere to preserve their cultural, linguistic and religious identity, the Ministry for Romanians Everywhere initiated in 2017 the necessary legislative changes to create the legal framework necessary to provide scholarships to young people of Romanian ethnic origin. permanent residence in Ukraine to study in Romanian in schools in Ukraine, as well as the allocation of a number of scholarship months for the participation in Romania of teachers in Romanian schools in Ukraine, in vocational training courses in order to improve the study of the Romanian language and of other disciplines in Romanian.

In the following years, the Romanian state granted these scholarships to students from Ukraine, thus supporting the facilitation of access to forms of study, programs and educational and communication projects in Romanian and diminishing the impact of legislative changes on Romanian students in Ukraine.

7. Conclusions

The effects of continuous, not always positive, changes on society, the turmoil caused by the confrontation between the desire to adapt to the new and legislative harmonization and the inability to spring from a historical past that has blocked many years of progress, lead us to believe that today we are still far from having a clear picture of the impact of legislative actions on all actors involved.

Frequent changes in laws can lead to uncertainty, lack of understanding, inability to comply with them and failure to make long-term plans. The decision-makers involved must make a detailed analysis of each area of activity, taking into account the need for long-term or short-term decisions, as appropriate. At the same time, we intend for the material to be used for the elaboration and application, by the institutions with competences in the field, of draft normative acts dedicated to consolidating the Romanian state relations with Romanians abroad and participating in the elaboration and negotiation of treaties and other international documents. have an impact in the field.

Thus, the legal framework intended to support ethnic Romanians everywhere must be in accordance with international norms, with the legislation of the state of residence and solve their problems, by supporting beneficial projects, carried out in order to preserve the ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious identity of Romanians. from everywhere.

To this end, it must be adapted to social realities, following the study on the influence it has on both public authorities and society. However, for this process to work, it is necessary the stability of the institutions with responsibilities in the field and last but not least of those who develop legislative proposals, so that public policies and the Strategy for Romanians abroad correspond to the need to create accessible educational tools, competitive, to meet the specific needs of children and young people in each region where Romanians live in Ukraine.

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9. ***Carta europeană a limbilor regionale sau minoritare [European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages]
10. ***Convenția Europeană privind protecția Minorităților Naționale [European Convention for the Protection of National Minorities]

CHALLENGES IN ENSURING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract: *The theme of this paper is the knowledge of the difficulties in promoting inclusive education in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. Among the groups of students at risk, we will focus on students from rural areas and those with special educational needs (SEN). We will mainly refer to the situation in Romania, but we will also consider models of good practice from other European countries. Children with special educational needs face a number of problems when it comes to their access to the education system. Their integration in a normal school or in a special one is a real challenge for those in this field. The issue of integrating children diagnosed with a disability of any kind is an intensely debated topic both at the political level and in the public space. As for children in rural areas, their access to education is often restricted due to the poverty in which they live.*

Keywords: *inclusive education; Covid-19 pandemic; pre-university education; children from rural areas; children with SEN.*

1. Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has completely changed the classic paradigm of the teaching-learning process, by moving all activities to the online environment. Research reports prepared so far, the results of which will be presented below. We draw attention to the difficulties that most students have faced in adapting to the new context.

It is known that, in rural communities, the difficulties in carrying out the teaching activity are completely different, due to the depopulation of these communities, the decrease of the school population, the lack of necessary equipment, etc. In such a context, dominated by major crises, the situation of children with SEN becomes even more problematic. We will focus on the specific problems of rural education, with an emphasis on how these problems manifest and overlap in the case of students with SEN.

2. Access to education in rural communities in Romania

When it comes to school success, regardless of the indicators we use to define it, schools in urban communities invariably have better results. For example, dropout rates are higher in rural areas than in urban areas. We will use the data provided by the National Institute of Statistics (Institutul Național de Statistică), presented in table 1.

Table 1. Dynamics of school dropout rate in Romania in the period 2008-2018 in primary and secondary education - distribution by areas of residence

| School year | Environment of residence | |
|-------------|--------------------------|-------|
| | Urban | Rural |
| 2008-2009 | 1,5 | 1,9 |
| 2009-2010 | 1,5 | 1,6 |
| 2010-2011 | 1,8 | 1,8 |
| 2011-2012 | 1,7 | 1,8 |
| 2012-2013 | 1,1 | 1,6 |
| 2013-2014 | 1,3 | 1,8 |
| 2014-2015 | 1,5 | 2,2 |
| 2015-2016 | 1,4 | 1,9 |
| 2016-2017 | 1,3 | 1,8 |
| 2017-2018 | 1,5 | 1,9 |

Source: National Institute of Statistics

With the exception of the 2010-2011 school year, in which rural and urban dropout rates reach similar values, in all other cases most students leaving school come from rural areas. Obviously, we are not talking here about a determining factor, but about a correlational one, considering that the village is, in general, much more dominated by refractory attitudes towards formal education, and the economic situation is often precarious. In general, interest in education and culture is lower in rural communities and traditionalist mentalities are dominant.

Engaging students in agricultural and household activities is still a current practice, given the profile of activities in this community: “agricultural activities practiced by members of rural households are mainly for self-consumption, 68% of households raising animals and 59% growing vegetables. for family consumption.” (World Vision Romania, 2020: 193) During the first seven years of life, children acquire the values and fundamental norms of living in society. The process is called primary socialization (Otovescu, 2009: 230). At this stage, children can be taught whether or not school is a priority. It is certain that, in rural communities, the valorization of the school is rarely an element of the primary socialization. The situation becomes even more difficult for children with special educational needs, who, not infrequently, remain in the care of grandparents, other relatives or even alone.

Increasing the chances of school success in rural areas starts from identifying and solving problems specific to these communities, of which stimulating interest in education and increasing opportunities for socio-economic development are just two of the many imperatives that are not the subject of our study.

Undoubtedly, the family situation cannot be analyzed separately from the social context of which it is part and in which the education of the descendants is carried out. And in terms of social and economic factors, international literature abounds with research relevant to understanding the mechanisms that make school failure a feature of rural communities. The correlation between the low level of income in the family of origin and school failure is a certainty, and prolonged unemployment, even if it occurs in the case of a single parent, is

associated with school leaving by minors. In most cases, the model from the family of origin is taken over and reproduced by the student, resulting in maintaining a precarious economic and educational level at the time of founding the new family. The concept of "culture of poverty" describes precisely this vicious circle, in which both microsociological and macrosociological variables intervene. So far, neither the welfare state nor the mechanisms of the market economy have offered viable solutions for breaking the "circle of poverty", in which school failure is only one of the many facets. Geographical mobility also correlates with school failure. The stress caused by moving the family to another community negatively influences the student's school results. In this situation, the reluctance of the reception environment, including the school environment, which is much more pronounced in the case of the student with SEN, may also show hostility towards newcomers, with negative effects on participation, identification and, implicitly, on performance.

The report on the well-being of rural children, prepared by World Vision at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, draws attention to the fact that "access to and participation in education of rural children are still unequally distributed according to available family resources, involvement parents, but also the relationship with the school and the teachers" (World Vision Romania, 2020: 19). At the same time, as we pointed out above, it is not educational problems that are responsible for this state of affairs, but social problems, especially the precarious economic situation: "the level of poverty is the main obstacle to children's participation in education" (World Vision Romania, 2020: 193)

Another research report, prepared by World Vision in collaboration with Vodafone Romania, presents other problems that students in rural areas face. The report draws attention to the lower level of professionalism of teachers in rural areas, much less trained to meet the challenges of all kinds that appear inherent in the school space (World Vision Romania, Vodafone Romania Foundation, 2020: 16). This is not about a value judgment, but about an educational reality. The report includes comparative analyzes on the distribution by teaching staff among teachers by area of residence, which demonstrates a greater concentration of professional skills in urban areas (reference is also made to the growing share of substitute teachers in rural areas). This reality raises big questions when it comes to integrating children with SEN. Promoting the social inclusion of children with SEN has been the basis of the current educational policy, which discourages the so-called "special school", arguing (justified, up to a point) the risk of segregation and encouraging social exclusion among these categories of students.

On the other hand, there is the issue of the extent to which teachers, especially those in rural areas, have the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the very particular needs of these students. In recent years, especially in rural areas, "the integration of children with disabilities / special educational needs (SEN) has led to a significant number of requests for teacher training on how to work with these students" (World Vision Romania, Vodafone Romania Foundation, 2020: 110). We must not lose sight of the fact that students with special educational needs (SEN) are an extremely vulnerable category. Teachers working with such students must take into account the educational needs complementary to the general educational objectives, which requires the adaptation of schooling

to the particularities of the learning disability or learning disorder of the child (these may be, for example: autism, language disorders, neuro-motor or mental deficiencies, behavioral disorders, multisensory deficiencies, etc. and may be individual or associated). These requirements create a difficult situation for the affected child, who cannot fully capitalize on his intellectual and attitudinal potential and who thus develops a feeling of inferiority that accentuates his condition as a person with special needs. " SEN expresses an obvious need to give some children additional attention and educational assistance (affirmative, positive measures, due to the need to compensate for one/some disadvantages), without which one cannot effectively talk about equalizing the chances, access and school and social participation. The SEN sintagm is more relevant in psychopedagogical plan than that of deficiency, incapacity/disability or handicap" (Constantinescu, 2019: 64) This process of adaptation requires a continuous improvement and qualification of the teacher, the opportunities in these directions being particularly limited in rural areas.

Demographic problems further complicate the implementation of the educational act in rural communities. After 1990, the Romanian population entered a process of permanent decline, which also left its mark on the volume of students. The continuous decrease of the school population and the abolition of some schools and didactic norms is a phenomenon that has grown especially in the rural environment. Here, in 2017, for example, according to the data of the National Institute of Statistics, there was a reduction of the total population in 2,269 rural localities, affecting in the long run the process of perpetuation of rural communities. The current population of Romania was, on March 4, 2020, 19,237,691 people, representing 0.25% of the world's population and with an average age of 43.2 years. More than half of them, ie 54.6%, were living in urban areas, and 45.4% lived in rural areas.

A study by the Romanian Academy proposes a long-term education development plan (until 2035). This plan includes measures for all important areas, including education. Referring to the issue of education in rural areas, the study points out the importance of access to the national education system and increasing the school success of all students in rural communities. "Students in rural areas are characterized by a lower participation rate at all levels of education, by a stronger orientation towards the professional route compared to the academic one. Although the school should ensure upward social mobility, at present it seems to fulfill rather the function of social reproduction" (Vlad, 2016: 22)

2. Challenges and barriers to the inclusion of students with SEN in online education

In March 2020, online teaching and learning was introduced, initially as a recommendation, becoming mandatory in April of the same year, in the context of the outbreak expansion. The most used e-learning platforms for online teaching and learning were Google Classroom, Google Meet, Google Hangouts, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Webex Meetings, etc. The tools of the Google platform were offered free of charge to teachers, through the ADMA application synchronized with SIIIR (www.adma.ro, 2021).

The Ministry has introduced a digital platform (www.digital.educared.ro, 2021), offering applications and online learning resources centralized in one place. It hosts tutorials and other learning materials designed to train and support teachers to design, implement, evaluate and organize technology-assisted learning and to manage student activities on online learning platforms. The platform leverages the experiences and results of CRED (European Social Fund funded project) which aims to provide open educational resources for learning communities and ensure a real contribution to the widespread use of new teaching and learning technologies. CRED and other European-funded projects, NGOs, universities, IT companies and freelancers, learning and business communities have organized webinars for teachers on the use of online teaching and learning platforms and tools.

At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ministry of National Education conducted a rapid survey in primary and secondary schools (Digi24, 2021). This helped to identify students who lacked electronic devices and internet connection, especially in rural areas. MEN took the initiative to support online learning and invited sponsors, mobile and internet providers, various private companies and NGOs to get involved. The survey revealed that 250,000 students (9% of the total population of students in state pre-university education) do not have devices and internet connection to implement e-learning at the national level (Digi24, 2021). While the Euro 200 program offers financial support (200 euros) for students who buy a computer, only those from very poor families can benefit, the eligibility criteria being particularly restrictive (<https://www.edu.ro/etichete/euro-200>, 2021). Students' access to technology is neither uniform nor universal, which contradicts the universal nature of the right to education. School inspectorates and school institutions, in cooperation with local authorities, can also support the provision of access to online learning for students in difficulty.

According to the Ministry's statistics, as mentioned, 9% of all pre-university students do not have the necessary equipment to participate in online learning. An IRES survey (2020), conducted last year, 2 months after the introduction of distance learning, presents a much darker reality: "Only 68% of students in Romania have access to electronic equipment for online school, according to a study conducted by IRES between April 27-30 and only half of the students attended the online school." (Radio Europa Liberă, 2020) The study also shows that the problems in implementing online learning are much more complex and require a deeper approach than the one initially proposed by education officials: "According to the IRES study, 36% of families with children have two or more children at school, and participation in online schooling is often done after a schedule that most often involves all students attending classes (different classes), which requires each child to have his own equipment, allocated for school online." (Radio Europa Liberă, 2020)

The study also revealed that the biggest difficulties in implementing online learning are faced by rural families, due to the lack of necessary technological equipment, respectively the knowledge of their use, if they were provided with the necessary material resources. It is also worth mentioning that "only 63% of primary school children have exclusive access to functional equipment, while 72% of children have equipment in high school, and 70% in high school. Urban students are more gifted in this respect (76%) compared to their rural counterparts (62%)." (Radio Europa Liberă, 2020)

The forced transition to exclusively digital education, under the imperative of the pandemic, has only amplified pre-existing inequalities, especially when it comes to vulnerable students. In this context, the quality of education, not only in Romania, was negatively affected by the closure of schools and the relocation of online activities. In addition to the fact that access to distance education is limited for some students, the pandemic has accentuated, through its consequences, issues of equality and equity in education. In addition, the pandemic has significantly reduced the support services provided to students with special needs by qualified specialists, such as speech therapists, psychoeducational professionals and qualified professionals in the field of working with these children.

The main purpose of the teaching-learning process, in the case of SEN students, is to ensure their integration into society by providing equal and efficient educational services both in the so-called special schools and by inclusive education, by integrating them into secondary education. During the pandemic, in addition to the issue of accessibility and the possibility of using new technologies, collaboration between families and teachers has become even more important than ever. Satisfying the special needs of the child, a position taken over until then by the school, was spent overnight in the family. Of course, professional and household activities do not always allow time management in the interest of meeting the needs of the child, and hiring a specialized person who can take on this role requires significant financial costs, difficult to bear by rural families. Not to mention the fact that, in the case of the latter, it becomes difficult, almost impossible, to find a qualified person in this regard at the community level, even when the family budget allows the hiring of a professional to assist the student.

The neglect of the student is doubled by other problems that many families faced during this period - prolonged quarantine, job loss, reduced income, etc. In this context, the family becomes an institution unable to fulfill its functions, just like the educational institution (Mustafa, 2020). The few empirical research conducted so far draws attention to the fact that negative changes in education, economics, politics and in everyday life as a whole increase the level of anxiety of families with children with SEN, but also of children (Mustafa, 2020). In addition, it is found that the duration and quality of family support in distance learning varies depending on the socio-economic structure and level of education of the family, the most disadvantaged being low-income families in rural areas (World Bank, 2020).

3. International models of good practice for the inclusion of students with SEN in online education

Education systems in developed countries saw the current situation not only as a challenge, but also as an opportunity to place a stronger emphasis on reducing existing educational gaps, including before the pandemic, by implementing initiatives to promote equality and inclusion. What in some states, such as Romania, was only a risk, in the sense of accentuating inequalities, in other states the risk was turned into an opportunity.

Through inclusive education, students with SEN must develop a sense of belonging to the learning community, communicate effectively with colleagues and teachers and acquire, as far as possible, the content of each subject. The pandemic has made it particularly difficult to achieve these goals, not only because of the reasons outlined above. Adaptive strategies to the new context developed for the large mass of

students are not always appropriate for those with SEN. We mentioned the case of computer devices, very difficult for the latter to use. Even in terms of health, it should be borne in mind that regular masks, although necessary to limit the spread of the virus, are poorly designed for certain categories of students with SEN (for example, hearing-impaired, speech-impaired or students who learn by observing the movements of the mouth). For this reason, as a first model of good practice, it is necessary to use transparent masks in classrooms with students with hearing / visual impairments, as an essential inclusive practice to facilitate communication and inclusion processes. Such masks have already begun to be marketed and used in Western states (<https://www.bellelily.com>, 2020).

The direct physical interaction between the teacher and the student with SEN cannot be replaced by the indirect interaction, mediated by the new technological means. Teachers, through daily contact with students, are among the most important agents for ensuring inclusion in education. In addition, teachers are the people most likely to be close to students' families and can play a major role both in integrating the most vulnerable among students and in monitoring and ensuring a constant level of family involvement in their education. Taking into account the importance of teachers in the process of integrating these students, most of the best practice models implemented at international level focused on optimizing teacher-student interaction in the context of physical distance. Among them, we mention the following:

- The Portuguese Ministry of Education has developed the Apoio às Escolas website, which includes a set of resources to support schools in using distance learning methodologies for students with special educational needs. The site includes content adapted to these students, noting that in the Portuguese state, most students with SEN study in schools adapted to their needs (<https://apoioescolas.dge.mec.pt>, 2020);
- In Uruguay, community social workers, carers of children with SEN and their families worked together to ensure that (1) all actors involved have the tools to move teaching online and (2) all students, including those vulnerable, have the opportunity to participate in online courses. Among the various initiatives implemented is the creation of WhatsApp groups managed by teachers, to discuss in real time with students' families. The teacher has the obligation to directly monitor the situation of each student, notifying him when problems arise or when the student is absent from online classes. If, following the discussion with the child's relatives, it is found that he is not able to participate in the courses, the teacher has the obligation to prepare a report, which he submits to the competent authority (the competent institution for each situation is explicitly specified in the legislation). For example, in the case of students with SEN, if it is found that he needs a person to physically assist him during the online activity, the teacher notifies this fact to the authorities of the local community, which, based on the notification, have the obligation to intervene by hiring a person to assist the student so that he enjoys the right to education (Deutsche Welle, 2021).
- In the UK, the Ministry of Children and Families has consistently funded the Family Fund, a charity that provides grants to families raising children and young people with disabilities or the seriously ill. The value of the financing exceeded 37.3 million dollars. Based on social surveys conducted by local

authorities, or upon notification by schools, the Fund supports children with SEN in terms of paying the costs of necessary equipment and services, including permanent specialist assistance (Gov.uk, 2021).

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, the rural environment represents the social framework for manifesting major social and educational problems, with direct negative implications on school success among most students in general, but especially on students with SEN. These problems, which had been highlighted by research conducted well before 2020, were exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

In such a context, dominated by inequalities and conflicting data, it becomes debatable to what extent ensuring the right to education is compatible with the widespread imposition of e-learning systems. Without disputing in any way their usefulness and reliability, we consider that, before imposing them as a norm, and not as a recommendation, a serious social diagnosis is necessary, based on which to implement educational policies consistent with the realities on the ground, through which to ensure real equality of opportunity for all participants in the training process.

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A GOOD LIFE IN OLD AGE? MONITORING AND IMPROVING QUALITY IN LONG-TERM CARE

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Abstract: *Since the early 1990s, the issue of an aging population has become one of the priority issues of the current Member States of the European Union. Historically, at least, individual concerns within each state have emerged long before we can discuss about a European policy in this direction. These concerns have naturally flowed from the evolution of European societies. The improvement of living conditions and scientific progress, especially in the medical field have led to the gradual prolongation of life expectancy. The average age of the European population has risen rapidly, while the fertility rate has fallen. The European demographic trend, visible since the 1990s, continued in the first decade of the 2000s, in parallel with unprecedented social and economic changes, which culminated in the economic crisis of a decade ago. During all this time, at the level of the European Union, but also at the level of the Member States, numerous measures and recommendations have been implemented to correct the negative effects of the aging population, promote active aging and increase the standard of living for this age group. In this study, we will analyze the most important statistical trends and policy adopted in this field at European level.*

Keyword: *active aging, population aging, European social policy, quality of life of the elderly, pension policy, pension systems.*

1. Introduction

The growth of the dependent population, combined with the imperative to meet the needs of this age group, has exerted and continues to exert strong pressure on social protection resources, given the logic of distribution systems in contemporary states: secondary expenditures (health care, care long-term, pensions, etc.) come from contributions and taxes paid by a younger workforce, which is in an alarming decline. The problems of the elderly are, in many cases, the general problems of vulnerable groups, which require special care and satisfaction services, as well as special conditions for carrying out professional activities, where appropriate (Otovescu, Calotă and Cioacă, 2019). Therefore, "the phenomenon of demographic aging has been manifesting itself for several decades in many states of the world. Reducing the birth rate and increasing the number of elderly people are constantly changing the balance between generations in all countries of the world." (Stanciu, 2020, p. 304)

The pressure exerted by the European Union on the Member States is even greater, as the short-term and long-term social spending of each country is limited by the budgetary constraints imposed by the new EU economic governance framework, which we will discuss below.

National social protection systems oscillate between the desire to maintain and even improve the services provided and the need to ensure the financial sustainability of the national economy. This is a challenge common to all EU countries, although its

magnitude varies according to the economic situation and the particularities of development that each society knows.

2. Quality of life and its indicators

The transition process meant an important objective change in people's living conditions. An overview of the quality of life in Romania reveals points where individuals' assessments of some aspects of life are positive, representing supporting elements in their lives, while other components remain in negative areas, constituting permanent sources of dissatisfaction in people's lives. and risks of marginalization and social exclusion (Marginean, 2003).

Perceptions and self-evaluations include a whole set of expectations, interests, motivations, moods, norms, values, political, philosophical, religious options, as well as public and group opinion and other elements that can influence them in one way or another. Personalizing perceptions and self-assessments makes them unsustainable from the outside. In the various normative judgments issued by one evaluator or another (researcher, politician, any other person) regarding the desirable values of quality of life indicators, one cannot ignore the personal meanings that people attribute to their own life, if wants to maintain in the area of plausibility, credibility, it is known that people act based on impressions, judgments, knowledge they have about a certain aspect of life in attention at a given time.

The field of quality of life can be defined by the set of elements that refer to the physical, economic, social, cultural, political, health, etc., in which people live, the content and nature of the activities they carry out, the characteristics of relationships and social processes. participate in the goods and services they have access to, the consumption patterns adopted, the way and lifestyle, the evaluation of the circumstances and the results of the activities that correspond to the population's expectations, as well as the subjective states of satisfaction / dissatisfaction, happiness, frustration etc. In order to obtain an image of society as it is filtered by people's perceptions, we chose to address the following issues: quality of education, quality of health care, quality of social assistance services, quality of company management, evaluation of local government activity, perception of social conflicts, access to education and the possibility of obtaining a job.

The relationship of the individual with the society in which he lives represents a result of the conditions that he experiences on a personal level and of those that this society offers, on a macro level. This relationship refers to trust in people, trust in institutions and participation in political and social life. Finally, the evolution of an indicator that is a result of all the conditions that people experience in their lives, namely life satisfaction, will be taken into account.

3. The situation worldwide

Given the global dimension of the problem, international organizations such as the United Nations (UN) and its agencies - the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labor Organization (IMO) - but also the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have developed analyzes and strategies to record the consequences of demographic aging and propose measures to improve them. The ability of individuals, companies and societies to adapt, as well as the ability of

decision-makers and institutions to generate major structural and behavioral changes, are the guidelines of these modal social policy documents. Despite the intra- and interstate efforts of such a policy, WHO experts stressed, almost two decades ago, that "in all countries, and especially in developing countries, measures to help older people to staying healthy and active are a necessity, not a luxury." (World Health Organization, 2002: 6) Although general enough to give freedom of action to each state, in accordance with the particularities of the national context, the World Health Organization emphasizes that global social policy in the field of the elderly should it must have a central core, namely "to be based on the rights, needs, preferences and capacities of the elderly. It must also adopt a perspective that recognizes the importance of previous life experiences" (World Health Organization, 2002: 6), hence the idea of active aging.

Active aging, a recurring theme in most European documents addressing the issue of the elderly, "is the process of optimizing health, participation and security opportunities to improve the quality of life as people age." (World Health Organization, 2002: 12) In the same report, prepared by the World Health Organization, it is argued that "active aging allows people to realize their potential for physical, social and mental well-being throughout life and to participate in social life, while providing them with adequate protection, security and care when they need it." (World Health Organization, 2002: 12).

Therefore, the concept of active aging extends the scope of policy action from the financial sustainability of systems to social inclusion, participation in social life and increasing the quality of life of the target age segment. Being active means continuing to participate in social, economic, cultural, spiritual and civic life and it doesn't just mean having a job. Although the need to maximize employment, in particular by encouraging older people to remain as active as possible, has become one of the main measures behind political reforms in EU countries, the scope should also be taken into account. wider range of active aging (Apostolu, 2015).

Despite existing legal provisions at European and national level, which prohibit age discrimination, and despite the financial incentives provided to encourage the employment of older people, organizational cultures do not always seem to favor this age group. Discrimination is justified and rationalized by employers by invoking arguments about alleged declines in productivity, along with higher wage costs incurred, as shown in a 2009 study by Lallemand and Rycx (2009) on discrimination against the elderly. Other prejudices stem from the idea that older people are less open to change, innovation and adaptation to new professional requirements and contexts, especially with regard to new technologies. However, beyond prejudice, other studies show that older employees tend to be less involved than young people in the training and lifelong learning processes, resulting in higher levels of non-correlation of personal skills with the requirements of the job, requirements that have a fluctuating and dynamic character. (European Center for the Development of Vocational Training, 2015). In addition, impaired mental processes and physical abilities, associated with old age, make it more difficult for older employees to perform more complex tasks, as well as their adaptation to sudden changes, which require high levels of functionality of neuropsychic parameters, such as memory. working power, concentration, distributive attention, etc.

According to studies by Naegele and Walker (2006), European entrepreneurs use eight key types of policies at the organizational management level to manage the

aging workforce: recruitment policies, training policies, lifelong learning policies, career development and planning, flexible working hours policies, policies to increase adaptability, redistribution policies, policies for managing retirement and the transition to retirement and, finally, an integrated policy, recommended by the two authors, which brings together all the types of policies mentioned above, becoming part of the organizational culture and codes of ethics in the company.

4. The first attempts to regulate the social protection of the elderly in Europe

The issue of active aging has been explicitly mentioned in European documents since the mid-1990s. 1993 has been declared the "European Year of Older People and Solidarity between Generations". Four years later, a chapter on employment was introduced in the Amsterdam Treaty, which allowed the launch of the European Employment Strategy (EES). It was introduced in 1997, when EU Member States decided to set a common set of employment policy targets. Its main purpose is to create more and better jobs for all citizens of the Union" (European Commission, 2013). The EES was the framework document for the development of a European policy on active aging in the coming years.

At the beginning of the millennium, with the launch of the Lisbon Strategy, which covers the period 2000-2010, the emphasis was placed on active aging in the field of Community social policy. Moreover, the Stockholm (2001) and Barcelona (2002) European Councils set two targets for 2010. The Stockholm target was to increase the average employment rate for women and men. from the age category 55-64 to 50%. The Barcelona Council undertook to gradually increase the average retirement age by about 5 years, in the context of one of the priority axes of the Strategy - pension reform. Also, according to the vision adopted by the Lisbon Strategy, all European citizens, regardless of age, should have access to a decent job and life, even after retirement (European Commission, 2009). An evaluation of the Strategy by the European Commission (2010a) showed that the two objectives were not met, but points out that the Strategy helped to build a broad consensus on the reforms the EU needed at the time to ensure its sustainability. and unitary of the processes of social and economic development and for the development of social protection systems.

The Europe 2020 Strategy, which continued the reforms initiated by the Lisbon Strategy, includes direct references to promoting active aging and reforming pension systems, without taking on quantitative, measurable targets, such as those in Stockholm and Barcelona, which have proved impossible within the assumed time interval. Unlike the Lisbon Agenda, Europe 2020 focuses more on correcting the effects and reducing the costs of an aging European population. The economic crises that affected European economies a decade ago have accentuated this trend, which has become an important milestone in the EU's economic governance. Europe 2020 emphasizes that it is the responsibility of the Member States to develop new forms of work-life balance and active aging policies (European Commission, 2020), and that the Commission will work to assess the adequacy and sustainability of protection systems. social security and pensions and identifying ways to improve access to health systems (European Commission, 2020).

Also in 2010, following the adoption of the Europe 2020 Strategy, the European Commission develops and adopts the Agenda for new skills and jobs, which aims to

increase employment and optimize the employment rate in areas facing labor shortages. According to the Agenda, “reforms of pension systems should go hand in hand with policies to support the transition of older people to the labor market, especially reintegration into employment after a period of unemployment” (European Commission, 2010b). In order to achieve these goals, harnessing the potential of older Europeans, able to pursue professional activities, becomes a priority solution. Also, reforms of national social protection systems, in particular pensions, health care and long-term care, are defined as priority directions for action, given that, in addition to regulating the labor market, by widening the range of the active population, they respond satisfactorily to the problem of population aging and represent a form of concretization, at the level of politics, of the doctrine of old age. The financing of social protection systems has been affected by the economic crisis, which has led to high deficits in national budgets and an increase in public debt. In that context, hampered by economic instability and unpredictability, one of the issues raised by the Agenda was to identify measures to rebalance public finances and ensure the sustainability of social protection systems, without undue costs for the younger generations.

The year 2012 resumes the tradition started in 1993 and is declared the European Year for Active Aging and Solidarity between Generations. German MEP Martin Kastler, the initiator, said at the time: “Maintaining the vitality of older people, respecting the dignity of all, strengthening their involvement in society, family, associations, church and politics and removing barriers between generations are the main objectives of the European Year of Aging. and solidarity between generations – 2012.” (European Parliament, 2012) 2012 was the year in which active aging was most visible on the European agenda. The European Year had the following objectives: raising awareness of the importance of active aging and solidarity between generations, organizing debates and intercultural exchanges on this topic and promoting activities that help to combat or reduce age discrimination. Also, in the same year, the active aging index was developed, developed in collaboration with the United Nations. Hundreds of initiatives dedicated to active aging have been launched, both at the level of the European Union institutions and at the level of the nation states. A special role was played by the exchange of good practices, ie successful social policies pursued by public authorities and private companies in the Member States.

A commendable initiative was the drawing up by the European Employment Committee (EMCO) and the Social Protection Committee (SPC) of a list of 19 guidelines for promoting active aging in EU Member States. These principles were adopted by the European Council in the 2012 Declaration on the European Year for Active Aging and Solidarity between Generations (European Council, 2012). These principles have been structured into three main areas of policy action: employment, social participation and independent living. In any case, it must be borne in mind that the EU's powers in this area are de facto limited, as most of the levers for change are in the hands of states and businesses.

5. The role of social dialogue in European social policy for the elderly

In December 2016, following the European Year for Active Aging in 2012 and in line with the guidelines set out in the Europe 2020 Strategy, the European social partners started negotiations to conclude an autonomous framework agreement on active aging and an intergenerational approach. The framework agreement was signed

on 8 March 2017 by ETUC (European Trade Union Confederation), Business Europe, UEAPME (European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises) and CEEP - European Center of Employers and Enterprises providing Services of Public Interest (European Commission, 2016a). The purpose of the agreement is to promote exchanges of practice designed to ensure adequate working conditions throughout working life and to allow the extension of the legal retirement age, in the context of optimizing working conditions in companies and adapting them to the needs of the elderly. The agreement also emphasizes the need for intergenerational solidarity, facilitating the transfer of knowledge and skills in the field.

The 2016 Framework Agreement is a commitment by the European social partners to cooperate in five priority areas: strategic assessments of labor demography, safety at work, skills management, organizing work for a healthy life and promoting intergenerational solidarity. Strategic assessments of workforce demography involve a scientific approach, methodologically based on the use of tools such as the age pyramid and specific social indicators, which, the Agreement emphasizes, should be operated in the day-to-day management of the company, beyond the steps taken by the community. scientific. These assessments must take into account the local context in which the company operates and are based on specific measures, in line with national and Union policies and practices, but adapted to the particular demographic situation of the community (European Commission, 2017).

Promoting safety and health at work is the priority objective of the 2016 Agreement and of social dialogue in general. The agreement emphasizes the need for relevant information to identify particularly demanding tasks, both physically and mentally, in order to anticipate, prevent and assess risks to the health and safety of older employees. The agreement undertakes to implement concrete measures to achieve this goal and implements the EU Framework Directive on Health and Safety at Work (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2020).

The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) insisted that the Agreement be binding on the member organizations of the signatory parties. The binding nature of the measures, which goes beyond mere recommendations, was the main obstacle during the negotiations. However, one of the problems with previous European documents, which we have already brought up, was the low level of implementation by the Member States. The agreement therefore commits the signatories to implement the established measures and to report annually to the Social Dialogue Committee on the concrete ways in which they have been implemented. A full report on the implementation actions and the results obtained would be prepared and published by the Social Dialogue Committee in 2020. Until the date of this analysis (October 2020), we did not identify the report on the websites of the European institutions responsible. implementation of the Agreement.

Most social protection policies for the elderly have involved the restructuring of pension systems in the Member States. Almost all European countries have raised the retirement age, only Poland has reduced the threshold from 67 to 65 for men and from 65 to 60 for women in 2017 (Center des Liaisons Européennes et Internationales de Sécurité Sociale - Cleiss, 2017). Some of policies have also been developed to encourage older employees to postpone their employment for as long as possible. Many countries have decided to phase out or significantly tighten early retirement conditions (e.g. Denmark, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Austria, Italy). Other

countries (eg Finland, Estonia, Cyprus) grant a financial bonus to pensioners who decide to postpone retirement. Several states have developed specific unemployment schemes for the elderly to encourage them to remain professionally active, in parallel with the first period of retirement - in which case retirement does not exclude or limit the receipt of other income, including salary (for example, Germany, Greece, Italy, Hungary, Finland).

Another recurring principle of European social policies is that older people with insufficient resources are eligible to receive a certain amount of money (for example, in the form of a guaranteed minimum income) to meet their subsistence needs. Some countries also offer specific social assistance to those over retirement age. This may take the form of an increase in the amount granted in direct proportion to aging (for example, in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Portugal, Lithuania), a fixed-value allowance, which is granted after reaching an age threshold (eg Belgium, France, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia) or some forms of lending (United Kingdom). However, in recent years, the conditions for access to various forms of social assistance have been tightened, and the continuation of professional activity tends to become quasi-mandatory for those who are (partially) fit for work (Penacasas and Ghailani, 2016).

Employment policies have followed the same path as pension systems. Employment policies for the elderly can be divided into three categories: those aimed at keeping the elderly in employment, those aimed at reintegrating the unemployed into working life and those included in general, non-specific reforms, but which indirectly affect the elderly. Of the reforms adopted by EU states between 2010 and 2014, 30 refer directly to older employees, 42 target older unemployed, and 18 are more general reforms, but with a major impact on this age group (Penacasas and Ghailani, 2016, p. 51).

Some countries, including Romania, have developed national strategies to promote active aging and implement international recommendations in the field. These strategies create the regulatory framework and conditions necessary to facilitate a long-term professional career, in parallel with increasing the quality of life. National strategies have also been adopted in Bulgaria, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Portugal and Spain. Other countries (Cyprus, Finland, Hungary and Lithuania) have included initiatives to support older employees in more general strategies for labor market reform, without developing specific public policy documents in this direction (Penacasas and Ghailani, 2016). Policies on equal opportunities, lifelong learning and increasing the quality of life of older people, even if not taken as distinct national strategies, can also be equated with the category of general reforms targeting active aging. In some countries, these policies have resulted from social dialogue between the partners involved and as a result of civil society efforts, for example, in Belgium, Germany, France, Finland, Denmark and Ireland (Penacasas and Ghailani, 2016).

Between 2010 and 2017, a number of labor tax reforms were also implemented, mainly in terms of contributions to social security schemes paid by employers (e.g. Belgium and Italy) or employees (e.g. Austria, Slovenia). The reforms required changes to labor protection legislation, mainly as regards the conditions for collective redundancies (e.g. Belgium, Luxembourg and Spain) or the definition of fair dismissal (Bulgaria). Many reforms have focused on supporting the elderly unemployed. These included providing subsidies to companies that employ older unemployed people (e.g.

Austria, Slovenia, Latvia, Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, France) and direct job creation (e.g. Greece, Slovakia, Bulgaria). Granting subsidies to companies for recruiting older unemployed and tightening redundancy measures for this category are two of the main types of reforms adopted at EU level. A number of studies have recently examined the effectiveness of these measures. Granting to companies tends to lead to the employment of unsubsidized labor, probably due to the low value of subsidies (perverse effect), generating very limited increases in employment, although such measures seem to have some positive effect on the employment of older women. third, but statistically insignificant and only in certain regions (Boockmann, 2015).

6. Conclusions

Increasing the employment rate of older people should help reduce social protection spending, in particular by reducing the growing burden of pensions as a share of general social spending. However, a recent European Commission report (2016b) suggests that a 10% increase in the employment rate for older employees (aged 55-64) in the period 2013-2060 would have a very low impact on the social spending budget, ranging from -1% to -0.1%. In several countries, the effect would even be to increase pension spending, especially in France, Estonia, Latvia, Czech Republic, Finland and Italy. This is due to the interaction of two contradictory effects. On the one hand, a reduction in the inactive population would lead to an increase in gross domestic product, a reduction in the number of pensioners and an extension of the rights enjoyed by employees to a wider segment of the population. On the other hand, longer working life would also involve the acquisition of more significant pension rights, which would lead to additional expenditure for the pension system (European Commission, 2016b).

To date, a number of European policies have been adopted in the field of active aging, some legally binding and others with recommendations. However, we cannot say to what extent national reforms are the result of European policies, rather than addressing specific national needs.

Currently, Member States are most effective in generating policies and strategies for older people, especially the Scandinavian countries or Germany, which carried out reforms well before the beginning of the millennium and the introduction of mandatory and recommended European incentives.

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INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: DEVELOPMENTS AND CHALLENGES IN THE ROMANIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract: *In recent decades, for a number of socio-economic, demographic and environmental reasons, there has been a steady increase in the number of children with disabilities in the mainstream education system. Students with disabilities at all levels of education (preschool, primary, middle school, high school, even adult education) are extremely vulnerable to exclusion and to have multiple barriers to accessing educational opportunities. And among those who drop out of school, they do not even finish primary education, most of them are children with disabilities. The article aims to achieve its own re-elective perspective through the systematic analysis of scientific literature, research studies in the field of educational inclusion and to propose directions for understanding the mechanisms of manifestation of the phenomenon of inclusion in the Romanian educational system. The research part involves identifying through the analysis of research studies already conducted the challenges and opportunities in implementing inclusive educational policies, with emphasis on the role of teachers. The results of the analysis confirm that the resources and difficulties of this complex process of inclusion, its consequences on students, teachers, parents, community, but also on the functioning of society. The attitudes of all those involved in the process are the variables that determine the success or not of the process of integration and socio-educational inclusion. Negative attitudes, rejection, isolation and non-acceptance are the ones that lead to a decrease in the student's ability to integrate in school and later in society, emotionally destabilizing the entire context and making inefficient a number of mechanisms and processes.*

Keywords: *integration; inclusion; SEN students; inclusive educational policies.*

1. Introduction

A new societal trend aims to recognize the right of every human person to self-determination, uniqueness and variability. The recognition by the state of the value of social and educational integration also comes with a series of challenges: the need to create special technologies for the education, upbringing and socialization of children with disabilities. In recent decades, in the country as a whole, for a number of socio-economic, demographic and environmental reasons, there has been a steady upward trend in the number of children with disabilities (OECD, Education Policies for Students at Risk and with disabilities in South East Europe Romania, 2007). Students with disabilities at all levels of education (preschool, primary, middle school, high school, even adult education) are extremely vulnerable, according to the 2011 World Disability Report, to being excluded and having multiple barriers to accessing educational opportunities. The same report (2011) estimated a number between 93 and 150 million school-aged children with disabilities globally. And among those who drop out of school, they do not even finish primary education, most of them are children with disabilities. The relevance of the chosen research topic is due to the changes that have taken place and are currently taking place in the socio-educational systems in Romania. The integration of educational institutions is one of the internationally required fields

that will eventually contribute to a radical transformation at various levels of society. Inclusive education is a way to develop and humanize society.

2. Theoretical foundation. The phenomenon of educational inclusion in the international specialized literature.

The issue of education of children with special educational needs must be on the agenda of decision makers dealing with people with disabilities, specialists, researchers and educational stakeholders, but it cannot be discussed in the context of educational and social policies promoted in Romania (Otovescu and Cioacă, 2019). Effective integration and inclusion must be achieved at all levels of social and community life. The recovery-correctional activity, as a pedagogical and, at the same time, social system, should have an independent outlet in the social environment. The environment is the one that will verify and confirm the efficiency of the integration and social inclusion of students with special educational needs, if the objectives that Romanian society is committed to ensure: harmonious personality development, social adaptation and finality with strong economic impact – professional integration of the students. The issue to be discussed in the study conducted by this doctoral research aims to explore the triad (training, growth, development), but in the socio-educational context. The dissemination of the inclusion of children with special educational needs in educational institutions has been carried out for several years in Romania, especially through the efforts of international organizations (UNICEF, UN, UNESCO) or non-governmental organizations (RENINCO). However, there is a need for a series of actions, projects to ensure the full realization of children's rights to receive a quality education, regardless of social, cognitive, emotional difficulties, etc. Inclusive practice is oriented towards achieving and ensuring equal access to receive a certain type of education, by creating the necessary conditions for education.

Experience documented in a series of reports (Dyson & Squires, 2016) shows that some children abandon any rigid education system because the system is not prepared to adapt to their educational needs, and the most vulnerable of these are children with disabilities. Most of the time, children who drop out of school become isolated and excluded from the general social system, from society onwards. Inclusive education, in order to become effective and a reality, requires more than a normative consolidation and educational policies, but a whole series of major and complex changes in the entire social and educational system. Many of the world's education systems are in the transition period to an inclusive education system, and because the attitude of teachers towards inclusion and students with special educational needs is extremely important for the efficiency of the inclusion process. Numerous studies (Subban & Sharma, 2006; Avramidis et al., 2000; Van Reusen et al., 2001) have been conducted to identify the perception of teachers in general education institutions, the relationship between certain demographic factors and teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education and their concerns. The tools used in the research (Subban & Sharma, 2006) were: ATIES, Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale (Wilczenski, 1992) and CIES, Concerns about Inclusive Education Scale (Sharma & Desai, 2002), aimed at determining the participants' attitude and level of concern about the inclusion of students with special educational needs in general education. Another study (Ka Lam Sam et al., 2015) argues that teacher perception influences their acceptance behaviours of students with educational learning requirements. This study examines

three dimensions (attitude, concern, and commitment) of perception that have been identified and tested. One implication resulting from this study is to provide a valid tool in measuring the teacher's attitude, concern and commitment. A number of researches (Newton et al., 2014; Kim et al., 2019; O'Toole et al., 2013) were conducted, and the results revealed contradictory perceptions of inclusive education in primary and secondary education. At the primary level, the participants were very honest, most teachers (60%) showed negative attitudes about the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools, some teachers (30%) showed mixed feelings about the practice, and one teacher (10%) strongly supports the practice of inclusive education.

3. The phenomenon of educational inclusion in the Romanian specialized literature.

The article aims to portray an overview of the moments of school inclusion of children with disabilities in Romania, but also of the impact of projects and programmes of socio-educational inclusion. The first studies and research on the integration and socio-educational inclusion of children with special educational needs were conducted under the auspices of the RENINCO association, studies largely funded by UNESCO and UNICEF. The research activities were initiated and intensified after 1992, following the International Conference "Education and Disability" held with the support of UNESCO and UNICEF. Several such programmes have been implemented through the PHARE Access to Education programme for disadvantaged groups, which aimed to facilitate access to quality education for all children, regardless of ethnicity, mother tongue, socio-economic or psychological differences; SNAC – National Strategy for Community Action – programme that mobilized an impressive number of volunteers; I learn as much as I can and what I like, a pilot project, carried out to support eleven special schools for organizing educational activities on centres of interest; Phare Twinning Light Project Access to education for disadvantaged groups – focusing on children with special educational needs, which conducted an assessment of the situation of special education in Romania; the national programme Together, in the same school that has resulted in the development of national policies to support schools to provide diverse and flexible educational services in such a way that they can meet the educational requirements of each child, diversified and efficient able to meet special educational requirements (Policies in education for students at risk and for those with disabilities in South East Europe Romania, OECD, 2007).

At the Babeş-Bolyai University, a series of doctoral researches were conducted that explored ways to improve educational services in Romania from the perspective of inclusive education (Cioloca, 2012), studies that confirm the importance of educational inclusion as a first step in social inclusion. The impact of teacher training from the perspective of inclusive education was researched at the University of Bucharest (Cercel, 2009) which shows the need to invest in human resources, a quality education cannot be without adequate training of human resources in the inclusive approach to education. Studies have been conducted (Dămean & Todea, 2011; Dumitru, 2018) that aimed to identify factors that could have an impact on the process of socio-educational inclusion of children from vulnerable groups, especially from disadvantaged backgrounds. Following the research, the authors developed a set of tools to support the process of measuring how school inclusion of students with special needs, students with social disadvantages, takes place. The tools developed have made

it possible to identify these children more effectively, who have various barriers to integration, so that they can be supported more effectively, as early as possible, in order to reduce the negative consequences of integration difficulties. Another study (Ghergut, 2010) that explores the initiatives of Romanian schools to adapt their educational offer in relation to the new directions of change of educational activities, as a consequence of inclusive educational programmes. Another study (Borca, 2010) conducted an analysis of educational policies, the steps to follow in implementing an inclusive educational process. The Romanian inclusive system also attracted the attention of foreign researchers, so we identified an analysis (Walker, 2009) of inclusive educational practices and policies in Romania, conducted by G. Walker. The article makes an analysis of the practices and policies of inclusive education in Romania, and the author acknowledges the insufficiency of systematic studies on this topic. G. Walker (2009) argues that the direction of the Romanian education system is towards integration and inclusion, and in this process, it is based on democratic principles, and the socio-educational stakeholders seek to identify strategies to adapt educational services to the educational requirements of students.

4. Research methodology:

According to these needs – exploring the process of integration and socio-educational inclusion of students – was the main purpose of the article. We studied the phenomenon of integration and socio-educational inclusion in the school, an approach we initiated with the study of specialized literature, the experience of other states with a tradition in socio-educational inclusion, but also the results of major research in this field. We identified the resources and difficulties of this complex process of inclusion, its consequences on students, teachers, parents, community, but also on the functioning of society.

The research objectives pursued in this study were the following:

- Carrying out a comparative analysis of internal and external approaches to the development of inclusive education, including the development and implementation of socio-educational policies; legal and regulatory framework; content, forms and methods of teaching and learning and educational management;
- Identifying at an international level some efficient educational policies, some good practices that could represent a model in the development of inclusive Romanian educational policies.
- Development of a resource package on scientific, methodological and training support for the development of inclusive education, taking into account domestic and international experience, including a regulatory and legal framework, analysis of key practices and issues of inclusive education and social integration;

The research methodology that coordinated the research approach involved a three-step linear approach to a systematic review, amid current international debates on inclusive education as a strategy to eliminate exclusion and promote education as a basic human right in inclusive school communities. The research methods were of comparative and critical analysis of the current relevant international and national specialized literature, using online databases, which tried to answer some research questions.

RQ1: What are the attitudes of society towards inclusive education

RQ2: What is the interest of the teachers to have an inclusive approach in the classroom and to improve to provide a quality inclusive education

RQ3: What is the current stage of development and implementation of inclusive educational policies.

At a later stage, relevant research studies and research reports on the adoption of inclusive education policies at national level were analysed to identify both the challenges and good practices in the field of inclusive education. The criteria for selecting these studies and reports included the relevance of the research and studies conducted, the impact of the results, the soundness of the methodology conducted, relevant conclusions.

5. Results and discussions.

In the analysis of the main international legislative documents (because they are quite numerous, we made an analysis of them and identified the most relevant to the field we are dealing with) we caught a series of values and basic beliefs inherent in inclusive education:

- Everyone has the right to education.
- All children can learn.
- Everyone may face learning difficulties at certain times or in certain subjects.
- Everyone needs help in the learning process.
- The school, the teacher, the family and the community have the main responsibility for facilitating learning and not only for the children.
- The differences are natural, valuable and enrich society.
- Discriminatory attitudes and behaviour must be removed.

Normative acts approved by the competent authorities contain clear provisions that ensure the availability of quality universal education for all children, regardless of gender, social, ethnic origin, religious and cultural affiliation and mother tongue, special educational needs. The main directions of inclusive education worldwide are based on strengthening policies on the promotion and development of social and integrated services for socially vulnerable families and children at risk. An essential element in the development of more positive attitudes towards inclusion has proved to be the result of training programmes in the field of special education (Sharma & Desai, 2002; Dumitru Tăbăcaru, 2019b). Experienced teachers have lower levels of anxiety about implementing inclusive education. In addition, participants with a family member with disabilities and those with some legislative knowledge showed more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of students with disabilities and felt more confident in their roles as inclusive educators. In addition, lack of training in inclusive or special education may lead to less positive attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream settings (Menlove et al., 2001; Mullen, 2001; Agran et al., 2002) while increased training has been associated with more positive attitudes in this regard (Agran et al., 2002; Sharma & Desai, 2002).

As there are many opportunities for continuing professional development relevant to inclusive education and working with children with special educational needs, it is essential to provide a solid tool for verifying the training needs of teachers and developing these training programmes that are in line with their training needs. These types of studies have implications for professional development in terms of inclusion, and confirm the need to provide high quality development opportunities to

facilitate the socio-educational inclusion of students with special educational needs. Regarding the possible factors that influence the teachers' perception of inclusive education, the teachers recalled: misconceptions and inadequate information about inclusion, lack of teacher training, insufficient resources, limited administrative support, teachers' attitudes, large number of children in the classroom and poor infrastructure. Certain studies (Zachary et al., 2018, Muffih et al., 2011; Dumitru Tăbăcaru, 2019a) explored the views of secondary school teachers from seven selected schools involved in a pilot inclusive education programme and the results show that most teachers who still prefer separate special education institutions to inclusive ones are usually teachers without some training to teach students with special educational needs, while more experienced and well-trained teachers are more inclined to support inclusive education. Thus, resistance to inclusion is linked to inadequate or complete lack of teacher training. Younger and less experienced teachers with no training in special education have shown less enthusiasm for the benefits of inclusion, their ability to manage integrated classrooms and to teach students with disabilities. The implication of these results must be essential for future research, institutional support systems, institutional policies and the overall management of training.

An interesting report (Blackie, 2010) was produced in order to identify the educators' perceptions of inclusive education, barriers to learning, skills needed to achieve quality inclusion, support structures and effective training programmes in a performing inclusive system. The negative perceptions of inclusion involved lack of training, unrealistic expectations, material resources, class time and size. Based on the results of this study, it appears that educators do not feel adequately trained to take on the responsibilities of inclusive education. The educators who report that they have received adequate training perceive training programmes as effective and successful in improving their knowledge and skills. The report highlighted the areas needed to be found in the training programmes include learning difficulties, inclusion strategies, support services, curricular adaptation and psychological training to improve the educators' communication skills and ways to deal with emotional barriers in learning, confirmed in other studies (Dumitru Tăbăcaru, 2019a; 2019b-).

Su Qiong & Xu Cooper (2020) explores how mass education teachers with experience in inclusive education perceive individual differences among students in general education classrooms. The study adopted a qualitative research approach and used semi-structured sampling and interviews, where it was found that teachers tended to conceptualize individual differences among students according to five categories: students' perceived ability; students' perceived behaviour and motivation; the personal attributes of the perceived students; perceived family factors and observed learning outcomes. The particular concerns of teachers about individual differences were also revealed and discussed. This research is relevant because it allows a deeper exploration of the perceptions and attitudes that teachers have towards students with special educational needs, requirements that represent individual differences. Saloviita (2020) conducted a study to explore the teachers' attitudes and their impact on the inclusion of children with special educational needs. According to the results obtained, for the efficiency of the inclusion of children with special educational needs in mainstream education, the positive attitude of teachers is very important. According to research, about 20% of teachers strongly opposed inclusion.

Teachers' attitudes towards inclusion have not been shown to be strongly associated with any of the demographic variables studied so far. In the present study, the sex and age of teachers gave comparable results to most previous studies: female teachers were somewhat more positive than male teachers (Avramidis et al., 2000), and younger teachers slightly more positive than the older ones (Ahmmed et al., 2014). The attitudinal variables controlled here included work orientation and self-efficacy. The professional orientation of teachers did not show a remarkable association with their attitudes towards inclusion. The inclusive education has been criticized as causing additional work for teachers (Gunnþórsdóttir & Jóhannesson, 2014). Despite the slightly negative general atmosphere, just over half of the teachers agreed that the education of children with special educational needs could be effectively supported in regular classrooms.

A report (Horga, 2017) made with the support of UNICEF aimed at a deep understanding of the phenomenon of participation in education, engaging in the educational activity, is a crucial element in reforming the Romanian education system. The research made a set of recommendations for reforming the education system to support the creation of a positive, inclusive environment, but also a set of indicators to increase the quality of socio-educational services offered in Romania for all levels of education (primary, middle school, high school and higher). An analysis (Manea, 2016) of access to education for young people with disabilities in Romania, focusing on upper secondary, vocational and university education was conducted following an empirical research, and the results were collected following the collection of experiences of subjects with various disabilities in the educational, general or special route. The most important things were the identification of barriers that prevent the integration and socio-educational inclusion of children with special educational needs in mainstream education. Among the most frequently cited obstacles listed by respondents with disabilities were: negative attitudes, instructional-educational means not adapted to special educational requirements, the use of rigid methods that do not meet the needs of beneficiaries of these educational services, lack of adequate support services (socio-emotional support, intervention and recovery programmes, counselling, school and professional guidance, etc.), insufficient financial resources and others. The report also identifies a number of legislative inconsistencies, which hinder the practical implementation of inclusive education, and the main factor of social exclusion is found in the educational sphere. The results of the study state that for the success of the subsequent social integration of people with disabilities, access to education is necessary and crucial, associated with parental support. The study concludes with the collection of recommendations to support and facilitate access to socio-educational activities of people with disabilities and reduce barriers to participation in educational experiences in the context in which children grow and develop, in inclusive and non-segregated contexts. The recommendation that was noted and that will be a starting point for the research initiated by us was the need to invest in teacher training, in their professional development, in empowering with knowledge and skills to work in inclusive environments, in acquire responses to the diversity of students with special educational needs, ways of working that facilitate socio-educational inclusion. In 2018, through the POCA programme, a comparative study was conducted (Ange, 2016) on inclusive educational policies for children with special educational needs, which resulted in the development of a set of recommendations on facilitating socio-

educational inclusion, based on a rigorous analysis of European education systems and a transfer of good practice. The study proposes that the change in the education system be supported by improved education policies, the decentralization of the education system, the support for inclusive education with a series of working tools that focus on student education, flexibility of the curriculum and teaching methods. We find again the need to adequately train teachers, to be better prepared to work with children with special educational needs.

We believe that an educational system will be inclusive and will be effective if it approaches this process from the perspective of social support of all the stakeholders involved in this process, it is important to involve society, community in this process, because ultimately students with social educational needs are the future members of the community and they must develop from school in an environment as close as possible to the real society. For this reason, we conducted an analysis of studies regarding the involvement and impact of social services on supporting inclusive education. A report made by the World Bank (Stănculescu, 2016) conducted in 2016 a comprehensive research prior to actions to reform child protection services in Romania. The progress made by the Romanian government in the years after 1989 is listed, regarding the reduction of the institutionalization of children and the finding of ways to raise children in positive, healthy environments, in the family and as close as possible to the family. The report identifies and offers a number of proposals to support the substantial improvement of child protection services. Also, a paper was conducted that aimed to identify the direct relationships between disabilities and a person's socioeconomic status, and the research results helped to shape the elements that define disability and the costs involved in a Romanian social system, which is appreciated as precarious and unstable. At the same time, the author emphasizes the important role that disability plays in the process of social integration and the frequent interdependence between disability and poverty.

6. Conclusions

The field of social inclusion and inclusion is still insufficiently studied, there is an acute need for research programmes to assess the impact of inclusive education, ways to support the socio-educational inclusion of children with special educational needs and to identify effective strategies to support social-educational inclusion. The analysis of research and the studies conducted to assess the impact of the process of educational integration of students with special educational needs is useful for formulating and structuring quantitative and qualitative indicators, depending on the main dimensions of actions to be taken to implement disability reforms, would measure the impact of the reform. At the same time, the results obtained from data collection, with the use of those indicators, would allow the recovery of disability reform and the development of new actions to increase the social inclusion of people with disabilities.

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“JAUNDE” TO “YAOUNDE”, MEMORIAL ROAMING ON THE FOUNDATION OF A CITY: HISTORICAL ANALYSIS ESSAY

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Abstract: *The onomastic study of African cities shows with shadowless clarity that the choice of the name of a city is not always made to the taste of providence. Several African cities today have names steeped in history. Yaoundé is one of them. The spelling shift from “Jaunde” to Yaoundé is indicative of this phenomenon. The first moment of this work will consist in taking a retrospective glance at the beginnings of this city; The second, of a socio-political nature, will highlight the long and short stories of the appropriation of the Yaoundé site by the German occupier; the swan song of this work will certainly be the origin of the name of Yaoundé.*

Key words: *Memorial; Roaming; Foundation; City*

1. Introduction

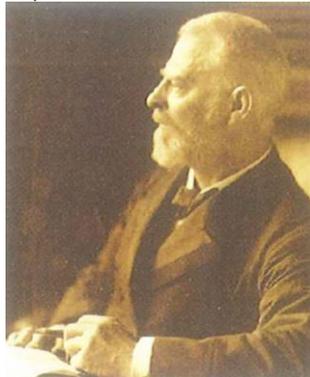
In 1885, the Berlin conference was held. In the background, the beacons for the occupation of new lands in Africa. These meetings gave rise to missions of exploration and military expeditions multiplied by the Germans in the interior of the country. Indeed, thanks to the Germano-Douala treaty of July 12, 1884, the Germans settled as soon as they arrived on the Cameroon coast. Through this installation, a number of human settlements for commercial, military, or other forms of exploitation took shape (Ateba Noah, 2005: 56). Subsequently, the Germans decided quite simply to enter the hinterland, in order to have all the Cameroon territory under their yoke.

2. “Jaunde”, a German colonial creation

2.1. The reasons for the German expedition to Yaoundé

Financed by German commercial firms based on the coast (Jantzen and Thormählen for Zintgraff, Woerman for Kund and Tappenbeck), the first expeditions to the Cameroon hinterland left from Grand Batanga (Eloundou, 1994: 46), place considered as the central axis.

Figure 1 : Adolph Woermann, founder of the first German counters in Cameroon



Source: H. Dominik, Kamerun, Berlin, 1900: 8.

The choice of this starting point was not accidental. Indeed, they aimed in the foreground not to arouse the suspicions of the go between Douala and Bakoko., fiercely opposed to this attempt. These expeditions pursued among other objectives:

- connect the South to the North, the narrow coastal strip known to Europeans to the savannah regions already explored by Barth and Flegel was all the more necessary since it allowed the Germans to trust the very popular ivory trade which for the moment was the share of the French and their Hausa suppliers. ;
- reach the east of the territory to put a damper on the rampant French hegemony in this city;
- inventory the human resources of the interior with a view to a possible recruitment of workers and porters;
- liquidate the meteoric progress of Islam spread like wildfire in the forest regions by Hausa traders ;
- divert the trade flows that took place at Ibis on the Bénoué in the North, and the Congo south towards the coast of Kribi and Douala, because the “Royal Niger”, An English company had the wind in its sails in the northern part of the hinterland;
- sign new treaties with local chiefs, in order to take control of the entire country;
- linking the Atlantic Ocean to Lake Chad (Eloundou, 1994: 56).

On the benefit of these motives, there is every reason to think that the expeditions started by the Germans were motivated by political, economic and socio-cultural reasons. How did they proceed to reach Yaoundé ?

2.2. A military expedition with scientific overtones

German army officers, Kund and Tappenbeck received a mission to explore the interior of Cameroonian territory from Kribi (National Archives of Yaoundé, 1888: 22). They were joined in early October 1887 by two scientists: the botanist Braun and zoologist Weissenbom.

Figure 2 : Richard Kund, German army officer



Source: Ateba Noah, “Land Problems ...”: 19.

Richard Kund was born on July 19, 1852 in Zielentia. In 1881, he was enlisted in the Deutsches Afrikanisches Gesellschaft. He cut his teeth in 1884 at the Pogge - Wesmann mission under the leadership of Eduard Schulze. After the latter's death, the post of expedition leader fell to Kund. It is significant to note that in his troop, Kund had in his ranks, his friend and comrade in arms Lieutenant Hans Tappenbeck (Temgoua, 2003: 76-77). The two men explored the southern Congo Basin. Wounded on December 20, 1885, he returned to Germany. On August 15, 1887, on behalf of the imperial government, he returned to Cameroon. Once there, expeditions to the hinterland were organized under his banner until 1889, when he contracted dysentery. With declining health, crippled, he became almost voiceless. After several years marked on the corner of suffering, he enters into rest in Sellin Auf Rugen July 31, 1904.

Figure 3 : Hans Tappenbeck, founder of the Yaoundé military post



Source: Medou, "Yaoundé to...": 13.

Regarding Tappenbeck, native of Wolsier im Rathenow in Germany January 14, 1861, He studied in Berlin. In 1880, he obtained his officer's license. Appointed to the 4th Westphalian Infantry Regiment, he befriends Kund. The latter will also hire him as a companion for his first mission in Africa (Temgoua, 2003: 76-77). Less old, he climbed the ranks in particular by becoming Kund's second. By Kund's admission, Tappenbeck was the linchpin of the success of his expeditions. The creation of the Yaoundé substation is to be credited. He was an early resident. In 1889, he left the Yaoundé post for Banyo in search of Zintgraff. On May 26, he reached the kingdom of Ngila who welcomed him.

Against all odds, his desire to continue the expedition to the interior failed on Ngila's categorical no.. He turned back on June 3, 1884 in Yaoundé from where it shakes for Kribi. After twelve days of fatigue, he was severely undermined by a fever: a hematuric bilious disease which ended his life on July 26, 1889 in Douala (Temgoua, 2003: 82).

Born September 30, 1858 in Mülhausen in Thuringia, Bernhard Weissenbom, after his secondary studies, returned to the University of Jena where he oriented

himself in zoology, in this case, he became an entomologist. In 1887, having heard of the scientific expedition organized by the Germans to Cameroon, he is running for a place as a geologist and zoologist. Ultimately, on September 1, 1887, he joined the strength of the Kund expedition and takes an active part in its organization. During the attack of February 2, 1888, he was the only white man to emerge unscathed (Morgen, 1893: 245). He decides to bring the expedition back to the coast where he is the victim of a pernicious fever. Making good heart against bad luck, he tried in vain to set out again in January 1889 flanked by a second expedition. But his illness after five days was due to his determination (Morgen, 1893: 246). Brought back to Kribi, he is embarked in a German government boat so that he can get back on his feet thanks to the sea air. Unsuccessful approach, since after two serious bouts of fever, he died on February 21, 1889 at the age of 31. He is buried in a cemetery in Douala (Temgoua, 2003: 75).

Regarding Braun, the information able to draw up his biography was sorely lacking. History retains that he was a botanist, and that he spent five days with the expedition (Morgen, 1893: 247). Obviously, there is not much to eat. Kund was at the head of a small garrison commanded by a black "Ghanaian" by the name of Cornelius and a certain German legionary called Herphold (Edzogo, 2007: 13). Along the way, they undertook two voyages towards Ewondo country.

The first expedition dates from October 1887. Indeed, on November 15, 1887, backstage negotiations were initiated by Kund with the Batanga chiefs to obtain guides in order to create a village in the hinterland. On the morning of November 16 the long column buried itself in the forest. It is made up of Kund, Tappenbeck, Weissenbom and Braun accompanied by 120 African carriers and a guide named Toko (Edzogo, 2007: 15). Very quickly, they realized that the journey was arduous (Morgen, 1893: 247). It was the banner and the cross. The showers make the paths impassable, blocked as they are by roots, lianas and tree trunks. Under maximum speed, the caravan travels two kilometers per hour. In addition to these difficulties, there is the indiscipline which is rampant in the column, the problems linked to supplies, the hostility displayed by the populations of the furrowed regions (Temgoua, 2003: 76). Suffice to say that this campaign was badly geared. A good section of the local populations, with a touch of xenophobia, hardly appreciated this expedition.

From time to time, the expedition, taken to task by a warmongering bronca orchestrated by the natives, must do battle to clear a passage. It turns out that various strategies were developed by the local populations to stop the German advance. In the radius of these, misinformation and ambushes figure prominently. All over the South, insurrectionary rhetoric was catching on. The populations intended to thwart the objectives pursued by the Germans by using disinformation.

On various occasions, the erroneous information on the routes for the sole purpose of disorienting the Germans was transmitted to them. For example, the makeshift guides protested with many pantalonnades to trample the countryside. They never took the shortest route leading to Yaoundé. In short, they were on the spot. This is the place to point out that they were paid ruby on nail and in proportion to the villages visited. For them, there was no danger there. The Germans were not caught in want of lucidity. If the glove was of velvet, the hand remained of iron. Aware of attending these many waltz tours orchestrated by these occasional guides, Kund decided to take Ngumba nationals hostage (Essomba, 2005: 61), connoisseurs of the region as commercial intermediaries. The prisoners thus constituted were only

released on the condition of taking the route leading to Zonu's in Yaoundé. With regard to ambushes, we can cite the one set by the Etenga in the vicinity of Yaoundé between 1888-1889 (Obama, 1981: 11). In their expedition to Yaoundé, the Germans had to turn back to look for reinforcements. Also in this line, in 1888, the expedition had to return to the coast twice to renew its numbers (guides, porters) and to refuel with food and ammunition. In January 1889, in addition to the diseases which decimated the carriers, Weissenbom, suffering from acute dysentery while Tappenbeck, was the victim of a malaria attack. The latter, due to rheumatic pains, becomes almost crippled, so much so that he has to be carried. In view of all these upheavals, it was necessary to take a break and found a post in this region, namely: Metomba, the village in which they gained a foothold.

The blaze of the insurrection was not only riveted in the South. This exploration mission also alienated the village chiefs located near this small village. They were offended that the Germans set their sights on the chief of a small village. They consequently organized a real blockade, opposing an end of inadmissibility to all inclinations of supplies intended for the expedition. At the end of four days of marches bristling with difficulties, the expedition arrived in "a marvelous site in the midst of a hospitable people, the Ewondo, whose notables spontaneously offered them the land (Medou, 1973: 2), between the Mingoa streams and Ekozoa. It is here that Kund and his companions established the Yaoundé post.

In short, given to be a canvas of penelope, this first expedition led by Kund, Tappenbeck, Weissenbom (Franqueville, 1989: 16) and Braun, provided with 1420 men (each carrying a load of 60 pounds) reached "Jaunde" In 1888. She found that this region was a huge forest that was difficult to penetrate, located more than 250 km from the Kribian coast. The occupation of Yaoundé was bristling with difficulties. How did the Germans go about making this territorial entity fall into their own hands?

2.3. Appropriation of the Yaounde site

Esono Ela, son of Fouda Ada of the Ewondo clan had settled in the village of Nkol Atom. Affable and renowned for having a broad gesture, the latter welcomed the German troop led by Kund and Tappenbeck. This explains why the Germans took him in high esteem. Despite the hostility displayed by the other notables Ewondo, who made a makeover in xenophobia, Esono Ela remained upright in his boots. Better, he granted them a large portion of land (Franqueville, 1989: 16). Riding on the friendly attentions they established with Esono Ela, the Germans decided to build a military post in this locality. Putting their money where their mouth is, they built at Nkol Atom. Initially, this station was called "Sono station", an alteration of the name Esono, the provider of the land. It must be said in full that the Germans heard behind the scenes, make this post an operational base for the occupation of the hinterland and in particular for the conquest of the North where the military campaign promised to be tough. Moreover, through this post, the Germans intended to clean all the pockets of resistance maintained by the indigenous populations in order to establish their hegemony. The Germans did not yet have complete control over this region.

The creation of the Yaoundé substation was strategic, with stakes of undeniable economic and political significance: indicating to contemporaries the new places of German domination and for the very first time weaving multifaceted relations with the interior without having to go through intermediaries. It makes sense that this

German installation was caught in a colonizing matrix. Certain clans very early perceived this mischief sewn with white thread. Witnesses, the Mvog Atemengue Essomba Ngonti (Heepe Jaunde, 1919: 30) (uncle of Charles Atangana) who would have sworn never to swear allegiance to the settlers. They only breathed aversion towards them. This acrimony for the whites also found fertile ground among the Baaba.

Several conjectures have been put forward to account for the warm welcome offered to the Germans by Esono Ela. One of them suggests that Esono Ela had simply followed in the footsteps of chief Zambo Nsa of Mvog. Amougou (family ties united them), who was the first to welcome the Germans (Eloundou, 1994: 50). Kund's column would have even been held for a long time by the latter. At that time, a fratricidal war was smoldering under ashes, against the backdrop of the clearly displayed desire for hegemony of some clans over others. These internal quarrels could quickly turn into quarrels of Atrides. This is how the Mvog Bétsi and the Emombo were on difficult terms with the Mvog Atemengue supported by students, the Emvengand the Baaba. The points of friction between these two groups were legion.

From the outset, the Mvog Ada had suffered considerable losses in slaves and in good of all kinds during the games of chance (Abbia) for which the Baaba seemed expert.

Another bone of contention, each clan spared no effort to establish its political ascendancy on its peers, in order to monopolize all economic transactions with the Ngoumba of the Kribian coast. This is why Esono Ela looked good on the Germans. It was a grave mistake to believe that his attitude was disinterested. He heard them enter their little papers. In this rat race, they used to pull the chestnuts out of the fire. This friendship therefore arose like a tide, given that in the event of war with his family, by means of their military arsenal, the Germans certainly had to lend him their assistance to neutralize the other groups. As a result, Esono hastened to warmly welcome the Germans because he feared that the others might pull the rug out from under him.

On examination, it is sewn with white thread that Esono Ela just as much as his German hosts had entered a fool's bargain. In reality, everyone had drawn the curtain on their real motives.

The plot of land offered by Esono Ela to his hosts served them to build a military post¹. However, this version is not unanimous. Different opinions indicate that it was out of compassion that Esono Ela granted this plot of land to the Germans who had just lost a soldier in a battle against the Bulu (Eloundou, 1994: 51).

Figure 3 : Esono Ela, seated, surrounded by members of his family.



Source: JMNdi, "Yaoundé de Zenker ..." : 19.

¹ This military post was located on the site where Factual CENADI is located on the current administrative platform where the former presidency of the republic is located.

The land would have been offered for burial purposes. For many, this gift had the resonance of collusion. It gave grain to grind to the polemicists of the German installation at Nkol Atom because it seems, Esono Ela would have received presents from the Germans. In any case, this post was the bridgehead to lay the foundations for the future city by the Germans. On November 30, 1889, Georg Zenkertakes the direction of the station. It focuses its action on agricultural and commercial questions to the detriment of military questions (Laburthe Tolra, 1970: 1-18).

In 1892, Zenker is replaced by Major Hans Dominik. However, because of the almost endemic unrest in the region, the station immediately fell to a soldier: Von Stetten. He was then recalled to Douala on June 4, 1895 and replaced by Lieutenant Dominik. Hans Dominik arrives in Cameroon in 1894 the day after the mutiny of the Dahomean soldiers. Companion of Corporal Martin Paul Samba in the delegation led by Curt Von Morgen, he becomes the new district chief of Yaoundé and remained in office until 1907 when the station became a civilian district.

By an administrative reform in 1907-1909, military districts like Yaoundé were transformed into civilian districts. To this end, Hans Dominik, a man in fatigues, will give way to Kirchoff, a civilian (Essomba, 2005: 89). Dominik left his mark on the political scene in Yaoundé until 1910, when he died from a heart attack.

In 1895, the region was still bathed in a noxious atmosphere. It was not a cloudless sky between the occupier and the natives. Indeed, the raids carried out in the Ewondo villages by the Dahomean soldiers in the pay of the Germans outraged the Ewondo. The reactions were not long in coming. Omgba Bissogo argued this resentment to foment a revolt against the occupier. It takes him badly, because the revolt was drowned in blood by Barth's troops and Zimmerman (Ateba Noah, 2005: 50). The revolt ended in 1896, after Omgba Bissogo was taken prisoner. As a result, he was ordered to deliver 100 workers for six months to the station and 100 sheep (Essomba, 2005: 89).

Still on the subject of revolts, there is that of the Bene. Here, the Germans had to deal with a large part in the person of Amougou Baana. The military expedition against the Bene follows an ambush against the Germans in 1897. Determined to definitively defeat the adversary, the Germans made use of "88 rifles", a large-scale measure intended to make the Bene bend. *Vae victis*, because the justice of the victors will be applied to them. Thus in 1898, Amougou Baana was forced to pay 100 elephant tusks, 400 rubber bills and 40 sheep. According to one of the reports dated June 4, 1895, the station had twenty one huts in *poto-poto* and one in planks.

Among these huts, there are among others two stores, a kitchen, a laboratory, a stable for the horses, a barn, a henhouse, a shed for drying tiles, a bathroom and a large wooden house which served as a residence for settlers (Eloundou, 1994: 53). Besides these boxes, Zenker had started, without being able to complete, a first stone house. In 1909, under the leadership of Major Hans Dominik, "Jaunde station" became a fortress of about 100 meters on a side, limited to the North-West by the European hospital inaugurated in 1913", to the North by the district of foreigners, to the East by the village Mvog Ada, in the south by the village Mvolyé. The exergue of the future capital of Kamerun, under its Germanic connotation "Jaunde" took root in the local language: ewondo.

3. The origin of the name Yaoundé

On the first German maps of the Yaoundé region, we note that the Yaoundé site appears under the name "Zonu" (Dikoumé, 2005: 40) in deformation of the name of *Esono*, leader of one of the Ewondo clans of the area. It was later that she took the name of "Jaunde". In the opinion of Georg Zenker (Laburthe Tolra, 1970: 16) German botanist among the first occupants of the military post *Jaunde Station*², and Nekes German linguist; the word Jaunde comes from the term "Ewondo" or "Yewondo" which means "peanut". In the opinion of Njike (Njike, 2000: 13) this word designates both the site and the inhabitants who lived in this region. According to Njike, "Ewondo" would be a nickname (Dugast, 1949: 70) by what he said: "they are numerous like the peanuts. The inhabitants in question all belong to an ethnic group: the Ewondo, a Beti people who lived on the site before the arrival of Europeans.

This posture is shared by Laburthe Tolra (Laburthe Tolra, 1970: 34) with a few nuances. Indeed for the latter, the term Yaoundé derived from the word Ewondo. For our information, it reveals that the word Yaoundé would only be a corruption or translation in the Batanga language. of term Ewondo. The Batanga in question here are the porters enlisted by Kund and Tappenbeck. In reality, for the French anthropologist, the term "Yaoundé" or *Jaunde* to render the German transcription of the time, designated any Beti, "Sometimes an Ewondo", sometimes the neighboring inhabitants of the "Yaoundé station". The first missionaries wanted to designate the region by the tribe that lived there. Ewondo was transcribed "Yewondo". The Germans adopted "Jaunde" and the French "Yaoundé".

Jean Baptiste Obama (Obama, 1981: 11) eats from the same bowl. He bluntly states that the name "Yewondo" in its current form of "Ewondo" is easily traceable to the Ewondo "peanut seed. This meant in 1887, when Kund arrived and Tappenbeck "Peanut sowers". It is a contraction of the double genealogical name "Evuna- Ondzoa", sometimes transformed into "Awondo", "Owonde" or even "Ewonde" then "Jaunde" in German. Jean Marie Essono is in the same direction because, to believe him, the onomastic analysis of the item "Ewondo" refers to several connotations. However, this term is subject to various etymological and morphological interpretations:

Ewondo > Jewondo > Jawonde > Jaunde > Yaoundé (Obama, 1981: 13) .

The transvestite form "Jaunde" Then "Yaoundé" Which has prevailed to this day, was transcribed by German explorers Kund and Tappenbeck, with the help of the Batanga by Kribi that they had hired.

In addition to phonetic and morphological fluctuations, the term Yaoundé gave many semantic interpretations. Indeed, it is on the one hand a toponym which designates the region which shelters the Ewondo. On the other hand, he is an ethnonym to the exact extent that he comes from the Ewondo ethnic group. More than a toponym and an ethnonym, Ewondo is also a glossonym, in this case, the name of a dialect of the *bəti-faŋ* group. Indeed, like other Beti languages, Ewondo proceeds (Essono, 2000: 11) from Ati or [tùki], a language spoken on the entire right bank of the Sanaga, in the Mbam department (Guthrie, 1971: 25).

²First military post built by the Germans when they reached Yaoundé. It is from this military post that they drew the first outlines of the city from Yaoundé.

Besides, "Yaoundé" is a barbarism of the word "Ewondo", first distorted by Batanga carriers, pursued by the Germans "Jaunde" and completed by the French "Yaoundé". Without a doubt, the use of the local language (ewondo) sheds new light on the origin of the name of this city. Why the umpteenth modification of the item "Jaunde" in Yaoundé from the French?

4. "Yaoundé", stamp of the French occupation

The German rout of February 20, 1916, symbolized by the deposit of arms by Von Rabben and his men led to the loss of Cameroon by the Germans for the benefit of France and Great Britain. As a result, recipients of eastern Cameroon, the French take the management of Yaoundé under their cap. A reform keyboard were immediately engaged. The change of the name of the city is the prelude. Indeed, the French were impatient to strip the name of the city of its Germanic connotation. Thus, the "Jaunde" German was changed to "Yaoundé". In the same perspective, the French chose to transfer to Yaoundé the capital of Cameroon Oriental in 1921. This measure is in line with German desires. It turns out that the Germans had decided in 1901 to set the capital of their colony on the site of Buea, at the foot of Mount Cameroon. But the eruption of this volcano in 1909, led them to prefer the site of Douala. It is probable that the French High Commission and the Cameroonian Institutions would have been installed on the same places, if it had not been for the frequency, in the years which followed the end of hostilities in Cameroon, a noise from the city of a possible return of the Germans. The rumor not always having the gift of caricature, the French put themselves on the reserve. Judging the port of Douala difficult to defend in the event of a German landing, they preferred to establish the capital, temporarily further inland in Yaoundé, then definitively in 1922. The choice of Yaoundé, in addition to strategic considerations, had enticing physical and social benefits.

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INCREASING THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE ELDERLY THROUGH HORTICULTURE THERAPY

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Abstract: *Horticultural therapy can be implemented in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable way of achieving these goals. Studies on the use of green spaces in mental health care have shown a positive result, with a cumulative association between access and quality of life through the use of green spaces and lower scores on psychological measures of stress (Pope et al, 2015: 33), the major determinants being accessibility green space, with enough green spaces in the neighborhood and theirs for relaxation and recreation. Similarly, van den Berg et al. (2016: 187) showed a positive association in spending time in green spaces and better scores on mental health and vitality scales. Nutsford et al (2013: 49) suggested that green spaces are beneficial for mental health, especially in the case of anxiety and mood disorders, both through the participation of people in activities in green spaces that can be used near the home and in terms of the proportion of usable spaces. green in a neighborhood. Similarly, positive effects on general health were found by Dadvand et al (2016: 112). It is particularly relevant for an inpatient population is a study that identified the benefits of bringing horticultural therapy into patients' spaces in a dementia population (Maller, C. et al, 2005: 64).*

Keywords: *horticultural therapy; quality of life; the third Age; the elderly; mental illness*

1. Introduction

Horticultural therapy refers to the use of a series of techniques and activities related to plant care to promote the general physical, mental and spiritual health of an individual, group or community. Horticultural therapy was conceived by combining several concepts from different fields such as occupational therapy, landscape architecture, gerontology, rehabilitation, etc. One of its basic principles is that participation in the life cycle of a plant, from the seed stage to the maturity stage is healing. This healing effect is achieved through natural aesthetics, which through its intense green encourages spending time outside the home, as well as by providing a space for a series of activities such as exploration, walking, rest, observation, plant care, etc.

Gardens have been considered healing spaces since ancient times. The gardens were highly prized by the Egyptians. The houses had flower and vegetable gardens and were surrounded by walls that provided privacy. Green - Wadj, was considered a sacred color. Color was predominantly associated with the Nile, the Mediterranean Sea (called Wadj-Wer), land and vegetation. The ancient Egyptians used the phrase "doing green things" to talk about beneficial things. Green was a powerful symbol of rebirth. For this reason, the images of the dead were painted green to guarantee their rebirth in the afterlife. Wadj also meant "to flourish" or "to be healthy." Green malachite was a symbol of joy. "Malachite field" was the expression of the Egyptians for the land of the blessed in the afterlife. Jannah is the Arabic name for the Islamic concept of life after death and means "Garden" in translation. Words such as Jannat al-'adn - The Gardens

of Eternal Peace, Jannat al-Khuld - The Gardens of the Eternal, Jannat al-Na'im - The Gardens of Pleasure appear in the text of the Qur'an.

Roman gardens were places of solitude, a refuge from urban life. The famous people of the Roman Empire were very interested in agriculture, horticulture and botany. Seeds and plants were often objects of exchange.

Over time, however, the healing role of nature has been replaced by more technical means, such as medical imaging, surgery and drug therapies, thus taking place a separation between physical ailments and spiritual discomfort. Gardens have become a purely decorative accessory or simply a financial investment to increase the price of a property.

Garden spaces offer opportunities for gradual participation in a number of ecological activities (Lovibond, PF et al 1995: 68). A great benefit of these is social inclusion, identified by Caan (2004: 123) as a way to provide a common identity. Psychologically speaking the benefits of houseplants in an office worker population have been critically analyzed by Bringslimark et al (2009: 239), with recognition of the impact on outcomes in terms of psychophysiological stress.

Horticultural therapy can relieve various forms of dementia. Although the innate attraction of people to nature has not been scientifically proven, the natural environment certainly creates a sense of gratitude, peace and inner peace. Gardening, a relaxing and therapeutic activity in itself, has multiple benefits for people with dementia. Dementia is an incurable disease with a special impact on the health of the individual, on his family and on his acquaintances. Alzheimer's disease is one of the most common forms of dementia and is generally diagnosed after the age of 70. Dementia is manifested by a general decline, especially in memory, communication, organization of daily activities and mental processes. In addition to this mental decline, there are a number of symptoms such as depression and aggression.

People with dementia often suffer from episodes of anxiety and discomfort. In these cases, traditional medicine focuses on prescribing antipsychotics and sedatives. It is also discouraging that antipsychotic drugs prescribed to Alzheimer's patients to treat mental illness associated with the disease increase the risk of premature death, according to a study by British researchers at King's College London, quoted by Reuters. In the last twenty years, however, a new current has emerged in the medical field: doctors are encouraged to intervene actively, preferably by ensuring the psychological comfort of patients, and not by resorting in the first instance to pharmacological methods. Gardening offers such a non-drug approach, as horticultural therapy can be used to improve the quality of life of the elderly population. The benefits of horticultural therapy have been demonstrated in multiple preliminary studies. They reported improved attention, regularization of agitation, reduction of chronic pain and the need for antipsychotics in patients who participated in horticultural activities.

During the interviews, patients showed higher spontaneity, an increased interest in communication and activities, which led to the normalization of family relationships. Other studies have shown that horticultural therapy programs have also led to improved sleep quality and declining verbal agitation in nursing home residents. The interest in alternative treatments to drug treatments is growing in recent years. In this context, horticultural therapy offers a combination of medical treatment and artistic approach that benefits modern society in an ecological way.

Therefore, the following design principles of a therapeutic garden for people with dementia will be considered:

1. Sustainability
2. Accessibility
3. Facilitating socialization
4. Inclusion of activities to stimulate memory and cognitive function
5. Sensory stimulation
6. Safety

List of recommended horticultural activities in the treatment of people with dementia:

- Artistic activities with natural or vegetal materials (painting, drawing, viewing art objects, making objects from seeds, flowers, branches, cones, etc.)
- Collection of vegetal materials and decoration with them
- Feeding the birds and supplying the birdhouses with water and food
- Planting bulbs, sowing or planting seedlings
- Watering, weeding, cutting dry bushes
- Use of gardening tools
- Lawn mowing

Horticultural therapy in the treatment of clinical depression. Depression is a psychological disorder that is manifested by low interest in regular activities, feelings of guilt and lack of self-esteem, sleep and appetite disorders, lack of energy and concentration. Even in its mild forms, depression substantially affects the quality of life of those affected. Traditional treatment for depression frequently includes antidepressants, such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) and tricyclic antidepressants. Other therapeutic methods are Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), psychotherapy, alternative therapies and acupuncture. The effect of horticultural therapy in the treatment of clinical depression was demonstrated by a study conducted in 2010 in Norway. The data needed for the study were collected before, during and after a 12-week horticulture program on 4 farms near Oslo. The aim of the study was to assess changes in the severity of depression, attention span and compulsive thinking. Results showed a significant decrease in depression in 50% of participants ("Beck Depression Inventory"), the score of the Beck Depression Inventory being at the same low level and three months post-study.

Garden activities for the treatment of clinical depression:

- Planting
- Transplantation
- Crop construction, pot planting
- Bird and butterfly watching
- Walking, contemplation
- Picking flowers
- Interaction with herbs to stimulate the senses
- Interaction with plants for texture and color (sensory input)

Horticultural therapy in the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder. Horticultural therapy, as a method of psychological intervention to treat post-traumatic stress syndrome, has been developed in the United States and is a relatively recent treatment alternative. Post-traumatic stress disorder occurs in those people who have witnessed, or have been the victims of, shocking, violent and dangerous

events such as: domestic violence scenes, terrorist attacks, physical or sexual violence, violent accidents, natural disasters. Symptoms can occur even years away from the traumatic event. Some symptoms fade in a few months, but sometimes they become chronic. The person suffering from PTSD avoids places and objects related to the traumatic experience. Victims have strong feelings of guilt, depression, worry. Apathy and memory loss occur. Patients feel pressure all the time, ready to react and have outbursts of anger.

Not all traumatized people end up suffering from PTSD and not all people suffering from PTSD have witnessed violent events. SPT can also occur when a loved one is in danger or when they die unexpectedly or violently. The risk of PTSD increases greatly when the traumatic event is associated with other situations such as lack of social support, loss of job or home, etc. Neuroimaging studies performed on patients with PTSD have shown that several regions of the brain differ structurally and functionally from those of unaffected individuals.

The amygdala, hippocampus and prefrontal ventromedial cortex play a major role in triggering SPT symptoms. The amygdala is the integral center for emotions, emotional behavior (especially fear and anxiety) and motivation. In animal studies, amygdala stimulation results in defensive and aggressive behavior. In people with PTSD, the amygdala is hyper-stimulated. Any sound, image or smell that suggests a resemblance to the traumatic event can trigger panic and fear reactions. A clear indication for SPT is the frequent startle and traumatic memories that reappear instantly. Dysfunction of the prefrontal ventromedial cortex seems to play an essential role in the pathogenesis of emotional diseases. At the same time, the prefrontal ventromedial cortex also has the role of regulating the decision-making process, any damage to this organ resulting in personality changes, impulsive and unthinking decisions. The size of the prefrontal ventromedial cortex is smaller in patients with PTSD.

The hippocampus is mainly associated with memory. The size of the hippocampus in victims of PTSD is substantially reduced, and they respond with an extremely high level of stress when they are subjected to situations similar to those at the origin of the trauma. Therefore, victims of PTSD perceive and respond differently to stress compared to people who do not have this syndrome. SPT changes the chemical balance of the brain, but the good news is that this psychological dysfunction is reversible. The human brain has a remarkable plasticity and regenerative capacity.

What are your current treatment options? Drug treatment for patients exposed to traumatic events comes with important side effects such as sexual dysfunction, insomnia, risk of suicidal behavior, low blood pressure and obesity. Horticultural therapy is an alternative therapy to psychotropic drugs, whose positive effect has been demonstrated by several studies. In the article "Psychological changes caused by the intervention through horticultural therapy on elderly women in areas affected by the earthquake"; "The psychological changes of horticultural therapy intervention for elderly women of earthquake-related areas", the researcher Yuka Kotozaki describes the study conducted on 39 elderly women, residents in the area most affected by the Great Japanese Earthquake. The participants were placed in two groups, one of 20 people (intervention group) and another of 19 people (control group). The intervention group was included in an 8-week horticultural program, and the control

group in an anti-stress therapy program. After the two months, a number of indicators were evaluated:

1. Clinician-Administered PTSD Scale (CAPS)
2. Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS)
3. Posttraumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI-J)
4. WHO Quality of Life Score 26 (WHO-QOL26)

In the intervention group, the indicators improved significantly, along with the level of salivary cortisol. The results were maintained post-study, suggesting that horticultural therapy has a long-term effect on people with PTSD. How contact with plants affects the human mind and brain is still unclear. From studies, researchers now know for sure that horticulture reduces stress, calms nervousness and lowers the level of cortisol, the hormone that plays the main role in the response to stress.

2. Case study: Horticultural therapy within the Neuropsychiatric Recovery and Rehabilitation Center Gâșteni, Bacău County

Gâșteni Neuropsychiatric Recovery and Rehabilitation Center, Bacău County is one of the main mental health centers in the region of Moldova. Among other clinical services, it hosts people with an acute deterioration in their mental health. Within the location, a team of specialists in acute mental health disorders for adults was developed, having available resources available for horticultural therapy, a project for the general psychiatry departments for acute inpatient adults. Here we describe the methods used for horticultural therapy, the results and the challenges.

The current research was designed between September 2020 - May 2021 with purpose to examine the performance and perceptions of horticultural therapy in this facility.

Therapists work to improve the patient's professional performance and develop these skills. One of the basic themes of this model is that people are professional beings and must "do", in the sense that we need to participate in tasks that provide a sense of self-worth. This model analyzes behavior in three key areas: willpower, habit, and performance. The aim is to carry out meaningful and productive activities that can enable patients to develop their horticultural skills and do so within the triple bottom line in terms of economic, social and environmental sustainability.

2.1. Research strategy:

I chose the sociological survey as a method of scientific research. This research technique is quite ambiguous and should be treated with special caution. – it's neither an observation nor an experiment, but it is also an observation (we notice and record some observational facts) and somehow an experiment (we provoke reactions, deliberately, according to a previous recipe).

Survey is a method used to study the behavior of media consumption (reading the medical records, watching the activities, listening to doctors, nurses and beneficiaries). From the two research tools of the sociological survey, the questionnaire and the observation, we chose participatory observation. Namely, I noticed from the inside the activities of interest and I analyzed the activities carried out by the hospital.

Another research method used is: the interview. The interview is one of the most frequently used research methods, applied both in the social sciences, socio-human sciences, and in the development of various professional activities.

In their well-known Treatise on Social Psychology, Roger Daval and collaborators (1967: p. 121) make due distinctions between the interview situation and the psychosociological phenomena mentioned. The interview involves the meeting, but is not to be confused with it. People meet even without the purpose of obtaining information from each other, but simply to see each other, for the pleasure of being together. Even if they talk to each other, it doesn't necessarily mean they exchange information.

Obviously, the interview can be a purpose of the meeting, but the meeting between two or more people often has completely different purposes. There is no interview without a conversation, but not every conversation is an interview. Conversation involves the exchange of information about one topic or another. People who converse frequently change their roles as sender and receiver. The information is not directed in one direction, there is no leader of the discussion, as is the case with the interview. The interview is more than a dialogue - says Roger Daval - because the dialogue is not always aimed at obtaining information. In films, for example, dialogue allows the expression of moods; in philosophy through dialogue it allows the expression of moods; In philosophy, dialogue expresses the ideas, thinking, conception of authors. Socratic dialogues are true philosophical reflections, not the search for information. Neither Socrates nor Plato "interviewed", but set out their philosophical conceptions in their dialogues.

Finally, the interview cannot be confused with the interrogation, although in both cases there is a person who asks questions, who directs the discussion. Obtaining information through interrogation evokes the obligation to answer, the external constraint. On the contrary, the interview presupposes the freedom of expression of the personality, even the joy of people to have their say, to make their opinions public.

The use of the interview as a research technique in the socio-human sciences leads, therefore, to the establishment of the relations between the variables and to the verification, testing of the hypotheses. It differs from ordinary verbal communication by the simple fact that the information is directed by the interviewer. Used in the interview-interview, as well as the sociological questionnaire, being research techniques of the survey method and opinion poll (hence the name "interview survey") - is the method of investigation with the highest frequency of application. In this case, we used the interview method to determine how beneficial horticultural therapy is in the Center from Gâșteni.

2.2. Results of the study:

As a proxy measure of how well the project is received is that it is based on the average number of participants per week. Participation is voluntary.

Recent feedback polls revealed that 83% of respondents rated the group as "useful", "mostly useful" or "extremely useful". Additional benefits informally reported to the therapy team included a reduction in anxiety and restlessness and a sense of general well-being.

Some comments made by patients during the interview about the project are quoted below:

- Leaving the ward and focusing on other activities.
- Perfect practice for when you go home.
- I'm thinking about work and I'm looking forward to getting out of here.
- Helping with the garden and being productive.
- Beautiful flowers, beautiful garden, beautiful day, beautiful people.

The project contributes to a better experience among the people admitted to the center's sections at a certain difficult period in their lives. It has other associated earnings. He strives to be self-sufficient. This includes lower procurement of essential resources, reduced travel times and reduced carbon footprint. The harvested product provides ingredient for cooking sessions, which in turn provides an opportunity to teach basic cooking skills and for the center's kitchen, self-management.

Various challenges were encountered among professionals, who overestimated skills or misinterpreted the set of skills needed to participate, lack of appropriate clothing and footwear and reduced patient motivation, sometimes leading to low participation.

Another limitation is the level of psychiatric disorders in the hospitalized population, sometimes incompatible with participation in horticultural therapy due to factors such as low concentration, reduced executive function, inability to sustain activity for extended periods, reduced strength or endurance, risk of aggression, and, sometimes, intentionally or unintentionally, the unintentional destruction of the business environment.

The project initially started as an attempt by a small group of occupational therapy, which aimed to get out of the ward. Given that horticultural therapy is only one part of the treatment offered in a multitude of intensive interventions available to a hospitalized patient, it becomes difficult to measure the particularity of the impact of this specific intervention. Finally, time and time constraints can also affect the ability to perform the required tasks.

3. Case study conclusions:

Leck et al (2015: p. 231) analyzed the impact on "care farms" and found that welfare measures were positively influenced by participation in them, with farm-mediated health benefits, the environment and social interactions becoming increasingly important. the more important the participants spent more time participating in the care farm.

There is additional evidence to suggest that several therapeutic goals, such as levels of interaction and self-esteem, can be achieved through gardening activities (Rappe et al., 2008: p. 85). They can play a positive role in the long-term management of mental health, with "green" interventions increasingly recognized in promoting well-being and increasing the quality of life (Webber et al., 2015: p. 325).

Different ways for horticulture:

- plant in your room
- gardening (individually or in groups)
- on-site garden
- voluntary community gardening
- paid gardening.

Horticultural groups have a positive impact on the care provided and contribute to the achievement of good professional and educational results. Patients

can work hard and get a more stable approach. Patients report this and the project helps and supports wider hospitalization as a community and describes the pride and sense of accomplishment when returning from these groups. Significant and intentional goals are beneficial to all involved, although doing things just for their pleasure is often an underestimated gain. Social interaction takes place in all ways - with colleagues or members of the public. This therapy helps to combat social isolation and increase social inclusion, contributing to the recovery of the individual and increasing the quality of life of the elderly.

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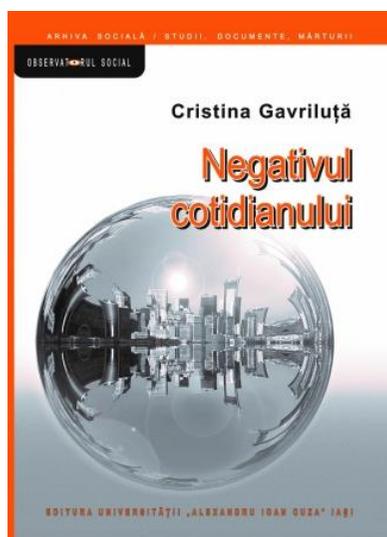
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BOOK REVIEW: Cristina Gavriluță (2017). *Negativul cotidianului*. [engl: *The Negative of everyday life*]. Iasi: „A.I.Cuza” University Press

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The book “Negativul cotidianului” [engl: *The Negative of everyday life*] is made up of 4 chapters, entitled: *Epistemological benchmarks in the research of the social; Beyond the air wall. Mentalities and cultural references in social life; The sacred and its social expressions; The body in the register of normality and deviance*. As the author herself says, the book offers a balance between didactic and scientific activities which offers readers extremely topical, even “hot” subjects, chosen in an inspired, inciting and undoubtedly topical way, such as that terrorism, globalization, the construction and reconstruction of identity, trafficking in human beings, divination and magico-religious rituals, intended for the general public, the educated public, and specialists interested in in-depth knowledge and qualitative of the social, “beyond figures and appearances”.

In the context of understanding the social, says the author, facts are important, but they do not represent everything, and in fact the negative, or “what is not seen in this world, is the key to understanding. deep of reality”. “This negative can be camouflaged by context, others, symbols, beliefs”, being “the subtle, invisible, but deeply real dimension of our existence”, in which case “marginal, obscure, insignificant, seemingly devoid of social facts of statistical relevance, become important”, hiding “the explanatory seeds of our actions, gestures, behaviours and choices”, thus discovering “fears, fears, passions, beliefs, symbols of connections hidden in the social fabric” which cannot be “simply included in statistics and indicators, even though each of us lives in different and strange ways”.

The book "Negativul cotidianului" [engl: *The Negative of everyday life*] represents qualitative research of a hermeneutical nature of interest to specialists "who wish to savor more subtle meanings and more subtle meanings of existence", representing at the same time "a plea for a socio- anthropological", at the level of which "the social data are intimately linked to the hermeneutics of mentalities", the approach not being easy at all. Such an approach can also change the solutions proposed for the various social challenges, because that "going beyond what is visible and manifested in everyday life can lead to a deeper understanding of the world in which we live".

The first chapter, entitled "*Epistemological landmarks in the research of the social*", presents the way in which a sociologist can approach reality to penetrate its essence, because the causal understanding of the phenomena is not sometimes sufficient, thus that the modality in which the social reality can be formed and what is significant in the understanding of the social, by presenting the sequences of the world which camouflage the deep understandings of the social life, and what constitutes the most appropriate "methodological formula" in a sociological approach.

The author promotes through the book "Negativul cotidianului" [engl: *The Negative of everyday life*], an "interdisciplinary perspective of social research", insisting on the possibility of modeling social reality, on "the need for a hermeneutics of the social, going as far as its negative". The research method is mainly qualitative, the author's studies being based on: introductory study, observation and storytelling.

The second chapter of the book, titled "*Beyond the Air Wall. Mentalities and cultural references in social life*", places the social spirit in the negative of everyday life and the themes that constitute the pillars of this approach are represented by: "Romanian capitalism", "tradition and social modernity", "the global world in image and imagination", all of these showing the fact that "behind certain extremely important social phenomena there are data of a mental nature", ethnological and anthropological research demonstrating "the existence of these constants in social life", which "control social reality in an invisible and subtle way, beyond reasoning, rules, standards", and which are "like a wall of invisible air that we often hit".

The third chapter, entitled "*The sacred and its social expressions*", shows the fact that "in the contemporary world, the sacred remains an important variable, despite an accelerated process towards a desacralized and Californized culture", the problem of tolerance and the knowledge of the Other becoming of maximum interest in the conditions of the different forms of "terrorism" which are manifested in the current world, because terrorism, the phenomenon of globalization and social practices in the unconventional field, such that magico-religious rituals and superstitions, demonstrate the fact that in a secular world, there is always a series of raw data which can explain social behaviour and which is placed by some authors in the "sacred zone" and by others "in that of archetypes". In the classic view of Vilfredo Pareto, as the author herself points out, there are "residues of the sphere of non-logicity", this "nucleus of residues" being represented by "a series of archetypal images. primordial which run in time, this mechanism of regeneration being continuous and unlimited", certain residues being able "to transform themselves into religious systems and doctrines", others remaining "of simple superstitions", and others "probably that they do not exist and have no chance to immerse themselves in time and history".

The fourth chapter, entitled "*The body in the register of normality and deviance*", describes "a series of social phenomena through the prism of bodily practices, images

and social representations of the body". The author, on the model of Michel Foucault, reveals the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings "as a form of domination and submission of the body", using a series of strategies and practices that "shape their representations but also their relation with the body", "a clear mark of discovery and real experience of the victim's condition. The body can also be a real repository of deviant and delinquent behaviour". In the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings, the manifestations of the body can be qualified, in the manner of Mauss, as a true total social phenomenon, and "the correct reading of the body in such situations, can generate new information and solutions in the management and control of the phenomenon of trafficking".

Ph.D. Professor Cristina Gavriluță, through her book "Negativul cotidianului" [engl: *The Negative of everyday life*], proposes a "hermeneutics of the everyday life", considered as a "hermeneutics of the negative of social life" which can also be identified in "apparently minor, insignificant, marginal social facts and phenomena or outdated". We can conclude with the author's idea, who states: "Knowledge of the social is always a challenge and the complexity of life can be deciphered precisely by accessing its less visible areas".