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Political Borders Are Not Natural Orders – The COVID-19 Pandemic in Frankfurt on the Main and Its Refugees

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Abstract

The overall aim of this paper will be to stick to the previous researchers to get valid and impartial data from the most international city of Germany: Frankfurt on the Main. However, this research paper will try to provide answers by comparing war situations (object) where curfews are at daily basis impact on lives of people, who become gradually refugees (subject). In the recent years many refugees found their way to the global city of Frankfurt and its region of Rhine-Main. In these days if talking about the situation of the visible shutdown, lockdown and the strictly forbidden laws for an overall betterment of life, refugees have a tendency to explain to the native people about their crisis-laden past: "Resilience for Survival". Their recent past in the war-torn countries of Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq in West-Asia, Libya in Africa or the many wars in the Balkans in the 1990s in Europe, are a case in point. Given that as a matter of fact, when individuals are leading conversations about the outbreak to the recent lockdown, especially, fugitives try to explain to the ordinary dweller of Frankfurt through what life-threatening circumstances they experienced. This described social encounter despite the imposed social distancing is the proof how our glocalized planet (global and local) effects the everyday life and every human being lives in each and every corner of the confined nation-states.

Keywords: transnationality, refugees, migration, everyday life, Frankfurt on the Main

1. Introduction

The city of Frankfurt on the Main is rooted in the Rhine-Main area. It is economically or historically not only one of the most affluent regions of Germany, but it is also embedded at the center of Europe. Frankfurt is by far the most international city of Germany. In a survey Frankfurt could prove to be a "global city", having a "super diversity" and being totally "transnational" (Vertovec, 2013). This is a proof why Frankfurt is chosen by many global actors not only in the prominent domain of finance and money as a hub. One important fact to point out is the skyline of Frankfurt and one of its dominant founders. The skyline of Frankfurt was much internationalized in the mid-1970s by an Iranian migrant, called Ali Selmi. He established his firm shortly after the Second World War. Frankfurt as a hub for finance and trade (like the Frankfurt stock exchange and trade fairs) has its roots in the medieval time period (Holtfrerich, 1999). In addition, it was chosen for example in the recent years and decades by Chinese banks, Korean car companies and Indian IT-entrepreneurs as one of their explicit global bases. This is the one and only face ordinary people might know about this city. The other face of Frankfurt will be explored on grounds of the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak in this article, when it comes to the status of refugees, especially from Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq.

For that reason, Frankfurt is directing its refugees through a division of tasks: accommodation, integration and public (Stadt Frankfurt am Main, 2020a). Each of these three categories has subdivisions that guides a refugee precisely through a process of search, finding and monitoring by the municipality staff as well as volunteers if necessary.

In intellectual terms Frankfurt belongs to the networking of “City of Refuge” (ICORN, 2006). Since 1997 under the supervision of the municipality threatened writers are invited to live with a scholarship for two years in the city of Frankfurt. Additionally, Frankfurt is the city of books, whose annual book fair is the biggest of its genre in Germany and in Europe. The Frankfurt Institute for Social Research (Frankfurt School) is going to turn a century, established in 1923 by Felix Weil (Wiggershaus, 2008). In this eminent institution masterminds such as Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, Walter Benjamin and Juergen Habermas were of the first in the 20th century to explore about the society through the lens of Marx thoughts and others. Another figure is Anne Frank, who is often mistakenly perceived as Dutch. She was born and raised during her shirt lifetime in Frankfurt, but migrated due to the Nazi threat with her parents after some years to the Netherlands (Jüdische Orte in Frankfurt am Main, 2011). Historically, in the 19th century the celebrity of German poets, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, was born in Frankfurt and spent a great part of his lifetime in the city. Today, the biggest University of Frankfurt, Goethe-University, carries his name. This city is not only in the heart of the Rhine-Main region, the Federal Republic of Germany and the European continent, it had since the medieval period the status of an imperial free city (Historisches Museum Frankfurt, 2020).

Despite all this beyond belief facts about Frankfurt, this city suffered in the 19th century from the cholera pandemic narrated by the “Corona-Special Virtual Tour” (Setzepfandt, 2020): As late as the year of 1830 the cholera disease infection took the life of many people in Frankfurt, so the solution was cremation.

Later on, after the French Revolution, Frankfurt gained again its status as a free city. Subsequently, it became in 1848-49 the seat of the first German parliament at St. Paul’s Church. In 1866 Frankfurt had been annexed by the Prussians from Berlin that marked the loss of its political independence. After the Second World War in the 20th century, it was foreseen to recuperate Frankfurt "again" the German seat of decision makers. Then, Bonn became by four votes the political capital until the fall of the Berlin wall (Deutscher Bundestag, 2014). Shortly after the Second World War, it was intended that the present-day headquarter of the Hessian broadcasting corporation should become the Federal Parliament of Germany.

Critically, another fact about the city is the negative domestic reputation of Frankfurt. As the fifth major city of Germany it has the most important national airport, Germany's and even Europe's historical largest railway station in the new-renaissance style, and the A5 as one of the most important Germany highway, to provide references about few leading points. On international level, Frankfurt is the center for economy, finance and trade: Each criminal act as counted, passes its way through the Frankfurt police, then as a consequence to the public prosecution department and finally to the Frankfurt court of justice. These additional factors are the primary causes for the one and single reason of the negative collected statistics, when it comes to the status of Frankfurt being the most criminal city in Germany (Polizeiliche Kriminalstatistik, 2018).

The "Homo Migrant" is the stereotype of human being, who is populating, influencing, and thus enriching Frankfurt, as a repeated center in each and every imagineable field.

2. Methodology

The data gathered for this research is based on qualitative research methods. For this purpose, the researcher employed an in-depth interview guide and observation technique to gather research data. The sample included 28 refugees aged between 18-55 years from Afghanistan, Syria, and Iraq. In general terms Frankfurt has according to its own municipality as of March 2020, 34% Afghan, 16% Syrian and 5% Iraqi refugees out of 4.467 refugees of whom two third are male and one third female (Stadt Frankfurt am Main, 2020b). For this study they were selected through verified asking concerning differences in their mother tongues, ethnic and city belongings, and life experience in Frankfurt. Researcher sustained a gender balance in the sample size of this research. Therefore, in this observation, 18 male and 11 female respondents were met at different public spaces. Not a single person of the target respondents was known before. The researcher maintained a certain trust level with the respondents without any difficulty and convinced them to do a detailed interview. However, participants did talk much about many aspects of their lives in such gatherings to some extent, because of the abruptly lockdown process. The data collection was carried out through IDIs at public spaces in the neighborhood of the researcher in Frankfurt. For this research, the concerned data was collected during the time of the lockdown in Frankfurt from mid-March 2020 to the mid-April 2020.

3. Objectives

1. To explore the factors which are responsible for the resilient habits of the refugees in Frankfurt in times of Covid-19 pandemic.
2. To understand the transnational resilience in and outside the fugitive community, which influences their everyday life and shapes their identity.

4. Discussion and Analysis

The contemporary shutdown process was done in Frankfurt like in many other cities worldwide, as well. It was announced by the media, then the public reacted, and eventually the society has to follow orders of the imposed lockdown in general and social distancing in public space in particular.

In the first days in March 2020 people of all walks of life had not enough conscience about the scale of the Covid-19 pandemic and its severe hygienic impacts. By and large, people began to stockpile noodles and toilet paper. So, things changed rapidly not only by health measures, but by social-habitual, economical-income, or just the fear of lacking enough food in groceries. All these caused panic behavior for the individuals, families, and couples (Harari, 2020). Many domestic employees and foreign expats left Frankfurt to go back to their native home.

In fact, the entire process of everyday life was power cut. Within these limits, it was not much easy to talk to people. But, refugees in the neighborhood, streets, and groceries and in public spaces stood quite open without or let us say a smaller amount of panic. Those refugees from Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq showed not much panic fear by social distancing measures by standing in a queue to maintain a distance of 1.5 meters between each other. Or else, if one customer gazed on a product a refugee offered the man to take it at first, and often stated the two English words of "no problem" with a smile.

By the passage of time, it was quite obvious the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak caused death tolls in each and every country at large scale. A 27 year old Syrian refugee was concerned: "Sometimes I feel it was a mistake to migrate to Europe. With this current infectious diseases, the labor market, and housing problems I acutely want to get rid of this situation as soon as possible."

Media Reports

The German media was from the beginning on full of reports from experts such as the local medical advisors, the three principal virologists and the two German national research institutes. In all news outlets the topic of the hour was Covid-19 pandemic.

The public space played, as reported, a key role on daily basis in Frankfurt. Many young people could not attend gyms, schools, universities or workplaces. The solution was to find third ways to match with a new everyday life. The regional and local media of Hesse covered many streams of life to showcase under what circumstances ordinary people – loneliness, jobless, aged, single parents – do really suffer without sufficient protection (Hessenschau, 2020). For the short time period, politicians pledged to provide financial aid to vulnerable employees, households, and small shop owners.

In the meantime, it was reported for example in Greece that refugees from war-torn countries intend to travel to Western Europe, targeting as first destination Germany. In advance, the conscience about the Covid-19 pandemic raised at large scale among the native dwellers. In Frankfurt, as case in point, many refugees were mistreated at the Turkish-Greece frontier. After a while, the amount of deaths raised due to Covid-19 pandemic infectious pace according to the principal public health institute in Germany (Robert Koch Institut, 2020). The Robert Koch Institute provided data from the third of March 2020 about diagnostic, hygiene and control of Covid-19 pandemic outbreak. As a result, the plight of the refugees at the eastern frontiers small continent of Europe was fully forgotten.

In Frankfurt, refugees have contacted their families, where they had in addition to the media coverage firsthand information about their home countries, cities, and the unending armed conflicts or wars. In this case a 51 year old woman from Iraq voiced: "In my age migration makes really not much sense. As you can imagine, I let my life behind me, came to here, only for the sake of autonomy, and to secure the future of my children."

Refugees as Survival Actors

In the year of 2015, as the German chancellor Angela Merkel opened the doors for refugees to find a proper shelter in Germany, many observers were critical if this deliberate act was the right approach to receive up to one million predominantly male refugees from war-torn countries (Katz, Noring, & Garrelts, 2016). It was not clear by the very arrival of the refugees at that time with what kind of infectious diseases, like scabies and pediculosis, these ones will arrive in Germany (Alberer, Malinowski, Sanftenberg, & Schelling, 2018).

However, in the time after Merkel was internationally valued as someone who practiced good will by her applied policies. At national level the German society was practicing a unique welcoming culture as a gesture by truthful words and deeds. After the incident of Cologne at New Year's Eve 2016 the hospitable frame of mind threatened to turn worse. The so-called celebrated welcoming culture was put in question. Especially, many male asylum seekers targeted Germany as final destiny, what caused hostile sentiments among Germany's news outlets and mass media (Georgiou, Zaborowski, 2017).

Within the years, especially in times of Covid-19 pandemic the daily survival as resilience by measures of hygiene practices are the most important precautions. In exactly this point, the lots of male refugees who came to Frankfurt are visible for their habits in public spaces. Hence, in many of participant observations since the outbreak of the virus refugees' showcase in conversations that they are used to with daily curfews due to armed conflicts in their native countries. A 19 year old Afghan lamented: "Look, I was born in Iran, stemming from Central Afghanistan, my face features are betraying myself by only a single second about my origin. My East Asian appearance betrayed myself as a foreigner, the Iranian government through their thugs were about to intimidate myself every day. My parents fled in the late 1990s from the Taliban to Iran. In Iran, which I consider still as my home, I was beaten as a street vendor in public, then I was not allowed to participate in public school. Please, answer my humble question: Do you really think I fear this virus?"

This source of dread interconnects with shortcomings of nutrition or education. In the same vein, the concept of identity is much touched: whether the nation, religion, patriarchy, nor the tribe are safeguards. As of now, refugees tend to explain the cause and reason of their escape from war zones to that of freedom.

Before the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic wars, conflicts and refugees were perceived as a phenomenon from far away. Within this short period of time, refugees are not more or less valued as before by the domestic German welcoming culture, but the event of the current virus from Wuhan in China triggered being more sophisticated by glocalized (global and local) crisis: That is to say, local diseases in Asia impacts each and every socioeconomic life at wide-ranging global level.

Especially, in Frankfurt the language changed in social media. The discursive proverb of "social distancing" was replaced in these virtual public discussions by "physical distancing" and "social solidarity" was written in red letters. Particularly, these headings have to signify the importance of perhaps first-hand mores and values in times of crisis. In each street of every neighborhood the Frankfurt residents were accumulating aid for elder and vulnerable persons. A 30 year old male refugee from Syria indicated: "This social or physical distancing, call it as you like, is sophisticated. Nobody has beaten you up to be in line with these new habits to avoid contagion. Here is the matter of fact, the German police forces are talking to you in a friendly, calm and peaceful way, while in my home country a policeman alone is the symbol of menace."

Undeniably, daily life changed in many ways. If the concern of an ordinary person was about his or her lifestyle, work and gym, the present Covid-19 pandemic was about continued existence procedures. The short news on the smart phones were expressing about the death records in Frankfurt, Rhine-Main region, Germany, Europe and the entire planet earth. There was no way out to be ignorant about the sharp line between today's life and tomorrow's after life.

Re-opening as Resilience

After the shutdown procedure from the kickoff of the spring until mid-April 2020 the re-opening is a bargain. At first, the economy of a city like Frankfurt was hit relentlessly due to the thousands of retailers who lost their customers (Wirtschaftsförderung Frankfurt, 2020). Short after, a large number of employees lost their income sources (Hessenschau, 2020b). The short-term ultimate solution from responsible decision makers in politics was, if an employee lost livelihood, to do immediate work (German: Kurzarbeit). For many observers as medical experts a re-opening was to be done carefully by monitoring agencies. The Frankfurt International Airport, the stock market, the fair and many other global acting businesses were to restart by an hourly loss of millions of Euros.

It came worse as president Trump of the USA with his "America First" populist rhetoric decided amidst a life-threatening virus not to fund anymore the World Health Organization like the US did it before (The White House, 2020). The German public opinion was even before the Corona crisis not much benign to the US leadership, its position vis-à-vis China, and its way to overcome the Comid-19 pandemic (Barkin, 2020). The epicenter of the outbreak changed within few weeks from China in Asia to New York in the USA. Earlier, it was transmitted from Asia to Europe, subsequently to Africa, which was hit rigorously by the outbreak of the virus.

Still, the ordinary refugee is not much touched by the great discourses in Frankfurt. There is no scientific investigation about refugees in Frankfurt how they would obey the rules, if experiencing or re-experiencing situations of crisis without arms. But, one 50 year old Iraqi refugee is expressing: "Iraq is a rich country by natural resources. This is not something new to hear, but for all that, since my adolescent life I have experienced how to survive, being more attentive about my surroundings, sharing everything I had in and out of my being."

Resilience for survival is not only a matter of fact, but in the same time it is how to act properly to safe on state level employments, to preserve socio-economic freedom, and to improve perhaps the labor state of affairs. Despite the fact that Covid-19 pandemic outbreak was not taken seriously by some states at the beginning of the year 2020. Critically evaluated, it is time to reshape a new order for the glocalized economy, which should not be decided exclusively between the two major world leaders of China and the USA (Hamideh, 2018).

Gradually, public life is guaranteed throughout Germany by the expertise of virologists, if the physical and social distancing are going to be maintained. Once more, it is important to carry masks in public transportations, groceries and institutions for the simple reason not to spread individual breath.

For an ordinary refugee, who lives in a zone of freedom similar to in Frankfurt, it is very important to achieve legal documents, having an appropriate shelter or learning the native German language. Many male single refugees spent the vast part of their income for shared housing, which is in the case of Frankfurt around €710 (Bathke, 2019). Yet again, it is surprising in the eyes of a refugee that in times of a virus disease outbreak Frankfurt as a city has such a largely control, which is in comparison to their experience not violent, but considerably educative and preventive. In this regard a 45 year old male Afghan shares the opinion: "Frankfurt as a city is more competent than my entire country. The preventive actions taken to this point by the municipality to anticipate the appropriate reactions in these days and weeks are mind blowing. In Kabul I didn't know, if I will survive the day healthy by leaving home."

A re-opening in Frankfurt with his largest international airport, its national central railway station, the internationally orientated banks, just to remark few essential daily belongings of this "alpha global city", is too much contested (Lohde-Reiff, 2003).

Foresight and Hindsight

If resilience is the bottom line of the hour of Covid-19 pandemic by means of migration to carry on just life, so one should examine more the life of an average refugee to gain insights. In general, the foresight in war zones is to save the own and family's life. In particular, the hindsight is not to participate in warfare, or avoiding the choice being a member of one of the participant groups in an armed conflict. The domestic German welcome culture of the year 2015 high-raised the expectations of the average refugee on the grounds of accommodation, regular income source, and a better life: But, since then, refugees and asylum seekers live under nearly the same circumstances (Neis, Meier, & Furukawazono, 2018).

Since Covid-19 pandemic outbreak the entire society is somehow getting more post-heroic: People have a tendency to be more anxious. If before the virus a face was marked by sorrow, because the everyday life was against the low income, which resonates simply too many other factors for leading a suitable life. At this time, the yesterday's grief and despair is not getting into oblivion. But then again, this virus has become a struggle between life and death. As said by a 28 year old Syrian refugee: "I might be observing many aspects of life here in the West, which are not much clear to my own since my arrival of the year 2015 in Frankfurt. But, I do not come across the reason of the daily pressures of the native people. What is honestly the reason of their dissatisfaction? Has it something to do, excuse me for expressing this, that the state is paying low salaries and takes the great part of the average income for taxes?"

Therefore, the significance of solidarity to the next person converted to a virtue. As a consequence, helping the weak and aged people is even promulgated by the government, what a citizen is able to read in buildings, streets, and public transportation in Frankfurt. Similarly, other values like tolerance, acknowledgement for the so-called system relevant employees like scientists, medical doctors, nurses, sanitation workers, and cashiers at groceries are the daily topics on the surface of public discourses (Lindhoff, 2020). In a nutshell, the societal conscience for resilience to survive was followed as a task force at daily basis. The foresight was at the same time the hindsight, and the opposite way around.

Refugee as Approver

A refugee in Frankfurt might be seen as an approver. When talking about Covid-19 pandemic, which is in liaison with life and death, the individual refugee, who came to here, epitomizes by his or her will to take the undetermined burden to migrate. In the current situation the permission for the legal status is getting difficult if a foreigner seeks shelter as a refugee and he or she is not from the European Union.

Not later than this outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic the habit of stockpiling dominated the societal media debate in Germany about people's motives of panic-buying toilet tissue, germicide, and noodles. This is the embodiment of a certain stereotype of syncope of the vast majority of Germany.

But for all that, the refugee is always in permanent danger being deported back, as it was reported by media. In this sense a 37 year old female Syrian is complaining: "We as refugees are living in a trauma and post-trauma condition. Whether we know if we are staying here, we are allowed to, or we should re-migrate to Syria. In spite of this, why I should be afraid to die. Do you or the people in Frankfurt fear to die?"

Conclusion

In Germany's neighboring country France, the French intellectual radio "France Culture" dedicated a whole series of radio broadcast to "Coronavirus, Une Conversation Mondiale" (English: Corona Virus, A Global Conversation) (France Culture, 2020): Once more, the legendary stroke of genius of Albert Camus "La Peste" (English: The Plague) was debated in this radio station as the historical legacy of 1947. As Germany's western neighbor, in times or "opportunities of crisis" France (44%) was evaluated by "a representative survey on German attitudes to foreign policy" as the most important partner for Germany, while the USA (10%), China (6%) and Russia (4%) got not in sum half of the votes in comparison to France (Körber Stiftung, 2020). The new shape of the world seems to include one more important factor after Covid-19 pandemic, which is on the one hand the "politization of health issues", and on the other the "sanitarization of politics".

This Covid-19 pandemic was the watershed at glocalized platform without any slight announcement. The virtual offline world transcended to the real life, whereas the daily vibrant life was because of the lockdown to be for a time alone. Forced seclusion from the public space at home was the solution to the Frankfurt citizen.

The refugees in this study were concerned, but not as that much as expected. The common attitude and stance were that the interviewed refugees compared their current situation in Frankfurt with their home countries: The zone of freedom (Frankfurt) vs. the zone of armed conflicts. Attention should be paid to the cast that Frankfurt is not an ordinary city, which all of the interviewees recognized. Principally, the transcultural distinctive side of Frankfurt at daily basis was pointed out (Alam, 2019).

In the public sphere of influence of the German newspaper "Die Zeit" the eminent 90 years old Juergen Habermas was discussing in a conversation with the professor for legal theories Klaus Guenther about the significance of human dignity, its protection and the basic limits of rights in the German constitution (Habermas, Guenther, 2020). More or less, both argued that even basic rights are not infinite.

To recommend only one point: There is no in-depth long-running scientific investigation about refugees in Frankfurt to gain more knowledge how they would obey the rules, if experiencing or re-experiencing situations of crisis without arms. It is necessary to investigate more on refugees with a preemptive outlook who belong to the more vulnerable social groups.

On a final note, the Covid-19 pandemic infectious disease prompted in many fields to a certain extent legal, political, societal, individual, gender, economical and digital debates through the lens of health.

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Spiritual Resilience and Transactional Analysis Model – Holistic Paradigm for Facing a Global Crisis

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Abstract

Faced with the challenge of Covid pandemic, the world will change its existence forever. In such circumstances of the common global crisis, humanity will form new narratives between suffering and survival. From the positioning to this experience, it will depend on whether it will remain a trauma or the deepest inner resources will be activated by building "new personal relationships" on a transpersonal level, and by forming a new alliance, versus the current alienation from nature and the planet. Spiritual resilience is the dimension of the overall mental framework, besides the cognitive, emotional and neurobiological one. This paper postulates the preventive, co-creative, and salutogenic capacity of this essential potential of one's spiritual self even in the most painful and stressful life events. It offers the models based on Christian psychotherapy and Transactional analysis in re-emerging one's inner power in forming adaptive coping mechanism and well-being. Within the TA we operate with the classical approach and two dimensions: intrapersonal and interpersonal and in the domain of spiritual TA- transcedental level regarding the cor self. Christian psychotherapy offers the union of the Holy Eucharist as a pastoral dimension of unity and the individual ascetic discipline through the FCP Method. Expanding the frame of reference – from the narrow anthropocentric to the wider and unlimited theocentric model – such a holistic approach can be successfully applied to all organized forms: family, organizations, and global community, thus creating a strong, aware, and compassionate society.

Keywords: spiritual resilience, transactional analysis, global crisis, adaptive coping, Holy Eucharist

Introduction

This paper is dedicated to all my colleagues, health professionals, volunteers and professional bodies who bravely and with love give their efforts and contribution in dealing with the Covid pandemic.

To Those who have passed into Eternity may rest in Peace!

Faced with the challenge of Covid pandemic, the world will change its existence forever. In such circumstances of the common global crisis, humanity will form new narratives between suffering and survival.

From the positioning to this experience it will depend on whether it will remain a trauma or the deepest inner resources will be activated by building "new personal relationships" on a transpersonal level (Ilievski, 2016) and by forming a new alliance, versus the current alienation from nature and the planet "ecological self" (Barrow & Marshall, 2020).

In such life-threatening circumstances, in addition to the readiness and proactive behavior of each individual in dealing with the consequences, we especially want to emphasize the importance of the deepest personal potentials arising from the spiritual layer of the person determined in its creation but suppressed to oblivion by modern living trends.

The spiritual aspect in general and the spiritual resilience in particular are powerful resources that can enable the survival, existence and reshaping of the existence of humanity even in conditions of bio-psycho-social stress.

The Breaking Point – Crisis and Survival

When we talk about crisis as a phenomenon, it is most often associated with negative events that result in a negative individual, collective and social impact. In the field of psychology, among the many definitions we have chosen the following, "Crisis is a perception or experience of an event or situation as an intolerable difficulty that exceeds the person's current resources and coping mechanisms" (James & Gilliland, 2001). The etymological source of the word, according to the ancient, original languages, reflects its higher and essential meaning. We want to point out the Greek κρίσις – krisis – event, issue, κρίσιν σχεῖν – to be decided (George & Scott, 1985), and especially the Chinese word, which is composed of two characters "danger" and "opportunity". With this, we are already approaching a new point of view of the crisis as "a testing time" for making new decisions and a source of opportunities. Triggering the complex somato-psychological condition in which a person finds himself during it, only penetrating into the deepest layers of his personality can give him hope and strength to deal with difficult circumstances and catastrophic consequences.

According to the famous creator of Logotherapy, Viktor Frankl, who have survived in the most horrible conditions of a concentration camp, "We all said to each other in camp," he writes, "that there could be no earthly happiness which could compensate for all we had suffered." But it was not the hope of happiness that "gave us courage," he writes. It was the "will to meaning" that looked to the future, not to the past (Frankl, 1946).

Every crisis is a breaking point and a new restructuring of life and our position in it.

Spiritual Resilience

Resilience in modern science is most often associated with the psychological capacities of man. This is why the term *psychological resilience* is most often described as "the ability to mentally or emotionally cope with a crisis or to return to pre-crisis status quickly" (De Terte & Stephens, 2014). Building this capacity requires "to be prepared for challenges, crises, and emergencies" (Bergman, 2019).

"Although earlier in the field of psychology, spirituality was largely ignored but resilience research has identifed religion and spirituality as factors of resilience" (Werner, 1984).

Spiritual resilience is contemporary paradigm defined as "the ability to sustain one's sense of self and purpose through a set of beliefs, principles, or values while encountering adversity, stress, and trauma by using internal and external spiritual resources" (Manning et al., 2019).

Spiritual resilience is the dimension of the overall mental framework, besides the cognitive, emotional and neurobiological one. This paper postulates the preventive, co-creative, and salutogenic capacity of this essential potential of one's spiritual self even in the most painful and stressful life events.

Through her personality re-emerges one's inner power in forming adaptive coping mechanism and well-being.

Transactional Analysis Model on Spirituality

From the very beginning of his work and the creation of the theory of personality and psychotherapeutic modality, Transactional Analysis, the founder Eric Berne pointed to the original religious concepts that served as the basis and inspiration for the various schools of psychotherapy.

Berne's "ancient religious stories" are recommended as prototypes in decoding the complexity of spirituality and religion in human life and psychopathologies. Also, he made his reflections on the problem of "man's essence or Self" (Berne, 1972, p. 438).

Classical Transactional analysis describes the two axes of human existence: intrapersonal and interpersonal in relation with oneself and on the other hand with the world and the others. This operational model is presented trough the concept of ego states. An ego-state, Berne defines "as a consistent pattern of feeling and experience directly related to a corresponding consistent pattern of behavior" (Berne, 1961).

The axis of transpersonal, as a basis for further development of spiritual transactional analysis, is recognized in the work of transactional analyst Muriel James in the early eighties. It sets the concept of "inner core" as a vehicle for the universal and spiritual self (James, 1981). Thus, the spiritual self became a new reality beyond the rational postulates.

Autonomy and its components – awareness, spontaneity, and intimacy as the highest and ultimate goal in the process of psychological growth and development according to Bern, in their work, Kandathil & Kandathil (1997) present it as "open door to spirituality" in an attempt to discover the spiritual dimension in addition to the psychological.

The Perspective of Christian Psychotherapy

Spiritual resilience is the capacity of the spiritually built person, through new personal relationships, with God and the spiritual father, which implies a level of awareness and inner state of spiritual self with hope and faith in the higher providence of Divine for us, life and the world in general (Ilievska & Ilievski, 2020).

The resilience of the spiritually built person arises primarily as a result of his personal and intimate relationship with God as an inner dimension and from the external level of relationship with the spiritual father, participation in the Holy Eucharist and love communion with church members as a visible reflection of sacred mysteries.

In the process of building spiritual resilience, there are two perspectives, individual and collective, through living as an active member of the Church, and thus two dimensions of spiritual existence (Ilievska, 2020):

– Mystical through the ascethical discipline of FCP method (Ilievski & Ilievska, 2018) in hesychia "silence of the mind" (Ilievski, 2011);

– Ecclesiastical (with transformed and loving action in the social community).

From this arises the connection and intertwining of spiritual resilience with the category of spiritual identity. "It implies the realization of two aspects, the inner – as a process of metanoia, transformation of the energy of the mind through the ascetic struggle of the mind-and-heart prayer, and outer – transformed acting of the person into the world" (Ilievska, 2020).

Spiritual identity is the basis from which the other components in the domain of human spirituality derive, namely, "Christian identity, on a personal level, is formed in one's spiritual heart through an ascetic-hesychastic struggle, in building personal union with God and — through God – with one's fellowmen. This is the realization of the Christian identity from the aspect of Orthodox Christianity" (Ilievski & Ilievska, 2020).

Meta-Narratives – Writing Better Stories for Ourselves

Expanding the frame of reference – from the narrow anthropocentric to the wider and unlimited theocentric model – such a holistic approach can be successfully applied to all organized forms: family, organizations, and global community, thus creating a strong, aware, and compassionate society.

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The Global Economic Impact of Terrorism

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Abstract

In general, when analyzing the costs of armed conflict, the literature most often relates to civil wars or interstate conflicts. The moment of September 11, 2001 marked the beginning of a new concern in the economy, namely the economic cost of terrorism. Terrorism is a form of conflict in which acts of violence are directed at non-combatants or civilians who are usually unrelated to the political target of the group that committed it. This article analyzes existing data on the costs of terrorist acts that are committed by non-state parties or subnational groups. In this article, we will also look at the impact that terrorism has on the world economy (including both developed and underdeveloped states). We will find that although it has a significant impact on the global economy, the most devastating effects of violence are felt by underdeveloped economies whose poverty and inequality do not allow for a rapid and sustained response to terrorism.

Keywords: terrorism, economy, cost, impact, violence

1.Introduction

It is a well-known fact that terrorism as a phenomenon, through its destructive effects, harms the quality of individual life, having repercussions on the growth and economic development of the attacked state. In recent years, terrorism is perceived as one of the greatest threats to the Western world, with globalization giving terrorist groups access to more and more countries. Also, the fact that state borders are much easier to cross has made the threat from terrorist groups a general one, and the attacks to be on the rise. In recent years, a number of major terrorist attacks in EU Member States have put the fight against domestic and international terrorism at the top of the European counter-terrorism agenda. A very important aspect is that the attacks took place not only in European capitals but also in peripheral territories, belonging to EU Member States. According to data provided by Global Terrorism (2017), 2016 was the most violent year for Europe: 630 terrorist attacks took place, resulting in 826 victims. For terrorists, the most targeted countries in the European Union are France, Spain, the United Kingdom and Germany. However, if we refer to the whole of Europe, Turkey has experienced most of the attacks, which indicates that the European Union is still a relatively safe place.

From an economic point of view, terrorist incidents impose high costs on the persons and countries attacked, in the literature many authors claiming that the negative effects of terrorism are substantial. In this article we will refer to two major costs groups: direct costs and indirect costs. In short, direct costs of terrorism refer to the costs incurred in caring for the wounded and the cost generated by the loss of human lives, but also to the suffering caused to the relatives and friends of the wounded or deceased. Direct costs also refer to the loss of physical capital through the destruction resulting from a terrorist attack. The destruction of some national heritage buildings, symbols of the affected cities can have aggravating consequences both psychologically and economically. On the other hand, indirect costs arise primarily from the disruption of the socio-economic order caused by terrorism. For example, insurance policies for losses due to terrorist activity can become more expensive. Also, victims of terrorist attacks can bear indirect costs such as loss of productivity, loss of income sources both for themselves and for the state. Another indirect cost, impossible to neglect, is the psychological trauma that people experience in relation to terrorist attacks. Being an inherent effect resulting from terrorist actions, the fear tends to divert public resources from productive sectors, generating income to non-productive sectors, respectively to security and defense. It is no surprise that the share of government spending increases when terrorist attacks occur. This is due to the fact that total public spending on defense and security is increasing. In order to be able to spend more on security, countries either increase taxes or redirect their programmed budget expenditures from supporting revenue-generating sectors to defense and security expenditures that not only do not generate revenue directly but are detrimental to long-term economic growth.

Countries or regions that are heavily dependent on tourism have been found to suffer significant economic losses due to the persistence of terrorism. Terrorism can also reduce the flow of foreign direct investment. Trade relations and consumption can also be affected by the presence of terrorism, as transactions are more difficult, requiring additional security to cover the risks involved. The immediate negative impact generated by terrorism on import-export activities and tourism almost immediately generates an increase in unemployment, which, in turn, implies a decrease in income and, implicitly, in consumption. Such a situation may in turn have multiplier effects, as reduced demand leads to lower production, rising unemployment, declining investment and a general slowdown in economic activity.

In this article we shall present, with the help of information and data found in the literature, how the economy is affected by terrorism, presenting the types of costs involved in these violent acts, while highlighting, globally, the countries most affected by this phenomenon, as well as the least affected.

2. Literature review

Following the widely used definition by Enders, Sandler, and Gaibulloev (2011: 321), terrorism can be seen as "the premeditated use or threat of using violence by subnational individuals or groups against non-combatants to achieve a political goal, or socially, by intimidating a wide audience beyond that of the immediate victims". Broadly speaking, terrorism is a short-term plan implemented to achieve certain long-term political, economic or social goals, which could not normally be achieved in a non-violent way. Schelling (1991) argues that terrorist acts are a means of obtaining, in addition to media attention as a form of communication with the general public, economic and political destabilization. Given the purpose of terrorist organizations to economically destabilize the attacked state, the role of the attacked government is to assess and choose between the cost of accepting the demands of terrorist attackers (i.e. the socio-political objectives at stake) and the cost of a prolonged terrorist campaign. resulting from continued resistance from the government (Sandler and Enders 2008). The efficiency or inefficiency of terrorism is the result of the strategic interaction between terrorists with their enemies, i.e. with governments and security forces.

The literature has identified five ways in which the economy is affected by terrorism: through destruction, disruption, diversion, waste, and portfolio replacement.

Destruction is a direct cost of terrorism because through terrorism, capital is destroyed. Important models of economic growth, such as the Swan-Solow model, show that the production of an economy is a direct result of existing capital; the more capital an economy has, the more that economy will produce. Consequently, when terrorism destroys this stock of capital (for example, by killing people - human capital - or by destroying buildings or infrastructure), production will shrink.

Disruption, diversion, waste and replacement of the portfolio are indirect costs of terrorism, which arise with the response of economic agents to terrorist events. The effect of disruption refers to the negative effects of terrorism on the socio-economic life of a country, i.e. the disruption of the socio-economic order. In general, this disruption of socio-economic life is expected to hamper economic transactions due to the fact that terrorism induces a decrease in trust in public institutions (Arvanitidis, Economou and Kollias 2016). In a non-violent environment, sound public institutions facilitate economic transactions through business costs (so-called transaction costs); if confidence in institutions decreases, transaction costs increase, which leads to non-completion of economic transactions. For example, (Bird, 2008) concluded that the uncertainty generated by terrorism can lead to long-term investment delays and, taking into account the Swan-Solow model mentioned above, a reduction in investment (or capital) leads to a decrease in output.

Deviation refers to the changes that occur in the allocation of public resources. Specifically, in the case of violent events, public resources are moved from productive, income-generating sectors to non-productive sectors. The affected productive sectors may be education and infrastructure which are disadvantaged, the resources allocated to them being used to increase security. Such a decision has a negative long-term impact because the diversion of resources from productive to non-productive sectors prevents economies from accumulating capital.

Waste (de-saving) refers to a decrease in savings that affects the capital of an economy. Again, a lower capital stock (or a lower rate of capital accumulation) leads to a decrease in output and, consequently, to a slowdown in economic growth. Terrorism discourages saving through the psychological impact it has on people. For example, following a terrorist attack, people will analyze the decision on available funds, choosing between saving or consuming, and because terrorism reduces the likelihood of benefiting in the future, individuals may be less inclined to save and more inclined to consume (Naor 2015).

Finally, on the replacement / substitution of the portfolio Abadie and Gardeazabal (2008) argue that terrorism negatively affects the ability of an economy to absorb investment, as it poses a risk and reduces the return on investment. A sudden withdrawal of capital adversely affects economic development, especially when foreign capital is the main driver of economic growth. This often happens in developing economies.

The Institute for Economics & Peace (2018) estimates the economic impact of violence using an aggregation of costs related to violence, conflict and violence-related costs. This model uses variables that include both the costs of preventing violence and the costs of the consequences of violence.

Therefore, the variables that form the cost of violence according to the Institute for Economics & Peace (2018) are structured as follows:

1. Prevention-oriented security services and costs:
- Military expenses;
- Expenditure on ensuring internal security;
- Expenditure on intelligence services;
- Peacekeeping by the UN.
2. Costs related to armed conflicts:
- Direct costs of deaths from violent internal conflicts;
- Direct costs of deaths from violent external conflicts;
- Indirect costs of violent conflicts resulting from the loss of potential investments and infrastructure to be rebuilt;
- Restricting the import of weapons affecting the military sectors;
- Terrorism.
3. Costs related to interpersonal violence:
- Homicide;
- Fear of murder;
- Indirect incarceration costs.

At the same time, the economic impact of violence includes the direct costs that are the cost of violence for the victim, perpetrator and government (these include direct costs, such as police costs) and indirect costs that accrue after the violent event and include indirect economic losses, physical trauma. and physiological for the victim, the decrease and loss of productivity, as well as the loss of investors for the affected states.

3. Methodology

For the period analyzed in this article, the economic impact of terrorism is calculated using the violence cost methodology of the Institute for Economics & Peace, (2018). Therefore, the model used to calculate the impact of global terrorism includes the direct and indirect costs caused either by the number of victims or deaths or by the destruction of property resulting from jihadist actions.

An important variable when talking about the impact of terrorism on the economy is the level of development of countries affected by terrorism. Thus, in this article, in order for the data to be presented as correctly as possible and to be able to take into account the income differences between states, unit costs are calculated according to GDP relative to the number of inhabitants. Statistical information related to terrorist actions will be used in the Global Terrorism Database which are also found in the reports of the Institute for Economics & Peace, (2015 - 2019) this information being collected by the “National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism” (START). The data obtained from these databases show the number of deaths, casualties for each incident, as well as the extent of the damage and destruction resulting from these terrorist attacks.

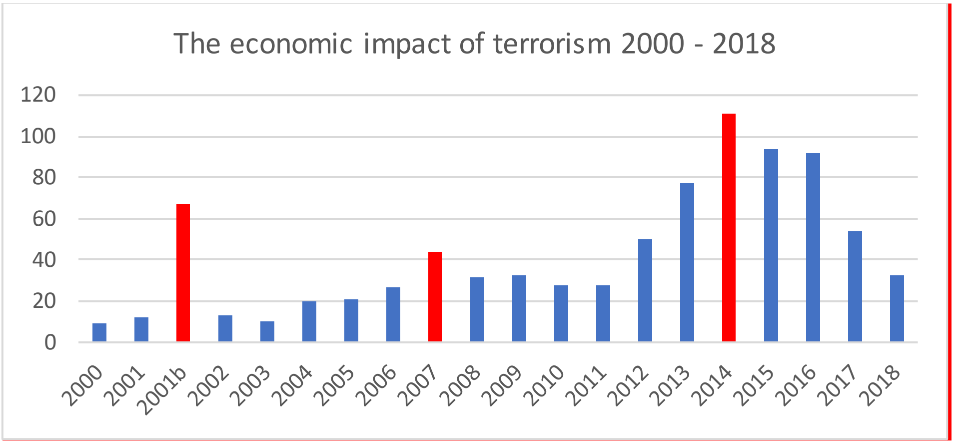
4. Analysis of the economic costs of terrorism

First of all, we believe that it is necessary to define direct and indirect costs. Thus, direct costs are those costs that are borne by the victims of terrorist acts, such as medical expenses, provided that these expenses are borne at the same time by the government. As far as the state is concerned, the expenses are directed in maintaining security by ensuring the salaries of the military personnel engaged at that time as well as for the equipment used. At the same time, another direct cost that can result from terrorist actions are those related to the restoration of destroyed properties and goods, but also to the restoration of public and critical infrastructure.

As for indirect costs, in the case of victims, they are associated with the loss of work capacity, which implicitly leads to the loss of jobs and a stable income. In addition to the loss of work capacity, the population exposed to terrorist events may also face psychological traumas over time. As for the state, indirect costs translate into lower tax collection, lower investment whether we are talking about local investment or foreign direct investment and losses generated by the relocation of funds from productive sectors to non-productive ones necessary to ensure security. These costs have a different impact on economies, with developed ones having a higher resilience than states facing political, economic and social problems.

An important indicator, when we talk about terrorism, is its economic impact worldwide. Thus, we submitted to the study the period 2000-2018, in order to highlight the evolution of the economic impact of terrorism as well as the possible causes that generated its increase / decrease, the analyzed data and conclusions can be observed from the chart and comment below:

Chart no. 1 – The economic impact of terrorism worldwide in the period 2000 – 2018 (billions $).



Source: Own processing according to the report of the Institute for Economics & Peace: Global Terrorism Index 2019, page. 29

The chart above illustrates three "critical" moments for the economy, determined by the evolution of terrorism. Thus, the first major increase in the economic impact of terrorism occurred on September 11, 2001, marking the beginning of a war between the West and terrorist organizations. In 2001, out of a total of $ 79 billion representing the impact of terrorism on the global economy, $ 67 billion meant only the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, a figure that is still the highest cost of terrorism associated with a single event.

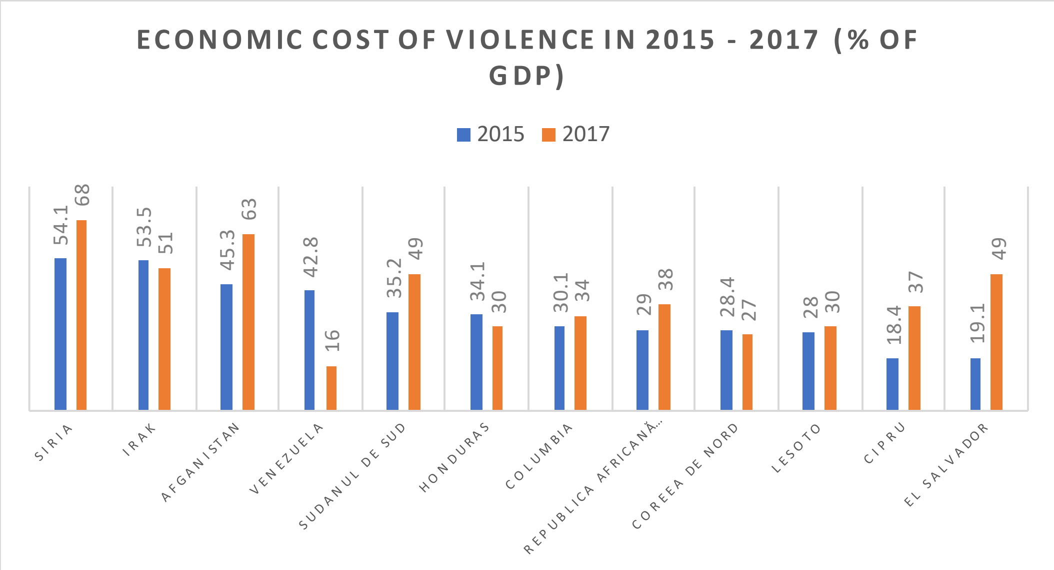
The second great moment was recorded in 2007, although, until this second wave, there were also attacks in Madrid, in 2004 but also in London, in 2006. The increase of the economic impact on terrorism, in 2007, which amounted to about $ 44 billion, is mainly attributed to Al Qaeda-affiliated terrorist groups, and also coincided with an increase in the presence of coalition troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The third wave of increasing the impact of terrorism on the economy began in 2012, continuing with the terrorist attacks recorded in 2013 in Boston, in 2015 in Paris, in 2016 in Brussels, in 2016 in Nice, but also many other attacks. made in countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan or Syria. The year 2014 has the highest level of impact that terrorism has on the global economy, being estimated at about 111 billion dollars, thus exceeding the 79 billion dollars level reached in 2001. The global economic impact of terrorism reached the amount of 94 billion dollars in 2015, which experienced a slight decrease compared to 2014, the level being lower by about 15%, this being also reflected in the decrease in the number of people killed by this phenomenon. The economic impact of terrorism in 2015 has been at the second largest level since the early 2000s.

From 2016 to 2018, the size of terrorism is slightly declining, with the impact on the world economy accounting for $ 92 billion in 2016, $ 54 billion in 2017, half the value of the damage caused in the year 2014, which is also the top of the “pyramid”, and $ 33 billion global economic impact of terrorism calculated for 2018, registering a decrease of 38% of the economic impact of terrorism compared to 2017. These figures are "gratifying", given the proportions of this phenomenon, any index that reflects a decline in terrorism is a victory for the West and for those who want peace and economic, political and social stability. However, it should be noted that all these figures are estimates because it is difficult to quantify the total cost of all elements affected by terrorism. In essence, these costs include the long-term economic implications of terrorism in economic sectors such as tourism which is an economic sector sensitive to such events, reducing the business environment, investment and production, leading to the channeling of funds from productive sectors to insurance sectors. and maintaining national security and not adding direct value to the economy. The decrease in terrorist events in recent years, illustrated in the chart above, is associated, by some security experts, with the decline of ISIS power in the main areas of controlled conflict. Thus, military interventions, increased security measures and risk awareness by the Iraqi and Syrian governments fighting terrorism have led to the deterrence of terrorist organizations such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda.

If we were to make a ranking of the countries most affected by violent acts such as terrorism, we will notice that often the countries suffering from armed conflicts and implicitly terrorism also face the costliest economic effects due to this phenomenon. Such countries are located in the Middle East, North Africa or South Asia and at the same time coincide with a low level of development. In chart number 2 we included the first 12 states that for 2015 and 2017 recorded the highest economic cost of violence. These costs are represented by the cost of violence for the victim, perpetrator and government (these include direct costs, such as the cost of police) and indirect costs that accrue after the violent event and include indirect economic losses, physical and physiological trauma for the victim, decrease and loss. productivity, as well as the loss of investors for the affected states.

Chart no: 2 - The top of the states with the highest cost of violence in the economy for 2015 and 2017, values expressed as% of GDP.



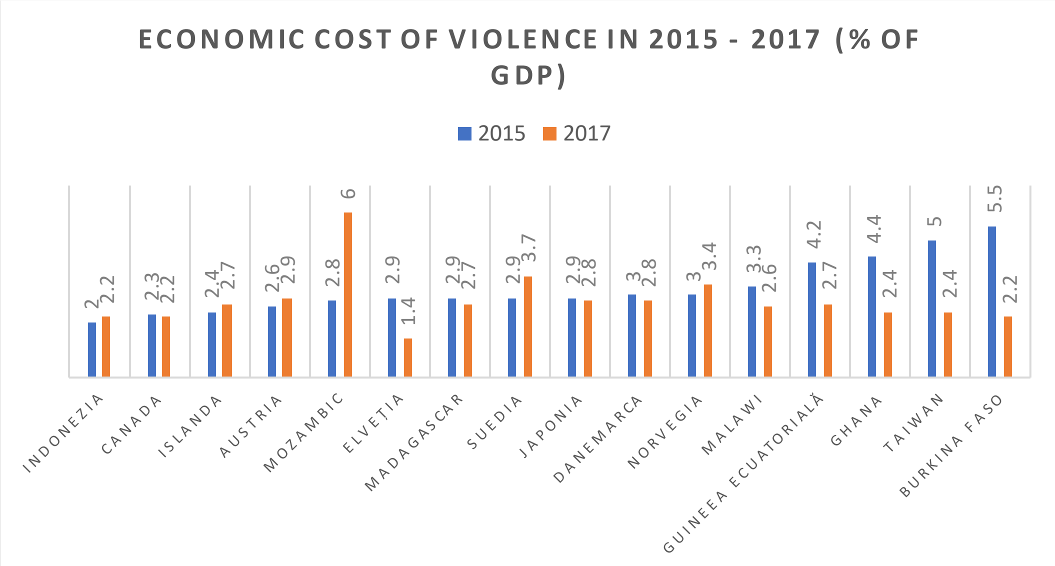
Source: Own processing according to the reports Institute for Economics & Peace: Economic Value of Peace 2016 – page 12; EVP 2018 - page 11.

The graph above highlights the evolution of the economic cost of violence for the most affected states in the world, in 2015 and 2017. The states included in this analysis face high levels of interpersonal violence and armed conflict. Thus, the states affected by armed conflicts are Colombia, the Central African Republic, Somalia, South Sudan, which have high costs that are caused by injuries and deaths caused by civil conflicts, displacement and terrorism. Along with these, the top is completed by a "podium" consisting of Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, whose economic cost of violence for the period under review is between 45% and 68% of GDP. It should be noted that in the three leading states, armed conflicts are mainly caused by terrorist organizations fighting against Western organizations and states present for the restoration of public order and peace. On the other hand, the chart above also shows states such as Lesotho and El Salvador, where the economic cost of violence for these states is associated with higher levels of violent crime and homicide. Instead, Cyprus is an "exception"; the presence of this state in a “negative” top is caused by the fact that much of the economic cost is closely related to the internal displacement of its population and the presence of refugees. Also, in the case of the state of Cyprus, the increased economic cost of violence is due to the fact that the Nicosia government has been overtaken by the number of refugees arriving in a relatively short time. Thus, the level of spending on the violence prevention sectors has increased in order to maintain a balance that ensures public confidence in the political, economic and social environment.

From the chart above, we can see a general negative evolution for 2017 compared to 2015, except for some countries such as Honduras or Venezuela which have managed to apply some corrective measures to reduce the economic cost expressed as a percentage of GDP. In 2015, Venezuela had an economic cost of violence of 42.8% of GDP, so by implementing policies to combat violence, this state reduced its percentage to 16% in 2017; a significant evolution, being the lowest percentage of the top for 2017. The rest of the states included in the analysis experienced a negative evolution, the economic cost increasing, which proves that the policies and measures identified and applied by Western organizations and states must be customized, for each state.

At the opposite pole, in chart number 3, we included the states that recorded the lowest cost of violence, for the period 2015-2017.

Chart no: 3 - Top of the states with the lowest cost of violence in the economy for 2015 and 2017, values expressed as% of GDP.



Source: Own processing according to the reports Institute for Economics & Peace: Economic Value of Peace 2016 – page 44 - 47; EVP 2018 - page 31 - 33.

The chart above shows us the states most bypassed by terrorist actions and which bear the lowest costs of violence for 2015 and 2017. The average economic costs associated with violence as a percentage of GDP for the analyzed period is about 3.05%. This average is significantly lower than the global average, which in 2017 represented about 11% of GDP. The average military costs in 2017 is 1.2% of GDP, compared to the global average of 2.1% of GDP. The lowest military expenditures are recorded by the states of Madagascar, Switzerland and Indonesia, these costs being 0.6%, 0.7% and 0.8% of GDP respectively. A similar trend as that of military costs is given by the costs necessary to ensure internal security, so the countries with the lowest expenditures directed to this area of interest are Switzerland with only 0.2% of GDP (this is also due to the position of neutrality which this state has compared to the rest of the world), Equatorial Guinea with 0.36% and Indonesia with 0.4% of GDP.

Conclusions

In relation to those presented, we can say that forms of violence such as terrorism are a real problem, which continues to be more and more present. Based on the data analyzed, we can say that developed countries suffer less damage from terrorism than underdeveloped economies, due to the fact that developed countries have the ability to ensure better security and a faster response to violent acts. It has been observed that the economic impact of violence, which includes terrorism, has a devastating impact on poorly developed economies such as Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc., accounting for over 50% of the GDP of the affected economy. On the other hand, in developed economies, capable of implementing increased security measures, the impact of violence on economies is not so significant, with a few exceptions exceeding 5% of GDP.

A solution to reduce violent events and terrorism can come even from the governments of the states concerned, which, in order to avoid violent acts, should avoid political, economic and social discrimination among minorities. At the same time, in order for vulnerable states to avoid violent manifestations, it is necessary to implement effective security measures which, although in the short term may represent an unjustified economic cost, can show their long-term benefits.

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Decentralization of Government Functions, a European Principle of the Albanian Modernization Process: A libertarian approach to territorial issues

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Abstract

Albania, for 30 years, has entered the phase of transition from a society organized into a one-party central governing regime to a democratic society of a free market economy. But the pace of moving in this direction and modernizing the country is not the expected one, because the centralized proclamations of the political elite and expertise have not allowed liberal approaches to enter Albanian legislation and governing practices. This has been the case in particular in the sector of territorial planning, where central governments have aimed and managed to not allow the actual decentralization of the governing function of drafting and adopting local territorial planning instruments. This has resulted in a shortage of local instruments, in general, but even when managed to ensure they are presented far beyond the needs, problems and objective local imbalances. This is because their distance mapping from the actual municipality for which they were designed failed to recognize the specifics and characteristics of each of them. The result has been evident; in both cases, planning has been inexistent to drive sustainable, smart and inclusive urban development processes. In this paper we aim to build another approach for future development in Albania, a country which aims at integration into the European Union. This path should be development based on previously adopted territorial planning instruments, drawn up in democratic and parliamentary processes as a local political activity. Central government must understand and accept the new and different role than the one it played 30 years ago in territorial development issues, and that the process of drafting and adopting local territorial planning instruments should be a function of local government itself.

Keywords: classical liberalism, etatism, centralism, decentralization, central government, local government, territorial strategy, local instrument of territorial planning

1-Introduction

The issue of the separation of government functions between central government and local government is a decades-long issue in the developed countries of liberal democracy in the European Union and beyond. Decentralization of governance functions in the field of territorial planning and development is one of the basic guidelines of European Union institutions, especially for developing and transition countries such as Albania. Albania must also go on this path in its transitional, modernizing and globalizing processes, especially in line with its aspiration to integrate into the European Union. In this article, we will first briefly present a theoretical approach to the positions of the two liberal movements, left liberalism and classical liberalism, on the issues of dividing the governing scope between the two levels of governance and the process of decentralization. Further, in this article we will examine the attitude of European and world organizations, the technical expertise of territorial planning and local government, on the importance of the city as a political and autonomous entity and the issue of decentralization of functions in territorial and urban planning. We will carry out the same observation for the meetings of the Ministers responsible for the territorial and urban planning of the member states of the European Union, and its other institutions. Further, this article will continue with a brief introduction to the beginnings of decentralization and the creation of local government as a democratically and representatively created level of governance by the vote of the sovereign in the early years of the Albanian transition. In the following we will briefly present the dynamics of developments in the issue of decentralization of government functions from central government to local government, during the subsequent years of the Albanian transition. The article will proceed with an assessment of the link between decentralization of governance functions in general to the planning and territorial development sector as a very important aspect of effective governance. The article will conclude with a brief presentation of the need and necessity for a new culture, including legal regulation, in territorial planning matters and the division of planning responsibilities between the two levels of government by functions to design policies of each of them. expressed in the form of conclusions and recommendations for Albanian political and representative institutions.

2- Separation of governing scope, decentralization and libertarianism

There is a clear distinction between contemporary left-wing liberals, who often promote etatist ideas, and classical liberals who value individual freedoms as the most important political idea, even with regard to the distribution of governing functions at the two levels of government. Liberal (classical) concepts originally introduced as a rebuttal to conservatives defending a stronger state authority in social affairs. Spencer would argue, while presenting two of the most important groups in 19th-century England, the Whigs and the Tories, *"Liberalism comes first as an opposition to Charles the II and his clique, their attempts to establish a monarchic* *power without any control*" (Spencer, 2005, p. 16). Classical Liberals regarded decentralization as one of their essential tenets, and incorporated it into their basic governing reforms, as Spencer would note for the libertarian contribution of the Whigs in his work "*On the Declaration of Reform and Local Government*" (Spencer, 2005, p. 16). Of course, Spencer could not elaborate in more detail on the libertarian principle of decentralization that had to do with the division of government functions between national and local government, because at the time he was writing cities had not received their due importance and in that sense, local government did not have the place it has today.

Aliaj in 2008 would see this concept as more than a decentralization process, when he stated, "*However for a country like Albania, decentralization is only half the job of tearing down the negative effects of centralized practices inherited from the past. The full effects of decentralization would only materialize if another crucial step was taken, which is the deconcentration of power*" (Aliaj, 2008, p. 128). In fact, like Spencer's broad concept, which saw the need to preserve the spaces of individual freedom from state coercion (Spencer, 2005), also the contemporary approach of Aliaj envisions, focused on the Albanian case of the third millennium, to convey the need to bring power of political decision making as close as possible to the individual. In an ideological sense, as a clear division between contemporary liberals and classical liberals, which we also call libertarians, the question of the division of governing scope between the two governing levels is addressed by Friedman. While evolution of liberal principles of the 20th century increasingly associated with the empowerment of the state in relation to the citizen are observed, another difference observed by Friedman, among liberals of the two different centuries, is that "*19th-century liberal favors political decentralization* ", while "*20th-century liberal favors centralized governance*" (Friedman, 2005, p. 6). This underlining by Friedman would give full meaning to the ideological differences between the two types of liberals in terms of the relationship between the levels of government and the scope of each level.

19th-century liberals, or classical liberals as Friedman would call them, and libertarians in our opinion, not only believed that the scope of government activity should be limited, they also believed in the principle of decentralization. The first principle of libertarians emphasized that the main function of government should be to protect the freedom of citizens, both from enemies abroad and from their compatriots. According to libertarians (classical liberals) the main task of the state is, referring to Friedman, "*to maintain law and order, to guarantee the implementation of private contracts, to promote competitive markets*" (Friedman, 2005, p. 2). Beyond the first principle, classical liberals have a second principle very important in their understanding of social order and the relationship between the state and the citizen. As Friedman would put it, "*The second principle is that power must be distributed. If the government is to exercise power, it is better to exercise it at the municipal level than at the state level, rather at the state level than in Washington*" (Friedman, 2005, p. 3).

If a person does not like the way a particular municipality operates, with regard to: management of sewage engineering networks, road system, public transport; or social infrastructures, such as kindergartens, preschools, schools, ambulances, hospitals; or how the city has distributed residential, employment, education areas; this man can leave this city and move on to another city that deals with these issues better and offers these public services in a better manner. Whereas in the case where these governance functions are centralized, and these sectors are treated in the same way by local government, then the situation will be the same in all municipalities, and the citizen is left to leave the country if he can (Friedman, 2005).

Preserving freedom is the main reason for reducing the governing scope and decentralizing the governance from the central government to local government, but there is also a constructive and equally valid reason. This reason tells us that centralism impedes development, as Friedman would point out, because "*The great advances of mankind, whether in architecture or painting, science or literature, in industry or in agriculture, have never come from centralized governments*" (Friedman, 2005, p. 2). Newton and Leibnitz, Einstein and Bohr, Shakespeare, Milton, Pasternak, Whitney, Mc Cormik, and a wide range of authorities in their knowledge that Friedman would not hesitate to emphasize "*none of them opened new horizons for human knowledge and culture in response to government directives*" (Friedman, 2005, p. 4). And in fact, all of humanity's greatest achievements came from individual genius, from the approaches and views advocated by minority groups; but at a time of a social climate that allowed for the diversity and multiplicity that proclaims and implements decentralization.

When it comes to multi-level governance, and the advantages of a decentralized system of government over centralized governance - and to use an Aliaj term of concentrated governance - the positive impact that central government can have is not excluded or denied. But, as Friedman would point out, "*Government can never reproduce the diversity and multiplicity of individual action*" (Friedman, 2005, p. 4), and in this sense, no central government can address the important local issues that arise in a variety of human, social, cultural and geographical specificities and characteristics, except in uniformity. A government can greatly regulate and improve the standard of living of many citizens in many local areas or cities of the country, and perhaps even the whole country as an average, if it imposes standard conditions on housing, food or clothing, or by imposing standard norms on education, road building, or hygiene and the environment. But, as Friedman would point out, "*during this process the government replaces progress with stalemate, offering uniform mediocrity rather than diversity which is so essential to experimentation that it can make tomorrow's last stand above today's average* " (Friedman, 2005, p. 4). Therefore, what we need more than ever is to seek and implement decentralization practices to build more capable individuals for the future, and better living centers, than what we have today.

3- The importance of the city and the decentralization to the technical and local institutions of the countries of liberal democracy

Following the major political changes of 1990-1992, which paved the way for Albania's transition from a socialist country of centrally planned economy to a country of liberal democracy and a free market economy, many liberalization reforms were undertaken with the aim of achieving political and economic similarities with Western countries (Biberaj, 2000; Fuga, 2003, 2004; Lami 2013).

Through the reforms designed and implemented during 1992-1996, the first phase of the territorial governance paved the way for the main goal Albanians expressed in the anti-communist protests of "Albania as all Europe" (Meksi, 1992, 2019). Since then, the country has been involved in a process of integration into the European Union, presented in a number of different sectors of country's life and society (Gjuraj, 2015; Biberaj, 2000, Lami, 2013). One of the essential aspects where the country has a need to strive for resemblance with the EU member states is the place and importance that these countries have given in the past, give today and promote for the future, the role of local government.

Albania's communist past of 1944-1991 obstructs this aim of Albanian society, especially in the sector of territorial government. Although a number of reforms have been carried out in the area of planning and territorial development, the etatist mentality that has accompanied political thinking and sectoral expertise, as Aliaj would distinguish, is "*the almost conservative mindset of professionals who still fail to emerge today, above the limitations of the mentality and education of the period of the centralized economy* "(Aliaj, 2008, p. 96), has not allowed the local dimension of territorial governance and local democracy to be strengthened. The European Union, where a vast majority of Albanians want to integrate to, attaches particular importance to the city as a political entity, to local autonomy and local democracy. We will try to address this in three main political pillars, the dimension of EU local governments, the national governments dimension of EU member states, and the dimension of professionals, technicians and researchers in the field of territorial development and urban from all over the world, starting with the latter.

One of the most important documents on a global scale is the 'Vancouver Declaration' adopted at the 2006 World Planners Congress held in Vancouver, Canada. The statement was signed by 29 leaders of the world's largest institutes and agencies. The essence of this statement was to establish some basic principles of urban and territorial planning globally, where the principle of planning at the governmental level was most essential. According to this statement, the types of planning instruments had to be consistent with the level of governance that drafted and approved these instruments. The political and technical worlds had to recognize that just as there are strategic plans that require the authority of national governments to be drafted and adopted, there are also local plans that must be carried out and approved by local government because of the cultural and territorial specificities and diversity that different cities represent, as would be stated in the statement "*Planning is strategic and local, integrative, participatory, creative, representative of cultural diversity and supports equality issues*" (WPC, 2006).

Governance-level planning emphasis is placed on all documents with political approaches of world and European planners, including, but not limited to, the Congress for the New Urbanism in their document *'The Charter of New Urbanism'* (CNU, 1996) and the European Council of Town Planners, in *'The New Athens Charter 2003; Vision for 21st Century Cities'*, adopted in Lisbon in 2003 (ECTP, 2003). But we can also mention the European Conference *'Urban Future'* in Saarbrucken, Germany, which brought together key players of the URBAN Community Initiative at local, regional, national and European levels. With approximately 300 participants from 22 member countries, the added value of the *'Acquis URBAN'* document was discussed at the conference, and its core principles were presented and discussed. This document was accompanied by a joint statement to be presented to Mrs. Danuta Hubner, EU Commissioner for Regional Policy, but also other European and local politicians and decision makers of the member countries. As stated, inter alia, in the statement "*Through the important role and potential of cities for regional development and the cohesion of EU territory on the one hand, and the prevailing problems of urban areas on the other, in the upcoming period many cities will benefit from EU funding and to a longer extent*" (EC, 2005), the importance of cities and local planning in European processes, including funding from European Basis projects, becomes very clear.

The importance of cities, territorial planning in the local dimension and local democracy to the European Union is also demonstrated by the place that is given to it, the political statements and attitudes of local authorities. The European Commission supported the initiative of 80 European local authorities and 253 representatives of international organizations, member governments, scientific and consulting institutions to hold the European Conference on Sustainable Development. This Conference took place in Aalborg, Denmark, in May 1994 and drafted and agreed the 'Aalborg Charter'. The essence of this statement was the importance of cities as clear political entities, as it states "*We, the European cities, the signatories of this charter, declare that throughout history, our cities have existed and challenged empires, nation states, and regimes and survived as centers of social life, carriers of economies, and guardians of culture, heritage and traditions. Together with families and neighbors, cities have been fundamental elements of our states and societies*" (EC, 1994).

The charter was discussed by more than 600 participants in 36 Aalborg Conference seminars, and aimed to highlight cities' self-government skills, as it would underline "*We, the cities, are aware that we have the skills, knowledge and creative potential to furthering sustainable lifestyles and designing and managing our cities towards sustainability*" (EC, 1994). One of the highlights of the Aalborg Charter was the representative dimension of the sovereignty of local authorities, as it presented "*As democratically elected representatives of our communities, we are able to take* *responsibility for reshaping our cities towards sustainability*" (EC, 1994). Therefore, what this massive conference participants and other local actors who have been joining them for years through the signature of this charter demanded became very clear from the statement "*The extent to which our cities are capable of answering to this challenge depends on the granting of rights to local self-government, in accordance with the principle of dependency. It is essential that the local government be given sufficient powers and provided with sustainable financial basis*" (EC, 1994). The Aalborg Conference put forward the demand for the continued expansion of local government functions and local self-government, a requirement that is repeated in the dynamics of decentralization of government functions to this day. This conference has become periodical, every three years, to support the same decentralized approach and to support local democracy.

4- The importance of the city and decentralization to European Union institutions

The European Union supports the decentralization and reinforcement of the cities' roles in governance also directly, through its initiatives. In this regard, we will first bring up the Ministerial Meeting on Territorial Cohesion, held in Rotterdam, the Netherlands on 29 November 2004. In this meeting the Ministers of the EU Member States responsible for territorial development issues shared among them the experiences of different European countries in urban policy in recent decades and identified and generated a set of common principles that frame what they considered to be successful policies. Ministers of EU member states adopted a joint document entitled *'Urban Acquis'*, which provides the foundations for developing a more coherent urban policy approach to the future. *'Urban Acquis'* prioritized, among other things, the emphasis on the importance of planning at the governing level by prioritizing *'Cities must be livable, places of alternative and cultural identity'* (EU, 2004), through which it recognized the need to identify and utilize the specifics and characteristics of each city as a way of developing in cohesion. The document outlined the mechanisms for successful urban policy, which emphasized "*Sectoral, regional and local policies should be better integrated*" (EU, 2004), recognizing the particular role of cities in territorial policies. It presented interested parties engagements highlighting inter alia "*Public, private and community partners in cities should engage in constructive working relationships. The partnership must balance the democratic responsibilities of elected local government*" (EU, 2004), and seek to achieve the right spatial balance and encourage good practices, study of policies and capacities.

In this sense, the Leipzig Ministerial can also be mentioned, which produced the 'Leipzig Charter for Sustainable European Cities', held on May 24-25, 2007 in the German city from which it was named. This Charter underlined, as its essence, "*In recognition of the chances and opportunities as well as of the different historical, economic, social and environmental pasts of European cities, the Ministers of Member States responsible for Urban Development agreed on common principles*" (EU, 2007), and in this sense reflected the importance of the different specifics of the different cities of the EU member states, accepting only common policy principles and strategies. The charter gave a special place to the polycentric dimension of development, when EU member states' ministers committed themselves to promoting balanced territorial development based on "*the polycentric urban structure of Europe*" (EU, 2007). The document further stated that ministers responsible for urban development in EU member states "*consider European cities of all measures that have evolved in history to be valuable and irreplaceable economic, social and cultural assets*" (EU, 2007).

From 2007 onwards, various documents have been agreed upon at various political levels, with many documents highlighting the importance of city, local autonomy and local democracy, to name only the two most important as' *Spatial Planning; Key Instrument for Development and Effective Governance with Special Reference to Countries in Transition*' of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE, 2008), and the *'Territorial Agenda 2020, towards a Comprehensive, Smart and Sustainable Europe of Different Regions*', agreed at the Ministerial Informal with Ministers responsible for Spatial Planning and Territorial Development on 19 May 2011 in Godollo, Hungary (EU, 2010). These documents and others we touched upon earlier were the beginnings of a long process which will continue in the future, especially in developing countries such as Albania, which are indispensable in taking steps in this very important direction of democracy and development.

5- The beginnings of decentralization in transitional Albania

The profound centralization of governing functions was one of the characteristics of the 46-year-old socialist regime that the territorial governments of transition had to face (Meksi, 1992, 2019). This was not a simple task, because the 46-year-old tradition did not allow for a profound reform, while at the same time producing acceptable results on the ground. The central authorities' unilateral political decision-making for a deep reform to decentralize the distribution of government functions, as in many other areas of the economic sector in particular, would not have a tangible result if it were not supported by other actors that would implement it. As Aliaj would point out "*In fact, if we study the history of governance in Albania, we will notice a handicap that has been created during the years of the centralized economy and which remains silent today. This obstacle is about concentration, one of the most sophisticated forms of centralization of power in Albania during the years of communist dictatorship*" (Aliaj, 2008, p. 130). In this sense, the process of decentralization in the early years of transition was not an easy one, due to the concentrated and centralized mindset of the society and especially the experts and officials involved in the implementation process of this potential reform on the ground.

During the first years of transition there was a need to take action to strengthen local government units in the context of administrative reform. These needs, defined in the 1992-1996 government program, consisted of two main points. First, there was the necessity of holding pluralistic elections for the local level of government likewise. The transition from a Labor Party-led government, the only party that had led a communist regime for 46 years to the Democratic Party, as the first opposition party, necessitated pluralist elections at the local government level as well. As Meksi, in his 1992-1996 government program, which he led would point out, "*Administrative reforms and quality improvements must also be carried out at the local level so that the central government's economic policy can be implemented nationwide. We will take measures to hold local elections within a few months*" (Meksi, 1992; 2019). With this clear aim based on the principles of classical liberalism, the Meksi government also broke the first taboo on local government authority, which was exalted from a chain of the Party-State system, where the Chairman of the District Executive Committee was nominated by the Labor Party; to a democratic and pluralistic institution where the mayor was elected by the votes of the citizens of the municipality.

The Meksi Government, 1992-1996, prepared and adopted Law no. 7573, dt. 16. 6. 1992 '*On the Elections of Local Government Bodies*' which paved the way for local democracy. In accordance with Article 1 of this law "*Local Government Bodies are elected by general, direct, secret and free vote*" (Official Journal, 1992, No. 3), which paved the way for a complete democratization of political life. Through this law, the territorial governance of the first phase also paved the way for the creation of the first local parliaments, in accordance with its Article 1 "*The Election of Local Councils is rendered by a proportional system with multi-names lists*" but also gave a deep dimension representing the mayor and the head of the municipality of a residential center, municipality or commune, in accordance with Article 1 of this Law "*The mayors of communes and municipalities are elected by a majoritarian system in areas with a nominal list*" (Official Journal, 1992, no. 3). The context of this law laid the groundwork for what Fuga in 2012 would call discursive democracy and define as "*Discursive democracy is defined at the level when the interested public speaks and listens to community problems and on this basis creates a kind of common opinion on policies to be followed and local government teams that can best implement them*" (Fuga, 2012, p. 74).

The second issue, dealt by the 1992-1996 Democratic Party government program in relation to local government, was aimed at empowering local government units by fully reforming their role and responsibilities, as Meksi would state "*At the same time we will propose to Parliament to consider the requirement to redefine the role and responsibilities of local bodies, including fiscal matters, as well as their administrative and legal relations with the central government* "(Meksi, 1992, 2019). This was the second step the Meksi government took in creating and strengthening local democracy, which required a clear separation between the two levels of government and their roles in social affairs. As Cili would point out, "*the Meksi government made major and bold reforms in the first phase*" to emphasize also the Meksi government's struggle against the deep centralization of the communist regime *"removed many of the economic institutions and practices centralized state had left behind.*" (Çili, 2013, p.

42). Meksi turned the issue of defining an important role of local government in Albania in the early years of transition to a key issue, as he would express himself in the speech held in the Albanian Parliament for the presentation of the Governing Program, 1992-1996 "*Without local administrative and democratic reform, our political and economic revolution will not be complete*" (Meksi, 1992; 2019).

6- The dynamics and deceleration of decentralization in Transitional Albania

However, decentralization did not go at the required speed, due to the frequent blockade by the Socialist Party, which was the successor of the Labor Party that had ruled the country for 46 years under the centralist inspiration of Party-State ideology, as HIS Alumni et al., would express "*although central authorities have initiated a process of decentralization towards local government, this process is practically frozen for political reasons*" (HIS Alumni et al., 1998, p. 103). The decentralization process received a second impetus by the end of the nineties. During 1998-2000, the country formally ratified the European Charter of Local Self-Government, embodied its core principles in the new Constitution, and adopted legal reforms for local self-government (WB, 2004). As the World Bank would point out in its report '*Albania: Decentralization in Transition*', important institutional adjustments have been made over the years, regulations have been adopted. "*These actions include: (i) establishing a National (Inter-Ministerial) Committee on Decentralization (NCD), supported by the Technical Expert Group with international expertise on Decentralization (GED); (ii) the adoption of the National Decentralization Autonomy Strategy by the National Committee on Decentralization (NCD); (iii) the adoption of a new law on the role of Prefects and their relationship with local authorities; (iv) the adoption of the Law on State Real Estate, the Law on Transfer of State Assets to Local Authorities, and the establishment of the Agency for the Inventory and Transfer of Public Assets; (v) the transfer of some specific key functions to local authorities*" (WB, 2004).

In order to focus on policies related to the territory and its administration, it was during this period that territorial reform was concretized by law no. 8652, dt. 31.07.2000 '*On the organization and functioning of local government*', promulgated by Decree No. 2729, dated 7.8.2000 of the President of the Republic of Albania, Rexhep Meidani (QKB, 2018). This reform and this law did not affect the concept of geographical division and territorial extension of local government units, which referred to point 4, article 5, of Chapter II of law no. 8652, dt. 31.07.2000 '*On the organization and functioning of local government*' was conceived in three types. Referring to point 4 of Article 5 of Chapter II of Law no. 8652, dt. 31.07.2000 '*On the organization and functioning of local government*' they were: district, second level local government and municipality and commune, basic local government units (QKB, 2018). Together with law no. 8653/2000 '*On the administrative-territorial division of local government units in the Republic of Albania*' marked the end of the previous District Councils, thereby diminishing the direct political influence of the state on local government activities. It was clear that this created a stable legal framework that would enable decentralized administrative and fiscal structures to function, involving self-governing circles, municipalities and communes (WB, 2004).

The contribution of this primary legislation was to the concept of the principle of subsidiarity and the process of decentralization, as the World Bank would say "*Although Albania is far from completing the political, administrative and fiscal decentralization picture that could satisfactorily improve distribution in terms of services, governance and accountability, it must be acknowledged that considerable progress has been made in building institutions and the basic legal framework, as well as in implementing policies towards decentralization* " (WB, 2004). Local Government Units, at both levels: district and municipality / commune, were assigned several governance functions which were grouped: (i) delegated functions, (ii) shared functions and (iii) specific functions, referred to in section 2, of Chapter I of Law no. 8652, dt. 31.07.2000 *'On the organization and functioning of local government'* (QKB, 2018). This law also referred to point 5c, of Article 72 of Chapter XI, municipalities and communes also had the power of urban planning, land management and social housing, including the approval of construction sites and the granting building permits, which began as of January 1, 2001 (QKB, 2018). However, as we will show further, the function of urban planning, namely the design and adoption of territorial planning instruments, came under the control of central government, which, through the National Territorial Adjustment Council, and subsequently the National Council of Territory, which consisted of the Prime Minister and some ministers, had to make the final approval of these local planning instruments.

Although through this reform local government was given some functions in matters of territorial planning and territorial control of construction and social and housing permits, they did not meet the realistic expectations and needs for decentralization. As Aliaj would point out, "*the last decade has been a lot of talk about decentralization. After a successful start in drafting the reform, the latter has moved at a very slow pace, largely due to a lack of political will, despite some efforts by the line minister to cover territorial, environmental and tourism planning issues.*" (Aliaj, 2008, p. 128) The fourth phase of territorial governance, 2013-2020, undertook a profound reform of administrative and territorial affairs, through law no. 115/2014 *'On the administrative-territorial division of local government units in the Republic of Albania*' and Law no. 139/2015 *'On Local Self-Governance'* (QKB, 2018). This reform, as we shall see in this paper, damaged local democracy in two ways, first by removing the citizen-voted politician and replacing him with the politically appointed administrator, and secondly by reducing the functions of Local Government Units, as Fuga would say of this reform, "*It is strange that this process of centralization and administrative concentration and homogenization of local government and territory after 2014 came with a decentralization propaganda*" and further on the same page to declare *"The local democracy in Albania after this [Reform] no longer exists*!" (Fuga, 2019, p. 224).

7- Local democracy and territory planning and development

One of the aspects where local democracy can be better, more clearly and more productively expressed in enhancing the quality of life of communities, families and individuals is the sector of territorial development and planning. For territorial and urban issues, what we need to understand and agree upon from the outset is the fact that the role of governing institutions is inevitable. In the planning and decision-making processes for control of territorial development issues, the involvement of state institutions is necessary (UN, 1976). Referring to Friedman, though he is often seen as opposed to the idea of the state, he rather recognizes his need, as he points out "*Rather, governance is essential, at the same time as a forum for determining the rules of the game and as an arbitrator, to interpret and impose the application of previously established rules*" (Friedman, 2005, p. 17). Urban planning means the compromise of all interested parties involved or affected by planning in a given territory, and in this sense, the role of the organizer and moderator in the processes of convening those groups and interests, of government institutions is necessary (HIS Alumni et al., 1998; Aliaj, 2008, Fuga, 2012).

But even if we refer to Spencer, while answering the question what purposes all people would agree to cooperate on, he would point out, among other things, that "*Another kind of cooperation that all people are interested in, is the use of the territory in which they reside*" (Spencer, 2005, p. 78). This cooperation is very important, first of all, to give a common understanding of land uses, but also to ensure the contributions of all owners to shared social spaces and infrastructures, or as stated by Spencer "*quite rightly, the decisions of the majority would prevail over the conditions in which part of the land would be used respectively to provide food, to build traffic, or for other purposes*" (Spencer, 2005, p. 78). Translated into the language of urban and territorial development, this Spencer statement means functional zoning, or defining land use and building zones in it (IHS Alumni, IHS and Co-Plan, 1998; Aliaj, 2008). Whereas on matters of territorial control, such as building permits, control of territory for informal construction and decision-making in cases where the territory is affected by illegal construction, the role of state institutions is indispensable (IHS Alumni et al., 1998).

The real issue at stake is: who in government, central or local government, will have the function of its own governor to design local instruments of territorial planning and development. The practices of the European Union member states are numerous and show us, not only in the theoretical dimension or political agreements, but also in the life practices that the decentralization of governance functions significantly affects the functioning of the city and has positive implications for the quality of life of citizens. As Aliaj would mention a case where decentralization works "*In France, Montpellier is a typical case of urban decentralization. By 1980, this town was more of a large Mediterranean village*". But the railroad was enough and the implementation of a fast train turned the attention of Parisians, who began to buy villas and especially the city administration that started investing in leisure and entertainment venues, and "*The result is the creation of a city and a cosmopolitan society that are completely different from those of a few years ago*" (Aliaj, 2008, p. 117).

Decentralization is particularly important for those governance functions related to the administration of local territory, as the example presented by Aliaj shows. While the administration of local affairs would have no productivity if it was carried out before planning (HIS Alumni et al., 1998) and that this planning had not been carried out by governing authorities that would implement concrete actions on the territory that were determined by planning, to be accomplished. Technical and independent expertise has often raised this concern, as Aliaj would point out: "*What will be the shortest fate and way to end the stall of the decentralization process in order to prevent centralized abuses and individual monopolies in the sphere of planning and administration of the territory forever*" (Aliaj, 2008, p. 100).

The issue of decentralization of governance functions related to territorial and urban development and planning has been one of the most discussed issues in recent years, as would be emphasized by HIS Alumni, HIS and Co-Plan "*The degree of local independence has been the object the discussion in Albania after the political changes (1991), but with no concrete results. The idea of establishing new relations between central and local government is based on the decentralization of competencies*" (HIS Alumni et al., 1998, p. 31). But the reality has proved that the products are lacking, and the first reason being the etatist approach and the particularly centralized one has dominated professional thinking and technical and administrative expertise in these transition years (Aliaj, 2008). Even when various experts have expressed aspirations for decentralization, through assessments, such as HIS Alumni et al., "*the role of local government is currently very reduced while local government intervention is very large*" (HIS Alumni, et al., 1998, p. 31), they have failed to be considered by law-making authorities, or, as we shall note in the following, even where implemented by legislation, the decentralization process has rapidly turned back.

8- The centralized approach of the Albanian transition governments

The Albanian governments of transition have introduced an etatist and concentric approach to territorial planning. This can be easily discerned if we observe the legislation that they have drafted and further adopted in the Assembly of the Republic of Albania in these years. As HIS Alumni et al., would point out "*At present, urban legislation, in the face of the alternative to open the way to capacity building at the local level, seems to have chosen the centralization of competences in the field of planning*" (HIS Alumni et al., 1998, p. 32). In regards to the territorial development four laws were adopted in the Albanian Parliament in the period 1993-2014: Law 7693/1993 *'On Urban Planning'* (QKB, 2010); law 8405/1998 *'On Urban Planning'* (QBZ, 2010); Law 10119/2009 *'On Territorial Planning and Development'* (QBZ, 2019); Law no. 107/2014 *'On Territory Planning and Development'* (QBZ, 2019). These laws have undergone repeated and consistent changes, notably the Law 8405/1998 *'On Urban*

Planning' was amended ten times and Law 10119/2009 *'On Territorial Planning and Development'* was amended few months after its adoption, before the entry into full force, by Law no. 10 258, dated 25.3.2010 *'On some additions and amendments to Law no. 10119, dated 23 April 2009' On Territorial Planning* ' (QKB, 2010). 'Hyper-legislation', as Spencer would define the layout and frequent changes of legislation (Spencer, 2005), characterized the transition governance in the field of territorial development.

These amendments, in particular through Law No. 10 258, dated 25.3.2010 *'On some additions and amendments to Law No 10 119, dated 23 April 2009' On Territorial Planning* ', consisted in strengthening the role of the central government. The National Territorial Council, which is a national planning authority, headed by the Prime Minister and composed of several ministers, was granted the right to final approval of local planning instruments, as noted in Article 2 and Article 3 thereof, (QKB, 2010). This was a clear case but not the only one, in which the central government, using its majority in the Albanian Parliament, works to reverse the process of decentralization of government functions. This is because according to the original Law No. 10119, dated 23.4.2009 *'On Territorial Planning'*, specifically Article 13 (2a), local government units had the function of approving local territorial planning instruments for the territory under their jurisdiction, while the National Territorial Council was only authorized to formally approve the compatibility of the local instrument with the national instruments. Law no. 10 258, dated 25.3.2010 returns the hierarchical concept of municipalities, as noted in point 3 of Article 3, considering some municipalities as First Category (QKB, 2010). This, with the intention of the National Territorial Council exercising in some local government units, an even deeper political control. Other than this 2009 attempt reversed a few months later, all other laws have not delegated to the Local Government the right to design and approve local territorial planning instruments within the limits of their jurisdiction.

The fourth phase territorial governance undertook a program to draft general local plans of the 61 municipalities of the Republic. This program has been going on for years and now 38 Local Government Units have a legally approved planning instrument, while the rest is in the process of drafting or approving this instrument (AKPT 2015-2020). It is clear that this action, albeit driven by the positive inclination of the central government, is an action with a “paternalistic approach” (Friedman, 2005) that harms the local autonomy of local government. Undoubtedly, as we have often mentioned in this paper, the need to develop territorial planning instruments, especially in the local dimension, is a necessity, but central government intervention in a basic function and duty pertaining to central government is a wrong governing act, for many reasons.

First, it undermines democracy and the principle of proportionality, according to which urban problems and imbalances must be dealt with at the level they appear, as UNECE would emphasize "*The principle [of proportionality] is this, it is not necessary*" *to use a reference to break a peanut if I can make a peanut-breaker. ' In other words, the ways should be in proportion to the conclusions.*" (UNECE, 2008). This project of the central government brought great damage to the process of modernizing governance, as one of the basic methods to increase local autonomy and strengthen local institutions. But most importantly, for this part of the paper, by concentrating the project on the National Territorial Planning Agency, which is an institution subordinate to the Prime Minister, it removed this project from the city government administrations for which each of these instruments is being drafted. Whereas, as Aliaj would say, "*The full realization of this reform is now an urgent necessity to remedy the mischievous way in which control over the country's financial and material resources is exercised, and above all to correct unfair and clientelist distribution of these resources, based on the situation and conditions created especially due to the population movement and the dynamic process of urbanization*" (Aliaj, 2008, p. 128), there is a need for a deep and perpetual decentralization to this sector.

Conclusions and recommendations

Territorial governance (the governing sector dealing with territorial issues), although Albania has been aiming for 30 years to move away from socialist modes of development based on central planning, towards development based on an inclusive free market economy, this social goal has not been introduced into legislation and in governing and administrative practices. Local territorial planning instruments have been considered by central governments, which have drafted sectoral legislation, as one of their domains. Albania's territorial governance, during these 30 years of transition, should have been inspired by the libertarian approaches introduced by the classics of classical liberal thought and by the European Union's demands for a proportionate division of government functions in relation to territorial planning. Although the sovereign's stated political intent has been clear: to accelerate integration into the European Union by adopting its principles, and to follow the guidelines given to member states or in the integration processes towards it, and in particular good practices that come from its member countries; yet it seems that the Albanian transitional governments have not followed this path required by the sovereign.

The best approach is one that is based on the 'own functions' of each level of government, as set out in the respective laws for the organization and functioning of each level of government. Central government should focus only on the development and adoption of territorial planning instruments in relation to those development sectors for which policies are drafted, such as national air transport infrastructure policies, maritime, rail and national road axes, and to balance the population. across national territory. For specific issues, and for territories of national importance in planning, the central government should have the power to intervene, but even in these cases the national importance of the issue of territory should be argued, with a view to avoiding centralized practices.

The design and approval of local planning instruments should be the full competence of local government units for the territory in their jurisdiction. Such a space of local freedom would allow the perspective development of local units to be oriented to the territorial and cultural specificity of each city separately. It would also allow cities to focus on and prioritize the needs that they themselves would prioritize for their future. The product of this decentralized approach would be the basis for creating a variety and diversity of Albanian cities, which would be served by its specifics to compete for freedom to absorb as many residents and businesses as possible.

Development based on the natural, territorial, cultural and social specifics and characteristics, creates a wide range of possibilities for citizens to choose the city they like most to live, work and invest. The variety and diversity of cities, by type of development, would also serve the regional dimension, because cities with different developmental physiognomies create complementary relationships between them and form polycentric urban areas, which are a very important European approach. Also, this approach has great benefits in the overall national dimension, because it enables the activation of all the country's natural and territorial resources and produces a synergy of overall national development that is greater than the sum of the economies of each city in the country.

As a final recommendation, we ask the Parliament of the Republic of Albania to ask the Council of Ministers or through its internal mechanisms to draft a new legal basis for territorial planning, with particular emphasis being given to planning at every governmental level. In this new legal basis, there should be a clear distinction of who are the territorial planning authorities, the territorial planning instruments, and who is the authority that drafts and approves each of the types of territorial planning instruments. This division should coincide with the functions that the levels of government, both central and local, have in drafting sectoral policies and their jurisdiction over the territory, with a clear decentralized approach.

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Legitimizing Workforce Reduction: A Review on Impact of COVID-19 Outbreak to the Economy

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Abstract

COVID-19 outbreak continues to impact business organizations around the world financially. One major concern is the common practice of business organizations to reduce their workforce. Issues might arise from such management decisions. The purpose of this conceptual paper is to analyze the legitimacy of managerial decisions relating to workforce reduction. The methodology of legal analysis was used by referring to and reviewing literature in Malaysia, Singapore and the United Kingdom. Major findings show that management decisions on workforce reduction especially during the COVID-19 outbreak must accord with employment law and existing government measures. Apart from that, an employer's failure to resolve issues of workforce reduction according to the law and government measures would result in trade disputes and eventual court action. The findings of this study can assist employers to make sound management decisions with valid reasons in situations, not within their control.

Keywords: legitimacy, workforce reduction, management, COVID-19

Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic was declared by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a global issue. The World Bank highlights “the need for urgent action to cushion the pandemic’s health and economic consequences, protect vulnerable populations, and set the stage for a lasting recovery” (The World Bank, 2020). Thus, it demands serious consideration especially when it has caused many business organizations to close down businesses. The International Labour Organization reported that on 7 April 2020, the world had experienced an estimated of 6.7% loss of job hours in the second quarter of 2020, an equivalent to 195 million full-time jobs (Financial Times, 2020). Job losses have been reported worldwide and has affected the source of income and economic activities (Astuti, & Mahardhika, 2020). There is also a fear of possible recession in the near future (Carlsson-Szlezak, Reeves, and Swartz, 2020). In China, 5 million people lost their jobs in January and February 2020 (Cheng, E. 2020). In

Canada, 44 per cent of Canadian households had lost work due to the COVID-19 outbreak (Abedi, 2020). .

Workforce reduction is one measure taken by many business organizations around the globe during the Covid-19 outbreak. Despite various government financial measures, there is a fear that disguised retrenchments will be used by employers as a drastic cost-cutting measures to survive the throughout the outbreak (Kaur, witherworldwide, 2020). The effects of workforce reductions are known such as loss of jobs and economic loss. The underlying belief is that workforce reduction is harmful to mental health and the economy. Workforce reduction, which is done not in accordance with the law would result in employers having to bear costly and unending legal suits. Thus, employers need to find reasons backed by the law for justifying the reduction of their companies' workforce.

The significance of this study is to provide guidance to employers and employees on workforce reduction by reviewing the appropriate laws and government measures on maintaining the workforce especially during the COVID-19 outbreak. A comparison between various laws and government policies in different countries used to address the problems that arise out of the COVID-19 outbreak might be useful in the sense of adopting and improving the current applicable laws or policies of a country. Both the legal systems of Malaysia and Singapore are based on the English Common Law System. The laws applicable in Malaysia, Singapore, and the United Kingdom are considered as persuasive in the courts of these countries, and thus they were analyzed in this study.

The purpose of this study is to analyse the legitimacy of managerial decisions relating to workforce reduction. Thus, this study aims firstly, to identify the relationship between management decision and the laws and government measures on workforce reduction that are made during the COVID-19 outbreak; and secondly, what are the consequences of not adhering to the laws and government measures in a workforce reduction. Thus, it is important to answer the following questions, namely (i) What is the relationship between management decision on workforce reduction and the laws and government measures made during the COVID-19 outbreak; and (ii) What are the consequences of not adhering to the laws and government measures in a workforce reduction. Knowing how to address issues on workforce reduction and knowing what practical mistakes to avoid will assist greatly to employers on how businesses have implemented retrenchments (both properly and improperly from the legal perspective). Thus, this study addresses the situations in Malaysia, Singapore and the United Kingdom and set out very brief summaries of a selection of statutory laws, reported case laws and government measures on the subject of workforce reduction with emphasis on the COVID-19 outbreak.

2. Literature Analysis

2.1 Government Measures/Laws to prevent outbreaks and cushion the financial impact of COVID-19

Malaysia

Malaysia's first phase of prevention of movement control in response to COVID-19 outbreak began with the Movement Control Order (MCO) on 16 March 2020. The MCO was made under the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988 (Act 342) ("Regulations") and the Police Act 1967. Restrictions under the MCO included prohibition of travelling abroad, mass movements and gathering and closure of private premises except those in essential services. Further to the MCO, specific regulations were introduced, namely the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases (Measures within the Infected Local Areas) Regulations 2020 ("Regulations") concerning the movement restriction for the period 18 March 2020 to 31 March 2020; and the Prevention, and Control of Infectious Diseases (Measures within Infected Local Areas) (No.2) Regulations 2020 (in force from 1 April 2020 to 14 April 2020).

The Temporary Measures for Reducing the Impact of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) Act 2020 operates for 2 years effective from 23 October 2020 provides relief to a party who is unable to perform his contractual obligation by prohibiting the other party to the contract to exercise his right under the contract (section 7 of the Act). Section 9 of the Act promotes mediation as a mechanism to resolve issues on a contractual obligation. The Malaysian Government had also issued the first stimulus package (valued at US$4.8 billion) to counter the impact of the most vulnerable sectors and households. Subsequently the second package (valued at US$57 billion), focused on enhancing the existing financing facilities issued in the first stimulus package apart from supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), assist low and middle-income households, and provide fiscal injections to strengthen the national economy (Asian Briefing, 2020).

Singapore

The COVID-19 (Temporary Measures) Act 2020 (No. 14 of 2020) sets out temporary measures for businesses and individuals impacted by the measures taken to reduce the spread of COVID-19. It also provides restrictions on the time, manner or extent for the carrying out of any business (see Part VII Article 34). In relations to reducing the impact of COVID-19 outbreak on the economy, the Act, among others suspends contractual obligations in contracts, provides financial relief to individuals, businesses and firms; and restricts certain activities by the general public to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (see Part 2, Temporary Relief for Inability to Perform Contracts and Part 3, Temporary Relief for Financially Distressed Individuals, Firms and Other Businesses).

The United Kingdom

The Coronavirus Act 2020 (2020 c.7) (CA 2020) came into effect on 25 March 2020 and among others allows the government to among others restrict or prohibit public gatherings (section 52), order businesses such as shops and restaurants to close and temporarily detain people suspected of COVID-19 infection (section 51). The CA 2020 also provides for measures to combat the economic effects of the outbreak such as protect emergency volunteers from becoming unemployed (section 9). The government also will reimburse the cost of statutory sick pay for employees affected by COVID-19 to employers.

2.2 Employment Law & Government Measures concerning Workforce Reduction during COVID-19 Outbreak

2.2.1 Malaysia

Redundancy Law: Reducing workers by reason of redundancy in the workforce is recognized as a management prerogative in Malaysia. The employer has the right to reduce the workforce due to the reason that fewer employees of whatever kind are required and not whether a particular work is no longer in existence (see Stephen Bong v FOB (M) Sdn. Bhd. & Anor (1999) 3 MLJ 411; and Pipraich Sugar Mills v Pipraich Sugar Mills Mazdoor Union AIR 1957 SC 95). The court will not interfere with such decision as long as it is based on reasonable grounds, done in good faith and without exploitation (see Radio & General Trading Sdn Bhd and Pui Cheng Teck & Anor (Award 243/1990)).

Redundancy must be actual redundancy. In Tang Chooi Kim lwn. Wasco Management Services Sdn Bhd/Wasco Coatings Limited [2018] 2 LNS 0175, the Industrial Court held that the employer failed to show redundancy on a balance of probability as the job and responsibility of the claimant (employee) was still in existence. Similarly, in the Court of Appeal case of Bayer (M) Sdn. Bhd. v. Ng Hong Pau [1999] 4 AMR 3913, His Lordship Justice Shaik Daud Md Ismail (as he then was) held that the burden is on (the employer) to prove actual redundancy on which the dismissal was grounded and that is where the workload was taken over by other colleagues.

The word 'retrenchment' has been defined as the discharge of surplus labour or staff by an employer for any reason whatsoever otherwise than as a punishment inflicted by way of disciplinary action." (Aminuddin, 2006) The principle derived from Malaysian industrial court awards shows that retrenchment exercise must be done in good faith (bona fide). In Mohd Zakir Yusoff v. Telarix (M) Sdn Bhd (Award No. 349 of 2020), the court found that the employers had failed to prove real and bona fide redundancy and decided that the dismissal of the employee was without just cause or excuse (see also William Jacks & Co. (M) Sdn. Bhd. v S. Balasingam (1987) CLJ 1; and East Asia Company (M) Bhd. v Valen Noel Yap (Award No. 130 of 1987)).

According to Aminuddin (2006), an employer is required to follow the golden principle, namely "Last in First Out" (LIFO) as a guide in the retrenchment exercise. In Tharmabalan Suppiah Velliah v. MSL Travel Sdn Bhd (Award No. 3081 of 2019), the Industrial Court upheld the employer's reorganization plan and had observed that the employer had complied with the LIFO principle). An employer must ensure that the retrenchment of a selected employee in the workforce under the LIFO principle is based on the reference of the same category of employment or employees doing similar work (see Malayan Tiles Manufacturers Ltd. v Non-Metallic Mineral Products manufacturing Employees Union (Award No. 11 of 1986); and Aluminium Company of Malaysia v Jaspal Singh (1989) 2 ILR 558).

A number of industrial court awards have shown that an employer must have valid reasons for not following the LIFO principle (see Ganda Palm Services Sdn. Bhd., Teluk Intan v Ng Wah Chiew and 2 others (Award 40/1986 ILR), CH Reinforcing Steel (M) Sdn Bhd v Abu Samah Abbas (2001) 1 ILR 903; and National Union of Cinema & Amusement Workers v Shaw Computer & Management Services Sdn. Bhd (Award No. 27 of 1978)). Apart from existing laws, the Code of Conduct for Industrial Harmony 1975 ('CCIH') assist employers to (avoid retrenchment by limiting the number of working hours; stop recruitment; avoidance of overtime work; to restrain work for the rest day; to trim down on salary; and/or to suggest temporary lay-offs.

Retrenchment Benefits: According to Regulation 6 of the Employment (Termination and Lay-Off Benefits) Regulations 1980, employees whose monthly salary is RM2000 and below and dismissed for redundancy reason are eligible for retrenchment benefits. An employee who is not governed by the Employment Act 1955 may have his retrenchment benefit, provided for either in a collective agreement or contract of employment. An employee who is governed neither by the collective agreement or individual contract of employment is not protected under the Employment Act 1955 and his entitlement to retrenchment benefits is wholly dependable upon the discretion of his employer.

Unlawful Dismissal: Reducing the workforce must be done without the ulterior intention to keep away an employee out of an organization. Thus, dismissal of an employee must be done on the basis of "just cause and excuse". It is settled law that the Industrial Court in hearing a dispute under section 20 (1) of the Industrial Relations Act 1967 (IRA 1967) will decide whether the dismissal of a workman by reason of misconduct has been established prior to deciding whether the proven misconduct itself is a just cause and excuse for dismissal (see the Federal Court decision of Milan Auto Sdn. Bhd. v Wong She Yen (1995) 3 MLJ 537 and Goon Kwee Phoy v J & P Coats (M) Bhd, [1981]2 MLJ 129).

Doctrine of Frustration in Contract: An employment contract is frustrated in a way where it can be ended without been terminated by the employer or his employee and is caused by situations beyond the control of both parties to the contract (Aminuddin, 2006). Frustration of contract arises not only due to certain unforeseen circumstance not within control, but also in a situation where neither party caused nor contemplate the supervening event (Lee & Detta, 2017). Section 57 (2) of the Contracts Act 1950 states that a contract is frustrated when there is a change in the circumstances which renders a contract legally or physically impossible of performance. For instance, in the case of H.A. Berney v Tronoh Mines Ltd. [1949] 15 MLJ 4, the court held that the invasion of Malaya by the Japanese frustrated the performance of the contract and thus there was no breach of contract by the employer. However, the doctrine of frustration does not apply when there is fault in the party pleading it (see Yee Seng Plantations Sdn. Bhd. V Kerajaan negeri Terengganu & Ors. [2000] 3 CLJ 666); where the particular state of affairs ceases to exist (Codelfa Construction Pty Ltd. v State rail Authority (NSW) [1982] 149 CLR 337); where the contract is still possible of performance (see Eastacres Development Sdn Bhd v Fatimah Mutallip & Anor [2000] 5 CLJ 379) and in a self-induced frustration (Dato' Yap Peng & Ors v Public Bank Bhd & Ors [1997] 3 MLJ 484.

Government Measures: In 24 March 2020, the Ministry of Human Resources ("MHR") released its Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on Movement Control Order, Ministry of Human Resources the COVID-19 outbreak ("FAQ"). Section 5 of the FAQ mentions that employers should comply with 3 basic requirements: (i) There must be a genuine financial impact on the business; (ii) measures have been taken and exhausted other means before opting for retrenchment; and (iii) Foreign workers are selected for retrenchment first if retrenchment is unavoidable. The LIFO principle must be adhered to if retrenchment involves local workers. However, in cases where employers believe that they are backed by strong justifications for exercising retrenchment, LIFO may be disregarded (FAQ Vol. 3, Ministry of Human Resources of Malaysia, 2020).

In addition, the MHR has encouraged employers to adhere to the "Guidelines on Handling Issues Relating to Contagious Outbreaks Including Novel Coronavirus (2019-NCOV)" (Ministry of Human Resources Guidelines, Press Statement dated 5 February 2020). Paragraph (iii) of the guidelines briefly seeks employers to ensure that employees be provided with full pay upon receiving quarantine orders from a registered medical practitioner, upon return from an official duty from countries with COVID-19 cases. Paragraph (iv) of the guidelines seeks employers to not to prevent any employees from attending work if no quarantine orders are issued against them (MInistry of Human Resources Guidelines, 2020).

2.2.2 Singapore

Redundancy Law: The words 'redundancy' or 'retrenchment' are not defined in Singapore's Employment Act (Cap 91). Section 45 of the Act provides that no employee who has been in continuous service with an employer for less than three years shall be entitled to any retrenchment benefit on the termination of his service by the employer on the ground of redundancy or by reason of any re-organization of the employers' profession, business, trade or work. However, the Court of Appeal in

Bethlehem Singapore Pte Ltd v Ler Hock Seng & Ors [1995] 1 SLR 1 held that the particular section cannot be construed to imply that employers are required to pay retrenchment benefits to their employees with more than three years' continuous service with them.

Retrenchment Benefits: Retrenchment benefits in Singapore depends on the size and financial position of the company and is normally stated in the contract of employment to avoid any conflict.

Unfair Dismissal: Section 14(2) of the Employment Act states that an employee may lodge a claim for wrongful dismissal if the employee feels that he/she was dismissed without just cause or excuse.

Doctrine of Frustration in Contract: In Singapore, employers are not encouraged to rely on the doctrine of frustration during the trying period of the MCOs. The legitimate reason is that the doctrine is only applicable in situations where contractual parties are finding it impossible to perform the contract rather than facing difficulty to perform the contract.

Government Measures: The Ministry of Manpower (“MoM”) guidance on workforce reduction is to: (i) decide on manpower needs in the long run; (ii) inform MOM before carrying out any retrenchment exercise; (iii) consult with the union for a unionised company; (iv) be non-discriminatory against employees; (v) treat the workforce with dignity and respect; and (vi) lengthening the retrenchment notice period. During the retrenchment exercise, an employer should (i) Pay all salaries; and (ii) Help affected employees look for alternative jobs (Ministry of Manpower website, 2020). The MOM also requires employers to notify it in relations to matters on no-pay leave and cost-saving measures. Prior to resorting to no-pay leave (as a last resort exercise), employers are to observe the Tripartite Advisory on Managing Excess Manpower and Responsible Retrenchment measures which include training, redeployment, flexible work schedule, shorter work week and temporary layoff. (Ministry of Manpower, 2020).

Section 2 of the Employment (Returns on Salary Reduction Measures) Notification 2020 which came into effect on 29 May 2020 allows an employer to cut operating expenses by reducing the working hours of an employee that results in a reduction of the his/her salary or by giving an employee a leave of absence with reduced salary or without salary for an agreed period; and a reduction in an employee’s gross rate of pay, but not a reduction or withholding of a wage increment.

2.2.3 The United Kingdom

Redundancy: Redundancy exercise is as follows: (i) last in, first out; (ii) volunteer basis; (iii) disciplinary records; and (iv) staff appraisal markings, skills, qualifications and experience. However, an employer can make an employee redundant without having to follow a selection process if the employee’s job has ceased to exist.

Employers have to comply with additional statutory obligations if they are planning a large number of redundancies. According to Darbourne (2014), where at least 20 redundancies are planned within a period of 90 days' or less, the employer must consult collectively with appropriate employee representatives about the redundancies.

Retrenchment benefits: Section 135 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 provides that an employer shall pay his employee, who is made redundant, a sum of "statutory redundancy pay" if the latter has been working for the former for 2 years or more. His entitlement would be based on a statutory formula as follows: (i) half a week's pay for each full year if he were under 22; (ii) one week's pay for each full year if he were 22 or older, but under 41; and (iii) one and a half week's pay for each full year if he were 41 or older; and the length of service is capped at 20 years. In addition, the employee may be entitled to contractual redundancy payments and payment in lieu of notice if notice is not given (a sum equivalent to the salary which he would have received during the contractual notice period).

Unfair Dismissal: Section 140 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 states an employee is not entitled to redundancy payment if he has been dismissed by his employer by reason of the employee's conduct. However, a genuine redundancy in the absence of a fair procedure entitles a dismissed employee to file an action for unfair dismissal.

Government Measures: In March 2020, the UK Government announced the implementation of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). The purpose of CJRS is to provide for payments to be made to employers on a claim made in respect of them incurring costs of employment in respect of furloughed employees (see Paragraph 2.1 of CJRS). Under paragraph 6.1 of CJSR, an employee is a furloughed employee if (a) the employee has been instructed by the employer to cease all work in relation to their employment, (b) the period for which the employee has ceased (or will have ceased) all work for the employer is 21 calendar days or more, and (c) the instruction is given by reason of circumstances arising as a result of coronavirus or coronavirus disease. Under the first phase of the scheme, employers could reclaim up to 80% of furloughed staff wage costs from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). A further flexible phase allows employees to be partially furloughed, combined with part-time working (Coronavirus (Covid-19): Redundancy Guide, 2020).

3. Methodology

Studies in law and society generally involve analysis of statutes, reported case laws, court procedural rules and court practice directions. This study depended largely on secondary data. The major sources of data include statutory laws, journal articles, reported cases, law books and relevant information retrieved from the internet were analysed and discussed. The methods employed in this study were descriptive aimed at fact finding and positive analytical criticisms.

4. Findings, Discussion and Analysis

The findings show that management decisions on workforce reduction especially during the COVID-19 outbreak must accord with employment law and existing government measures. Apart from that, an employer's failure to resolve issues of workforce reduction, according to the law and government measures would result in trade disputes and eventual court action.

Employers who intend to reduce their workforce must not forget that they have been given numerous financial aids by the government to cushion the economic impact of COVID-19 outbreak on their businesses. These aids are in the form of stimulus packages or financial aids to employers such as the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) United Kingdom in respect of furloughed employees (see Paragraph 2.1 of CJRS). Similarly, the Employment (Returns on Salary Reduction Measures) Notification 2020 introduced in Singapore has allowed employers to reduce operating expenses such as by reducing the working hours of an employee that results in a reduced amount of take-home salary.

Companies generally attempt to reduce their workforce as a result of a merger or takeover. Employers are only allowed to do so, subject to the governing laws of their respective countries. The continuing inability of employers to manage the financial performance of their businesses due to COVID-19 outbreak should be accepted as a legitimate reason to reduce their workforce. Based on the cited case laws and statutory laws in the literature review, it is found that employers are generally allowed to reduce their workforce if there is genuine redundancy. The literature review also shows that the countries under study require an employer to follow the golden principle, namely “Last in First Out” (LIFO) as a guide in the retrenchment exercise.

Noticeably, the implementation of movement control orders and government measures to curb the COVID-19 outbreak has a drastic effect on the daily routine of an employee and even an employer. In most countries, the new normal of life requires most employees to work from home (WFH). Restrictions under the movement control orders usually included prohibition of mass movements and closure of private premises in ‘red zone areas’ except those in essential services.

As observed, government measures generally require employers to pay their employees their salary as normally received if they are working from the office. The current situation made it difficult for employers to expect employees to fulfil their contractual obligations as efficiently as possible, especially when they are deprived from moving freely. This raises the issue of whether employers can treat the employment contract as frustrated and used this as a reason to reduce their workforce by way of retrenchment.

Based on the analysis of the literature, retrenchment should only be considered as a last resort after other methods prescribed by government measures to avoid retrenchment have not been effective. In addition, the principles prescribed under the Code of Conduct for Industrial Harmony 1975 ('CCIH') need to be observed to avoid retrenchment by limiting the number of working hours, stop recruitment, avoidance of overtime work, to restrain work for the rest day, to trim down on salary, and/or to suggest temporary lay-offs.

Employers are not supposed to rely on the doctrine of frustration as a result of the movement control order. Most employees are capable of discharging their obligations by WFH. A contract is not frustrated when it is still possible of performance (see Eastacres Development Sdn Bhd v Fatimah Mutallip & Anor [2000] 5 CLJ 379). The rationale is acceptable from the lens of both contracting parties and is good from the aspect of improving harmony in industrial relations. In Malaysia, The Ministry of Human Resources (MHR)'s "Guidelines on Handling Issues Relating to Contagious Outbreaks Including Novel Coronavirus (2019-NCOV)" seek employers provide employees with full pay upon receiving quarantine orders upon return from an official duty from countries with COVID-19 cases. There is no reason for treating the contract as frustrated when employees are capable of rendering their services in exchange of remuneration.

Frustration of contract can arise due to certain unforeseen circumstance not within control and in a situation where neither party caused nor contemplate the supervening event (Lee & Detta, 2017). The employer should be slow to terminate contracts on the basis of frustration. The Employers should not reduce their workforce when they refused to adhere to government measures to cushion the economy due to COVID-19 outbreak. Numerous government incentives (such as where employers could reclaim up to 80% of furloughed staff wage costs in the United Kingdom) are meant to cushion the financial problems faced by the employers. However, refusal to receive incentives might be considered as a self-induced frustration (see Dato' Yap Peng & Ors v Public Bank Bhd & Ors [1997] 3 MLJ 484). Likewise, the workforce should not be reduced merely due to the assumption that the COVID-19 outbreak would last for a number of years to come.

As previously mentioned in the literature review, the doctrine of frustration does not apply when there is a fault in the party pleading it (see Yee Seng Plantations Sdn. Bhd. v Kerajaan negeri Terengganu & Ors. [2000] 3 CLJ 666) and where the particular state of affairs ceases to exist (Codelfa Construction Pty Ltd. V State rail Authority (NSW) [1982] 149 CLR 337). Frustration of contract might take place if it is directly related to situations whereby an employee has been detained by the authorities due to possession of illegal drugs, the death of an employer or employee, and the mental of physical incapacity of an employee which makes him or her impossible to fulfill his or her obligations under an employment contract.

Management decision is generally made by the management itself without interference from any other party. However, unilateral decisions can be disastrous if made in disregard of the governing law and government measures. This would result in trade disputes and eventual court action. In retrenchment exercise, for instance, an employer should ensure that all salaries, including unused annual leave are paid to the retrenched employees on their last day of work; apart from helping them to look for alternative jobs.

The industrial relations system is a tripartite system which involves the participation of the employer, the employees and the government. The literature shows that employers are safeguarded to a certain extent from legal suits by their employees when the government have some right to participate in the decision-making process of the employer. Thus, it is important for the parties to work together in order to ensure industrial harmony in the workforce, especially in facing the effects of COVID-19 outbreak. Making unilateral decisions are risky for the employers and should be exercised diligently in order to avoid trade disputes in the forms of strikes, lockout and picketing. In relation to this, Malaysian employers can find guidance from the recent introduction of the Temporary Measures for Reducing the Impact of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) Act 2020 which provides relief to a party who is unable to perform his contractual obligation as a result of the measures under the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act, 1988. Under the said Act, employers and employees can also resort to mediation to resolve their disputes.

Conclusion

Retrenchment is seen as dismissals or may even be seen as unfair dismissals. Thus, employers must take precautionary steps to avoid the long term inconvenience of having to defend court actions filed against them by aggrieved employees. One way of avoiding such situation is to properly consider government measures and employment laws as well as other applicable laws regulating the workforce. The impact of COVID-19 on the economy would not diminish in a couple of years. With movement control orders, the predicaments faced by employers and employees would not subside.

It is only hoped that governments around the world would provide continuous support and also allow a large number of economic sectors and business activities to operate. As the new normal is the way of life, employers and employees need to adapt to the new working condition with strict compliance to the health standard operating procedures ("SOP"). Most importantly, employers must not violate the laws and adhere to government measures on workforce reduction in order to avoid unending legal actions taken against them by their employees who are aggrieved by their management decisions.

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Acceptance of Violence and Its Concomitants Among Students from Three Types of Schools in Pakistan

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to investigate associations between acceptance of violence and victimisation from physical punishment by teachers, self-esteem, and psychological concomitants among students from three school systems in Pakistan. A questionnaire was completed by 550 girls, and 550 boys. The mean age for girls was 13.3 years, and for boys 14.1. Boys accepted violence significantly more than girls. Students in Urdu Medium schools accepted violence significantly more than students in the Madrassa, and students in English Medium schools accepted it significantly least of all. In English Medium schools, girls accepted violence significantly more than boys, in Urdu Medium schools there was no sex difference, and in the Madrassa, boys accepted it significantly more than girls. Respondents who scored higher than average on acceptance of violence scored significantly higher on victimisation from physical punishment by teachers, anxiety, depression, and hostility, and had significantly lower self-esteem.

Keywords: acceptance of violence, Pakistan, Urdu Medium, English medium, Madrassa, physical punishment by teachers, psychological concomitants

Introduction

The aim of the study was to investigate associations between acceptance of violence in general, victimisation from physical punishment by a teacher, self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and hostility among students from three school systems in Pakistan.

Violence in Pakistan

Pakistan has undergone different forms of violence to such an extent that violence has become a daily phenomenon. Among many different forms of violence, the most common and frequently practiced forms include domestic violence against women and children, and sectarian violence. It has been found that 34% of married women have become victims of physical, sexual, or emotional violence perpetrated by their spouses (National Institute of Population Studies, 2019). Pakistan has been experiencing sectarian violence since the 1980s. The Madrassa have played a significant role in sectarian violence in Pakistan (Grare, 2007), as Madrassas are established on the basis of sects i.e. *Sunni* and *Shia* Madrassas. The Sunni Madrassas are further divided into many sects, which include *Deobandi* Madrassa, *Barelvi* Madrassa and *Ahlehadis* Madrassa. Many violent sectarian organisations in Pakistan originate from Madrassa (International Crisis Group, 2002). The *Sunni* and *Shia* Madrassa have been funded by Saudi Arabia and Iraq respectively (Grare, 2007). The violent activities of sectarian organisations like *Sipa e Sahaba, Lashkr e Jhangvi, Jaishe Muhammad* and *Harkatul Mujahedin* have resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people on sectarian basis. Around 5,037 people have been killed in sectarian violence in Pakistan between 1989-2015 (Asma & Muhammad, 2017).

Violence against Children in Pakistan

In Pakistan, children are raised in an environment replete with violence; they experience violence in both domestic and public domains. In a study, it was found that approximately, 84 % of the children were victims of psychological abuse, 74% of physical violence, 73% of child neglect, and 42% entered child labour (Zakar, 2016). A large number of children become victims of violence in their workplace (Hyder & Malik, 2007). Children are also victimised in the homes. According to a survey conducted among 4,200 children in Pakistan between 5–16-year-old, all the children were victims of physical punishment by their parents at home (Holden & Ashraf, 2016). The most frequently practiced forms of punishment at home include slapping, hitting with stick, and kicking. Victimisation of children from physical punishment is also common in schools. According to a study, physical punishment is used in order to discipline children in around 89% of both public and private schools in Pakistan (Holden & Ashraf, 2016).

Acceptance of Violence and Acceptance of Physical Punishment

Several studies have reported that males accept violence to a higher degree than women (Kaura, & Lohman, 2007; Yorohan, 2011). High levels of approval of violence has also been shown to be associated with a higher likelihood to be both a victim and a perpetrator of violence (Spencer, Morgan, Bridges, Washburn-Busk, & Stith, 2017). If peers have accepting attitudes towards aggression, it predicts aggressive behaviour in school children (Jung, Krahé, & Busching, 2018). The link was mediated by external locus of control. The authors argue that beliefs of non-control promote aggressive behaviour in children. External locus of control is the tendency to locate causes for events outside the self (Connell, 1985). Another study has also revealed that peers' accepting attitudes of aggression promoted aggression but only for children with low levels of prosocial behaviour (Jung & Schröder-Abé, 2019).

It has been argued that accepting attitudes towards violence could serve as coping mechanism in a situation where the victim has no possibility to defend her/himself or to flee the situation. For women, but not for men, accepting attitudes towards rape in intimate relationships has been found to correlate significantly positively with frequency of victimization from sexual abuse in the relationship (Nakyazze, Österman, & Björkqvist, 2018). Victimisation from physical punishment during childhood and approval of physical punishment in adulthood have also been found to be correlated (Bower-Russa, Knutson, & Winebarger, 2001; Deater-Deckard, Lansford, Dodge, Pettit, & Bates, 2003).

Cultural factors are associated with approval of physical punishment. Higher levels of approval have been found among students from Asian universities than students from European universities (Douglas, 2006). Approval rates are also lower among women than men and belonging to an affluent family was related to lower levels. In a study carried out in Pakistan, 65% of the teachers were found to accept physical punishment in order to create discipline (Plan Pakistan, 2013). In another study, 76% of the parents also reported that they accepted physical punishment (Holden & Ashraf, 2016).

The Educational System in Pakistan

There are many different types of schools in Pakistan; the main three categories are Urdu Medium, English Medium, and the Madrassa (religious seminaries). Choice of educational system reflects the social-economic class in Pakistan. In the English Medium school system, the elite English Medium schools serve the needs of the ruling and affluent class while the only option for the lower social class is to send their children to public Urdu Medium schools or Madrassa due to their affordability (Khattak, 2014). The enrolment rate to primary and middle school in Pakistan are 71% and 18% respectively (Government of Pakistan, 2017). The school drop-out rate is around 73% for the children between 5–16 years of age (Mughal, Aldridge, & Monaghan, 2019).

The English Medium schools are privately owned by individuals or organisations. According to an estimate, around 25–33% of all children join private schools (Amjad & MacLeod, 2014). There are many categories of English Medium schools; they are characterised by the level of educational performance and the fee of the schools. The elite English Medium schools are expensive, and they are free to charge high tuition fees, administrative fees, and other extra charges. Hence, they cater the needs of the privileged class and disregard the sections of society that cannot afford high tuition fees (Siddiqui & Gorard, 2017). Study performance is better in private schools than in public schools (Amjad, & MacLeod, 2014). Students from elite English Medium schools have been found to have higher self-esteem than students from other types of schools (Nazar, Österman, & Björkqvist, 2020).

Urdu Medium schools are usually in the public sector; 37 % of the middle schools in Pakistan are in the public sector (Government of Pakistan, 2017). The medium of instruction in these schools is Urdu, which is a national language of Pakistan. Urdu Medium schools are usually not well-equipped with modern facilities. Some schools have no actual school building and classes are arranged under the shadow of trees (Raheem, 2015). Schools are not easily accessible; students often need to travel up to five kilometres daily to reach their school. Since these schools are few, the classrooms are usually overcrowded, which affects the quality of education (Raheem, 2013). School burnout has been found to be highest among boys from Urdu Medium schools in Pakistan (Nazar et al., 2020).

The Madrassa are Islamic schools where students get more religious than formal education. There are 32,272 Madrassas in Pakistan of which 3% are in the public sector, and 97% are in the private sector (Government of Pakistan, 2017). The enrolment rate of boys and girls is 65% and 35% respectively. Students mostly come from less educated families (Cockcroft, & et al., 2009). The Madrassas got international attention after 9/11. They have been accused of supporting militancy (Delavande & Zafar, 2015), which is argued to be controversial (Fair, 2008). Although the enrolment rate in Madrassa is around 1 % (Andrabi, Das, Khwaja, Zajonc, 2006) the influence of Madrassa students over the society is much higher than their enrolment rate. The students educated from Madrassa usually aim to be the religious scholars in the future. They work as a pressure group and their influence in the society is far greater than their number (Bano & Ferra, 2018). Previous studies show Madrassa students to have lower levels of religious tolerance than students from English Medium schools (Nazar, Österman, & Björkqvist, 2017), higher levels of anxiety, hostility and depression, and lower levels of self-esteem than students from other school systems (Nazar et al., 2020). Victimisation of school children and adolescents in the form of physical punishment is also a common phenomenon in Urdu Medium schools and Madrassa in Pakistan (Nazar, Österman, & Björkqvist, 2019; Save the Children UNICEF, 2005).

Method

Sample

A questionnaire was completed by 550 girls, and 550 boys, from three types of schools in Pakistan. The three school types were Urdu Medium (200 girls, 200 boys), English Medium (175 girls, 175 boys), and Madrassa (175 girls, 175 boys). The age range of the students was between 11 and 15 years of age. The mean age for girls was 13.3 years (*SD* 1.0), and for boys 14.1 (*SD* 1.0). The age difference between girls and boys was significant ($t_{(1098)} = 13.89$, $p < .001$).

Instrument

Acceptance of violence was measured with 12 items. The single items are presented in Table 1. Response alternatives were on a five point scale (0 = strongly disagree, 1=

disagree, 2 = undecided, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). Cronbach's alpha for the scale was .86.

Table 1: *Single Items in the Scale Measuring an Accepting Attitude towards Violence (N = 1100)*

It is ok to use violence to get whatever you want.
People who use violence get respect.
If a person hits you, you should hit them back.
If someone starts a fight you should walk away. *)
It is good to hit a person who commits a crime.
I like to watch movies which are full of violence.
I like to play violent games.
If someone insults or makes fun of your family, it is ok to hit him/her.
If someone insults or makes fun of your religion, it is ok to hit him/her.
If someone insults or make fun of your country, it is ok to hit him/her.
In order to defend your country, war is necessary.
It is ok to hit a Muslim who does not belong to your faith.

*) = Recoded

Victimisation from physical punishment by a teacher was measured with a scale consisting of 11 items. Single items of the scale have been published previously (Nazar et al., 2019). The response alternatives were on a five-point scale (0 = never, 1 = seldom, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, 4 = very often). Cronbach's Alpha for the scale was = .91. Anxiety, depression, and hostility were measured with three subscales of the the Brief Symptom Inventory (Derogatis & Melisaratos, 1983). Responses were given on a five-point scale (0 = not at all, 1 = slightly, 2 = moderately, 3 = very much, 4 = extremely much). Cronbach's Alphas were .93 for all three scales. Self-esteem was measured with three items from the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965): (a) On the whole, I am satisfied with myself, (b) I feel that I have a number of good qualities, and (c) I am able to do things as well as most other people do. The response alternatives were on a five-point scale (0 = strongly disagree, 1 = disagree, 2 = undecided, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree). Cronbach's Alpha for the scale was .77.

Procedure

The paper-and-pencil questionnaires were distributed in 17 schools in Lahore, Pakistan. Six Urdu Medium public schools, six English Medium elite schools and five Madrassa took part in the study. The data were collected between December 2016 and April 2017.

Ethical Considerations

The study was carried out anonymously and in accordance with the principles concerning human research ethics of the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 2013), and guidelines for the responsible conduct of research (Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity, 2012).

Results

Acceptance of Violence among Girls and Boys in Three Types of Schools

A univariate analyses of variance (ANOVA) with age as covariate showed significant differences on acceptance of violence for sex [$F_{(1, 1093)} = 4.76$, $p = .029$, $\eta_p^2 = .004$], for school type [$F_{(2, 1093)} = 97.85$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .152$], and for the interaction between them [$F_{(2, 1093)} = 36.73$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .063$] (Fig. 1). Boys accepted violence significantly more than girls did. Scheffé's test revealed that the students in Urdu Medium schools accepted violence significantly more than the students in the Madrassa, and that the students in English Medium schools accepted it significantly least of all. In English Medium schools, girls accepted violence significantly more than boys [$t_{(348)} = 4.95$, $p < .001$], in Urdu Medium schools there was no difference between girls and boys, and in the Madrassa boys accepted it significantly more than girls [$t_{(348)} = 6.69$, $p < .001$].

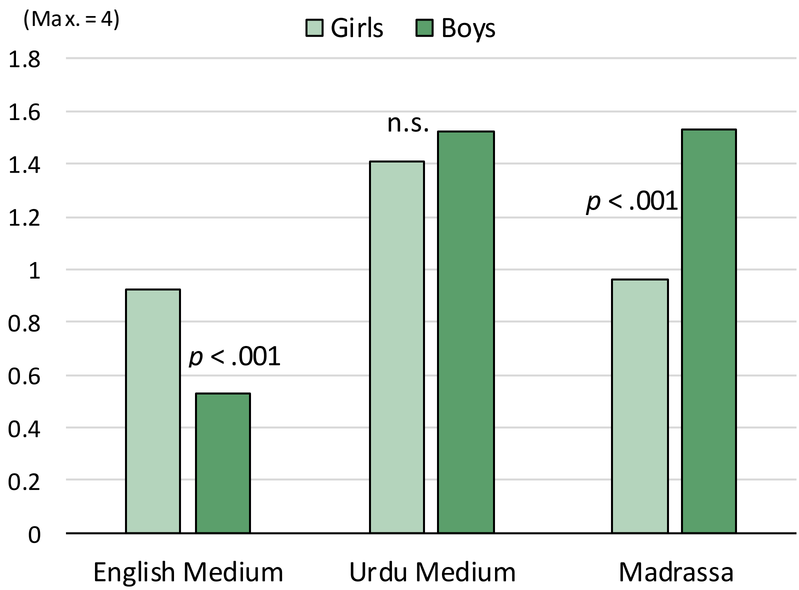

Figure 1. Mean values on acceptance of violence among students from three types of schools in Pakistan ($N = 1100$).

Concomitants of Acceptance of Violence

Acceptance of violence was, for both girls and boys, significantly correlated at the $p \leq .001$-level with victimisation from physical punishment by a teacher, anxiety, depression, and hostility (Table 2). It was also significantly correlated with low self-esteem for boys but not for girls.

Table 2: *Correlations between Acceptance of Violence and Five Other Scales for Girls (n = 550) and Boys (n = 550)*

Acceptance of Violence	Girls	Boys
Victimisation from Physical Punishment by a Teacher	.26 ***	.43 ***
Anxiety	.16 ***	.43 ***
Depression	.26 ***	.44 ***
Hostility	.24 ***	.45 ***
Self-esteem	-.08 †	-.12 **

*** $p \leq .001$; $p < .01$; † $p < .10$

Two groups were constructed, one with scores above the average, and one with scores below the average on acceptance of violence (High/Low). A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted with acceptance of violence group as independent variable and five scales as dependent variables (Table 3, Fig. 2). The multivariate analysis was significant. Respondents who scored higher than average on acceptance of violence scored significantly higher on victimisation from physical punishment by teachers, anxiety, depression, and hostility, and significantly lower on self-esteem.

Table 3: *Results of a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) with Acceptance of Violence (High/Low) as Independent Variable and Five Scales as Dependent Variables, (N = 1100). Cf. Fig. 2*

	F	*df*	*p* <	η_p^2
Effect of Acceptance of Violence (High/Low)				
Multivariate analysis	45.02	5, 1094	.001	.171
Univariate analyses				
Victimisation from Physical Punishment by Teachers	104.23	1, 1098	.001	.087
Anxiety	127.76	“	.001	.104
Depression	169.93	“	.001	.134
Hostility	154.29	“	.001	.123
Self-esteem	20.62	“	.001	.018

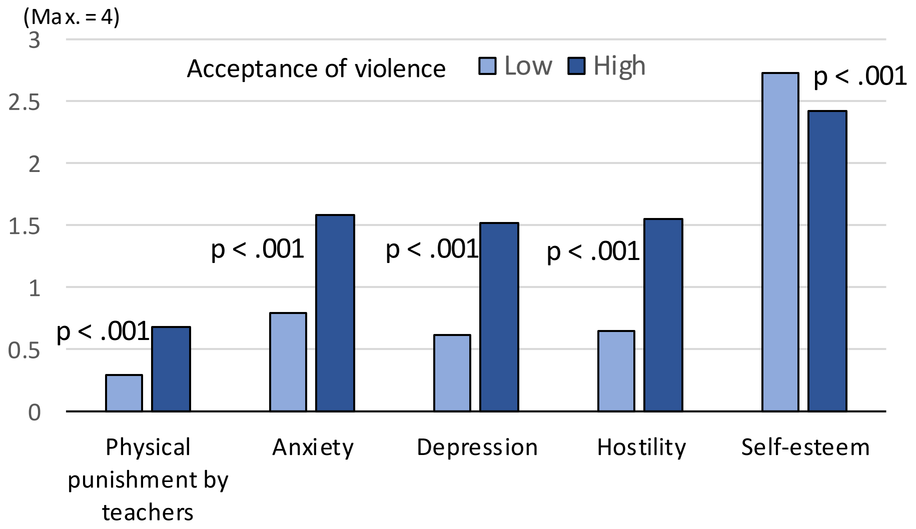

Figure 2. Mean values on five variables for students who reported high vs. low acceptance of violence (N = 1100), c.f. Table 2.

Discussion

The aim of the study was to investigate acceptance of violence, sex differences, and links with anxiety, depression, hostility, and self-esteem among students from Urdu Medium schools, English Medium schools, and Madrassa in Pakistan. In the present study, students in Urdu Medium schools accepted violence significantly more than students in the Madrassa, and students in the English Medium schools accepted it significantly least of all. This result is in line with a previous study where it was found that students from Urdu medium school scored higher on acceptance of physical punishment than students from the Madrassa, and students from English medium school scored lowest (Nazar et al., 2019). Throughout history, the Madrassa have played a significant role in sectarian violence in Pakistan (Grare, 2007; International Crisis Group, 2002). In these two studies, however, the Madrassa students accepted violence in general and physical punishment at school to a lesser degree than students from Urdu schools. The reason for this is not clear. Possibly, since the Madrassa are religious schools, they stress nonviolence more than is done in the Urdu medium schools.

Overall, boys were found to accept violence significantly more than girls did. This result is in line with previous studies where males have been found to have higher levels of acceptance of violence than females (Kim, Lee, & Farber, 2019). However, there was an interaction effect between school system and sex. While boys from the Madrassa accepted violence significantly more than girls, in Urdu schools, girls and boys accepted violence equally much. In English Medium schools, on the other hand, boys accepted violence significantly less than girls, with their mean scores being lowest of all the groups. The result from the English medium schools is supported by a previous study where boys from this school system accepted physical punishment at school less than girls and boys from the other two school systems (Nazar et al., 2019). The fact that boys from English Medium schools accepted violence in general and physical punishment at school least of all, even less than girls from the same school system, is a positive trend that deserves to be followed up in future studies.

Respondents who scored higher than average on acceptance of violence scored significantly higher on victimisation from physical punishment by teachers. The correlation was higher for boys than for girls. Previous studies have also found a link between victimisation from physical punishment and acceptance of it (Anderson & Kras, 2007; Bower-Russa, et al., 2001; Nazar et al., 2019). Previous studies have found a large number of students from Urdu medium schools to be victims of physical punishment both at school and at home (Save the Children UNICEF, 2005). Physical punishment has in some cases resulted in the death of school children in Pakistan (Dawn 2017).

Respondents who scored higher than average on acceptance of violence also scored significantly higher on anxiety, depression, and hostility, and significantly lower on self-esteem. Exposure to violence and witnessing of violence has been shown to be associated with trauma symptoms such as depression, aggression, and distress (Buka, Stichick, Birdthistle, & Earls, 2001; Flannery, Wester, & Singer, 2004). While acceptance of violence was shown to be associated with higher levels of anxiety, depression, and hostility, this circumstance does not implicate a cause-effect relationship. Other intervening factors such as family background, socio-economic status, or experiences of violence might also be involved in high levels of negative psychological concomitants.

High levels of approval of violence has been shown to be a risk factor for being both a victim and a perpetrator of violence (Spencer et al, 2017). High levels of acceptance of violence among students in Urdu medium schools is a cause of concern, since a large number of Pakistani students join Urdu medium schools due to its affordability. This fact might also be one of the underlying factors contributing to high numbers of incidents of violence in Pakistan. Future studies could investigate the role of socio-economic status and family background in order to explore violence in school setting in Pakistan.

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Applied Research in the Production of a Genre Film: Production Design and Realization of a School Movie

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Abstract

The production of a film for research purposes (film-based research) is a growing qualitative scientific research method, applied in many scientific fields. The researcher of the film-based research is an active part of the process, aiming at formulating questions and disputes rather than seeking answers. The object of the research is located in the cinematic production of a fiction film belonging to the genre of School Movies, in combination with the application of the auteur theory. The results of the present study highlight the importance of the personality of the researcher, who should balance between scientific principles and the needs and requirements of film production.

Keywords: film-based research, School Movies, auteur theory, film production

Introduction

This article describes the results of my postdoctoral research entitled *"Applied research in the production of a genre film: production design and realization of a School Movie"*. This research has been conducted at the School of Film of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki for two years, from 20/11/2018 to 20/11/2020. The investigation emerged as a result of my involvement with my doctoral dissertation on the genre of School Movies. More specifically, it is motivated by the study of the formation and evolution of School Movies, a category of films that presents specific semantic, syntactic and pragmatic features (according to Altman's approach), and utilizing the auteur theory, I searched - in an applied research level - those elements that lead to the production of a School Movie. During the first months of the second year of research, the restrictions imposed due to the pandemic of coronavirus, and the subsequent objective difficulties, led to a redefinition of research objectives with an emphasis on organizing and planning *Do It Yourself* production model, excluding the production elements and post-production process.

Literature review

The arts based research is a new phenomenon which uses the arts (music, poetry, literature, dance, theater, cinema) as research approaches to capture qualities of life that have an impact on what we know and what we live (Barone, 2003). Such contributions can be found in the poetic use of language, in the expressive use of narrative, and in the sensory creation of a cinematic film. In recent years, the use of arts based research finds several applications in many scientific fields. In the case of Barone (2003), the arts based research uses the artistic expression, as a way to present a set of images from the existing educational process, which will lead to an understanding of teachers' and students' educational experience. Images of school life, basically negative in public schools for an outside observer, come to light with the help of a film or documentary.

In his article *Challenging the Educational Imaginary: Issues of Form, Substance, and Quality in Film - Based Research*, Barone (2003) deals with quality issues in film-based educational research projects. He proposes the criteria related to both the aesthetic form and the substance, which are appropriate for assessing the usefulness of educational films, in the effort to achieve a possible goal for educational research based on cinema. The goal of this effort is to effectively address the educational establishment imaginary. This imagery is described as a set of images of schools and school people, rooted in the wider culture which advocates a grueling narrative about education. Issues of quality and usefulness are explored in the context of a film, made by an educator and presented (among other things) at film festivals or at the pedagogical school of the author himself (Barone, 2003).

As a key branch of arts based research, the film-based research is a method which, according to Wood & Brown (2012), *"(its) aim is to construct a framework from which to analyse the interconnection between filmmaking, as a mode of aesthetic engagement, and the system of domination that shapes the parameters of qualitative research. A key insight that emerges from this analysis is that the practice of filmmaking can be a highly affective form of qualitative research in itself, with its own distinctive mode of communicating thoughts and feelings together"* (Wood & Brown, 2012, p. 131) .

An important addition to the theoretical framework of the film-based research is the article by Martin Wood, Perttu Salovaara and Laurent Marti (2003), *Manifesto for film making as organisational research*, in which the authors make four basic principles on the subject of organizational studies: rescue of the research field, provocation of new thought, design of a non-conventional research and, finally, integrating production and distribution (Wood, Salovaara & Marti, 2018).

Main objectives and assumptions of research

Assuming that the production of a cinematic work is a method of scientific research (film-based research) which uses the means and processes of the applied art of cinema, I can state the main objective of the research, which is the production of a genre film and specifically, a School Movie.

In this case, the proposed research which can be viewed as an applied analysis of both the film genre of School Movies and the auteur theory reflects on the personality of the scientist - film producer. Therefore, the main objectives of the postdoctoral research were formulated as follows:

The planning, organization and execution of the production of a digital movie that belongs to the genre of School Movies, that is, a film which contains specific semantic / syntactic / pragmatic characteristics, as defined by me in my phd thesis (Aletras, 2018).

The study of the role of a film producer, who is not only treated as the coordinator of the project, but he is in charge of many qualities (screenwriter, director, etc.), too. The researcher-film producer can be treated as an auteur, in the research context set by Brown & Wood in 2012, and according to the characteristics given to the term by Francois Truffaut. Truffaut's views were transformed into an aesthetic theoretical movement, that of "politique des auteurs", according to which «auteurs are treated as authors or artists whose creative voice has a particular influence on all stages of film production, from planning and directing, up to post-production management. An example of a cinematic auteur is Hitchcock, who is considered - according to Sarris - the 'touchstone of touchstones' of the movement "(Wood and Brown, 2012, p. 134).

Research method

According to what has been presented in the literature review, the methodological core of this proposal is the new form of arts based research and specifically, that based on film-based research. In this sense, the planning of film production of a School Movie (fiction film) in combination with the application of the creator's theory is an innovative application of film-based research that will lead to useful research experiences and conclusions, which will be evaluated both methodologically (what is the value of film-based research as a research method) and in relation to the academic view of the object of film production (similar research was conducted by Brown & Wood in 2009 shooting the short documentary *Lines of Flight*). Based on the above, the production of a cinematic piece of work is not only the object of the research but also a strongly emerging method of qualitative research that involves the researcher, as an active part of field research. In this case, the researcher-filmmaker becomes auteur himself, "creating" through the research process and, at the same time, gaining sensory experiences since the film production (both as a practice and as an object of a study) determines behaviors, emotions and identifications that characterize the professional filmmaker.

The film-based research has been expressed mainly by documentary films. Fiction films are the subject of a scientific analysis in a theoretical context rather than the object of cinematic scientific research. That is why the films made in the context of a scientific research are documentaries, many of which - in recent years - contain strong elements of drama and fiction. Documentaries become a form of cinema that - most of the time - combine the recording of reality with the personal stamp of their creators.

As an example, Barone (2012) mentions the movie *Fear and Learning at Hoover Elementary* (Simon , 1997), a documentary, filmed by the teacher Laura Simon , who was a teacher in a primary school in Los Angeles with, mostly, latin-speaking students. The film - as reported by Barone - traces events that arose as a result of the implementation of a legislative regulation according to which, teachers were obliged to report to the authorities the students who were illegal immigrants. The film dramatically captures the effects of the regulation on the lives and relationships of the characters, with the director using documentary techniques and thorough editing of the footage, in order to engage viewers in the difficult situations the characters experience (Barone & Eisner, 2011, pp. 25-26).

Most films of this kind are a form of qualitative ethnographic research, with their creators not necessarily being related to academic research. Great filmmakers such as Frederick Wiseman and Michael Moore have left their personal mark through documentaries. Wiseman's documentaries are a special case study of state institutions [*Titicut Follies* (1967), *High School* (1968), *High School II* (1994)]. The absence of a narrator, interviews and the fact that the main characters do not look directly at the camera, give an indirect feeling to the viewer (Nichols, 1978). With the new cinematic techniques and the evolution of technology, along with the wave of controversy brought by the new filmmakers (with F. Wiseman being one of them) compared to the old ones, the line between classic films and documentaries had already been blurred since the ‘60s and ‘70s (Donato,2007). Wiseman’s documentaries are modern ethnographies of organizations, capturing with graphic details, norms, culture, values and systems within the organizations. Wiseman was able to capture the true meaning of an organization through examples, which may seem random to the casual observer. For research purposes, in a business administration training program, Wiseman's projects were used as a reference to introduce students to "organizational reality" (Scherer & Baker, 1999), with particularly positive results. In the case of Michael Moore, the director himself becomes the protagonist of his research, participating and co-shaping the progress in an activist way (*Fahrenheit 9/11, Bowling for Columbine*). The result is making films that have dramatic climaxes and script twists, which proves that the boundaries between documentaries and fiction are becoming increasingly blurred.

In the case of Brown & Wood (2012), the two authors describe their own research effort, using the film- based research method, when in 2009 they shot the film *Lines of Flight*, which, as they describe, is an application of the auteur theory in film production. Their award-winning work *"is both a micro- ethnography of free climbing, a visual geography of the Pennines in North England, an expression of Deleuze's film philosophy and, finally, a socio- historical critique of the oppression and resistance of* *the working class. We use the film to challenge and engage viewers in aesthetic experiences they have not experienced, as if they had actually experienced them. By integrating sounds and images into emotional, dynamic and aesthetic terms, we invite viewers to reflect on their own personalities, emotions and ideas. In addition, as researchers, we extend this ability to reflect ourselves in our own 'implementation practices' of production. By focusing on the specificity of our experiences, we practically contribute to literacy on sensory methodologies*" (Wood & Brown, 2012, pp. 131-132).

Evaluating Brown & Wood's film, *Lines of Flight*, it is easy to see that this is an excellent cinematic creation-research, which accurately captures the application of the auteur theory in cinematic production. Furthermore, this research has been the model for me to proceed with my postdoctoral research **using, this time, the auteur theory on film production of a School Movie**.

Findings

In accordance with the objectives of research, I attempted to produce a school movie, that is, a film governed by specific ideological semantic / syntactic / pragmatic frameworks. Specifically, based on the findings of my doctoral research *Types of Teachers and Educational Systems in cinema. Analysis of the most important School Movies of world film production*, the School Movies are a distinct category of fiction films with main characters teachers and students placed inside school and society. The films of the genre are realistic, with the main syntactic mean, the pursuit of education, which is based on the dialectical contradiction between the purpose (education) and the expedient (educational system). The pragmatic framework is defined by the interactions of multiple users, who are influenced by the respective ideological and economic systems of the country of production (Aletras,2018).

The use of Altman's semantic / syntactic / pragmatic approach was the main methodological tool for documenting the genre of School Movies. The application of this method clearly identified types of teachers (punisher, ideal, democratic, supportive, activist, intellectual, cynical, indifferent, bureaucratic, authoritarian), who seek the best education in a social and racial divided environment, which is expressed by the various educational systems. Therefore, School Movies is a separate and autonomous genre of feature-length fiction films, based on the combination of semantic elements (teacher / student within school and society), which acquire a stable syntax, and which is based on the aim for education. School Movies, created their own film curriculum, representing, in cinematic terms, the equivalent actual, while the film production process of School Movies been fixed by the ideological and economic systems in the countries of production. Also, the diachronic and historical evolution of the genre is reflected through the depicted types of teachers and educational systems, while their themes are related to the economic, political, ideological and racial characteristics of societies. Taking these into account, the semantic / syntactic / pragmatic elements of School Movies - based on the characteristics of real life school - compose a filmic self-existent world, which contributes to the interaction of the real model with the corresponding cinematic one, having the spectators and multiple users of the genre, as intermediates. These changes - usually invisible - create new situations and express new problems that arise over time.

The theoretical framework of the conclusions of my doctoral dissertation was the basis for my postdoctoral research, the time and planning of which covered a period of two years. The research was originally planned based on usual cinematic production process (pre-production, production, post-production) and, specifically, on features of individual film production, in which “the division of labor is very small: the filmmaker oversees every production work, from funding to final editing, and actually performing many of these tasks himself ” (Bordwell & Thompson, 2011, p. 48). In this way, the digitally produced School Movie will serve the objectives of the research and, at the same time, it will be defined by low cost, not "because of its existence, but as part of its logic" (Dimitriou,2011, p. 146) .

Since most of the research was the result of my own effort, I attempted the stage of pre-production (18 months) to cover the biggest part of the schedule. During that time, a lot of actions took place so that, later, at the stage of production (i.e. shooting), as little time as possible and small number of employees would be required. In the pre-production stage, all those procedures that will create the conditions were defined and planned, so that there is a smooth and short filming as well as the completion of the process. During that time, the script was completed. The title of the screenplay is *Kalamonas* and is based on the real facts concerning the students’ uprising of the 4th Grade of Zosimaia High School in 1900, during the Ottoman rule period, in Ioannina City. The development of the original idea into a screenplay as well as the writing of the text were realized by me, of the final text. In the spring of 2020, due to objective difficulties arising from the measures taken to combat the covid-19 pandemic, the objectives of the research were redefined, with an additional emphasis on the organizing and planning of film production, focusing on its thorough story in storyboard, using special software (iClone, Blender). The storyboard provides «a preliminary picture of what the plans should look like in their final form. Before filming the *Godfather III*, Francis Ford Coppola filmed it on video with extras’ voices narrating the dialogue» (Bordwell & Thompson, 2011, p. 37). The approach described was followed by many auteurs, in the past and nowadays. The case of Alfred Hitchcock who «planned each shot in advance, and explained to the director of photography, in detail, what he exactly wanted, is such an example» (Bordwell & Thompson, 2011, p. 59). In this way he managed to have maximum creative control over the artistic result of his vision, and - at the same time - to minimize the cost of production, although he was part of the costly Hollywood film industry. Another typical example is the Estonian school bullying movie, *Klass* (2007) by Ilmar Raag . In this film, the pre-production stage lasted six months while the shooting lasted just twelve days (Aletras,2018).

Discussion and Conclusions

The film production researcher resembles the *do it yourself* filmmaker, who - due to circumstances and financial difficulties - is forced to reinvent methods and approaches that will help him realize his vision. The scientist / researcher, like the *do it yourself filmmaker*, takes the conditions and means at his disposal into account, and tries to use them as effectively as possible, in order to solve problems that may arise. The *do it yourself* researcher / producer reaches his goals through continuous tests, which finally form a path towards self-realization through the continuous analysis of the facts and the (self) critical thinking. The *do it yourself* model can be a holistically person-centered way of production but it fits in with film-based research, a dynamic research method that places the researcher / producer at the center of the research production process. The researcher - under certain conditions - can become a filmmaker (auteur). That depends on how creative and imaginative he can become, acting himself as an autonomous personality, in a scientific way in the field of real film production. For example, during screenwriting, and trying to apply theory to practice, I experimented with combining elements of film theory (Altman's semantic / syntactic approach) with screenwriting techniques, as described by Syd Field (three act structure, characters, obstacles, plot points, resolution, etc.). In my endeavor, there was always the danger of standardization, which, in fact, undermines artistic inspiration and innovation. Such a danger, however, is faced by the filmmakers themselves, when they make films of this kind. In order to avoid it, they seek to enrich the contracts with new elements of the genre. This is how they manage to evolve the film genres, letting their creative imagination surprise the viewers, even though they use the same "recipe". The final script of *Kalamonas* makes up a school movie with features of many cinematic genres: action, adventure and suspense, historical drama, story of characters with strong political elements, and western. What I paid special attention to, is to create an ecumenical story with a strong Greek imprint in its narration. However, writing the script was the most difficult part of my research, as I had to take all the requirements above into consideration.

Also, due to the 'paralysis' caused by the Covid - 19 pandemic in the system of world film production, live action shooting on location became prohibitive. So, I decided to make use of the possibilities software programs offered, like iClone and Blender, which I used in the storyboard planning so that the script of *Kalamonas* can be filmed as an animated feature film. By making such a choice, I finally came to the conclusion that *do it yourself* production method but also film-based research, find in the choice of animation the ideal field of application (although the completion of an animation movie requires a time-consuming process, which far exceeds the time frame of my postdoctoral research) .

In the case of an academic researcher working on such an applied field, strict adherence to the theoretical principles might have undesirable effects on the artistic aspect of the final result. For example, the produced work of art could turn out to be a “lifeless” realization of the theoretical model, without any artistic value. A film-based researcher wishing to work like an auteur should manage to find a balance between the validity of the scientific method and his own personal view. Such a task is extremely difficult, since the researcher will also have to function as a film producer who is interested in the artistic and commercial acceptance of his work.

To sum up, the resulting work of my postdoctoral research offers useful information on qualitative research based on the principles of film-based research, while contributing to the debate on the auteur theory in film studies. The results show that the personality of the researcher plays a catalytic role in conducting the research. The researcher can be considered as an auteur, and film-based research can be applied in terms of the cinematic production process.

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The Influence of Musically Gifted on the Development of Language Competences

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Abstract

Cognitive processes related to children involved in music are directly related to other cognitive processes in the brain because music is known to directly or indirectly affect many mental processes, but we still don't have evidence of how and in which way this process takes place. Since the paper deals with influence of musically gifted students on the development of language competencies, in the theoretical elaboration of the paper we will try to analyze and compare musical intelligence in relation to linguistic intelligence. The empirical part of the paper will present the results of research on the process of mastering language competencies among students going to gymnasium who are musically gifted and attend music education in relation to other students.

Keywords: music, musical ear, language, competence, achievement

Introduction

Research about connection between musical and linguistical abilities is not the latest revelation. Proof of how much the musical talent is important for the development of linguistic competences, or second language acquisition have instigated research in that paticular field in the 30s of the 20th century. (i.e. Dexter & Omwake, 1934).

Starting with development of musical skills in comparison and co-dependence with linguistic competences, we quicky find ourselves analysing the differences and the similarities between musical and linguistic intelligence. It is importnat to stress causation and weaknesses of the educational system which has over course of time produced asymmetrical representation and neglect of the musical culture and art in the existing curricula which ultimately had a negative impact on the dvelopment of a young person. Cases in which musical abilities can have a positive impact to the learnings abilities (whether of a native or second language) is connected to the possibility of the overlap of several types of intelligence (Gardenr, 1993). Gardner states that interaction of various types of intelligence still is not known. The main aim of the current research is the ability of interaction between different intelligence aspects and the possible overlap in various cognitive processes. Eventhough the earlier research was directed at components of the musical anf linguistic abilities, the results can be applied in contemporary research although in some cases the results of the newer research often confirm the same findings as those done before.

In this paper only part of the whole research will be shown. The research covers wider population of elementary schools even including some High school (lyceum) students with the intention of comparing given results.

Musical and linguistical findings

(Broca, 1861, Wernicke, 1874) hundred years ago discovered that certain language and speech difficulties are connected to certain brain defects which led them to conclusion that the left hemisphere is largely responsible for linguistic and analytical processes, while the right hemisphere is important for general facts processing. The old belief was that music belongs to functions of the right hemisphere, while the language was considered to be the function of the left hemisphere. Lately certain notions changed and we now see that the situation is much more complex. It is believed that both hemipsheres have a lot of auxiliary functions which are part of the processing of both linguistical and musical area. (Maess et al, 2001)

Today it is believed that right hemisphere is important for linguistic prosody and intonation (Blonder et al, 1991; Weintraub t al, 1981) which can be important in the understanding of figures of speech like metaphor. Zatorre (2001) is of the opinion that it does not only apply to musical pitch but also to linguistic pitch – simplistically speaking, pitch, intonation anf rhythm are universal categories regardless o the medium via which theyre produced, which is confirmed by Patel and Peretz, 1997) who talk about the possiblity of the left hemisphere processing information regarding both speech and musical pitch.Springer and Deutch (1998, pg. 221) think that „although right hemisphere was connected to the pitch, especially where melodic line was important, the left hemisphere activated when it came to structures of the music intervals.“

Therefore, it can be observed that both right and left hemisphere play the part in pitch processing eventhough differences between musical and linguistic pitch signify that two forms of pitch can be processed independently inside the left hemisphere.

In the current literature the fact which claims that speech and music most likely share nervous resources in the field of intonation, rhythm and time processing is highly stressed. In the same way ouglas and Willatts (1994) results can be explained which show that intonation and rhythmic ability are areas of the music intelligence which most likely affects linguistic skills.

The ever growing research interest for speech and music overlap contributes to the solving of the problem of the structure of such overlap, and also points to the difference between separate cases depending whether the individual has gone through musical training or not.

Relationship between musical education and linguistic skills development

Some research have shown certain overlap in processing music and language in brain; for example Maess et al (2001) show results of the experiment which shows that Broca center is included in musical syntax processing. They suggest that this area is included in processing of many more information than it was believed. Eventhough they think that the left pars opercularis[1]moreso included in linguistic syntax processing, and that right pars opercularis is moreso included in processing od the music syntax, it is important to stress that both hemispheres activate considerably both in music and language. Messa et al research offers proof of firm connection between language and music processing and they conclude that that connection can at least partially explain the influence of musical education and verbal ability. (Douglas and Willatts, 1994)

Patel and Peretz (1997, pg. 191) stress the importance of understanding music as „integration of mutual cognitive processes“ moreso than as an „indivisible whole“. Different research deal with different aspects of musical structure and their relationship with linguistic structures (Patel and Peretz, 1997). characteristics that are studied include melody (contour, pitch, tonality), rhythm, tempo, dynamic, measure and song. The results suggest connection between the execution tasks of melody and linguistic intonation. The research that has been carried out by Fries and Swihart (1990) offers support to existance of mutual mechanism which governs metric organisation of music and language. Conversely, it seems that tonality rendition is only typical of music. Rhythm question in language becomes necessary because it delinates the difference between two different languages therefore placing language rhythm and other expressive methods into certain category is still highly debated.

Despite classification difficulties, it is clear that the rhythm is very important language aspect; i.e., numerous research deal with the manner in which mother tongue rhythm affects speech rendition. (i.e. Otake et al, 1993). Children can differentiate between language pairs based on rhythm all the while their mother tongue is present, but they fail to do so when both languages are unknown to them. (Nazzi et al., 2000)

Weinberger (1998) considers that „music benefits intellectual development which superceeds the music itself... learning and musical performance very likely offer direct neurological benefit. It seems that the connection between music an other intelligence types is worthy of further exploration, and it could be said that „Music“ and „Language“ aren't exactly completely independent, mental capabilites but that they

[1] Pars opercularis is in the back part of the lower frontal brain wheel. Left pars opercularis is part of the Broca's center

are signs of complex sequence of processes in which some are shared, and some are not.

Just as Patel and Peretz (1997) point out, simultaneous language and music study offers the option for understanding and development of language competence just as hearing communication and knowledge in the bigger perspective than it is possible if we focus only on one area. This paper tries to observe the possibility whether high level of musical talent truly contributes to successful language acquisition, that is, in cases where there is no musical education (which could potentially aid it) if such correlation can be equally observed.

Empirical part

The object and the research issue

According to target goal, both issues and research problems have been defined and have been tested on 423 lyceum students grade 1 and 2 of the Split and Zadar area out of which 184 attended musical school or some other musical education whose musical preferences have been tested , and 239 students which never attended any sort of musical education or who never had their musical preferences tested.

Set goal, object and research issue was to tes the correlation and connection of musical and linguistic competences in high school students which attend musical education and those that do not. Musical talent influence on the development of linguistic competences will be researched on achieved results of students in the field of native and second language acquisition.

Hypothesis

Students who attend musical education have better results in studying native and second language.

Musical talent significantly affects development of all other linguistic abilities.

Methods and research sample

During research, survey was used – surveys were created specifically for the purpose of this research. The research included 423 lyceum students of 1 and 2 classes in the area of Split an Zadar. Some of the methods used were: survey, description, comparation of the analysis of achieved results of the students in the field of Croatian and English language.

In the empirical part of this paper with the use of statistical methods, assumed hypotheses are tested.

Table 1. The influence of music education on the results achieved in English language in the 1th grade students.

Results of the English language pronunciation test	Attend music school (more than three years)	Do not attend music school
Above average	69,5 %	58,3 %
Average	23,8 %	29,7 %
Below average	8,7 %	12,0 %

Table 2. The influence of music education on results achieved in Croatian language in the 1th grade students

Results of the Croatian language pronunciation test	Attend music school (more than three years)	Do not attend music school
Above average	64,3 %	56,8%
Average	31,2 %	38,1%
Below average	4,5 %	3,1%

Table 3. The influence of music education on results achieved in English language in the 2th grade students.

Results of the English language pronunciation test	Attend music school (more than three years)	Do not attend music school
Above average	87,2 %	66,1 %
Average	12,2 %	29,8 %
Below average	0,6 %	4,1 %

Table 4. The influence of music education on results achieved in Croatian language in the 2th grade students.

Results of the Croatian language pronunciation test	Attend music school (more than three years)	Do not attend music school
Above average	79,2 %	67,8 %
Average	19,9 %	26,7%
Below average	0,9 %	4,5 %

Discussion

In the first category of the tables we refer to those 184 students who attend musical school or have some other form of musical education, which includes getting tested to see basic musical preferences. In this category musical education entails playing an instrument, and not theoretical musical education. Second category refers to 239 students who do not attend any musical school nor who have been tested to see musical preference which does not necessarily exclude musical talent displayed by some students which fall into the group.

Let's give an example which can be seen in table 3. which shows that 87% of students, who attend second grade of high school and who have not played an instrument for three years or longer have, showed above average results for pronunciation test both in Croatian and English language, whereas only 12,2% achieved average result. Only 0,6%, almost not one student, have achieved very low results.

Therefore, throughout this research and displayed results in above showed tables, the evidence are apparent and unanimously show the correlation between musical capablities and skills with the ability to acquire foreign language more successfully, unlike mother tongue. Given results show that the ability to differentiate pitch (Intonation) and rhythm in constant and independent relationship with acoustic interpretation of foreign and native languge. It is also very useful to add the comparison with similar research which have been carried out in elementary schools (on younger students) where given results undoubtedly show the phenomenon (where students which have engaged themselves in musical education) of achieving better results in development of their linguistic competences in comparison to those which haven't spent as equal amount of time in musical education.

Hypothesis testing

Research results have confirmed both initial hypotheses.

Students who attend musical education have better results in studying native and second language.

Musical talent significantly affects development of all other linguistic abilities.

Conclusion

The ultimate goal is to seek answer to many open and unresolved questions regarding this area. Considering we are dealing with overlap of many different intelligence types, we simultaneously enter into interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary areas which demand more hollistic approach, integration as a foundational connection, team work, co-operative relations of scientists from several scientific fields in order to get closer to the answers that will be regarded as a higher level contribution.

If we do not use the advantages which we can find in natural phenomena, we drift away from the path which leads to success. Concretely speaking, in this case we focus on music which awakens motivational and emotional states which can be interlinked in the dimension of space as well as linguistic intelligence. This paper should encourage further research of the influence of the long-term musical education on other skills, i.e. language or other abilities.

Despite that, it is possible to use music potentiality just like Spychiger (1993) did so that, for instance, a reading lecture becomes more efficient by using the benefit provided by musical education. Taking into consideration presented proof, it is apparent that the connection of music anf other abilities and skills is worth further research, and the results so far have been nothing but exceptionally promising.

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Examining the Deliquescence of Lithium Salts and Those of Other Alkali Metals Through a Range of Humidity

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Abstract

It is well known that lithium chloride is able to extract moisture from the ambient air. Our research in this area has examined a variety of lithium salts for their ability to do so, as well as their counterparts containing sodium and potassium. Additionally, we have made and utilized chambers that allow us to examine deliquescence of these salts in conditions of various humidity. We will present the results, and how these experiments can be adapted to the teaching of laboratory courses.

Keywords: deliquescence, lithium salts, alkali metals, humidity

Introduction

The use of lithium chloride as a means to control the humidity of air in some commercial buildings is a well-established practice;(Fumo and Goswami, 2002) and numerous lithium-chloride-based dessicant packages are commercially available. As well, in some semi-tropical and tropical climates, a few grains of rice are often added to salt shakers to keep the salt dry and easy to pour, as a common practice, because even sodium chloride can extract moisture from the ambient air in humid environments. And yet the examination of deliquescence, while it has a relatively long history, (Steinbach, 1943) does not appear to have been brought into the classroom or the teaching lab in any meaningful way. Most studies of the deliquescent nature of a material appear to be focused on a specific material, or on some application of the property.(Tereschenko, 2015; Salameh and Taylor, 2006; Hiatt et al., 2011; Kallenberger and Froeba, 2018)

Our own recent work has been centered on a comparison between the deliquescent properties of several lithium salts, and their sodium counterparts, as well as their potassium counterparts, to determine which takes up more water from the surrounding air under the same conditions.(Mather et al., 2020) Table 1 shows a summary of the salts used.

Table 1: Salts used to extract moisture from air

Salt	Comment, or common use
LiCl	Used as a pharmaceutical to administer lithium to the body; used as an industrial dessicant.
$LiNO_3$	Produces red colors in fireworks.
Li_2SO_4	Used as a pharmaceutical to administer lithium ion to the body.
NaCl	Produced on a massive scale; in these experiments, food grade can be used.
$NaNO_3$	Finds use as a food additive, number E251.
Na_2SO_4	Used as a filler in laundry detergents; used in paper production
KCl	A major component in “no salt”: dietary supplements
KNO_3	Component of traditional gun-powders, used in fertilizers
K_2SO_4	Component in fertilizers

As can be seen from Table 1, several of these salts have some use that impacts the general public, although such uses may not be widely known. The use of lithium salts to treat bi-polar disorder, for example, has been studied for decades, at this point.(O’Connell et al., 1991) Similarly, common table salt as well as sodium sulfate, potassium sulfate, and potassium nitrate, are produced on massive scales each year.

Discussion

An extremely simple experiment, one suitable for early college lab classes, as well as those in secondary schools, is simply to measure amounts of lithium chloride and other salts, place them in pre-weighed containers, and allow them to sit, open to the surrounding atmosphere for some amount of time. In many environments, within one hour some change in the mass of the salts occurs, routinely an increase in the mass. But the salts can also be allowed to sit for longer periods. Students can take measurements of changes in mass over the course of a day, week, or even a semester, if the instructor chooses to extend the observations for this long a period of time. Graphs can be made of the changes in mass of each material over the course of time, allowing students practice in both data gathering and analysis.

Concentrations, Molarity and molality

An interesting outgrowth of this straightforward set of comparisons is that both molarity and molality can be determined for each of the salts. Molarity is certainly one of the most common measures of concentration taught in general chemistry classes. Although molality is less commonly taught, the mass of the starting salt, and the mass of the material after some time has elapsed provides the mass of the water that was extracted from the air, and thus what is required to determine molality as well.

Weight percentage

Gathering the changes of mass for each salt over some period of time also allows an instructor to discuss, and to have students compute, weight percentage of water and salt in each of the samples. After looking through a number of general chemistry textbooks, it is fair to say that weight percentage is taught in less detail in general chemistry classes than molarity, although it has not vanished from the curriculum.

Dry environments

While comparing the mass of water taken up from the air by various lithium, sodium, and potassium salts over time is a useful one, and works in many environments, how can this experiment be performed in extremely dry locales? There are numerous schools, colleges, and universities that exist in or near the deserts of all six of the inhabited continents. It seems logical that the uptake of water by salts in such dry environments will be tiny, and may not be noticeable at all, simply because there is very little water in the air in such places.

To illustrate this phenomenon in a dry environment, we have found that a simple, inexpensive environmental chamber can be made using a large beaker, two small containers, and some improvised lid. The experimental steps can be listed broadly as follows, below.

Experimental

All salts were purchased from scientific supply houses such as Aldrich or Flinn Scientific, and used as purchased.

Experimental steps are:

1. Weigh some amount of a salt (lithium chloride, or one of the others listed in Table 1) and place it in a small beaker or Erlenmeyer flask.
2. Weigh some amount of water, and place it in a second small beaker or Erlenmeyer flask.
3. Place both small containers in a much larger beaker.
4. Cover the beaker with aluminum foil, plastic wrap, or other material. Tape this “lid” onto the large beaker. An example is shown in Figure 1.

5. After an hour – although the experiment can run for more or less time – remove the two small containers, and again weigh the salt in the first, and the water in the second.

Figure 1: Simple environmental chamber for deliquescence experiments

Elevating the temperature of the chamber

The use of this simple set up can be further adjusted to optimize the uptake of water by any salts in the chamber. The entire apparatus can be immersed in warm to hot water bath, often simply a large crystallizing dish or a beaker larger than the others. This can be held in place with a variety of weights, and the amount of time for which this elevated temperature experiment can be varied, as has been mentioned above, for other iterations of the experiment and comparisons.

Once again, at the conclusion of some pre-set amount of time, the inner container of salt, and the inner container of water can be weighed, providing the needed data for the just-mentioned discussion and computing of concentrations. If the instructor does not have a single container large enough to run this experiment with the nine salts listed in Table 1, perhaps obviously, several environmental chambers and warm or hot water baths can be constructed.

Conclusions, educational applications, recommendations

Simplicity

This remains a very simple experiment, but one with numerous connections to concepts taught in general chemistry classes,(NGSS; Next Generation Science Standards; Science Education for Responsible Citizenship) such as: gases, and the behavior of matter as it changes from liquid to gas, then back to liquid; concentrations of salts, as molarity, molality, or weight percent; and the phenomenon of deliquescence by a variety of ionic salts.

Importantly, the experiments, and especially the construction of isolated environmental chambers allows for the adjustment of the environment each of the salts is in. This permits the student to maximize the uptake of water, and to make the deliquescence of salts easy and straightforward to observe.

Connections to gas phase chemistry

This set of experiments allows discussion of how water moves as a vapor. This lab therefore allows students to see, understand, and discuss the movement of some material as a gas. Since gases that are visible all tend to be toxic (such as bromine or iodine vapor), it is difficult to present experiments to students in which they can see direct or indirect evidence of a gas moving. By weighing an amount of water and an amount of salt prior to this experiment, then weighing the container of water and of salt after it has been in a controlled humidity chamber, students have direct evidence that a material – water – has moved by being transformed into a gas, then back to a liquid. It can be recommended that any discussion of gas behavior include this phenomenon.

Adaptability

We opted for the use of beakers with nothing more than aluminum foil or plastic coverings as environmentally-controlled chambers because they are simple, very inexpensive, and the easiest to adapt to any teaching lab or classroom. There are certainly other sealed containers that can be used to create a small environment in which the humidity can be adjusted and increased. But many appear to be more expensive than a beaker and plastic cover, and thus might be too expensive for some schools and school districts. One of our aims was to develop a set of experiments that is easy to adapt to virtually any classroom; and we believe this has been accomplished. It can be recommended that for teaching faculty or instructors, those introducing this to their classes for the first time, that some comparison between different means of making such chambers be presented and become part of the learning experience.

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An Analysis of Some of the Factors that Affect the Role of Party Leaders in Election Campaigns in Albania

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Abstract

In recent election campaigns in Albania, whether general or local, party leaders have become increasingly important. There is a dominance of party leaders in political communication in an electoral campaign. Increasingly the media focus is on leading individuals, neglecting parties and collective identities. Political leaders now serve as a shortcut to informing the electorate. But why does this happen? Is this a feature of the Albanian electoral reality or a trend and influence from developed democracies? What are some of the specific circumstances in the country that enabled this change? Is it a demand from the electorate or an imposition on it? What role does media play in this regard? These and other matters related to it such as: how the party leaders are elected, internal party democracy issues, the methods and tactics of campaign organization, the role of electoral rules and the type of electoral system, etc. shall be briefly addressed in this paper, which is based on observations and analysis of three election campaigns, two general elections (2017 & 2021) and one local (2015).

Keywords: political communication, media, party leader, campaign

Introduction

In the recent election campaigns in Albania, whether local or general, there is an increasing role of leaders of political parties. We do not even exaggerate if we say that they are dominating the traditional media and especially television screens. This is not just an Albanian phenomenon, although the culture of political communication in the country is favorable for such a show. Nowadays, the role of party leaders in the political campaigns is also increasing in developed western democracies.

Personalization, according to Professor of Political Science Laura Karnoven refers to “the notion that individual political actors have become more prominent at the expense of parties and collective identities" (p. 4).

Why does this happen?

If we refer to different studies, we notice that the reasons vary.

"Leaders matter, and that under certain circumstances, they can matter a lot" (Bittner, p. 126).

Let us analyze some of the circumstances that make their role important in Albania.

1. The power of leaders comes from the political parties they represent.

In addition to their party's electoral weight, there are also two other specific moments:

The way of electing party leaders.

In Albania, leaders of the main political parties are elected according to the principle of 'one member - one vote'. The membership votes for the nominated candidates. The other party leading bodies are elected with the vote of congress delegates, or a council or committee members elected by the congress.

It is precisely the way they are elected that renders them almost all-powerful, compared to other party leaders. The Professor of Political Science Fortunato Musella highlights the argument of Massari[1] who states that "the internal party regime moves from the parliamentary model to a presidential one" (p. 33).

The situation of internal party democracy

One of the deficiencies of the organization of political parties in Albania is precisely the lack of internal democracy. Party leaders, after being elected to this post, propose and practically define "their teams", which formally become party leadership teams. Neither of the two parties that have governed the country in these past 30 years of transition, allows the existence of factions. They are prohibited by the party statute. The dissenting opinion finds little room, different voices are not heard, and in cases when it becomes public in the media, often the respective individuals have signed the end of their political careers within the party.

2. Selection of candidates for central or local government bodies.

Given the situation when there is no 'primary' within the party and when party members or supporters have very little voice in the selection of party candidacies for members of Parliament or local government bodies, this right is entrusted to the senior party governing bodies. But in reality, the party lists of candidates are compiled by the party leader, or a small group of people led by him/her, and the approval by other party bodies is only of a formal nature. It seems as if the race

[1] Massari, Oreste. 1987. Le transformazioni nella direzione del PSI: la direzione e i suoi membri (1976-1984)

between the candidates is no longer to gain the approval of the party membership, but it has instead been replaced with candidates racing to please the leader. It is the party leader who can jump start, aid or hinder the individual political careers, within a party and beyond.

This time, in the elections of April 2021, DPA[1] started a process aimed at listening to the voice of the membership in this selection process, but in the end, as in other occasions, it was the higher party members and the leader who made the selection and ranking of the candidates in the party lists for MP candidates.

Even in the local elections of 2015, the selection of candidates for local government bodies was implemented in the same way. Well-known researcher and director of the Institute of Political Studies in Tirana, Mr. Afrim Krasniqi voices this concern: "I would like the candidates to be recognized many months in advance so that they have time to prepare their staff, programs and train for the election. It may happen that completely unknown individuals with no administrative experience can become mayors, because they are a last-minute choice of party leaders" (Telegraf, 2015).

3. Another factor that explains the importance of party leaders is the electoral system.

The electoral system in Albania is a proportional regional system, since 2009. Only in the last parliamentary elections were open lists implemented, but the ranking of candidates was determined by political parties.

Either for the sake of the tradition and party affiliations of the electorate, or because of the fact that the system made it very difficult to overturn the ranking in party lists ["To change the ranking of the list, a candidate must receive more preferential votes than the average number of votes received by the nominating party per each seat in the region" (OSCE, 2021)], only three candidates managed to change the order and get elected in the next Parliament, as voter preferences. Other winning candidates, often with very few votes, are grateful for the selection by party leaders.

4. Albanian political tradition, especially that of political transition.

Reading through the pages of the Albanian history books, one notes that strong, powerful individuals are idolized. The monist system also put the dictator Hoxha at the center of its propaganda.

After establishment of the multi-party democratic system, in the last 30 years of political campaigns and clashes, the political scene and especially political communication has been dominated by party leaders. Clashes and battles between the two main political parties, DPA vs. SPA[2] have been clashes and battles among Berisha-Nano[3], Berisha-Rama, and recently Basha-Rama.

[1] DPA - Democratic Party of Albania
[2] SPA - Socialist Party of Albania
[3] Berisha, histiric leader of DPA, 1990-2013.

5. An ongoing duel!

In 2011, began the electoral political clash between Rama-Basha, for the Municipality of Tirana. Basha's victory, by only a few more votes, was contested and was not accepted by Rama, who never congratulated the winner, and it resembled the first act of a duel, which continues to date.

6. Less campaigning for programs and alternatives...

In the last two election campaigns (2017 & 2021) it was noted that at the center of the campaign were not the programs and issues of concern but the party leaders.

Bittner acknowledges that “leader evaluations may act as a shortcut (information shortcut – author’s note) for the least politically sophisticated” voters (p.118). In Albania, where political parties, some more than others, focus their campaign more on leaders than on platforms and ideas, a good part of the electorate qualifies under the status of less informed.

In 2017, different from before, the campaigns deviated from issues of concern to voters and was dominated by exchanges and political retorts between top leaders.

Two words were suddenly the most used in the political vocabulary of the campaign. ‘pie-pan’ and ‘steering wheel’. Those were the words you woke up to in the morning, echoed by political shows, and the words that sent you to bed at night.

‘Steering wheel’ meant having the leadership, and political leaders demanded just that. While the ‘pie-pan’ was a metaphor used to symbolize power, and the pie (which had been divided with small political parties) should, at least this time, not be distributed among the many and "dirty" hands that aimed to cut it into small pieces. This time, they needed all of the ‘pie’ to themselves. Only this way it could be of value!

For example, one of the issues that was hardly touched upon was environmental policy. Xhemal Mato of the "Ekolëvizja" organization has stated: "They (politicians – author’s note) should think clearly and precisely about how the future economic development will go. But to eliminate the country's wealth, to create great pollution, to create environmental situations that lead to great diseases, or the loss of human lives, all these affect the development of a country. Economic development should not be threatened by debts and environmental degradation … over 70% of political parties have no details about or plan for the environment, in the next four years”. (Nasi, 2017).

In the general elections held this year, as compared to four years ago, both sides, especially the challenger, the DPA made an effort to steer political communication with voters towards issues and alternatives. However, the campaign was again dominated by the role, character, or the ability of leaders. Such a finding also comes from the International Election Observation Mission: “The campaign lacked vigor, and

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Fatos Nano, historic leader of SPA, 1991-2005.

messaging focused on the main party leaders, rather than on genuine issue-driven discourse" (OSCE Statement, 2021).

In the recent electoral campaigns, an "Americanization" of the campaigns is noted. They resemble more presidential-type campaigns. The main media attention is focused on the two rivals for prime minister, and less and less on the new political parties and movements in the country.

7. "Media have the power to increase the prominence of party leaders in the electoral process in a multi-party parliamentary democracy" (Takens et al., p. 15).

The media, whether traditional or social media, pays particular attention to party leaders. Every appearance, meeting, statement, or opinion of the leaders is part of the main news cycle.

Among some of the reasons are public interest, electoral strategies of political parties focus on the leader (character and skills), one media feeds the other, etc.

But despite the increasing adaptation of electoral campaign experiences from developed democracies, there is one feature that remains unchanged over the years. And this is the lack of televised debates in Albania. The challengers insist on such debates, and if they win the election, the next time they just as persistently reject it. Here is how Prime Minister Rama explained in 2017 his rejection to the invitation of his rivals for a televised debate: "Usually politicians who have nothing to lose, grasp at straws and seek to enter into a debate with those who have much more serious things to deal with rather than put on a show that serves no one. I am with people every day, constantly, so I do not intend to participate in a show to exchange quips, which people have heard and are fed up with. And above all, I am not in this campaign to help Luli (Lulzim Basha - democratic rival- author's note) (Opinion).

So, we may conclude that there are many reasons for the increasing role of political leaders in election campaigns in Albania. Most of them can be grouped into the following:

a. Reasons related to the low level of democracy in the country and especially within the political parties. The role of the leader is of special importance, given the lack of separation of powers, as is often the case in new fragile democracies. Meanwhile political parties, despite of their separate ideology, have one thing in common: the almost absolute role of leaders.

b. Reasons related to the electoral system and electoral rules. The former system of closed lists ties the fate and responsibility of the elected individuals with the political party and not with the voters. The recent change of open lists was diminished by the party ranking of candidates in the list. Therefore, leaders are very important for the selection of MPs.

On the other hand, the television time defined by the electoral laws, tends to favor the winning parties of the last election cycle, and makes it difficult for independent candidates or new parties, which present a more democratic model of organization, to become a factor on the political scene.

c. Reasons related to the media. In addition to various reasons such as political interference in the media, etc., the media is a difficult business in Albania. Therefore, individual clashes, rhetoric and negative retorts among leaders are more attractive and profitable than focusing on issues and governing alternatives.

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